

During this pandemic, why does obedience to God matter?

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The fourth commandment teaches us to honor our father and mother. In Ephesians 6:1, we read, "Children, obey your parents (in the Lord), for this is right." Honoring and obeying are very similar in the nature of their meaning scripturally. God is our heavenly Father, and it is appropriate to honor and obey Him, just as we should honor and obey our earthly father. Our relationship with God is shown through our obedience to God. "In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments." (1 Jn 5:2) We can demonstrate our love and faithfulness to God through our obedience.

Jesus said, "If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete" (John 15: 10-11). Obedience is a command, and it is linked to love and joy. Faith and obedience go hand in hand. We obey God's commands, not because we must, but because we love Him, and we want to obey Him. The Bible tells us that God blesses and rewards obedience. In James 1:22-25, it says, "Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does."

Obedience is also important because others are watching how we live our lives. The obedience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego led the king of Babylon to honor the Lord (Daniel 3). Paul and Silas's obedience in the jail at Philippi led to the salvation of the jailer (Acts 16:29-30). Obedience enables us to live a life of joy, without shame, confident in our eternal hope in the Lord. Psalm 119:1-2 says, "Happy those whose way is blameless, who walk by the teaching of the Lord. Happy those who observe God's decrees, who seek the Lord with all their heart."

God is gracious, and if we are living our lives for Him by following His commandments, we can be transformed through the Blood of Jesus Christ and be forgiven of our sinfulness. Obedience does matter to God. How we obey His Church and those God has chosen to guide His Church does matter. Obedience is a virtue, a good habit, and we are blessed when we exercise the virtues. We become stronger in our faith as we obey God's commands. He blesses us when we obey.

Don't lose hope, keep the faith, and continue to pray. God is with us until the end of the world. Pray the rosary every day!

In Christ,

Fr. Dan