

# Pilgrim Perspective



February 2016

A Newsletter of Pilgrim Presbyterian Church in America  
601 Albert Street, Martinsburg, WV 25404  
Rev. Jerry C. Mead, Pastor

## You Just Need to Obey

By Steven J. Lawson

**C**an you imagine a Christian couple actually praying about living together before marriage? Can you fathom a young woman who professes Christ even bothering to pray about whether she should marry an unbeliever? Can you grasp a Christian businessman having to pray about whether he should tell the truth in a transaction? When the Word of God is so clear, praying to discern God's will becomes a convenient excuse—or even a prolonged filibuster—to avoid doing what Scripture commands. Many who profess Christ today emphasize a wrong view of grace that makes it a free pass to do whatever they please. Tragically, they have convinced themselves that the Christian life can be lived without any binding obligation to the moral law of God. In this hyper-grace distortion, the need for obedience has been neutered. The commandments of God are no longer in the driver's seat of Christian living, but have been relegated to the backseat, if not the trunk—like a spare tire—to be used only in case of emergency. With such a spirit of antinomianism, what needs to be reinforced again is the necessity of obedience.

For all true followers of Christ, obedience is never peripheral. At the heart of what it means to be a disciple of our Lord is living in loving devotion to God. But if such love is real, the acid test is obedience. Jesus maintained, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Genuine love for Christ will always manifest itself in obedience. This does not mean that a Christian can ascend to sinless perfection. This will never be realized this side of glory. Neither does it imply that a believer will never disobey God again. Isolated acts of disobedience will still occur. But the new birth does give a new heart that desires to obey the Word.

In regeneration, God says: *And I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put with in you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)*

In this heart transplant, God causes the believer to pursue Spirit-energized obedience. The Apostle John agrees when he writes, "And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments." (1John 2:3). In the new birth, the elect are granted saving faith, and they immediately begin to walk in "the obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5). There is no time lapse between the time of conversion and when one begins to obey Christ. The exercise of saving faith is the first step of a life of obedience. When Jesus preached, "repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:14-15), this was issued as an urgent imperative. The gospel is more than an offer to be considered—it is a word from God to be obeyed. John writes, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the son shall not see life" (John 3:36). In this verse, believing in Christ and obeying Him are used synonymously. Simply put, true faith is obedient faith. Our obedience of faith is not the grounds upon which God declares us righteous, but it reveals our faith to be genuine. At the moment of conversion, we transfer our allegiance from our old master, sin, to a new Master, Jesus Christ. Paul explains, "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Romans 6:16).

Far from being optional, grace-fueled obedience is absolutely necessary for Christlikeness. Is there any need to pray about whether or not to obey God's Word? You just need to obey!

The Pilgrim Perspective is published by Pilgrim Presbyterian Church, 601 Albert Street, Martinsburg, WV 25404

Send information, contributions, comments, and suggestions to the attention of Donna Hercules at the church's address.

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Church Phone Number Office: (304) 263-5362

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Regular Sunday Services 10:30 a.m. 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages

Pastor Rev. Jerry C. Mead

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Youth Director Pastoral Intern Greg Mead

Church Secretary Donna Hercules

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With Appreciation & Thanks

Thanks to all who supported Debbie and me during my recent surgery. Your cards, visits, phone calls, meals provided and FaceBook posts were all greatly appreciated. A special thanks to my wife who was a real support in my recovery process. Please know that your acts of kindness towards us were well appreciated. Thanks to our gracious Lord who provides in the healing process once the Doctors have done their part.

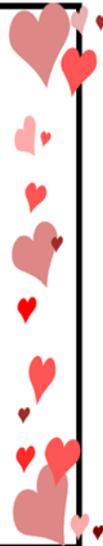
Blessings, Rick Wilburn

Thank You!

Birthdays & Anniversaries

February

- 15 – Elizabeth Underwood
16 – Bob Deweese
16 – John Foltz
16 – David & Kathy Moore
18 – Heather Mead
18 – Donna Hercules
18 – Sarah Shell
19 – Christopher Moore
21 – Henry Cook
21 – Shirley Grove
23 – Randy Underwood
28 – Linda Mead
28 – Erin Hubbard



March

- 3 – Toad Brandt
3 – Caleb Auldridge
5 – Gabe Auldridge
5 – Mim Mead
7 – Elizabeth Hoffmaster
11 – Priscilla LeMaster
14 – Monte & Bonnie Cater
17 – Debbie Wilburn
17 – Rick & Debbie Wilburn
20 – Elsie Wilburn
21 – Howard & Judy Butts
22 – Sawyer Hubbard
24 – David Hoffmaster
28 – William Mead
29 – Jennifer Mann
31 – David & Susan Zych



April

- 1 – Jim & Shari Auldridge
2 – LeGarde Cook
2 – Mike Kisner
5 – Erin Mead
5 – Rick Wilburn
6 – Mary Rogers
8 – Garrett Cookus
10 – Dorothea Peterson
19 – Jim Brady
22 – Deanna Hercules
23 – Kathy Moore

