



OBEDIENCE

1. Happiness comes from hearing and obeying God's Word (Luke 11:28).
 - a. This beatitude is a promise of happiness from Jesus to you.
 - b. You will never be happy if you don't listen to and obey the Word.
 - c. Hearing must take place before obedience: you can't obey if you don't know God's commandments.
 - d. Hearing is not enough: it must be followed with obedience (James 1:22). Are you an infrequent hearer? a hearer but not a doer? or a hearer and a doer?
2. Positive ("thou shalt") and negative ("thou shalt not") commands are found in the Bible. The ancient rabbis counted 248 positive commands and 365 prohibitions in the Law—a total of 613 commands in the Pentateuch. Many apply to the ministry of levitical priests in the Tabernacle; of the 613 only 297 can be applied today—77 positive, 194 negative, and 26 that apply only to Jews living in Israel.
3. There are three kinds of commandments in the Law: judgments (ordinances), statutes, and testimonies (Deut. 4:45; 6:20; 1 Kings 2:3). Judgments are decisions of a judge, statutes are written laws, and testimonies are stipulations of the Sinaitic covenant.
4. You can disobey in two ways: (1) disobey positive commands (not do something you should), or (2) disobey negative commands (do something you shouldn't). Negative commands are usually easier to understand and obey than positive commands.
5. Disobeying a positive command (not doing what God has commanded) is a sin of omission (James 4:17), such as "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5:18).
 - a. Knowing a command and ignoring it or doing nothing is a sin of omission.
 - b. Knowing a command and doing something else is a sin of omission. Moses struck the rock with his rod instead of speaking to the rock (Num. 20:8–11) and Jonah went to Tarshish instead of to Nineveh (Jonah 1:1–3).
 - c. Sins of omission are disciplined by God (Num. 20:12; Jonah 1:4–2:10).
6. Disobeying a negative command (doing what God has prohibited) is a sin of commission, such as committing adultery (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18).
7. 1 John 1:9 covers both sins of omission and commission. Have you ever confessed sins of omission such as not loving one another, not obeying your husband, not loving your wife, not praying without ceasing, not learning the Bible? Most are forgiven, not because we confess them, but because we confess sins of commission. Sins of omission are forgiven along with all other unknown sins when we confess sins of commission.
8. Looking at your face in a mirror illustrates what it's like to be a hearer but not a doer of the Word (James 1:23–24). In this illustration the mirror is the Word of God, dirt on your face is sin (disobedience), seeing is hearing, and washing is doing (obedience). A hearer sees dirt on his face but doesn't bother to wash it off; that is, he hears the Word, sees sin in his life, but makes no effort to remove it. A doer sees the dirt and washes it off; that is, he hears the Word, sees his disobedience, and obeys. The mirror of your spiritual life is the Bible.

MIRROR	WORD OF GOD
a mirror reveals what you look like, how others see you	God's Word reveals what your spiritual life looks like, how others see you
you can't see your face without a mirror	you can't see your spiritual life without God's Word
a mirror reveals imperfections you are not aware of, imperfections that would embarrass you in public—dirt on your face, runny mascara, hair out of place	God's Word reveals sins you are not aware of, imperfections in your spiritual life that would embarrass you in public
to be aware of imperfections is to do something about them—to remove the dirt, wash off the mascara, comb your hair	to be aware of sins is to remove them; don't look at the imperfections and walk away without cleaning up—without obeying the commands of Scripture

9. Obedience (having faith, being faithful, doing good works, serving God) is the means of acquiring eternal rewards (Matt. 19:28–30; 25:34–35; Col. 3:23–24). Obedience often requires time and effort, but pays off in present happiness and future rewards. The cost of obedience is high, but not nearly as high as disobedience—loss of future rewards (1 Cor. 3:15; 6:9–10).