

Repentance - True *repentance* is a Kingdom principle by which reconciliation is facilitated. *Repentance* facilitates reconciliation between man and man; as well as reconciliation between God and man.

In the Kingdom, it can be said this way: “*repentance* is to so agree with God on a particular truth as to align one’s self (in word and deed) with that truth.” In the Kingdom, there is only one type of *repentance*. That is a *repentance* that results in such a change in the posture of the heart so as to be reflected in one’s behavior.

One good example of *repentance*:

[28] But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. [29] He answered and said “I will not,” but afterward he repented, and went. [30] And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. [31] Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They said unto him, “The first.” Jesus replied to them, “... the publicans and the harlots will go into the kingdom of God before you.” (Matthew 21:28-31 KJV *adapted*)

Why?

Relationship between Forgiveness and Repentance - Why does our Lord keep (*pardon the expression*) harping on *repentance*? It is because the Lord genuinely wants to *forgive*. But the law of the Lord is *perfect* (it won’t change); therefore it is the soul that must be converted; it is the soul that must change (repent).

However, there is a sense in which God is not at liberty to step over *repentance* and *forgive*. Why? It is because the delicate relationship between *repentance* and *forgiveness* is inherent in the very nature of God. For God to side-step *repentance* in order to *forgive* someone; would necessitate that He set Himself at odds with Himself.

If God could *forgive* without the prerequisite genuine *repentance*, then the Plan of Salvation (Calvary) would not have been necessary. It would be the same as “a criminal being brought up on legitimate charges and then being released without penalty.” This would amount to an egregious and most distasteful miscarriage of justice.

Faith - But true, Kingdom *faith* is an “act of worship,” therefore it must terminate on a Person. Worship is derived from two Old English words “worth” and “scipe.” A very old use of the term was “worth-ship.” Worship is a league of honor; it is an allegiance. Worship is to esteem or to bestow honor upon one.

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO OBEY?

Where does obedience reside? Does it reside in the hands or in the heart? Is it identified by one’s will or by one’s works?

May I submit to you that Kingdom *obedience* resides predominantly in the heart? What is done with the “hands” may or may not be an expression of *obedience*. Transactional obedience is not, itself, Kingdom *obedience*.

Kingdom obedience issues from a heart that has a pre-commitment to live “subject to and in compliance with” the governance of God; and with the precepts of the Kingdom.

Here's where it gets close to home. You have two children. You are able to identify a heart of obedience in one child (child A); and not so much so, in the other child (child B). [Sidebar: I was child B, pray for me.] Now both children, for the most part, "do what they are told." But one does it out of a pre-commitment to obedience to the parent (child A). The other does it "when and how" it suits their particular needs or preferences (child B).

We can do (what I call) transactional "acts of obedience" and yet be disobedient. This happens when our motives for acting issue from a heart pre-committed to Self-service.

The scriptures expose this when it says,

[34] ... How can you, being evil, speak good things? It is the case that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. (Matthew 12: 34-35 KJV *adapted*)

OBEY WHO AND WHY?

Obey God.

It may seem counter-intuitive at this point in the discussion to identify the "who" of *obedience*. Of course, we are to obey God; who else?

Well ... is it possible that sometimes we are obeying our own directives and attribute the *obedience* to God?

Disobedience is not necessarily a "categorical departure" from the precepts of God (think about what Eve did). Often, dare I say, most often disobedience is the result of us having redefined for ourselves the precepts of God; and that apart from the leading and interpretation of the Holy Spirit.

Example: if we are predisposed to be selfish, we redefine things like "giving." If we are predisposed to sexual impropriety; we redefine the concepts of "chastity and abstinence."

Why is it important to obey? The answers are many, but some of them are:

That we may properly represent a right relationship with God (all of creation is "dying" to see this).

That life may go well with us; that we may eat the good of the land. (Deut. 28; Isa. 1:19-20 KJV)

WHAT DOES FAITH HAVE TO DO WITH OBEEDIENCE?

Again, Kingdom obedience issues from a heart that has a pre-commitment to live "subject to and in compliance with" the governance of God; and with the precepts of the Kingdom. Obedience issues from a heart that believes (faith) that God is "Who He has identified Himself to be" and subsequently that He worthy of our *obedience*.

If *faith* truly is an "act of worship," then there ought to be (no ... there **will** be) a corresponding posture of the heart. There will be an aligning of one's life with the precepts of the Kingdom.

Obedience *IS* to be a natural next step or outworking of that *faith*. In a very real sense, *obedience* comprises the works of *faith*. We recall James' expression of this very solemn truth:

[20] Can I get you to accept as common knowledge, that faith without works is dead? [21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had (obeyed) offered Isaac his son upon the altar? [22] Are you able to see how faith displayed with its works, and evidenced by its works is made perfect? [24] You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. [26] For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:20-22, 24, 26 KJV *adapted*)