

Obedience Is Not Optional

Scripture

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken [it].” (Isa 1:16-20 AV)

Devotion

The Lord is gracious and longsuffering beyond our understanding, but obedience to His commands is not optional. Sometimes we might convince ourselves that our constant waywardness is not a problem; but the Lord has said in this passage about forgiveness that we all love, “If ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword.”

Now obviously this was spoken to a national people, but the same principle is repeated in the New Testament concerning us. “For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put [him] to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned.” (Heb 6:4-8 AV)

Putting aside the theological difficulties of this passage in Hebrews, look carefully at its obvious meaning: Those who fall away die the second death. If Christ is not enough to satisfy, then how will that person be renewed again? Is there one better than Christ (NO!)? If freedom from the bondage of sin and the promise of eternal life in Christ is not enough, then to appeal with more of the same is of no value to that apostate.

My dear friends, guard your walk for which step is too far? When will your waywardness be counted as falling away? What will you do if you find that you no longer cherish Christ? You who know the truth and treat it with contempt; will you soon be turned to repentance seeing you do not fear the Lord? Religion without faith is like trying to quench your thirst with salt water. It will never satisfy and in the end it will lead to a painful death.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Wash yourself in the pool of repentance. Cast off your filthy rags and embrace the work of Christ. Let His sacrifice become your atonement. “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Ro 10:12-13 AV)