**I Want to Obey**

**(Obedience; Patience)**

*“If worship does not propel us into greater obedience, it has not been worship. To stand before the Holy One of eternity is to change.” – Richard J. Foster.*

*In Matthew 10:34–39, Jesus stated what it means to follow Him. He said, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."*

*What does “follow Jesus” mean? We come up with our personal responses to answer this question. But, in a nutshell, following Christ means striving to be like Him.*

*So, what is my struggle? Well, I may need clarification on Paul's words. Paul asked us to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Cor 11:1). This is what Paul wanted us to do when he did the right thing. However, Paul reminded us that he becomes conflicted in serving God. Paul said that he did not do what he wanted for the good, but Paul practiced the evil that he did not wish to do (Rom 7:19). Paul said he find himself doing the things he shouldn’t and not doing the things that he should be doing. This is where most of us find ourselves. We intend to do things the way God called us to do it. But we have difficulty choosing what God will have us do over what we feel like doing.*

*Paul did not stop there either. He continues to point out the weakness that we all share. Paul wrote, "It is no longer I who does it, but it is a sin living in me" (Romans 7:17). As Christians, we are trying to live a righteous life, but the spiritual battle is a tough battle to be in. What makes it so difficult? It is not always the enemy. Sometimes, it’s those closest to us that make choosing God's righteousness over our self-righteousness. Sometimes, our roadblocks are family members, longtime friends, awesome neighbors, and great colleagues. This puts weight on the choices we need to make to honor God.*

*What can I do about this to help me overcome these challenges of choosing to follow God? I can begin by checking my mindset. Many things often need to be corrected when I react based on my feelings rather than accurate and factual information. The way I feel is unpredictable, sometimes dishonest, and often unwise. My feelings are a gift, but I must let the Spirit of God control them.*

*If I choose obedience to God, then it pleases God. God's love inspires us to obey Him. Yet, I can still fall short. Jesus stated if I love Him, I will keep His commandments. If I live for God, I will practice correct behavior.*

*I ask God to examine my heart. I even asked Him to create in me a clean soul. Creating a clean one will require work because God may examine my heart. If I am unwilling to surrender to God's will, I will not be compliant, supportive, or open to God and His commands. God wants a servant who has a heart for obeying.*

*Let's give God some glory by our obedience. There is a definite correlation between my obedience and God's credit. As I study our Bible, I see that when the people obeyed God, His glory shined exceedingly bright. I refer to the sanctuary and the Tabernacle building and see a clear example. So, do I want God to have His glory?*

*If I can pledge to be submissive to God, no matter what, my spirit will unite with the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit will encourage me to comply with the Lord despite my conflicting emotions.*

*To follow Jesus, I must always obey God and try to do the right thing. When I follow Jesus, I indeed let Him be the Supervisor. I am not saved by my work for Jesus but by what He did for me. He gave me His grace, and I want to please Him. This means following His examples when confronted with many of today’s challenges. If I allow the Holy Spirit to control my life, I will please Jesus.*

*Following Jesus means applying God’s truths, learning from His Word, and living as if Jesus were walking alongside me.*

*God has told me what He requires of me and given me the power to do it. God gave me His Spirit. Do we remember Augustine’s prayer, “O Lord, command what you will, and give what you command?” So, when God tells us what He wants us to do, He also gives us the power to do it! We need to be steadfast in keeping God's statutes.*

*Prayer: Jesus, our Lord, and Savior. We certainly need you in this area of our life. It is so hard to obey when obedience is called for. Please help us to follow You, Your ways, and Your example. Please help me to exemplify Your righteousness before others. Amen!*