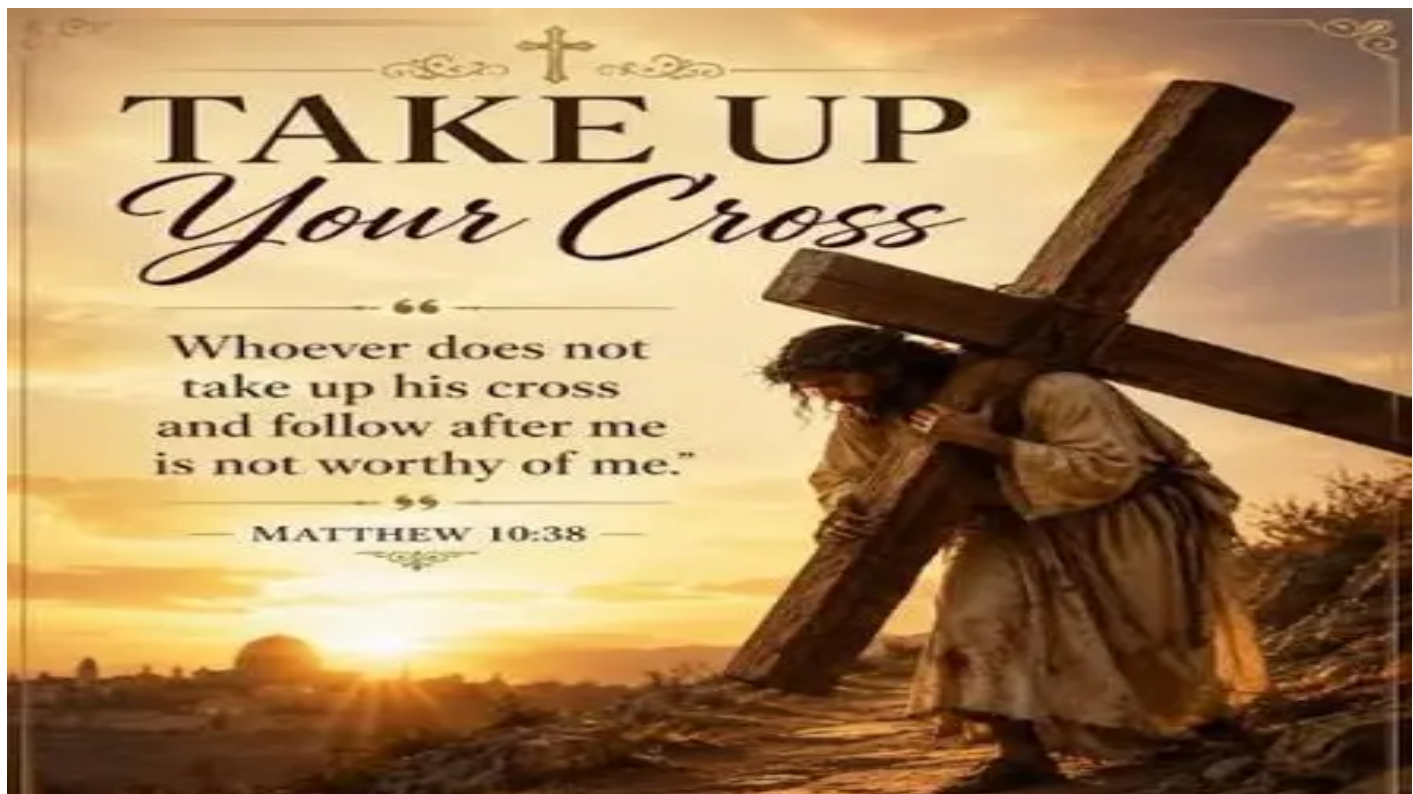




Old Testament Reading – Genesis 12:1-17
New Testament Reading – Philippians 2:5-11

A Challenge to our Students

“The Price of Obedience”

John 14:12-24

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

In Ephesians 2:10, the Apostle Paul said: “***Christians are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***”

- Therefore, for the Christian, success is not measured by what we have done, or what we are doing, but by what we have done, and are doing, compared to what we could have done, and should be doing, if we were living in obedience to God’s will for our lives.
- The secret of contentment for the Christian is to know God’s will for our lives, and to set about to do it, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust

and obey.

The initial steps to living the “successful” Christian life:

1. Be born again by the power of the Holy Spirit– God quickens our dead spirit, convicting us that we are sinners by nature and by choice, convincing us that we need a Savior, and that Jesus is the Savior we need.

- Being born again is the supernatural work of God in our spirit, which completely changes our desires and our will.
- The Holy Spirit replaces our old selfish heart with a new selfless heart, giving us a new vision and a new purpose for life – old things, old habits, old desires, etc., pass away, and, behold, everything about our lives becomes new.

2. Surrender our lives unto the Lordship of Jesus Christ –we submit our lives unto His authority so that we can accomplish the good works He has prepared for us to do. This involves three steps:

- Present our bodies to the Lord as living sacrifices.
- Refuse to be conformed to the patterns of the world.
- Determine to be transformed by the renewing of our mind through the consistent and persistent study of God’s Word

3. Saturate our minds with the Scriptures – Joshua 1:8 – “*You shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*”

- Select a time and a place where you can meet with God each day, undisturbed.
- Select a book of the Bible to study, such as the Book of John.
- Read a small section each day, looking for that promise to claim, that warning to heed, that example to follow or avoid, or that attitude of life you need to change, and then adjust your will to God’s will by agreeing with that truth and then obeying it.
- *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in Me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in*

For if you love Me, and keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, and My Father will love you, and I will love you, and I will manifest Myself to you. This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples."

- If we remain in the study of the Word of God, our knowledge of God's Word and God's will increase, our faith in God will increase, our desire to live in obedience to the will of God will increase, and the JOY of the Lord becomes our strength.

4. Be Quick to Obey God's Word – John 14:12-24 – Vs. 15, *"If you love Me, keep my commandments. 21 – *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."**

- Obedience is the key that unlocks the doors of heaven to reveal God's promises. Exodus 23:22, Deuteronomy 6:3
- God's promise of the land to Israel was based on His unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but the level of His blessings to the Israelites was based upon their obedience to God.
- Just as God called Joshua to lead the Israelites into the promised land, God has called each one of us to follow His leadership into that personal, intimate, relationship with Him, through which He will give us what we need to be successful.

A. The Motive of Our Obedience is Our Love for the Lord.

- John 14:15, ***"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."***
- The evidence of our saving relationship with the Lord is our instant obedience to His Word.
- John 14:21, ***"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."***
- The level of our obedience to God reflects the level of our love for Him. Therefore, if there is no desire to obey what the Lord has commanded us, there is no love for Him, for if we are not abiding in Him, we do not even know Him.
- 1 John 5:2, ***"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."***
- **How can we identify a true Christian?** A true Christian loves the Lord, and that love motivates them to obey.

- **How do we know that Jesus loved the Father?** Because He obeyed the Father, as Paul said in Philippians 2:8, ***“Even to death, even the death of the cross.”***
- Jesus loved the Father enough to do the Father’s will, even though it meant laying down His life. So, our relationship with God manifests itself on the basis of our love for Him as demonstrated by our obedience to Him.

B. The Evidence of our Love is Obedience. John 21:15-17

- The level of our love for the Lord Jesus is manifest in our eager obedience, our joyful obedience, our happy obedience, our thankful obedience, for this is the essential, foundational characteristic of a true, born-again believer.
- Jesus tested Peter’s love for Him. John 21:15-17
- In his book, **“The Four Loves,”** S. Lewis identified the four Greek words that are translated as “love” in our Bibles.
 - **Storge** – Familial Love – the love between family members.
 - **Phileo** – Deep Friendship – the love between equals.
 - **Eros** – Romantic Love – the love of sexual desire toward a specific person. (Lust is an evil, self-serving craving)
 - **Agape** – Unconditional Love – a sacrificial love that seeks the best for others without expecting anything in return.
- First, Jesus asked Peter, ***“Do you AGAPE ME?”*** Peter said, ***“Yes, Lord, You know that I PHILEO You.”*** Jesus said, ***“Feed My Sheep”***
- Second, Jesus asked Peter, ***“Do you AGAPE Me?”*** Peter said, ***“Lord, You know that I PHILEO You.”*** Jesus said, ***“Tend My lambs.”***
- Finally, Jesus asked Peter, ***“Do you PHILEO Me?”*** Peter said, ***“Lord, you know everything: you know that I “PHILEO” You.”*** Jesus said, ***“Feed My Sheep.”***
- Basically, Jesus was telling Peter to get his mind off of himself and his feelings of regret for having failed the Lord three times, for there was much work to be done.
- Jesus couldn’t get Peter to understand what we must all understand: **if we are to live in obedience to the will and the ways of the Lord, we must raise the level of love for Him to “unconditional,” for that is the price of obedience.**
- Thus, as John Stott once said, **“the test of love is obedience and the reward of love is the self-manifestation of Christ.”**
- Our unconditional love of the Lord is the price of our obedience to Him. Our personal intimacy with the Father and the Son is our reward for our obedience to them.

- The call to salvation is the call to discipleship, and the call to discipleship is the call to obedience; to unconditionally surrender our lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and it is the only level of commitment Jesus offers to anyone who wants to be His disciple.