

Ignoring Obedience

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We love worship. It's almost trendy to throw your head back, lift your hands, close your eyes and sway to a glorious song about God. We can sing for hours.

But do we obey?

King Saul thought he could cover his lack of obedience with a worshipful sacrifice. Sent on a mission by God, he obeyed until it became inconvenient and then disregarded Divine directives. He hurried to cover his disobedience by a worship service.

God was not impressed. He voiced His opinion of Saul's worship through His prophet, Samuel.

"Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king." (1 Samuel 15:22)

God needed a ruler who would let HIM be King. He had a nation He wanted to lead in the right paths. The non-essential leadership component was a leader who would instantly, unapologetically obey God.

Leadership books abound. Bookstores are filled with the latest ideas on how to achieve optimum leadership capital and expend it to move organizations forward. They have their place, but what about the simple quality of obedience? What of men who recognize their inability, listen to God and humbly follow His directives to the letter? What about just obeying God?

Anyone, regardless of their gifting, can obey. And God can lead through men who fully follow Him. Look how He used a common band of fishermen and tax collectors to change the world and lead the first church.

If that doesn't impress you, how about the leadership mantra of Christ who said, *"I do nothing on my own initiative...I've come to do my Father's will, not my own" (John 5:30)?*

You may ignore obedience, but God doesn't. My disobedience, especially as I lead others, aborts God's leadership through me. I can cover it with religious activity, emotional worship, business acumen, charts and graphs, plans and ideas, reasonable human excuses but, in the end, God wants the answer to one question:

"Have you done what I asked you to do?"

Obedience IS worship. It is the sweet incense of a heart unimpressed and uninterested in anything but God. What our hands and feet do is the true indicator of what our hearts really love.

Is there any area of clear disobedience in your life? Some directive that you refuse to follow? It is not disconnected from your leadership. He is a God of grace and mercy, but He is also jealously interested in leading others through you. Every step of disobedience detours those who follow you down your own self-centered road of rebellion.

Others may follow and even be impressed with your leadership, but don't be surprised if there's a Samuel in your future.

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