

The Joys and Blessings of Obedience to God

Introduction: how to handle a moment of temptation (examples)

→ Does it really make any difference? (You think: Aren't I already forgiven?)

→ Yes, it does make a difference, because there are many joys and blessings that come with obedience in daily life.

A. Invisible benefits in the unseen spiritual realm

1. **The blessing of bringing glory to God by imitating his character on earth**

everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." (Isaiah 43:7)

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. (Ephesians 5:1)

2. **The blessing of expressing our love to God by our actions**

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." (John 14:21)

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3)

3. **The blessing of making angels happy**

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. (1 Timothy 5:21)

in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. (1 Peter 1:12)

B. Benefits that help advance the kingdom of God on earth

4. **The blessing of becoming a "useful vessel" for "honorable use" by God**

Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. (2 Tim 2:20-21)

5. **The blessing of being an effective witness to unbelievers**

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12; see also 1 Pet. 3:1)

C. Benefits in relationships with God and others

6. **The blessing of deeper fellowship with God**

Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. (John 14:23)

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (John 15:10)

7. **The blessing of having God's eyes and ears more attentive to you**

For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." (1 Peter 3:10-12)

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16)

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; (1 John 3:21)

The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way (Psalm 37:24)

8. **The blessing of closer fellowship with other Christians**

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:6-7)

D. Benefits that come to you personally

9. **The blessing of a clear conscience**

holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, (1 Timothy 1:19)

The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Tim 1:5)

Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. (Rom 13:5)

10. The blessing of God's peace

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me--practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:9)

11. The blessing of discovering by experience how good God's commands really are for us

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2; see also Ps. 119)

12. The blessing of avoiding God's painful discipline

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. (Revelation 3:19)

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11)

Ananias and Sapphira: Acts 5:5,10-11

For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. (1 Corinthians 11:29-30)

13. The blessing of greater assurance of salvation

And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. (1 John 2:3)

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities [see vss. 5-7: virtue, knowledge, self-control, etc.] you will never fall. (2 Peter 1:10)

14. The blessing of "seeing good days" and experiencing more of a foretaste of life in heaven

we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:13)

But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, (Revelation 21:27)

For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. (1 Peter 3:10-11)

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked ... (Psalm 1:1; see rest of Psalm 1)

15. The blessing of increased heavenly reward

So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Corinthians 5:9-10; see also 1 Cor. 3:12-15)

E. Questions:

1. What if I give in to a temptation and begin to miss out on these blessings? How long will it be until I experience these blessings again?

a. God's discipline will stop when you turn away from the temptation and begin to walk in obedience: 1 Cor. 11:31

b. Be sure you have made right any past wrongs you have done

c. Remember: God sees your heart: Jer 11:20; Ps 26:2; Davis's prayer: Ps. 51:10

For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7)

d. How long until blessings are restored? We cannot know. Ps. 103:8-14; Ps. 51.

2. What if I've been obedient to God and I'm still suffering some kind of hardship?

a. → This is a normal part of the Christian life (exx: Jesus, Paul; also Abraham, Moses, Joseph, David and Job)

b. But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. (1 Peter 2:20; see also 1 Pet 1:6-7; 4:12-13)

c. God will often give the blessings listed above in greater measure when we are called to suffer hardship

d. The suffering will come to an end, sometimes sooner than we expect

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. (1 Peter 5:10)

F. Conclusion: It makes a huge difference whether you give in to temptation or continue in obedience to God each day!