

The Graces of a Christian #6 — OBEDIENCE

A Study on 2 Corinthians

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2 Cor. 10:1-18

By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you--I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" when away! [2] I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. [3] For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. [4] The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. [5] We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. [6] And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

[7] You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he. [8] For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it. [9] I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. [10] For some say, "His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing." [11] Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

[12] We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. [13] We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you. [14] We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. [15] Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, [16] so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory. [17] But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." [18] For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

1. Obedience R_____ in the _____ and _____

Philippians 4:8; James 1:14-15; Philippians 2:5-8

2. Obedience R_____ a higher _____

1 Corinthians 2:4

3. Obedience R_____ in divine _____

Titus 2:7-8; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 9:13

WHAT DOES A GRACE-FILLED CHRISTIAN LOOK LIKE?

CHRISTIAN GRACES #6 – Discussion Guide

- When you were a child, did you have trouble obeying your parents? What rules were you most prone to disobey?
- Do you agree with the statement that obedience begins in the heart? Why or why not? What does attitude have to do with obedience? Can you think of any examples of people who were compliant on the outside but defiant on the inside? What were the eventual results?
- Do you consider yourself an optimist or a pessimist? Why? Do you think it's a choice? Why or why not? Why are negative thought patterns so hard to break? Read Philippians 4:8. What steps can we take to change the way we think?
- Have you ever been unfairly criticized? How did you react? Did you try to defend yourself? Why or why not? Based on your experiences, what is the best way to approach a person who maligns you? What did Paul do in 2 Corinthians?
- What standard does God have for our behavior as Christians? Why do you think His standard is so high? Why is it a bad idea to compare yourself to other Christians or to non-Christians? Why do you think we're so prone to do so? What are the benefits to living up to God's standards?
- Do you think the world would think differently of Christians if we were more obedient to God? How might our witness be affected? How would our daily lives change?
- Take some time to pray together and privately for God to help you display the Christian grace of obedience every day. If He has spoken to you about a specific area of your life, ask for forgiveness for your disobedience and surrender that area to God's Lordship. Allow Him to help you live up to His standards.