

Living Lent | Saturday, March 6

Kristen Mathis

Obedience Today

Today's Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 5-9

“So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you...See, just as the LORD my God has charged me, I now teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. You must observe them and perform them, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!’ For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?... But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children.

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 5-9 NRSV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

When we think about the word “obedience”, we often think about children. When they are young and as they grow, we try to teach them to be obedient to certain people; their parents, teachers, caregivers. However, too often we forget that obedience is not just something our children ought to practice. As we become adults we

have more & more independence, and this can make us forget that there is an obedience we are called to exercise every day of our life. An obedience to God.

This Scripture reminds us of that obedience and gives us some specific pointers on how to live it out. In verse 2, we are warned not to add or subtract anything from what God has commanded us.

This might seem self-explanatory,

but we are guilty of it all the time, often by accident. For example, there are phrases that Christians often use as if they are in the Bible. To name a few; God never gives us more than we can handle, God helps those who help themselves, everything happens for a reason. While many of these statements are made with no harm intended, we must be careful to distinguish what God has really said from that which religion or the church has made common.

How do we ensure that we are keeping our hearts & minds on true obedience? One of the most important ways we can do this is by keeping up our independent study & relationship with Christ. When we become entirely dependent on outside sources to define what being obedient to Christ means (even our churches), we can find ourselves being obedient to those entities themselves instead of to God.

In this Scripture, Moses is referring to particular laws, decrees & commandments from God for God’s people. But we should not cause this to make us believe that obedience is static. Obedience in our faith is not a checklist of

statements we can look over each day. Rather, our obedience to God is found in our living, changing, everyday relationship with God. As our circumstances & situations change, what obedience looks like may change as well. We can’t predict where our obedience to God will lead us next year, or even tomorrow. What we can do is live faithfully today, and model for our children how to cultivate a living obedience to God.

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ:

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