

Christ OBEYED God's Law and Requires Us to Do Likewise!

Many people think that Jesus Christ had a *sentimental* type love in His heart, but that He didn't literally *obey* God's spiritual law---the law summarized by the Ten Commandments. Yet, is that what your Bible actually shows?

All through the Bible, we are admonished to avoid sinning....to *stop* sinning. Yet, what exactly *is* sin? In I John 3:4, we are clearly told the very *definition* of sin: "sin *is* the transgression of the **law**" (KJV). Therefore, when we are admonished all through the Bible to stop "sinning," we are being admonished to stop breaking God's *law*!

Paul said that he would not have *known* that he had sinned, "except *through* the law. For I would not have known covetousness [he wouldn't have known it was a sin to covet] unless the *law* had said, 'You shall not covet'" (Rom. 7:7). The law being spoken of is obviously the Ten Commandments.

So, whenever we disobey God's spiritual law, we sin. That's what sin is---disobeying God's spiritual law.

Was Jesus Christ obedient to God's spiritual law? Christ said, "I have **kept** My Father's commandments" (John 15:10). Scripture tells us that Christ *never* sinned (Heb. 4:15; II Cor. 5:21)---that is, He never transgressed the *law* of God. Christ "humbled Himself and became **obedient** to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

Now, does Christ require that *we too* have that same attitude of obedience to God's law? Christ said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who **does** the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; *depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!*'" (Matt. 7:21-23). Speaking of the end-time judgment, Christ said that those who "practice *lawlessness*" will be cast "into the furnace of fire"! (Matt.13: 40-42).

Likewise, Christ said that if a person wants "to *enter into* [eternal] life," he must "**keep** the commandments" (Matt. 19: 16-17). And He then went on to show (in verses 18-19) that He was speaking of the Ten Commandments.

So, Christ was obedient to God's spiritual law, and He requires that we likewise *strive* to obey that law (Luke 13:24; Phil. 3:11-14). He said that we are to live "by every **word** of God" (Luke 4:4).

Yet, we, of and by ourselves, *cannot be* successfully obedient to God's law---God's way of life. Christ said, "without Me you can do *nothing*" (John 15:5). Why is that? It's because "the carnal mind [the natural mind we're born with] is enmity [hostile] against God; for it is not *subject to* the **law** of God, nor indeed *can be*" (Rom. 8:7).

Yet, notice verses 8 to 9: "So then, those who are in the flesh **cannot** please God. But you are *not* in the flesh but in the Spirit, **if** indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you."

So, the only way that you *can* live an obedient life that is pleasing to God, is **IF** you come to have God's Holy Spirit dwelling with you.

How, then, does one receive God's Spirit? Peter answers: "*Repent*, and let every one of you be baptized *in the name of Jesus Christ* for the remission of sins; and you **shall receive** the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

At baptism, we actually enter a *covenant* (or agreement) with God. God agrees to give us His Holy Spirit *on the condition that* (1) we accept Christ as our Savior, and (2) we **repent of**---turn from---our past way of life. We make an unconditional *surrender* to God---that we will henceforth *strive*, with the help of the Holy Spirit---to live in accordance with God's *spiritual law*.

As we're told in Acts 5:32, God gives His Spirit only "to those who **obey** Him"---only to those who have repented---only to those who are *striving* to live God's way. True Christians---also called "saints"---are described as "those who **keep** the commandments of God" (Rev. 14:12; 12:17).

So, upon entering that agreement with God at baptism, the individual (upon having hands laid upon him) then *receives* God's Spirit. It is the **death** of the old self and the start of a whole *new* life! (Rom.6:3-6, 12-13).

Yes, at baptism the person begins a new life of being "a living sacrifice" unto God (Rom.12:1). He enters a lifelong process of having God's **laws** written in his mind and placed in his heart (Heb.10:16).

Christ Dwelling Within You

If God's Spirit dwells within you, it is actually *Christ* living His life within you (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:9-10). To the *extent* that you yield your life to Christ's guidance, Christ then lives, *in you*, the **same** manner of life He lived 2,000 years ago---a life of *obedience* to God's law! "Jesus Christ is the **same** yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb.13:8).

You then begin to take on the very *mind* of Christ (Phil.2:5)---a mind of humble *obedience* to God (verse 8)---an attitude of "not My will, but Yours, be done"! (Luke 22:42).

Yes, in having God's Holy Spirit dwelling within you, you become a partaker of *God's very nature*---"the divine nature" (II Peter 1:4).