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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Grace, Faith & Obedience: Understanding the Relationship Part 1

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching examines the biblical relationship between grace, faith, and obedience. Rather than treating these concepts as opposing one another, the lesson demonstrates that they work together as part of God's consistent plan of redemption from Genesis through Revelation. The teaching begins by defining each term according to Scripture before explaining how they relate to one another. Throughout the lesson, emphasis is placed on testing every conclusion against the Word of God instead of relying on common assumptions or traditions.

The teaching first defines grace as God's unmerited favor. Grace is a gift that cannot be earned because humanity deserves only the penalty for sin. Since every person has broken God's Law, everyone stands under the curse of death. God's greatest act of grace is His plan of salvation through Messiah Yeshua, who delivers believers from the second death. Grace is therefore completely initiated by God and cannot be obtained through human effort or personal merit. It is the supreme expression of God's love toward undeserving people.

Faith is then defined as believing, trusting, and committing oneself completely to God and His Word. The teaching stresses that faith involves much more than intellectual agreement. To have faith in Yeshua is to have faith in the entirety of God's Word because Yeshua is the Word made flesh. Consequently, it is impossible to genuinely believe in Messiah while rejecting portions of Scripture. True faith accepts both Yeshua and the Scriptures as equally true because both originate from God. Faith becomes the foundation from which every aspect of a believer's life flows.

The lesson next explains obedience as the natural result of genuine faith. Obedience is not what creates faith but what reveals it. When someone truly believes God's Word, that belief naturally produces a desire to live according to His commandments. God's commandments, referred to as the Torah or His instruction, define holiness,

righteousness, and the proper way to live. The greater a person's trust in God, the greater the desire to walk in obedience. Thus, obedience becomes the outward evidence of inward faith rather than a means of earning God's favor.

After defining these terms, the teaching explains how they work together. Humanity has violated God's Law and therefore deserves the curse that accompanies sin. Paul describes this as the law of sin and death. God, however, lovingly extended grace by providing salvation through Yeshua. Messiah's sacrifice removed the curse that results from violating God's Law while leaving God's Law itself intact. Those who receive God's grace through faith are no longer condemned by the penalty of sin. Rather than abolishing obedience, grace enables believers to pursue obedience without fear of eternal condemnation. Obedience therefore follows salvation instead of producing it.

The teaching also explains the relationship between eternal life and eternal rewards. Salvation itself is entirely a gift of grace through faith, but Scripture also teaches that believers will receive rewards according to their works. Romans 2, 1 Corinthians 3, Matthew 5, and Matthew 25 all demonstrate that faithful obedience receives reward. These rewards do not earn salvation; instead, Messiah's redemptive work makes it possible for believers to inherit eternal life and enjoy the blessings associated with faithful service. Grace provides life, while obedience determines reward within that life.

A central theme throughout the teaching is that obedience demonstrates love for God. God's grace is His expression of love toward humanity, while human obedience becomes the believer's response of love toward God. Those who truly possess faith desire to obey because they trust the goodness of God's instruction. Conversely, persistent disobedience reveals a lack of genuine faith. The teaching repeatedly emphasizes that there are only two paths: the narrow path of faith leading to obedient living and eternal life, or the broad path of unbelief leading to destruction.

The lesson then demonstrates that grace is not unique to the New Testament. Because God does not change, He has always been a God of grace. Noah found grace in the eyes of YHWH, Moses also found grace, and throughout the Old Testament God extended His favor to those who trusted Him. The coming of Yeshua did not introduce grace but revealed its fullest expression by accomplishing the salvation God had promised from the beginning. Messiah's work fulfilled God's gracious plan by providing complete redemption for all who believe.

Attention then turns to the biblical purpose of obedience. Scripture describes obedience in many complementary ways. Obedience is the purpose of mankind, the evidence of faith, the expression of love for God and neighbor, the avoidance of sin, the path of blessing, righteousness, liberty, truth, life, and light. God's Law is presented as perfect instruction that reveals His character and teaches His people how to live. The teaching emphasizes that God's commandments are not burdensome but are given for humanity's benefit and blessing. Even those who were formerly Gentiles but are now grafted into Israel are called to live according to God's instruction because there is one law for all of God's covenant people.

Building on these definitions, the lesson explains that obedience fulfills humanity's purpose because it demonstrates God's character before the world. As believers obey God's commandments, they reveal His righteousness, His truth, His wisdom, His love, His freedom, and His way of life. Their obedience becomes a testimony that points others to Messiah. God's people therefore serve as witnesses to the nations through lives shaped by His instruction rather than merely through verbal proclamation.

The teaching continues by examining passages that seem to associate obedience with salvation. Hebrews, Matthew, Acts, Romans, James, and John are considered together to demonstrate that these passages do not contradict salvation by grace through faith. Instead, they consistently show that obedience flows from genuine belief. Paul describes his mission as calling the nations to "the obedience that comes from faith," while James teaches that faith without works is dead. The Philippian jailer's conversion illustrates this principle, as his belief was immediately expressed through obedient action. Throughout Scripture, faith and obedience are inseparable because true belief always produces visible fruit.

The lesson also warns against deliberate, ongoing rebellion after receiving the knowledge of the truth. Hebrews 10 is presented as a serious warning that intentionally continuing in sin demonstrates a rejection of God's truth and insults the Spirit of grace. Such behavior reveals a failure of faith rather than a failure of performance. Scripture distinguishes between accidental sin committed in weakness or ignorance and persistent, willful rebellion against God's known instruction. Genuine believers continue striving toward obedience because they trust God's Word, even while depending completely upon His grace.

The teaching concludes by reaffirming that grace, faith, and obedience cannot be separated. Salvation comes entirely through God's grace and is received through faith alone. However, genuine faith inevitably produces obedience, while obedience serves as the visible evidence that faith is alive. Abraham himself demonstrated this pattern by believing God and obeying His commandments. From Genesis through Revelation, Scripture consistently presents faith as the root and obedience as its fruit. The greater one's faith in God and His Word, the greater the desire to walk according to His commandments. Thus, obedience never earns salvation, but it unmistakably reveals the reality of saving faith.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Grace is God's unmerited favor extended to undeserving people.
- Salvation is a gift of grace that cannot be earned by works.
- Faith is trusting and believing God's entire Word.
- Yeshua is the Word made flesh, so faith in Him includes faith in God's Word.

- Obedience is the natural fruit of genuine faith.
 - God's Law defines righteousness and identifies sin.
 - Messiah removed the curse of sin, not God's Law.
 - Grace frees believers from condemnation, not from obedience.
 - Obedience demonstrates love for God.
 - Scripture teaches both eternal life by grace and eternal rewards for faithful obedience.
 - Grace has existed throughout all of Scripture, not only in the New Testament.
 - Noah and Moses both found grace in the eyes of God.
 - God's commandments reveal His character and His will for His people.
 - Faith without obedience is incomplete because true faith produces action.
 - Abraham serves as the biblical pattern of faith demonstrated through obedience.
 - Hebrews warns against willful, continual sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth.
 - Believers obey because they trust God, not because they are trying to earn salvation.
 - From Genesis to Revelation, grace, faith, and obedience work together in God's plan of redemption.
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FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. Grace is God's _____ favor.
 2. Salvation is received through _____ in Messiah.
 3. Yeshua is the _____ made flesh.
 4. Obedience is the natural _____ of genuine faith.
 5. God's Law defines _____.
 6. Messiah removed the _____ of sin.
 7. Obedience demonstrates our _____ for God.
 8. Noah found _____ in the eyes of YHWH.
 9. Abraham's obedience demonstrated his _____.
 10. Genuine faith produces _____.
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Challenging

1. Paul described his mission as bringing about the obedience of _____.
 2. Eternal _____ are given according to believers' works, while salvation remains a gift of grace.
 3. Hebrews warns against _____ sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth.
 4. James teaches that faith without _____ is dead.
 5. The teaching distinguishes between accidental sin and _____ rebellion.
 6. God's Law reveals His righteousness, truth, wisdom, _____, and love.
 7. The Law of _____ and death is overcome through Messiah.
 8. The teaching explains that faith is the _____, while obedience is the fruit.
 9. Scripture teaches that there is one _____ for all of God's covenant people.
 10. The greater a believer's _____ in God, the greater the desire to obey His commandments.
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GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you explain the relationship between grace, faith, and obedience to someone who believes they contradict one another?
 2. Why is it important to understand that obedience is the result of salvation rather than the means of obtaining it?
 3. How does recognizing Yeshua as the Word made flesh affect the way we view God's commandments?
 4. Why do you think Scripture consistently presents obedience as evidence of genuine faith?
 5. How do the examples of Noah, Moses, and Abraham demonstrate that grace and faith existed before the New Testament?
 6. What is the difference between striving to obey because you love God and trying to obey in order to earn His favor?
 7. How should the promise of eternal rewards motivate believers to pursue faithful obedience?
 8. What warning does Hebrews 10 give about willful sin, and how should that shape the way believers respond to God's grace?
 9. In what practical ways can believers demonstrate that they trust God's Word in their daily lives?
 10. After studying this teaching, how has your understanding of the relationship between grace, faith, and obedience changed or been strengthened?
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ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Unmerited
2. Faith
3. Word
4. Fruit
5. Righteousness
6. Curse
7. Love
8. Grace
9. Faith
10. Obedience

Challenging

1. Faith
2. Rewards
3. Willful
4. Works
5. Willful
6. Justice
7. Sin
8. Root
9. Law
10. Faith