

There's No Other Way

Ready:

"If you love me, obey my commandments." — John 14:15

Set

Growing up in the church as a young boy, I have fond memories of singing the classic hymns of the faith. One of my favorites was *Trust and Obey*, and I think my parents were pleased that I liked to sing about obedience as a child! This classic hymn was pinned in 1887 by John Henry Sammis, a Presbyterian minister. A friend of Sammis was attending a D.L. Moody revival in 1886 and heard a young man stand and testify, *"I am not quite sure—but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey."* He jotted down the phrase and sent it to Sammis who was inspired to write the hymn *Trust and Obey* that included these words:

***Trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

Obedience applies in all areas of life. As parents, my wife and I incorporated a concept into our family called *first-time obedience*. We told our kids that there is no such thing as second-time obedience. That is called disobedience. We wanted them to understand the power and significance of obedience. It was amazing to see how they quickly responded to us – the first time! It was one of the best parenting tips we implemented.

A biblical definition of obedience is simply to hear God's Word and act accordingly. The problem isn't hearing, but rather acting. Responding is the hard part, because it requires submitting and surrendering to God and His Word. We struggle with first-time obedience with our Heavenly Father because the world, the flesh and Satan (1 John 2:15-17) are the enemies of obedience. It's a battle 24/7!

Men and women of God have been marked with either a life of obedience or a life of disobedience. John Lee* from East Asia is someone whose life is marked with obedience. I met him several years ago and heard his story; how as a sports ministry leader in a closed country, he was thrown in prison seven times. The police would beat him and tell him to deny his faith, and then they would let him free. He would say to them, *"How can I deny what is in my heart?"* This past year, I visited John Lee in his country and saw the prison that held him, the sports fields where he does ministry, his underground church and his home where he discipled 35 young sports ministry leaders over a two-year period.

John Lee wakes up every day to serve coaches and athletes in his country with the reality that he will be thrown into prison again, because he is obeying the call that God has put in his heart. Obedience is the fuel that drives him. He inspires me to obey the Lord.

There are hundreds of reasons to obey, but here are ten reasons that I believe reveal the supernatural power of obedience. John Lee and many other faithful, obedient followers of Christ have experienced.

Reasons to Obey:

1. My obedience invites the favor and blessing of God. (Joshua 1:8)
2. Obedience always pleases the heart of God, who loves me. (John 14:21)
3. My obedience will always, in time, bring a harvest. (Galatians 6:9)
4. Choosing to obey is the ultimate expression of my love for Christ. (2 John 6)
5. Obedience is the pathway for intimacy with God. (1 John 2:3)
6. Obedience always delivers what it promises: freedom and blessing. (James 1:25)
7. Living a life of obedience leaves a legacy. (Psalm 112:1-2)
8. The prayers of the obedient are powerful and effective. (James 5:16)
9. My life is always moving in the direction of my obedience. (Colossians 1:10)
10. When I try, I fail; when I obey, He succeeds. (Galatians 2:20)

If not obedience, then what? Others are counting on us hearing and acting! They will see first-hand how obedience marks our lives. John Lee has a front row seat at the blessings of obedience because his life is consumed with obeying the calling that God has put in his heart. No one can take that from him—not even prison guards. He is living Jesus' words, *"If you love me, obey my commandments."*

***Trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

*Name changed due to security reasons

Go

1. Who inspires you to obey Jesus? Why?
2. Reviewing the ten reasons to obey, which one resonates with you the most? Why?
3. How can your obedience change your school, team, family and your own life?

Workout

Ephesians 4:17-24; Deuteronomy 28:1-6; 1 Peter 2:1-3

Overtime

Father, help me to obey You. Obeying leads to transformation, and I want to be transformed. Obeying You brings clarity and disobeying You brings confusion. Bring clarity to my life. You are worthy of my obedience, because You are the only God who deserves all glory, majesty, power and authority. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Bible Reference:

Ephesians 4:17-24

Deuteronomy 28:1-6

1 Peter 2:1-3



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8701 Leeds Road | Kansas City, MO 64129 | 800.289.0909

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