

Partial Obedience Is Disobedience

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Mat 8:5-10 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, (6) And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. (7) And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. (8) The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: **but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.** (9) **For I am a man under authority**, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. (10) When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, **I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

Mat 8:13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

The centurion was a man under authority. He was completely yielded to the will of Rome. When orders came from his superior, he did not question the order. His own will was not involved at all. **He lived for Rome.** His job was to hear and obey. His will had nothing to it. He was a man “**under**” authority, which made him a man “**of**” authority.

The Roman centurion could've said, “I am not here to do my own will. I am here to do the will of Rome which sent me. When I speak, all the power of Rome backs up every word that I say. When I speak, my words are obeyed.”

The centurion understood that Jesus was completely yielded to the will of God, just as he was completely yielded to the will of Rome. He knew that all the power of God would back up every word that Jesus spoke. He knew Jesus had authority because He was a man under authority.

Joh 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because **I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.**

Joh 6:38 For I came down from heaven, **not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.**

Both the centurion and Jesus are examples of men of full obedience. Let's look at a man under partial obedience. That would be king Saul in the Old Testament.

1Sa 15:2-3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. (3) Now go and smite Amalek, and **utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.**

This is not a general commandment, like what is given to all the people during the dispensation of the Law. This is the "voice of the Lord" specifically to King Saul. God did not tell everybody to build an ark. Only Noah. God did not tell everybody to receive two tablets of commandments, only Moses. There are general commandments to us all, and there is personal instruction that comes to each of us by way of the "voice of the Lord." Notice how precise the instructions are. It was the same with Noah to build the ark. It was the same with Moses to build the tabernacle. God makes His instructions clear to us if we wait upon Him. He still speaks from Heaven.

Heb 12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

King Saul in the Old Testament was only partially yielded to God. He partially obeyed God.

1Sa 15:7-9 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. (8) And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. (9) **But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them:** but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

We call this partial obedience. But notice what the Lord calls it in the next verse.

1Sa 15:11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: **for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.** And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night. **KJV**

1Sa 15:11 “I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for **he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command.**” Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the LORD all night. **TPT**

For years I foolishly said, “Partial obedience is better than no obedience at all.” I am sorry I ever said that. Saul knows better. He found out the hard way; **Partial obedience is disobedience.**

God does not give Saul any kind of “pat on the back” at all for his partial obedience. God does not call it partial obedience. He says Saul has “turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My commandments.”

Example in our day: God says, “Give that person one hundred dollars.” You give that person eighty dollars instead. We tend to think, “I gave 80 of 100. I got an 80% grade on this test,” which in school would be a grade of B. God says you got an F because you refused to obey His command.

Why did Saul disobey the instruction he had received from God?

1Sa 15:24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: **because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.**

Jesus mentioned, why do you seek the glory that comes from man and not the glory that comes from God alone?

Joh 5:44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? KJV

Saul had a pattern of only partially obeying the Lord. You can read about more of his partial obedience in 1 Samuel chapter thirteen. Even though Saul remained king “officially” for a while, he really no longer had the anointing from God to be king. That anointing was given to another man who was a man after God’s own heart. **Once Saul lost the anointing, he was a king in name only.**

When we have a divided heart, only partially obeying the instructions we receive from God, we also lose the anointing to be the kings and priests that He intends for us to be.

We are supposed to be a “royal” priesthood. The Greek word translated ROYAL means KINGLY. During the law there was no such thing as a person who was a king and a priest at the same time. You have to go back all the way to Genesis to find a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD—someone who was both KING and PRIEST at the same time:

Gen 14:18 And Melchizedek **king of Salem** brought forth bread and wine: **and he was the priest of the Most High God.**

Heb 7:15-17 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, (16) Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. (17) For he testifieth, **Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.**

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, **a royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

We are more than priests. We are priests and kings. The words king and authority are almost synonymous. **A king with no authority is a king in name only.**

That is what has happened to the “royal priesthood” in this modern generation. Our authority is in direct proportion to the level we have yielded our life to Jesus Christ. Jesus plainly told us this, but we have not taken His words seriously enough.

Mat 10:39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Mar 8:35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.

David was not perfect. David made mistakes. But notice what God Himself said about king David:

1Ki 15:5 Because David did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

Saul had a pattern of partial obedience. It was not a onetime event. It was a life pattern. David had a life pattern of obeying the Lord. And when he repented, he

repented completely. He did not ask the prophet Nathan to forgive him, as Saul asked the prophet Samuel to forgive him.

Psa 51:1-4 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (2) Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. (3) **For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.** (4) **Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:** that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

What causes a man to be under authority, so that he has authority? What if the attitude of the centurion was like this: “When instructions come from Rome, I judge each and every one of them to see if I agree with those instructions. I obey the ones I agree with, and I partially obey the ones I only semi-agree with. Sometimes I want to do something different from what Rome says. In those cases, I simply do my own will. But Rome gives me full backing of its power no matter the level of my obedience to Rome’s commands.”

Why is there not more authority in the Church today? Because the Royal Priesthood has an attitude like that just described.

Personal examples:

1. My obedience to lose forty pounds when He told me to. Compared with my disobedience to go full time into ministry when He told me to.
2. My obedience to the Prayer Plan compared to my disobedience to the Fasting Plan.

General examples:

How many take Jesus seriously when He says:

Mat 5:29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

It means no matter how much it hurts, you must deal harshly with the flesh so that you no longer sin. I wish I had understood this earlier in my Christian life.