

Obedience

OBEYING GOD – Matthew 4.17-22 and John 14.23-24

From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Matthew 4.17-22, NIV

Jesus replied, 'Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.'

John 14.23-24, NIV

Always do what you are told? Nope, didn't think so. Being human means that we are often in rebellion to God. Romans 3.23 says that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's standards. Romans 7 and 8 reminds us that as Christians, we are always in a battle between doing right and wrong in God's eyes.

Read through Romans 7.21-25. It's a difficult bit of the Bible to get your head round but write down what you think it's saying...

Simon Peter and Andrew probably weren't that old when Jesus stopped by and told them to follow him. It seems strange that Jesus said, 'follow me and I'll make you fishers of men..' What did he mean by this?

The Bible says that Simon Peter and Andrew immediately left their nets and followed Jesus (verse 20). If Jesus asked you to do something today, would you do it immediately?

Why or why not?

What kinds of things stop you obeying God?

Simon Peter and Andrew were fishermen by trade. They were fixing their nets. When Jesus invited them to come with him, they laid it down. It must have been valuable to them – it was their source of income and their whole livelihood / way of life.

In the Old Testament, God called Abraham to lay down his most valued thing – his son, Isaac. This was the son that God had promised and who would be the heir to Abraham – the one God would start to fulfil his promises to Abraham through. But God asked Abraham to lay down his son's life. Notice how Isaac also willingly laid down his own life. Of course, God provided a ram to sacrifice instead of Isaac but sometimes God tests our faith and obedience.

Are there areas of your life where you need to lay things down and give them to God?

Are you willing to be obedient to God, even if it costs you and changes the direction of your life? Maybe write a prayer of dedication down below if you are prepared for this. God will take you at your word.

As Jesus continued walking along the shore of Lake Galilee he saw James and John who were also busy doing their 'knitting'!! They too followed Jesus. So now there was Jesus and 4 ex-fishermen.

Read John 14.23-24. Write down some things you can learn from this:

When Judas asked Jesus a question, he told his disciples something that he is saying to us today. We've got 2 choices...

1. If you love Jesus as your Lord, you will obey him
2. If you don't love Jesus as your Lord, you won't obey him

John 14 is very rare as it is one of the few places in the Bible where Jesus promises that the whole Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) will come and hang out with you if you obey God. What a promise! SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

A PRAYER:

Lord, thank you that you love me. I want to live my life for you and not for me. I want to obey you with my whole heart. Help me hear your voice and obey. Amen.