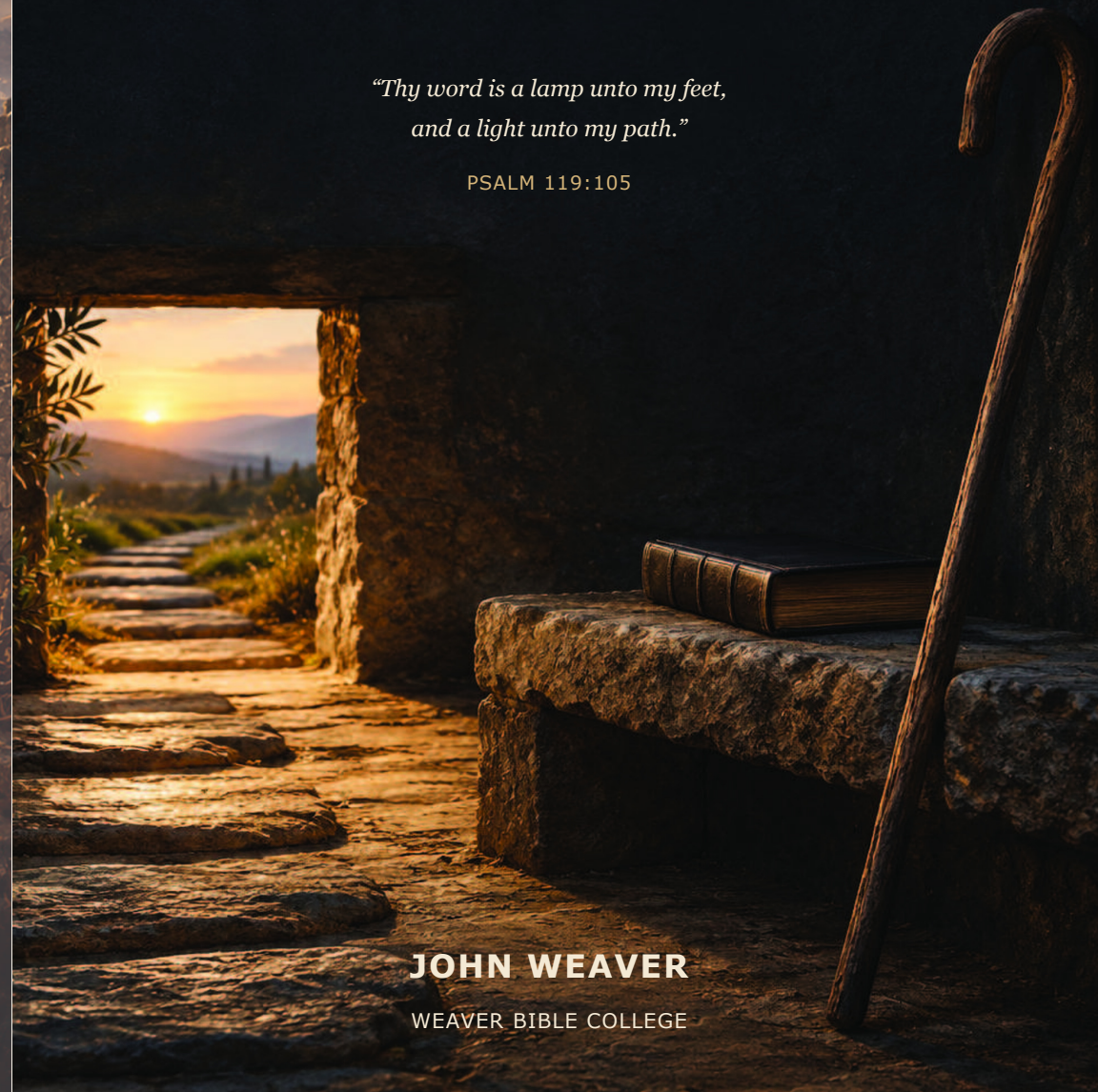
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BIBLICAL STUDIES

# The Pattern of
# Christian Obedience

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,*
*and a light unto my path."*

PSALM 119:105



**JOHN WEAVER**

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE

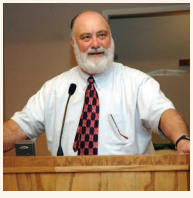
*Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.*

**JAMES 1:22, EXCERPT**

Christian obedience requires a standard beyond changing preference. John Weaver considers the pattern supplied by Scripture and the relationship between profession, conduct, and submission to God's commands. These messages invite readers to pursue a faithful response in the ordinary responsibilities of life.

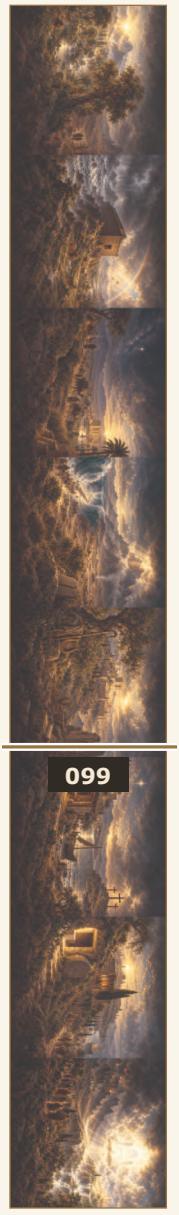
*“We thank You for Jesus Christ, who is our obedience, standard, and pattern.”*

JOHN WEAVER



## John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.




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# The Pattern of Christian Obedience

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# The Pattern of Christian Obedience

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CHAPTER 1

# The Pattern of Christian Obedience

## Introduction: The Concept of a Pattern

Please open your Bibles to John chapter 8 and verse 29. This whole conference is dealing with Christian obedience, and my subject today is the pattern of Christian obedience. In John 8:29, our Lord speaks: "And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him."

When we talk about the pattern of Christian obedience, we stop and think about the word pattern. We use that word almost daily, yet we never really stop to consider its actual usage or meaning. So we have to ask ourselves: Is there a pattern in Christian obedience? Is there a pattern for our lives as believers?

We have to remember that in 1 Corinthians 14:33, the Bible tells us that God is not the author of confusion. Obviously, if there were no pattern and everyone were doing their own thing, there would be absolutely nothing but confusion. The Apostle Paul, praying for the Colossian Christians in Colossians 1:10, gave a very pointed prayer

request. He petitioned the Father that they might "walk worthy unto the Lord in all pleasing, being fruitful unto every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Obviously, you cannot walk pleasing unto the Lord unless you know what pleases Him. There has to be a pattern, and there has to be some direction somewhere.

## Biblical Examples of Patterns

Do you think that God would be so fastidious in some areas and then leave Christian obedience up to ourselves or to the whim of men? Consider the direction God gave concerning the tabernacle. Exodus 25:9 says, "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Again, Exodus 25:40 says, "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." Numbers 8:4 says that the candlestick "was beaten work according to the pattern which the Lord had showed Moses." All of this is reiterated in Hebrews 8:5, where he says, "...for they," speaking of the Old Testament priests, "...serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished by God when he was about to make

"For see," saith he, "that thou makest all things according to the pattern that was shown thee in the mount." So God gave the pattern for absolutely everything in the tabernacle. God also gave the pattern for everything in the temple. God gave specific directions to David and to Solomon.

When you get to 1 Chronicles chapter 28, listen to verses 11 and 12: "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern for the porch, and the house thereof, and the treasures thereof, and the upper chambers thereof, and the inner parlors thereof, and the place of the mercy seat, and all the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and all the treasuries of dedicated things." Then, when you get to chapter 28, verses 18 and 19, he talks about the pattern for the altar of incense, and the cherubim, and everything. God gave express details.

Nothing was left to chance, nothing was left to fate or fortune, or to the whim of man, or to the desires or feelings of man. Moses

certainly could not make the tabernacle, neither could David nor Solomon make the temple according to what they wanted. They had to follow the pattern that God gave them.

Have you ever stopped to think about this, that God has graciously given us patterns in many areas of life? For instance, in 1 Timothy 1, verse 16, did you know that God has given us a pattern for conversion? In fact, the Apostle Paul said it like this: “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.” So the Apostle’s conversion was a pattern. That does not mean that we are going to have the exact same experience that the Apostle Paul had, but it does mean that we certainly will have conviction of sin, repentance, and faith. All of those things are a pattern that has been given unto us.

Likewise, in Titus chapter 2 and verse 7, Paul told Titus, “In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity.”

Now, the word pattern is used many times in Scripture. You are going to say, “Well, I have never seen the word pattern when it comes to Christian obedience.” Well, you have, but it is just translated differently. It is the same Greek word, but oftentimes it is translated as example. For instance, in 1 Timothy 4 and verse 12, Paul writes to Timothy: “Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.”

## The Pattern of Christ's Obedience

Timothy was a pastor, and Paul tells Timothy, as a pastor, that he is to be an example to believers. The word example is the Greek word tupos. It is where we get our English words example, type, or pattern. It is exactly the same word. Paul is telling Timothy that, as a pastor, he is to be an example to believers.

When I read that, I thought of this: I wonder how many people today would be more holy, more godly, and more obedient if they patterned their lives after their pastor. Did you know the Apostle Paul often asked people to follow him? For instance, in 1 Corinthians

4:16, he says, “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.” In 1 Corinthians 11:1, he says, “Be ye followers of me, even as I am a follower of Christ.” And in Philippians 3:17, he says, “Brethren, be followers of me, and mark them which so walk that ye have us for an example.” The Apostle Paul is saying, Follow me as I follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Paul told Timothy he was to be an example to believers, the sad truth is that today, if most people followed their pastor, most of them would follow him almost straight to hell, or at least into sin, hypocrisy, and all kinds of disobedience.

God does indeed give us examples. Do you realize that we even have an example when it comes to suffering and persecution? James 5:10 says, “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction, and patience.” And, of course, he goes on to speak of the patience of Job. If we want to understand how we are to suffer, how we are to endure afflictions, and how we are to live while being persecuted, we need to study the lives of the prophets. In other words, God says, Here is the pattern. Here is the example.

Concerning Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2:21 says, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”

The Bible says, “For even hereunto were you called.” God has a calling for you in this reference, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. The interesting thing about the word example here is that it is a very unique and explanatory word. The Greek word happens to be hypogrammos. Here is what the word literally means.

First, it means a writing copy including all of the letters of the alphabet, given to beginners so that they may learn to write. Secondly, it means an example set before one so that he may be quickly an emulation of that example. In other words, the example of Christ is so simple, so obvious, and so perfect that we need to follow in His steps. This literally means that we place our feet in the prints that He left. It is a very simple word. He is telling us that we are to

walk in His steps, follow His directions, and live our lives as He lived.

Now, go back in your Bibles to the book of John, chapter 8, and look at verse 29 with me. Having understood that there are indeed patterns and examples given unto us, look at John 8:29 again in this light. Jesus Christ says, “And he that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.” There are several very wonderful truths given to us in this verse. First, notice that Jesus Christ was sent by the Father.

## Our Commission as Sent Ones

He did not come on His own. He came in obedience and in submission to His Father. He said, “He that sent me is with me.” Interestingly, when you read through the Bible, one of the most noteworthy titles of Jesus Christ is the sent one. He reveled in and gloried in the fact that He was sent by His Father. It was not a humiliation for Him, nor was it burdensome for Him to be the servant of His Father. He was sent by the Father.

When you read a passage like Hebrews chapter 3 and verse 1, the Bible says, “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession Jesus Christ.” So God admonishes us to consider the apostle and high priest of our profession. Do you realize that the word apostle literally means sent one? He says we are to consider the sent one, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ gloried in the fact that He had been sent by the Father.

Do you realize, as Jesus Christ was sent by the Father, so likewise we have been sent? You remember what He told His disciples in John 20 and verse 21? Then said Jesus unto them, “Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.” As my Father hath sent me, so send I you. The Father sent Jesus Christ on a mission, and now Jesus Christ sends us on a mission. Christians should rightly be called sent ones. Since our Lord sent us as His Father sent Him, our sending should emulate, copy, demonstrate, and typify the way that He was sent. How was He sent? He was sent with a divine conviction, that is for sure, but He was sent in obedience to His heavenly Father. When our Lord said, “As my Father hath sent me, so send I you,” our obedience is to emulate and typify His obedience.

Ephesians 5 teaches that wives are to be in subjection to their husbands in all things, because the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Savior of the body. The man is the head of the house, and as its head he is to represent Jesus Christ. The wife represents the church, and her submission to her husband typifies, exemplifies, and demonstrates the submission of the church to Jesus Christ. All of that is very typical, and everybody understands it. But do we understand that our obedience is to shadow forth and demonstrate the obedience that Jesus Christ gave unto His Father? It is startling to recognize that our obedience is to show forth His obedience. Frequently, husbands and wives fail in the typology of marriage. The husband often fails in representing Christ's headship, and the wife often fails in representing the church and its submission to Jesus Christ. But the truth of the matter is that probably every one of us has failed miserably in representing the obedience of Jesus Christ. As the Father has sent me, so send I you.

## Living in the Father's Presence

In John 8:29, Jesus said, “He that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone.” Here is the second truth: we must comprehend the presence of the Father in our lives, just as our Lord did. Do you realize, as His children, that we are never, ever left alone?

He has promised to lead us, guide us, and direct us. Jesus said in John 14:23, “If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Everyone in this room can quote Hebrews 13:5: “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Put these two truths together in your mind. Jesus Christ was sent by the Father, and He lived in the Father's presence. He understood that His commission was from God, and that the Father's presence and power would enable Him to accomplish that for which He was sent. Consequently, He did always those things which pleased His Father. Moreover, the more He pleased the Father, the more He was assured of His presence and power.

## Christ as the Perfect Servant

If we wish to be holy, godly, submissive, and obedient, first we must consider our calling. We are sent ones: as the Father sent Christ, so Christ has sent us. We have a real, genuine calling and commission; we have been effectually sent by the Sovereign of heaven and earth.

Second, we must recognize the Father's presence and live in light of both truths. God has not only sent and commissioned us, but we are surrounded by His omnipotence and omnipresence. None of us can escape His presence or power. What did David say? He knows our rising and our setting; He knows the words before they form in our tongue; He knows our thoughts. There is no way to escape the omnipresence of God. Have you ever really considered that you are surrounded by omnipresence and omnipotence? You talk about encouragement and giving courage—wow.

I have thought about this verse innumerable times. I have often in my prayers said, “Oh, Lord, if I could just truly say, ‘I do always those things that please you.’” Would it not be wonderful if every Christian could truthfully say, “I do always those things that please him”? If we are truly going to seek to please Him and pattern our lives after Jesus Christ, we must remember our commission and the presence and power of God.

Calvin said of this passage, “Because I do always those things which please Him. We must observe the reason why Christ declares that God is on His side and that He will never be deprived of His assistance. It is because He is regulated entirely by His will and serves Him in sincerity. For this is what he means by the word always, and that he does not obey God only in part, but is entirely and unreservedly devoted to his service. Wherefore, if we desire to enjoy the same presence of God, our whole reason must be subjected to his authority. For if our senses hold government in any degree, we want to share it with God, all of our exertions will be fruitless, because the blessings of God will not be upon them.” Though for a time we may be delighted with the joyful prospect of success, “yet the final result will be dismal.”

If we want to enjoy the blessings of God, we must understand that God is sovereign, God is in control, God has sent us, and we must live in His presence and delight in His power.

John Gill said, “For I do always those things that please Him, by submitting to gospel ordinances, as to baptism, at which the Father declared His well-pleasedness in Him, and by complying with the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which were typical of Him, and by perfectly obeying the precepts of the moral law, and bearing the penalty of it, or by suffering and dying in the room instead of His people, all of which were the will of God and well-pleasing unto Him.”

There is a passage quoted in the Old Testament and also in the New Testament that relates to Jesus Christ. In Psalm 40, beginning with verse 6, David said, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.”

Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of the book that is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God. Yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, who have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid my righteousness within my heart. I have declared my faithfulness and my salvation. I have not concealed my lovingkindness and my truth from the great congregation.

Of course, this passage is applied to Jesus Christ in the New Testament. You can find that in Hebrews chapter 10, verses 5 through 9. I am not going to turn there and read that, because it is basically the same thing. But notice the words: “Then said I, Lo, I come,” and, “The volume of the book it is written of me, I delight in thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” So the very first emphasis that we find in Psalm 40 is upon our Lord’s servitude.

Have you ever stopped to think that our Lord is the preeminent servant? He is the preeminent slave of His Father. People do not like that word, slave. But when you get to the Greek word doulos, which is translated servant, sometimes it is translated slave. It is one and the same. A servant is a slave.

You say, “I am not a slave.” Well, let me ask you: have you ever borrowed any money? The Bible says that the borrower is servant or slave to the lender. You go down to the bank and borrow some money. Guess what? You are actually the slave of that bank until you pay it back. You are not working for yourself; you are working for them. This deals with our Lord’s servitude.

Our Lord loved His Father supremely. Exodus chapter 21, verses 5 and 6, says, “And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go free. Then his master shall bring him unto the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, to the doorpost, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever.” This is permanent servitude, permanent slavery. Deuteronomy chapter 15, verses 16 and 17, gives a similar passage. Scripture says concerning Christ, “Mine ear hast thou opened.”

Deuteronomy 15:16–17 says, “And it shall be, if he that is the servant shall say unto thee, I will not go away from thee, because he loveth thee in thine house, and because it is well with thee, then thou shalt take an awl and thrust it through his ear into the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant shalt thou do likewise.” The servant remained because he loved his master. Another passage says, “Thou hast opened mine ears.” There is another passage that says, “Thou hast opened his ear.” Jesus Christ was sent as a servant to the Father, and He loved Him supremely. Jesus Christ is the perfect servant.

In 1 Corinthians 15, beginning with verse 24, we see this in light of these Old Testament passages. Talking about Jesus Christ, the perfect servant, the Bible says, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” that is, Jesus Christ, who has accomplished everything, delivering up the kingdom to God the Father, when He has put down all rule and all authority and power. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” The passage continues, “For he that put all things under his feet,” and when he says all things are put under Him, it is manifested that He, that is, God the Father, is accepted who did put all things under Him. “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the

Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

What is that telling us? Jesus Christ, after He accomplishes the perfect will of God the Father, delivers everything up to Him, and He is willing to be His permanent servant forever. I know that Jesus Christ is God. There is only one God. Yet Scripture is showing us His absolute, perfect servitude. Therefore, when you look at Psalm 40 and read this passage, the very first thing you have to understand is that the emphasis is upon His servitude, and secondly, the emphasis is upon His perfect obedience.

## Obedience and the Law of God

"Lo, I come, in the volume of this book it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Jesus Christ is not only the perfect servant; He is also perfect in His obedience. His ears were opened. He heard the Word of God. Do you realize that man by nature does not hear? Man by nature is absolutely deaf.

In Psalm 58, beginning with verse 3, God talks about the wicked: "The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent. They're like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming ever so wisely." What does God say about the wicked? They have deaf ears. They will not hear. They will not listen. Man by nature does not want to hear God. He does not want to see God. He does not want to be with God. He is totally and absolutely depraved, and he has no desire for anything spiritual.

In Isaiah 48, and then Isaiah 50, we see the distinction between the servants of God and the servant of God. In Isaiah 48, we are talking particularly about Israel and how deaf they were to the things of God. You study Israel in the New Testament, consider everything they did, and you cannot help but think, Those people would never learn. They tempted, they provoked, and they were judged over and over and over. I get tickled every time I read that passage when the Bible says, "But many of them God was not well pleased and they were overthrown in the wilderness." With many of them? With many of them? Only two got into the land. He killed all the rest of them.

I look at Israel in the Old Testament and think, They'll never learn. Then I look at us and say, Oh God, we're in the same boat. We'll never learn either, unless You open our eyes. But watch Isaiah 48: "Hearing ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, not in righteousness, the Lord's they were hypocrites. For they call themselves of the holy city, and state themselves upon the God of Israel."

**SCRIPTURE READING - Isaiah 48:2-8 (KJV)**

> The Lord of hosts is his name. I have declared the former things from the beginning, and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them, and I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass. I have even from the beginning declared it unto thee before it came to pass. I showed it thee, lest thou should say, Mine eye will have done them, and my graven image and my molten image hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this, and will not ye declare it? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not, lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them. Yea, thou heardest not. Yea, thou knewest not. Yea, from that time thine ear was not opened, for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb.

So even Israel refused to hear. If you look in Isaiah chapter 50 at the difference between Israel, who were to be His servants, and the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the servant par excellence, notice verse 4: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned," then I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. "He waketh morning by morning, he waketh mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear," just like that servant who had the awl and the whole board in his ear, "and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and I hid not my face from shame and spitting." I included verse 6 to show

that we are talking about Christ, the perfect servant, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you ever understood this? His life was a life lived for the Father. His life was consumed with obedience. In John 4:34, Jesus said to them, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and finish his work. If Jesus Christ is our pattern, we must ask, then, how did He obey?

Years ago, many of you will remember it, there was a fad that went around, and a lot of people wore jewelry. Some even had it printed on shirts and caps: WWJD—“What would Jesus do?” I used to see that, and I would get so grieved and upset. I wanted to snatch a knot in him every time I saw it. But I would try to say very sweetly and calmly, “I can answer your question. What would Jesus do? He would obey His Father. He would obey God’s law. That’s what He would do.” You do not really have to ask that question. The answer is obvious.

I want you to look at Isaiah 42. Notice verse 21. We are still talking about Jesus Christ. Look carefully at Isaiah 42, verse 21.

Notice what the Bible says concerning our Lord: “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.” He will magnify the law and make it honourable.

The Hebrew word for magnify means to make great. It means to promote, to make powerful, and to nourish up. He is going to magnify the law, make it powerful, and nourish it up. The word honourable means to make glorious, to make majestic, to make wide and noble. Have you ever stopped to think that when God sent Jesus Christ, He sent Him made of a woman, made under the law? That is what the Bible says in Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” What was He doing? He was making it honourable. He was magnifying God’s law. He was making it majestic. He was making it noble.

Because Jesus Christ honoured and magnified the law and made it honourable, do you think it is now right as Christians to dishonour it, to disannul it, and disobey it? No. God's law is still His standard. His Word is forever settled in the heavens. His Word, likened to Himself, is immutable and unchangeable.

A large part of our Lord's public ministry, including His atonement, was to magnify the law and make it honourable; to vindicate its equity, urge its binding obligations, sustain its claim, show that it could not be violated with impunity, and demonstrate that the penalty was just. The whole effect of our Lord's life, person, and work was to magnify and honour God's law. Shall you and I then disacknowledge, disobey, or disregard it?

How can I please my Heavenly Father? I am going to answer that. Look in your Bibles to Matthew, chapter 7, and notice verse 12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Watch.

For this is the law and the prophets. Our Lord does not intend to say that this is the only point of doctrine laid down in the law and the prophets. But He is saying that, if you understand what law really is, and if you understand the biblical doctrine of love and charity, this is a simple way to maintain justice and equity.

For instance, if I want Brother Tim to honor my wife, I need to honor his wife. If I want Brother Daniel to help me when I need help, then I need to help him when he needs help. If I do not want Kurt to steal from me, then I should not steal from him. Is this not very simple? Our Lord says, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." This is the law and the prophets. Do you know what the Bible says in Romans 13:10? "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

## Practical Sanctification and Consequences

Love is not some esoteric little something floating around somewhere in the universe. Love is obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them not, he it is that loveth me not." Love is the fulfilling of the law.

I could look at Brother Shelby and say, “Brother, I love you,” and at the same time be stealing money from him. Do I love him? No, because love is the fulfilling of the law. If I love him, I may never tell him I love him, but as long as I honor him, his wife, his family, and his property, and do what God commands me to do, I love him biblically. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

It is impossible to live a holy, sanctified, and godly life apart from the law of God. Certainly, the Holy Spirit is the agent in sanctification, and love is the motivation in sanctification, but the law is the direction in sanctification. There is no such thing as a sanctified whoremonger, a sanctified murderer, or a sanctified drunkard. You cannot be a holy, godly, sanctified, obedient individual and violate God's law. It is impossible. Turn in your Bibles, if you would please, to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4.

I am not just blowing smoke when I tell you this. There are people today who think, “I can just live my own life as long as I profess to be a Christian, and all is well.” No, that is not true. We are talking about the pattern for obedience, and Jesus Christ is our pattern, for He says, “I do always those things that please Thee.” If you want to please our Father, how do you do it?

You do so by keeping His law, by obeying the totality of His Word. Here it is. First Thessalonians chapter 4, beginning at verse 3: “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.” That is keeping the law, is it not? That is obeying God’s law. “That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God.”

“Now watch that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we have also forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given us his holy Spirit.”

How do you live a sanctified life? In this passage, God says that if you are going to be sanctified, you must keep the seventh commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” You must keep the eighth commandment, “Thou shalt not steal,” because

defrauding someone is a form of theft. You must keep the tenth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet.” At the same time, you must keep the first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” because when you deny God, that is when you begin sinning. You cannot violate any of God’s law without violating the first commandment. The moment you begin to violate God’s law, you have already dethroned God in your life and enthroned yourself, which is idolatry. This is the will of God, even your sanctification: that you know how to possess your vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God, and that no man go beyond and defraud his brother. That is theft.

God is telling us how we are to please Him. Hosea 4:6 says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” We know that verse, and it is true. We are destroyed for lack of knowledge. You never have a problem if you know what to do; you only have problems when you do not know what to do. Your ignorance is your problem.

“My people were destroyed for lack of knowledge, because thou hast rejected knowledge that is of His will and word and way, I will also reject thee that thou shalt be no priest to Me.” God says, “You reject Me, I reject you.” “Seeing thou hast forgotten the law by God, I will also forget thy children.”

Do you want to know what is happening in Christendom today? Our children are being forgotten because we have forgotten God and His law. This is called the Lex Talionis, the law of retribution. It is when God makes the punishment fit the crime. What is God's law? Plain and simple, God's law is an expression of His will for His people.

What are our children? They are expressions of our will. We wanted them; we had them. Now God says, “If you forget the expression of My will, I will forget the expression of your will.” Do you want to know why our families have such hellions today and such rebellious children? Because they have such rebellious parents. We think that we can live our lives apart from God, disregard Him, and disobey His law, and everything will work out. It will not.

## Conclusion: A Call to Desire Obedience

If we genuinely and truly want to please our Heavenly Father and always do those things which please Him, we must be obedient in the totality of our lives and bring our lives into conformity to His Word. The Lord Jesus Christ magnified the law and made it honorable. We are not keeping it for salvation; our Lord Jesus Christ is our salvation. But if He honored God's law, we must honor God's law. If He fulfilled the law, we must fulfill it in our lives. We must walk in His steps. He has given us the example. How did He please Him? By fulfilling His word and His will in all things.

Can you truthfully say, “I do always those things that please Him”? No, I cannot say that. But can you say, “I really, genuinely, truly want to always do those things that please Him, and it grieves me greatly when I disobey”? Does it break your heart that you are so impotent and unable to please Him always? At least you are on the right track. We are not perfect; we are sinners.

But it takes discipline to train your mind and your life, and to stop and think before you act and before you speak. Say, “Father, I want to please Thee in this. Would You please help me, surround me by Your presence and Your power? I confess that without Thee I can do nothing.” You must learn to live not only in His presence, but also as one He has sent, knowing that you need Him. Without Him, you are absolutely, totally helpless.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. Lord, we confess that we have sinned against Thee greatly and failed Thee miserably. Our lives, unhappily, have not set forth Jesus Christ as the standard in obedience. We so often pick and choose. O Lord, help us. Teach us to do always those things that please Thee. Help us bring honor and glory to Thy great and awesome name, the one true and living God who has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the great I Am. Lord, help me, teach me, and enable me to desire to do only those things that will always please Thee. In Thy name we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

# The Pattern Of Christian Obedience

*Part Two of Two*

## Introduction: The Need for a Pattern

The title of the message is The Pattern of Christian Obedience. Last time we met, we dealt with the scope of Christian obedience. Today, we consider the pattern of Christian obedience.

In John 8:29 our Lord says, “He that sent me is with me. The Father has not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him.” When we talk about the word pattern, we must understand that we use it on a regular basis, and very seldom stop to consider the word or its meaning. So we must ask this simple question: Is there such a thing as a pattern for Christian obedience? Is there a pattern after which we are to live our lives as believers?

We must remember that God is not the God of confusion. First Corinthians 14:33 says, “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” If there were no pattern

for obedience, there would obviously be confusion, because no one would know exactly how to live or exactly how to please God.

The Apostle Paul, in Colossians 1:10, offered a petition for the Colossian Christians, praying that they might “walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Obviously, you cannot walk pleasing unless you know that which pleases God. So my question, to begin with, is this: Do you think God would be so fastidious in many other areas and less fastidious when it came to Christian obedience?

## Biblical Precedents for Detailed Patterns

When God gave Moses the directions for the tabernacle and everything in it, He gave them down to the very last detail. In Exodus 25:9, God says, "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it." God gave a detailed pattern for everything in the tabernacle. In Exodus 25:40 He said again to Moses, "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." Numbers 8:4 speaks of the pattern of the candlestick; God told Moses how to build it. Then Hebrews 8:5, bringing together these Old Testament verses, says, "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."

Nothing was left to chance, fate, fortune, or the whim of man. God gave detailed patterns for everything. The same was true of the Temple. In 1 Chronicles 28:11-12 the Bible says, "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things." Thus God gave a detailed account of how everything in the tabernacle and Temple was to be done; it was not left to the whim or caprice of man.

When we consider a pattern of true conversion, God even gave us a pattern in the experience of Saul of Tarsus.

In fact, the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:16, “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” That does not mean that everybody will be knocked down on the road as the Apostle Paul was, but it does mean that everyone will be convicted. Everybody will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There will be repentance, and there will be faith. In other words, He is the pattern.

Paul wrote to Titus in Titus 2:7, “In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.” Remember that Titus was a pastor, and Timothy was also a pastor. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul wrote to Timothy. We do not have to see the word pattern to understand that it is a pattern. Sometimes the word is translated in our Bibles as example. The same word that is translated as pattern in the New Testament is also translated as example.

It is the word tupos in the Greek, from which we get our English word type or pattern. When you hear the word example, it is the same as pattern. Paul told Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” Paul commanded both Titus and Timothy to be a pattern or an example to believers. In other words, the believers were to follow and emulate their pastors.

Here is my question: How many Christians would be more holy, more godly, and more obedient if they followed their pastors? The Apostle Paul did indeed suggest that people follow him, but of course no further than he followed Christ. In 1 Corinthians 4:16 he said, “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.” The word followers there is where we get our word imitators.

Mimickers, be thou an imitator of me. And then he said in 1 Corinthians 11 verse 1, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” So Paul was saying, You need to follow me, but you do not follow me any further than I follow Jesus Christ. And then in Philippians 3 and verse 17 he says, “Brethren, be followers together

of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." So Paul then is saying, Look, anyone who believes the Scripture and obeys the Scripture and serves God should be an example.

Unhappily, in this day and age, if so many professing Christians followed their pastors, they would probably follow them straight to Hell, or at least to hypocrisy and to sin. But the believers are indeed to have an example in their pastors. Do you know that when it comes to suffering, when it comes to persecution, again we have a pattern? In James 5 and verse 10, James wrote, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." So if we want to know how we can endure affliction, or persecution, or suffering, then we need to study Job, and we need to study the lives of all the other prophets as well.

## Christ as the Perfect Pattern (1 Peter 2:21)

Look in your Bibles, if you would, to 1 Peter chapter 2. We are going to come back to John 8, but I want you to see this in 1 Peter 2 and verse 21. Usually the word example is from the word tupos, but here there is an unusual Greek word, and I might say that it is a very explanatory word as well. So, if we are going to have a pattern to follow, and we are going to have a perfect pattern to follow, then we must follow the Lord Jesus Christ. But I want you to look at what the Bible says in 1 Peter 2 and verse 21. He says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." So, Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. Now the word example here is not the word tupos as usual. This word is hupogrammos.

Let me tell you what it really refers to. Grammos is where we get our English word grammar. Hupogrammos means, first and foremost, a writing copy including all the letters of the alphabet, given to beginners as an aid in learning how to draw and write them. Some of us went to school in the old days, and we remember that on the blackboard there were usually, in cursive and in print, all the letters of the alphabet. When you went to school, you saw the A and made the A; there was the B, and you learned to print and to write cursive. That is exactly what this verse is saying: Jesus Christ is

evidently set forth so plainly that all we have to do is copy and emulate Him.

The second meaning is an example set before one so that one may be quick in copying and emulating it. The example and pattern of Jesus Christ's life should be, and is, something from which we can easily and readily learn.

In verse 21, Peter says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Literally, we are to place our feet in the prints He left. We are to walk in His steps, follow His direction, and live our lives as He lived.

I have shared these things about pattern and example to bring us back to my text in John 8:29: "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." There are several wonderful truths in this short passage. First, Jesus Christ was sent by the Father: "And he that sent me is with me." Jesus Christ did not come on His own.

## Christ's Obedience in John 8:29

He did not run unsent. He came in obedience unto and in submission to His Father. He said, “He that sent me is with me.” As you read through the New Testament, you will find that one of the most noteworthy titles of Jesus Christ is that He is the Sent One. In fact, He says over and over that He was sent by the Father. So it was neither humiliating nor burdensome for Jesus Christ to be a servant to His Heavenly Father. Not at all.

In Hebrews 3:1 we are commanded to consider “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” The word Apostle is the Greek word apostolos, which literally means a sent one. You remember the twelve Apostles? What did He do? He sent them forth to preach. The word Apostle means a sent one. So Jesus Christ is chiefly the Sent One. The Father sent Him; He has been sent by God the Father.

We must understand also the beauty and the glory that Christ had in being sent by the Father. In like manner, we must also consider

the beauty and the glory that is ours in being sent by Jesus Christ. It is a divine and heavenly commission. In John 20:21, Jesus looked at His disciples and said to them, “Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”

“As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” Stop and think about this. Christians, then, are really and truly sent ones. We have been sent into the world to emulate, to shadow forth, and to follow Jesus Christ. Let me make something very plain. It is something that probably most of us have never thought about. Do you realize that our obedience is to picture and show forth the obedience of Jesus Christ to His Father? What did He say?

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." In Ephesians 5, the husband is designated the head of the home, the head of the house, and the head of the wife because he is to picture the Lord Jesus Christ ruling and reigning over His Church. The wife's submission to her husband is to picture the Church and its submission to Jesus Christ. We understand that. But it is almost something new when we think that our obedience is to picture and show forth the obedience of Jesus Christ.

Unhappily, husbands and wives frequently fail in their representation of Christ and the Church; we do not give forth the picture that we should. Likewise, many Christians fail in their obedience to shadow forth and show forth the obedience of Jesus Christ. But notice in John 8:29 the very first thing He said: the Father hath sent Him. So He is the Sent One.

In John 8:29, Jesus said, "He that sent me is with me." Then He made this statement: "The Father hath not left me alone." As the Father was personally present with the Son, so likewise He has not left us alone. We are never alone. We are surrounded by omnipresence. The Lord will lead us, guide us, and direct us. There is a specific promise in John 14:23: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

If we are obedient, there is going to be a special presence of God in our lives. Everyone can quote Hebrews 13:5: "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Put these two things together. Jesus Christ was sent by the Father. He knew and experienced the presence of God; He lived in the Father's presence. He realized and understood His commission, and He knew the Father's presence and power, and that the Father would enable Him to accomplish that for which He had sent Him. Consequently, He pleased the Father. That is why He said, "For I do always those things that please him." Moreover, the more He pleased the Father, the more He was assured of the Father's presence and power.

If we want to live a more godly life, to be more holy, and to be more obedient, we must put these two things together in our lives. We have been sent by God. We have been sent by our Lord Jesus Christ: "As the Father sent me, so send I you."

The second thing we have to put in place is that we are surrounded by the presence of God. We have to understand that presence. In Psalm 139, David said, “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.” What does he say? I cannot escape the presence of God.

God is omnipresent. That means God is everywhere at one time in the totality of His person. It is not that part of God is here, and part of God is here, and part of God is here; you put all these parts together and you have God. No, no, no. God is everywhere at once in the totality of His person.

Stop and think about the three Hebrew children. How many did Nebuchadnezzar throw into the fire? Three. How many did he see walking around? Four. What about Daniel? What did the king say to Daniel when he got there early the next morning? He lamented and said, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?” And Daniel said, “O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths.”

It really does not matter how dangerous the situation or the circumstance. The truth is, we are surrounded by the omnipresence of God. Let that sink in. I do not care if you are washing dishes, mowing the grass, or fixing fence. You are surrounded by the presence of an eternal God, an always sovereign God.

I have often thought about John 8:29, where Christ said, "For I do always those things that please him." I have thought, "Oh Lord, I want to be able to say that in my life." Would it not be absolutely wonderful if every Christian could truthfully say, "For I do always those things that please him"? We are sinners, and I am sure that we do not, but the desire should still be there.

John Calvin, on John 8:29, says this: "Because I do always the things which please him. He says, we must observe the reason why Christ declares that God is on his side and that he will never be deprived of his assistance."

It is because He is regulated entirely by His will and serves Him in sincerity. For this is what He means by the word always: He does not obey God only in part, but is entirely and unreservedly devoted to His service. Therefore, if we desire to enjoy the same presence of God, our whole reason must be subjected to His authority. If our senses hold the government in any degree, all our exertions will be fruitless, because the blessing of God will not be upon them. Though for a time we may be delighted with a joyful prospect of success, yet the final result will be dismal.

If we want to be like Christ and know the presence of God, we have to resign the reins of government in our lives to God. We cannot say, "I am the one directing this. This is what I want to do." No. We must say, "Thy will be done," as Jesus Christ did.

John Gill said it like this: "For I do always those things that please him, by submitting to the gospel ordinance as to baptism, at which the Father declared His well-pleasedness in Him, and by complying with the ordinances of the ceremonial law which were typical of Him, and by perfectly obeying the precepts of the moral law and bearing the penalty of it, or by suffering and dying in the room and stead of His people, all which were of the will of God and well-pleasing to Him."

John 8:29 shows what is involved when He says, “For I do always those things that please him.” Hold John 8 and turn to Psalm 40. We will read verses 6 through 8: Psalm 40:6–8. Watch carefully.

## The Servant's Ear and Perfect Obedience (Psalm 40; Isaiah 50)

This passage relates to the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, it is quoted of Christ in the New Testament. In Psalm 40, verse 6, the Word of God says, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” This passage is quoted in relation to Jesus Christ in Hebrews chapter 10, verses 5 through 9. Basically, the only difference is that He says, “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” Jesus Christ, the Eternal God, assumed the body that was born for Him in the Virgin Mary. Mary is not the mother of God. She is the mother of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ which He assumed. Here, when you look at this passage, He had to have a body.

Why did He have a body? Because the Father sent Him. He came as the Father’s servant. Do you remember that passage in Philippians chapter 2? He became obedient, even obedient unto death. The first emphasis in Psalm 40 is upon our Lord’s servitude. He was and is the perfect servant. He was a servant par excellence.

In the Old Testament, when a servant said that he loved his master and would not go free, something happened to him: he became a permanent servant, or a permanent slave. Exodus 21, verses 5 and 6, says: “And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.” This is how a man became a permanent slave in the Old Testament. Now turn to Deuteronomy 15, the fifth book.

Deuteronomy 15:16–17 gives the same truth: “And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee

and thine house, because he is well with thee; Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise."

In Psalm 40, "thou hast opened mine ears," plural. There is another passage where he said, "thou hast opened my ear," which may indicate that it was bored through, and that he became the faithful servant forever.

In 1 Corinthians 15:24–28, we read about Jesus Christ: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

This passage indicates that Jesus Christ is going to be the permanent servant of God the Father. Remember, there is only one God. Yet that one God has revealed Himself in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is all there is of God. God the Father is all there is of God. God the Holy Spirit is all there is of God. It is not three parts. Each one is totally, absolutely God, and yet there is only one God. God the Son, who came to be the Father's servant, was willing to be His servant forever, because we need to deliver up all things.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Here you have His perfect servitude in Psalm 40. Secondly, you have His perfect obedience. In Psalm 40 He also said, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Jesus Christ was not only the perfect servant; He gave forth a perfect obedience. His ears were open unto the Word of God.

Man by nature has his ears closed, at least to God. They may be open to the world, the flesh, and the Devil, but they are closed to God. In Psalm 58, which is not far from Psalm 40, God describes fallen man, the wicked. Psalm 58, beginning with verse 3, says, “The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.” That is the way man is by nature. He is deaf to the things of God. He will not hear. He cannot hear.

Now turn to two passages, Isaiah 48 and Isaiah 50. I want to show you a distinction. In Isaiah 48, we are reading about Israel. Israel was supposed to be God’s servant and God’s witnesses. Over and over God says, “You are my witnesses. You are my servants,” but they did not really serve God or witness for Him. Notice Isaiah 48; we will read the first seven verses so you can see the context. In verse 8 he says, “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness.” Here were people professing, but not in truth and not in righteousness. “For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel.”

The LORD of hosts is his name. I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them. Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very

treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb. So God says their ear was not opened.

Now look in Isaiah 50, because here is the perfect servant of Jehovah, the perfect servant with the perfect obedience. I will read one additional verse so you can see that this passage is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is applied to Christ in the New Testament. Isaiah 50, verse 4: “The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear. And I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”

Verse six shows that we are talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. God had opened his ear, and he said, “He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.” Do you not remember that in John chapter 4 and verse 34 Jesus Christ said to his disciples, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work”? My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Some of you will remember that a number of years back there was a fad that went around among Christians. I disagreed with the fad.

I didn't like it, but I couldn't stop it. But a lot of people on their jewelry, on their clothes, shirts, hats, would have embroidered WWJD. What would Jesus do? You remember that? Yeah, you had it. I never did like that. Why? Because I could answer it. I know what He would do. He would obey the Father. He would keep the law. I don't have to ask. What would He do? I know exactly what He would do, for the Father sent Him, and He was perfectly obedient.

## Magnifying the Law (Isaiah 42:21; Matthew 7:12)

Now, since you're in Isaiah, go back to Isaiah 42. Watch it. I'm not making this up. I want you to see it. Isaiah 42 and notice if you would please verse 21. We're still talking about the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Watch it. Isaiah 42 verse 21. Look what the Bible says. Talking about Christ: "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it

honourable." Now the word magnify there literally means to make great, to promote, to make powerful, and to nourish up. Notice he said he will magnify it and make it honourable. And the word honourable here literally means to make it glorious, honourable, majestic, wide, and noble. Have you ever stopped to think how Jesus Christ made the law glorious? How He magnified it? Stop and think about Galatians 4 verses 4 and 5: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Why did Jesus Christ come made under the Law? So that He could magnify it and make it honourable. He obeyed it personally, perfectly, and perpetually. He never, ever violated the Law of God. So here is my question: If our Lord honoured the law and magnified it, is it now right for you and I to dishonour it, to disannul it, and to disobey it? It is still God's standard.

His Word is forever settled in the heavens, and His Word is like Himself immutable. That's why Psalm 119 verse 89 says, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." A large part of our Lord's public ministry, especially his atonement, was to magnify the law and to make it honourable. He vindicated the equity of the law. He urged its binding obligations. He sustained its claim. He showed that it could not be violated with impunity, and he demonstrated that the penalty of the law was absolutely just. Now let me show you. I want you to turn to the book of Matthew chapter 7 and look at verse 12. Matthew chapter 7 in verse 12. Watch carefully. It's interesting that our Lord says this, and especially with the latter part. Matthew 7 and verse 12, watch carefully. Our Lord says, "Therefore all

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Our Lord is not saying that this is the only point of doctrine laid down in the law and the prophets; certainly there is more. But what He is saying is simply this: the Biblical doctrine of charity, or the Biblical doctrine of love, can be easily explained by demonstrating justice. For instance, He says, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” If I want Francis to respect and honour my wife, I would have to respect and honour

his wife. If I do not want James to steal from me, then I do not need to steal from James. If I want Lorraine to help me when I need help, then I need to help her when she needs help. That is what He is saying. Here is basic justice, and this is the law and the prophets.

You remember Romans 13:10: “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” That is exactly what He is saying in Matthew 7:12. You cannot escape the fact that our Lord came to obey the law.

## Sanctification and the Law (1 Thessalonians 4; Hosea 4:6)

Now, I want you to turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. I want you to see this passage in light of what I am going to say. Listen carefully. It is impossible to live a holy, godly, sanctified life apart from the law of God. It is impossible. The Holy Spirit is the agent in our sanctification; love is the motivation in our sanctification, but the law is the direction in our sanctification. The Holy Spirit enables us to love the Father so that we will obey Him.

There is no sanctification apart from the law of God. Now, let me try to illustrate what I am saying. I just got through saying there is no sanctification apart from the law of God. There is no such thing as a sanctified murderer, a sanctified whoremonger, or a sanctified thief. They are unsanctified, unholy, and ungodly; that is why they do what they are doing. So, the point I am trying to make is that it is impossible to be sanctified, to be holy, apart from the law of God. Look in 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 3, now watch: “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”

The Bible specifically says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." Fornication would violate the seventh commandment, would it not? "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Fornication is a very broad term. It includes adultery, incest, bestiality, and many other things. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." Then he says, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour," not in "the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God."

In other words, do not live like those who are unsaved. "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit."

Obviously, when you commit adultery or fornication, you violate the seventh commandment. But consider verse 6: "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother." If I put a pistol to James's head and said, "James, give me all your money," everybody would call that theft. But if I am unscrupulous and cheat and swindle him without using a gun, still taking all his money, is that theft? Of course. That is fraud.

So, when he speaks of fornication and adultery, if you go beyond and commit them, you are not only violating the seventh commandment; you are violating the eighth commandment. You are stealing that which does not belong to you. It is also a violation of the tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not covet." Why would you steal? Why would you commit fornication? Because you are lustful and covetous. You want what somebody else has. Moreover, before violating all the others, you would have to violate the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

You would have to dethrone God, enthrone yourself, and say, basically, “I don't care what God wants.” Here is a violation of four commandments, and probably all of them, because it could be dishonoring your father and your mother, violating the fifth commandment. In a sense, you could violate the sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” by killing the relationship between a husband and wife or someone else.

You cannot live a holy, godly, sanctified life apart from the law of God. He says, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” Now look in the book of Hosea, chapter 4 and verse 6: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

In other words, you cannot serve God if you do not listen to Him. How are we going to serve God and please God if we disobey? “Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” What is God's law? God's law is an expression of His will for His people. That is how He wants us to live—in obedience. What are our children? They are expressions of our will. We wanted them; we had them.

Now God says that if you forget His law, which is an expression of His will for your life, then He will forget your children, which are an expression of your will for your life. It is the Lex Talionis, the Law of Retribution, where God makes the punishment fit the crime. And you want to know what is happening in America? We have forgotten the law of God, and God is forgetting our children. It is just that simple. The neglect and disobedience of God's law is no light act. It carries serious consequences.

## Application and Conclusion

The second application is this: if we wish always to do those things that please our heavenly Father, we must learn to honour and magnify His law and be obedient to it. We must learn to bring the totality of our lives into obedience. Jesus Christ is our pattern. His obedience brings us into obedience to the Father, and our obedience is to shadow and show forth His obedience. Jesus Christ could truthfully say, “For I do always those things that please him.”

So here are my questions: Can you honestly say as a Christian that you always do those things that please Him? Everyone will have to say no, because we are sinners. But could you say this: “I want and desire always to do those things that please Him”? Therefore, I will pray constantly and continually, asking Him to enable and empower me to bring my life into obedience to Him and conformity to His Word, that I might please Him.

Jesus Christ is our pattern, and it is a perfect pattern. He is our ABCs. We need to look at Him, put our feet in His footsteps, do as He did, and bring honor and glory to the Father.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your word and truth. We thank You for Jesus Christ, who is

our obedience, standard, and pattern. Help us, Heavenly Father, always to do those things that please Thee. Enable us and empower us. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask. Amen.

# Source Notes

Chapter 1: The Pattern of Christian Obedience
JW00493 | SermonAudio

Chapter 2: The Pattern Of Christian Obedience - Part 2 of 2
JW01442 | YouTube

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