

Series: Exodus

Title: Obedience by Revelation

Text: Gal 1: 11-24

Date: Oct 8, 2020

Place: SGBC, NJ

Subject: Obedience by Revelation

Throughout this letter Paul declares that true believers walk by faith which works by love. We are not compelled by men using the law of God nor are we compelled by man-made commands and creeds. We are not moved by fear of punishment or promise of rewards.

Proposition: Those sanctified by God in true holiness are made obedient by the revelation of Christ in our hearts through the preaching of Christ crucified.

The same as Christ separated and called us in the first hour, Christ is able to keep us following him. He does not do this through the message of man's works and morality but through the same gospel of Christ by which he called us in the first hour. In order to show this, the Holy Spirit moved Paul to declare how Christ personally did this work when he called him to be an apostle.

Galatians 1: 11: But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12: For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The gospel is not after man—it did not originate with man but with God. No man can teach another sinner the gospel nor make a sinner receive the gospel in spirit and truth. Christ is the Gospel and Christ is the Revealer of the Gospel. Sinners are taught and receive the Gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ in our hearts through the preaching of the Gospel.

There are some differences between the apostles and us. With us Christ uses a preacher. But Christ called the apostles in person. Our Lord may not give us as full revelation as immediately, as dramatically as Paul. But Paul is a pattern for every believer in that this work is done through the revelation of Christ by Christ through the Truth.

1 Timothy 1: 12: And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. 14: And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15: This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16: Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

RELIGIOUS WITHOUT CHRIST

Galatians 1: 13: For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it. 14: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

An unregenerate sinner can become religious apart from Christ. When Paul was Saul of Tarsus he was religious yet he was a sinner who had not been born again of the Spirit of God and did not know God.

Yet, we see how wrapped up in the Jew's religion Paul was. "The Jew's religion" is natural, man-made religion. It exists in our day in churches that go by the name of Christ. It summed up by these two things:

One, natural men in natural, vain religion persecute the true church of God—"*beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.*" When he was Saul of Tarsus, Paul consented when men stoned Stephen to death. On the road to Damascus he had letters to arrest, imprison and put believers to death. It may not be that bad in our day but it has been in the past and may be again. But works religion still speaks evil of us. They call us antinomians—anti-law. They discourage people from hearing our gospel. They will sooner embrace Armenians' as brethren than us.

Galatians 4:29: But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Two, false religion then and now is all about personal profit by the sinner's will and works—"*And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.*" Works religion is taken up with things like "How to be born-again, how to be holy, how to be righteous, how to live a purpose-driven life, how to be more holy, etc..." It is about personal gain, covetousness, idolatry, the worship of man's works. That is what Christ separated Paul from and it is what is in our sinful nature which only Christ can subdue and deliver us from. Paul said,

Philippians 3: 3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. 4: Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6: Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7: But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8: Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, 9: And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

All sinner's come into this world naturally self-righteous and hating God. Man needs no help in that.

GOD ALONE SEPARATES AND CALLS

Galatians 1: 15: But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16: To reveal his Son in me,...

Sanctification is God separating us. It is by God's pleasure—"when it pleased God." Salvation is the pleasure of God's will. In eternity, God the Father chose his people in Christ

and blessed us with all spiritual blessings according to the good pleasure of his will. He predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus according to the good pleasure of his will. Christ made us accepted by his blood according to the good pleasure of his will. He abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, making known unto us the mystery of the gospel—according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself (Eph 1: 1-14)

We rejoice that salvation is by God's good pleasure "For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people" (1 Sam 12: 22). Brethren, we tend to want to snap our fingers and have it now but everything comes to pass "when it pleases God."

God separated his people from eternity. Paul says he "*when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb.*" The word "separated" means to "sever, divide, set apart"

Matthew 25: 32: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall SEPARATE them one from another, as a shepherd DIVIDETH *his* sheep from the goats: (Mt 25:32)

God separated his people when we had done nothing to merit or cause it—that is the message of "*from my mother's womb.*" God the Father "separated" his people in divine election before the foundation of the world. Paul was like Jeremiah and like all God's elect.

Jeremiah 1: 4: Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 5: Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Paul said that God "*called me by his grace*". Grace means it was all of God's free favor. If anything was of us it is works. But our separation and calling, like all of salvation, it is by the grace of God. The calling does not cause the election. God separating and calling in time is the consequence of God separating and calling us before time by his grace!

2 Timothy 1: 9: Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

When it pleases God in time, God separates and calls by revealing Christ in us—"*To reveal his Son in me.*" Christ revealed himself in Paul on the road to Damascus. The revelation was in Paul's heart. Paul did not merely receive the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, Christ the Life entered Paul and he began to live spiritually. Paul did not merely receive the doctrine that Christ is wisdom, Wisdom himself entered Paul, giving him the mind of Christ, spiritual discernment. Paul did not merely receive the doctrine that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes, Righteousness revealed himself in Paul and made Paul know that Christ had established the whole law and justified him by his precious blood. Paul did not merely receive the doctrine that Christ is sanctification, Holiness himself entered and created within Paul a new holy man in whom was no sin, only faith.

Be sure to get this, brethren. The Spirit of Christ works internally. He makes us KNOW HIM! David said, "In the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know Wisdom" (Ps 51: 6). Revelation is more than a carnal understanding. Paul said, "To whom God would make known...the riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col 1: 27) We live and have faith by THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD LIVING WITHIN US.

OBEDIENCE IS BY REVELATION

Galatians 1: 16...reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18: Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,..

When Christ reveals himself in his child the result is that we obey him.

Paul did not go to other apostles or confer with any man. He immediately believed on Christ and immediately obeyed him by going into Arabia where Christ commanded he begin preaching Christ.

When Christ reveals himself HE is the Power to makes us obey him. In obedience, we believe on him because Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. It is not imagination, it is real. Faith is the substance. By revelation we know Christ is All. He produces immediate fruit—we believe on him and follow him as he directs.

We saw how wrapped up in will-works religion Paul was. He was full of self-righteousness, self-worth, self-merit, and self-sanctification. Nothing short of Christ's power by revelation in his heart could make Paul drop it immediately. Only Christ grants you and I repentance. None but Christ can make a God-hating rebel immediately believe on Christ. None but Christ can make a work-monger into a preacher of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ Jesus! He turned Paul from being Gamaliel's student to being Christ's disciple, from membership in the Sanhedrim to membership Christ's body, from safety and peace to bitter persecution unto death.

Brethren, this is how the Spirit proved that Paul's gospel was not of man but of Christ. Christ made Paul repent and believe on Christ and go forth as a witness of Christ and him crucified from then on!

Christ does this work today through the preaching of Christ and him crucified not the message of man's works. It is the revelation of Christ in our hearts that creates obedience. Christ himself, our Substitute, our Redeemer, our Life makes sinners repent from and part with our former vain religion. He alone turns us from sin and self-righteousness and makes us believe on Christ, seeking to be found in his righteousness alone. Only the revelation of Christ in the heart makes us cease looking to our law-keeping for sanctification and makes us walk in the holiness Christ is and Christ has made us to be. He alone makes us bear witness of him alone! Christ does it throughout the life of faith through the preaching of his person and works. It is not done through the preaching of works but only through the preaching of the glorious person and wonderful works of our Redeemer which I am declaring to you now.

If what we hear preached is only about man, law, morality, and works of men then it will make us zealous for our own works. It will exclude us from Christ and make us exclude Christ from us. It will make us follow men rather than Christ. The only way we can be turned to believe on Christ and follow him is by Christ's revelation through the preaching of Christ crucified. Speaking of the false preachers of works, Paul said,

Galatians 4: 17: They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

They make you zealous for your own works. But they exclude you from Christ from the gospel. They shut you up to Moses and the law. Their purpose is that you might follow them rather than Christ. Vain preachers are concerned only with making disciples after themselves.

Galatians 4: 18: But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in good, and not only when I am present with you.

Zeal is good when it is of Christ through the preaching of the gospel that exalts our triune God in Christ as being all our salvation. When it is of Christ it affects us not simply because men are present. We are not following men but Christ. Paul did not want them following Paul when he was there and will-workers when they were there. He wanted them led and constrained in the heart by the power and love of Christ himself. What is the only thing that will make us follow Christ, trusting that he alone is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. What will turn us from vain works and those who preach such vanity? It is only the revelation of Christ within our hearts. So Paul says,

Galatians 4: 19: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,...

When Christ enters in and reveals himself in our hearts then we do not confer with flesh and blood. Then we follow Christ believing on him and obeying him. It is not by law, not by man compelling, but by the Spirit of Christ within you. Let me illustrate this by two believers who did not have the law given at Sinai. We could show this by Adam, Abel, Enoch, and every believer in scripture who lived prior to the law given at Mt Sinai. But we will use two men.

One is Noah. God told him to build an ark in a day when it had never rained. There was no visible, temporal indication that it would rain. But Noah believed God by the Spirit of God working within him and by that revelation Noah obeyed God in faith.

Hebrews 11: 7: By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

The other is Abraham. God told him leave his country and kindred and go unto a land God would give him. Abraham had never seen that land. He was leaving family he loved. But by the Spirit of Christ within him he was led of the Spirit and obeyed.

Hebrews 11: 8: By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Paul knew he was taught of Christ. He was led of the Spirit. So he needed no man to convince him, neither do we. He went forth preaching Christ by the Spirit of Christ leading him and guiding him into all truth. So does every true child of God who is made a witness of Christ by the Spirit of Christ.

1 John 2: 26: These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27: But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you [convince you]: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

When Christ himself becomes our Life, we really are separated in Holiness and live unto God by the Spirit of Christ living within us, who faithfully leads us in the way of righteousness. He is our Wisdom and Power in godliness—and he is our Godliness. One sight of him makes us bear witness of the faith we once hated. And therefore God gets all the glory—"*But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me.*" **Amen!**