

Obedience:

Submission to another's authority



Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." (John 14:15) As Christians, we supposedly live in obedience to Christ, but I can tell you from many years of working with couples, that too many do not demonstrate obedience to Christ in their marriage relationship. They too often live very selfish, self-centered lives and their marriage is not a testimony to God's love. Do we die to self and put our spouse first? Do we honor marriage? Do we serve our spouse? The Bible is *very* clear about how we are to live in relationship; it provides very clear instructions about living out who we are *in Christ*.

While people may go to church, give, and even serve, they do not fulfill the basic commands given to husbands and wives. Husbands aren't loving their wives as Christ loves the church and wives aren't respecting their husbands and treating them with honor. They judge their spouse and often treat him or her worse than an enemy. How can someone claim to love Christ and treat their spouse badly? The Bible tells us that to obey is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22), but how often do we give and serve at church and yell at our spouse for some wrong they committed? We justify our poor behavior because our spouse doesn't meet our needs or do things the way we think they should do them.

Friends, we need to demonstrate our love for Christ through our obedience! What does that mean in marriage? It means that we act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly - giving grace to our spouse when he or she doesn't do things right. It means that we confront sin; humbly and in love, not by judging or attacking our spouse's character. It means that we take responsibility for poor behavior rather than becoming defensive or justifying our wrong. It means that we communicate in a way that will build our spouse up rather than tear them down. Obey Christ; love your spouse as Christ wants you to, dying to self and giving to him or her. Actively meet their emotional needs - put him or her before yourself as you are told to do in Romans 12:10 and Philippians 2:3. Seek to bless your spouse, building them up and seek their good, always being gracious.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Christians are to Obey Christ's Commands - www.fortifiedmarriages.com/docs/Christ%20Commands.pdf

Article to check out: *Obedience* by Henry Cloud & John Townsend - www.cloudtownsend.com

Book to check out: *A Life of Obedience* by Andrew Murray