

Sermon Series: TRANSFORMATION

Sermon: Love Must

Text: Romans 12:9-21

Discussion Questions:

Let's think a little bit about the word "Obedience."

- What comes to mind when you hear this word?
- Does this word evoke a positive, negative, or neutral response when you hear it?
- How is this word most often used?
- Contrast obedience with freedom. Does being "free" mean that we are no longer required to obey?
- Obedience is defined as: *Compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority.* The two verbs in this definition are "compliance" and "submission." What are the similarities and differences between these two words? Can you comply without submitting and still be obedient?

Talk about obedience in light of our current American culture.

- How is obedience viewed within the context of the family?
- How is obedience viewed within the context of government/politics?
- How has our nation's view toward obedience changed in the last 5 years?; 20 years?; 100 years?

Examination:

Read **Exodus 20:1-21**. No matter how many times you've heard or read the ten commandments - it never hurts to read them again!

- Is there anything that jumped out at you in a fresh way - perhaps even something that you've never seen before?
- God Himself calls these *commandments* (v. 6). We're, of course, familiar with the language of "Thou Shalt" or "Thou Shalt Not" (in the King James Version). This doesn't leave much "wobble room" in terms of a response. You either DO or you DON'T. What do you think about that?
- How many of these ten can you honestly say you've obeyed? How many of you plead the fifth? Seriously - I don't think it is humanly possible to keep from breaking 8 of the 10 (and if someone claims they've never stolen anything - they're lying...which automatically takes you right back to 8).
- And just when you enjoyed some measure of satisfaction by keeping one or two - you read these two passages from Matthew 5:

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment."
(Matthew 5:21-22)

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27-28)

- Anger, lust, lying, stealing, dishonoring, idolizing, coveting - the truth is, we're doing well to go back-to-back days without breaking every single one of these. Do you agree?
- So where does that leave us? How good are we at obeying? Why DON'T we obey?
- Did the "fear of God" (v. 20) seem to help the people NOT sin? Does it help you?

Now read **Romans 6:14; Romans 7:1-6.**

- Are you reading this right? Is it really true that we are "no longer under the law" (6:14)? Are we truly "released from the law" (7:6)?
- Does this mean that we are NOT obligated to obey the ten commandments?
- How did we "die to the law through the body of Christ" (v. 4)?
- Now we "belong to Christ" and "serve in the new way of the Spirit." What does this look like?

Read the next passage: **Romans 7:7-25.**

- What was the purpose of the law?
- How was sin "dead" apart from (before?) the law?
- How did sin "spring to life" and "put me to death" when the law came?
- Why is it good for sin to become utterly sinful?
- What goes on in your mind when you read that the Apostle Paul simply DID NOT have what it took to obey the law of God?

Finally, read: **Romans 8:1-17.**

- How powerful is it to think that that there is "no condemnation" for those who are in Christ? How important is it to be "in Christ"? What is the fate of those who aren't in Christ?
- So...if we're not obligated to obey the laws and commands of the Old Testament anymore - —what (Who) are we called to obey?
- We see that the "mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace." (v. 6). Is that true for you?
- Is it your desire to obey the Spirit? Are you willing to do what the Spirit says you must do?

Application:

Understand during this coming week that you are not obligated to obey the law. You are called to obey the Spirit of God that lives in you. When you come under temptation, make a decision to submit to the Spirit. It is God's Spirit who alone can keep us from stumbling.