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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Grace, Faith & Obedience: Understanding the Relationship Part 2

TEACHING SUMMARY

Part two of this teaching continues examining the biblical relationship between grace, faith, and obedience by expanding on the role of obedience in the life of the believer. Building on the definitions established in Part One, the lesson demonstrates that obedience is not opposed to grace but is the natural response to God's grace. The teaching begins by showing that obedience is fundamentally about love. Because God first loved humanity by extending His grace, believers are called to respond by loving Him in return. Scripture defines this love very specifically—not as an emotion or personal preference, but as keeping God's commandments. The lesson emphasizes that believers do not invent their own ways of loving God; instead, God Himself defines how He desires to be loved.

The teaching examines numerous passages from John's writings, including 1 John 2, 1 John 5, 2 John, and John 14, all of which consistently connect love for God with obedience to His commandments. Yeshua Himself declared, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." The lesson argues that every commandment God has given is an expression of either loving God or loving one's neighbor. This principle did not begin in the New Testament but has always been the foundation of God's Law. When Yeshua identified the two greatest commandments—to love God and to love one's neighbor—He was quoting directly from Deuteronomy and Leviticus, showing that the entire Law and the Prophets depend upon these two commands. Every individual commandment therefore teaches believers how to express genuine love.

The lesson then challenges believers to compare their walk with the example of Yeshua. Since those who abide in Messiah ought to walk as He walked, believers should desire to imitate His obedience. Yeshua faithfully observed the Sabbath, kept God's appointed times, ate according to God's instructions, and perfectly obeyed every commandment of His Father. Although believers cannot attain His perfect obedience, they are still called to pursue the same standard through the power of the Holy Spirit. Grace does not excuse disobedience but provides forgiveness whenever believers fail while continuing to call

them toward faithful obedience. The teaching emphasizes that a healthy relationship with God must be mutual: God demonstrates His love through grace, while believers demonstrate their love through obedience.

The teaching next explains that obedience is simply the opposite of sin. Yeshua repeatedly instructed those He healed or forgave to "go and sin no more," revealing God's desire that His people turn away from sin. Scripture defines sin as lawlessness and explains that the Law gives humanity the knowledge of sin. Without God's commandments, people would have no objective standard for determining right and wrong. The lesson also highlights Yeshua's teaching that obedience involves more than outward actions. Murder begins with hatred, adultery begins with lust, and true obedience requires a transformed heart. God's concern has always been the condition of the heart because inward beliefs eventually produce outward actions. The promised New Covenant fulfills this purpose by writing God's Torah upon the hearts of His people so that they desire to obey Him from within rather than merely conforming outwardly.

Building upon this principle, the lesson warns about the danger of continual, deliberate sin. Hebrews 10 is presented as a warning against persistent rebellion after receiving the knowledge of the truth. Habitual disobedience reveals a heart that rejects God's authority and ultimately insults the Spirit of grace. The teaching explains that obedience demonstrates genuine faith, while continual disobedience demonstrates unbelief. Choosing to obey God's commandments is therefore inseparable from trusting God's wisdom and goodness. Conversely, rejecting His commandments demonstrates a lack of trust in His Word.

The teaching then examines God's description of His obedient people as His treasured possession. Beginning with Exodus 19 and Deuteronomy 26, Scripture connects covenant obedience with belonging to God in a special way. Paul echoes this same principle in Titus by explaining that Messiah redeemed believers from lawlessness in order to create a people who are zealous for good works. Peter likewise describes believers as God's own possession who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light. The lesson explains that although the world often views obedience as strange, God's people demonstrate that they belong to Him by choosing His ways instead of the world's ways. Obedience becomes one of the identifying characteristics of God's covenant people.

Attention then turns to righteousness. Scripture consistently teaches that all Scripture is profitable for training in righteousness and that those who practice righteousness are righteous. Since sin is defined as breaking God's Law, righteousness is naturally understood as walking in obedience to God's commandments. However, the lesson carefully distinguishes between two aspects of righteousness. Believers practice righteousness by obeying God's Law, but they can never attain perfect righteousness through their own obedience because everyone has sinned. Instead, believers receive the perfect righteousness of Messiah through faith. His righteousness provides salvation, while believers continue striving to live righteously by obeying God's commandments. These two truths complement one another rather than compete.

The lesson also examines Paul's teaching on righteousness in Romans and Galatians. Paul explains that righteousness cannot be earned through the Law because no one has obeyed perfectly. At the same time, Paul also teaches that obedience leads to righteousness and that believers should become slaves of righteousness instead of slaves to sin. The teaching resolves this apparent tension by explaining that Messiah's righteousness covers believers whenever they fail, while God's Law continues to define the righteous way they are called to live. Grace therefore does not abolish the Law but enables believers to pursue righteous living without condemnation. Faith establishes God's Law because it motivates believers to uphold His instruction rather than ignore it.

The teaching continues by emphasizing that obedience should never be viewed as a burden but as a delight. Throughout the Psalms, David delights in God's Torah and meditates on it continually. Paul likewise declares that he delights in God's Law in his inner being. The lesson contrasts this biblical perspective with the common belief that God's commandments are restrictive or burdensome. Instead, Scripture consistently describes God's Law as freedom, blessing, and joy. The New Covenant fulfills God's promise by writing His Law upon the hearts of His people so they willingly delight in His instruction instead of resisting it.

Finally, the teaching explains that obedience leads to blessing and eternal reward. Deuteronomy presents obedience as the path of blessing and disobedience as the path of curse. Through Messiah, believers are delivered from the eternal curse of breaking God's Law, yet the blessings of obedience remain. Both the Old and New Testaments repeatedly pronounce blessings upon those who keep God's commandments. The lesson concludes by reminding believers that while salvation is entirely by grace through faith, Scripture also teaches that believers will be judged according to their works and rewarded accordingly. Those who faithfully practice and teach God's commandments will receive greater reward in the Kingdom. Obedience therefore remains deeply significant—not as the basis of salvation, but as the evidence of faith, the expression of love, the pursuit of righteousness, and the path of blessing for those who belong to God.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Grace and obedience are complementary, not contradictory.
- God defines love as keeping His commandments.
- Yeshua taught that those who love Him will keep His commandments.
- The two greatest commandments summarize the entire Torah.
- Every commandment teaches believers how to love God or love their neighbor.
- Believers are called to walk as Yeshua walked.
- Grace forgives sin but never encourages continued disobedience.
- Sin is defined as lawlessness.
- God's Law provides the knowledge of sin.
- The New Covenant writes God's Law on believers' hearts.
- Continual, willful sin reveals unbelief rather than genuine faith.

- God's people are identified by their obedience to Him.
- Believers receive Messiah's righteousness by faith.
- God's Law continues to define righteous living.
- Scripture describes God's Law as a delight rather than a burden.
- Obedience leads to blessing and eternal reward.
- Salvation is by grace through faith, while rewards are connected to faithful obedience.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. God defines love as keeping His _____.
2. Yeshua said, "If you love Me, you will keep My _____."
3. The two greatest commandments are to love God and love your _____.
4. Believers should walk as _____ walked.
5. Sin is defined as _____.
6. The New Covenant writes God's Law on our _____.
7. Believers receive the righteousness of _____ through faith.
8. God's Law gives the knowledge of _____.
9. Obedience demonstrates genuine _____.
10. Scripture describes God's Law as a _____ rather than a burden.

Challenging

1. Yeshua quoted _____ and Leviticus when giving the two greatest commandments.
2. Hebrews 10 warns against _____ sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth.
3. Titus says Messiah redeemed believers from _____.
4. Peter describes believers as God's own _____.
5. Paul teaches believers to become slaves of _____ rather than slaves of sin.
6. David delighted in God's _____.

7. The teaching explains that Messiah's righteousness provides _____, while believers practice righteousness through obedience.
8. Deuteronomy presents obedience as the path of _____.
9. Matthew 5 teaches that those who practice and teach God's commandments will be called _____ in the Kingdom.
10. Genuine obedience flows from a heart transformed by the _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Scripture consistently defines love for God in terms of obedience rather than feelings alone?
2. How do the two greatest commandments help us understand the purpose of the rest of God's commandments?
3. What does it practically mean to "walk as Yeshua walked" in everyday life?
4. Why is it important to distinguish between struggling with sin and living in continual, willful rebellion?
5. How does understanding that Messiah's righteousness is credited to believers affect the way we pursue obedience?
6. Why do you think Scripture describes God's Law as a delight and a blessing instead of a burden?
7. How does the New Covenant promise of God's Law being written on our hearts change our motivation for obedience?
8. What is the relationship between salvation, faithful obedience, and eternal rewards according to this teaching?
9. In what ways can believers demonstrate that they are God's treasured possession through their daily lives?
10. After studying this teaching, what aspect of the relationship between grace, faith, and obedience has become clearer or more meaningful to you?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Commandments
2. Commandments
3. Neighbor
4. Yeshua
5. Lawlessness
6. Hearts
7. Messiah
8. Sin
9. Faith
10. Delight

Challenging

1. Deuteronomy
2. Willful
3. Lawlessness
4. Possession
5. Righteousness
6. Torah
7. Salvation
8. Blessing
9. Great
10. Holy Spirit