

Joy in Obedience

(Deuteronomy 7:1-26)

Yearly Theme: “Joy is...”

Series Title: *Joy in the Wilderness*

February 23rd, 2020

Something to think about:

Obedience!

Obedience is not always easy. As a matter of fact, more often than not, obedience is difficult.

Obedience comes in many shapes and forms. Whether it’s through laws within a civil society, or rules of the home, or rules in sports, or the Laws and teachings of God, obedience is necessary for an ordered life and an ordered society/culture.

As we close out this short series entitled “Joy in the Wilderness,” we’ve followed the Israelites exodus from Egypt and their wandering in the wilderness outside of the Promised Land for 40 years. Now, under the leadership of Joshua (Moses’ assistant), the Israelites are ready to take the Land of Promise in complete obedience to God’s commands.

In a final treatise of instruction, Moses reminds this new generation of Israelites what He had initially told their parents and grandparents 40 years prior: *They must be faithful and obedient to God if they are to thrive in the Promised Land.*

Let’s take a closer look at Moses’ instructions to the people...

Turn in your Bibles to: Deuteronomy 7:1-26

The key point this morning is this...

Key Point: “Joy originates in acts of obedience to a God who loves.”

Doing things God’s way requires...

1. No compromise with evil.

Deuteronomy 7:2-6 (NLT) 2 When the LORD your God hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, you must completely destroy them. Make no treaties with them and show them no mercy. 3 You must not intermarry with them. Do not let your daughters and sons marry their sons and daughters, 4 for they will lead

your children away from me to worship other gods. Then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and he will quickly destroy you. 5 This is what you must do. You must break down their pagan altars and shatter their sacred pillars. Cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols. 6 For you are a holy people, who belong to the LORD your God. Of all the people on earth, the LORD your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.

2. Complete submission to a God who loves.

Deuteronomy 7:7-10 (NLT) 7 “The LORD did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! 8 Rather, it was simply that the LORD loves you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the LORD rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. 9 Understand, therefore, that the LORD your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unending love on those who love him and obey his commands. 10 But he does not hesitate to punish and destroy those who reject him.

Something to take home:

Dr. B.J. Miller once said, “It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do, no matter how hard it is, than to face the responsibilities of not doing it.”¹

Why do we complicate matters in life by our unwillingness to obey all of God’s commands? Why do we give in to temptation to do those things that we know will cause us, or other, harm in the long run?

The problem is the spiritual war within us that cannot be won without the Holy Spirit living in us.

The Holy Spirit takes residence in each and every person who surrenders their lives to Christ by believing in, and following Him each and every day; daily denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Jesus. And, though this is difficult at times, it’s always the most fulfilling thing in life. Though following Jesus is hard, our obedience to His commands and teachings is what truly liberates the soul to pure joy.

Finally, remember...

Key Point: “Joy originates in acts of obedience to a God who loves.”

¹ *Today in the Word*, November, 1989, p. 11.

Joy in Obedience

(Deuteronomy 7:1-26)

Series Title: "Joy in the Wilderness"

KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ What is "obedience?"
- ⇒ Describe three ways in which obedience is a good thing. Is obedience to God ever a bad thing? Explain...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

Deuteronomy 7:1-26 (NLT)

¹ "When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are about to enter and occupy, he will clear away many nations ahead of you: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. These seven nations are greater and more numerous than you. ² When the LORD your God hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, you must completely destroy them. Make no treaties with them and show them no mercy. ³ You must not intermarry with them. Do not let your daughters and sons marry their sons and daughters, ⁴ for they will lead your children away from me to worship other gods. Then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and he will quickly destroy you. ⁵ This is what you must do. You must break down their pagan altars and shatter their sacred pillars. Cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols. ⁶ For you are a holy people, who belong to the LORD your God. Of all the people on earth, the LORD your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.

⁷ "The LORD did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! ⁸ Rather, it was simply that the LORD loves you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the LORD rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. ⁹ Understand, therefore, that the LORD your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands. ¹⁰ But he does not hesitate to punish and destroy those who reject him. ¹¹ Therefore, you must obey all these commands, decrees, and regulations I am giving you today.

¹² "If you listen to these regulations and faithfully obey them, the LORD your God will keep his covenant of unfailing love with you, as he promised with an oath to your ancestors. ¹³ He will love you and bless you, and he will give you many children. He will give fertility to your land and your animals. When you arrive in the land he swore to give your ancestors, you will have large harvests of grain, new wine, and olive oil, and great herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. ¹⁴ You will be blessed above all the nations of the earth. None of your men or women will be childless, and all your livestock will bear young. ¹⁵ And the LORD will protect you from all sickness. He will not let you suffer from the terrible diseases you knew in Egypt, but he will inflict them on all your enemies!

¹⁶ "You must destroy all the nations the LORD your God hands over to you. Show them no mercy, and do not worship their gods, or they will trap you. ¹⁷ Perhaps you will think to yourselves, 'How can we ever conquer these nations that are so much more powerful than we are?' ¹⁸ But don't be afraid of them! Just remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all the land of Egypt. ¹⁹ Remember the great terrors the LORD your God sent against them. You saw it all with your own eyes! And remember the miraculous signs and wonders, and the strong hand and powerful arm with which he brought you out of Egypt. The LORD your God will use this same power against all the people you fear. ²⁰ And then the LORD your God will send terror to drive out the few survivors still hiding from you!

²¹ "No, do not be afraid of those nations, for the LORD your God is among you, and he is a great and awesome God. ²² The LORD your God will drive those nations out ahead of you little by little. You will not clear them away all at once, otherwise the wild animals would multiply too quickly for you. ²³ But the LORD your God will hand them over to you. He will throw them into complete confusion until they are destroyed. ²⁴ He will put their kings in your power, and you will erase their names from the face of the earth. No one will be able to stand against you, and you will destroy them all.

²⁵ "You must burn their idols in fire, and you must not covet the silver or gold that covers them. You must not take it or it will become a trap to you, for it is detestable to the LORD your God. ²⁶ Do not bring any detestable objects into your home, for then you will be destroyed, just like them. You must utterly detest such things, for they are set apart for destruction.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Again, this week, we consider another passage from the Old Testament book, Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy is Moses' final treatise to the Israelites after the 40 years of wilderness wanderings, just before they are to enter the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. Briefly explain what is going on in this passage of Scripture:

2. When the Israelites enter the Promised Land, what does Moses instruct them to do, and why (vv. 1-6)?

3. What was Moses' explanation as to why God chose the Israelites to be His people (vv. 7-11)?

4. What would be the result of Israel's obedience to God (vv. 16-20)?

5. Why did Moses instruct the Israelites not to fear the pagan nations in the Promised Land (vv. 21-24)?

6. What would result if the people of God allowed themselves to be trapped by the worship of idols just like the pagan nations did (vv. 25-26)?

7. How can obedience to God bring people joy?

8. Why is it important *not* to compromise with evil? What happens when people give in to temptation to disobey God's commands and teachings?

9. How does complete submission to God give a person salvation and true *freedom*? What are some tangible ways that people can live in submission/obedience to God?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

⇒ **WHY DO WE** complicate matters in life by our unwillingness to obey all of God's commands? Why do we give in to temptation to do those things that we know will cause us, or other, harm in the long run? The problem is the spiritual war within us that cannot be won without the Holy Spirit living in us.

⇒ **THE HOLY SPIRIT** takes residence in each and every person who surrenders their lives to Christ by believing in, and following Him each and every day; daily denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Jesus. And, though this is difficult at times, it's always the most fulfilling thing in life. Though following Jesus is hard, our obedience to His commands and teachings is what truly liberates the soul to pure joy.

⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** Deuteronomy 7:7-8 and Romans 12:14.