

HUMBLE OBEDIENCE

By David J. Riggs

Jesus said to Peter, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Peter answered, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." (Luke 5:4-5).

Peter demonstrated respect for the word of Jesus. He was an experienced fisherman and knew that fishing was better at night. He knew that if they hadn't caught anything after fishing all night, they wouldn't during the day. However, he didn't let human wisdom or reasoning stand in his way. He simply took Jesus at His word and did what He said.

We, too, need to simply take Jesus at His word and do what He says. We need to take Him at His word and do what He says with regard to being saved from past sins (Mark 16:16). We need to take Him at His word and do what He says regarding attendance (Heb. 10:25), giving (1 Cor. 16:2), visiting (Matt. 25:36), studying (2 Tim. 2:15), etc.

Peter and his friends were greatly rewarded for their humble obedience of letting down their nets. They caught such an abundance of fish that they filled two ships so full they began to sink (Luke 5:6-7). As on that occasion, humble obedience to the Lord today brings its manifold blessings, blessing far superior to all the physical ones afforded in the lifetime of Jesus.

If Peter had refused to launch out and let down his nets, he would not have witnessed nor experienced this great miracle of the Lord. If he had been persistent in his own will in this and other matters, he would only have been numbered with the disobedient of his day. All those who will not humbly submit to the will of Christ are classified as the disobedient, and someday the wrath of God will be poured out upon them (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6). A mere profession of knowing God is not enough (Titus 1:6); we must obey.

There is great wisdom in obeying the Lord. Jesus said, "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matt. 7:24). Part of the work of John the Baptist was to "turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." (Luke 1:17). He was to teach them the wisdom of the righteous who obey God. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13).

Please notice that Jesus said, "Whoever hears these saying of MINE, and does THEM, I will liken him to a wise man..." (Matt. 7:24; emp. mine). Furthermore, He said, "He that has MY commandments, and keeps THEM, it is he who loves Me." (John 14:21; emp. mine). Only by keeping the commandments of Jesus, not the commandments of men, do we prove our love. It takes deep, abiding respect and love for the Lord to do only as He commanded. When we follow the traditions and commandments of men, our worship becomes vain (Matt. 15:9). Indeed, we must render humble obedience to the Lord and to Him only.