



*Benefits of Obedience—Part Two “Peace”
Power Peace Prosperity
Isaiah 1:18-19*

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Objective Sentence: Everyone can enjoy the benefits of obedience which includes peace by walking with Christ and fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit.

Introduction: My therapist told me the way to achieve true inner peace is to finish what I start. So far today, I have finished 2 bags of chips and a chocolate cake. I feel better already.

Duke University did a study on “peace of mind and that the following factors contribute greatly the wellbeing and emotional stability of a individual.

1. The absence of suspicion and resentment. Nursing a grudge was a major factor in unhappiness.
2. Not living in the past. An unwholesome preoccupation with old mistakes and failures leads to depression.
3. Not wasting time and energy fighting conditions you cannot change. Cooperate with life, instead of trying to run away from it.
4. Force yourself to stay involved with the living world. Resist the temptation to withdraw and become reclusive during periods of emotional stress.
5. Refuse to indulge in self-pity when life hands you a raw deal. Accept the fact that nobody gets through life without some sorrow and misfortune.
6. Cultivate the old-fashioned virtues—love, humor, compassion and loyalty
7. Do not expect too much of yourself. When there is too wide a gap between self-expectation and your ability to meet the goals you have set, feelings of inadequacy are inevitable.
8. Find something bigger than yourself to believe in. Self-centered egotistical people score lowest in any test for measuring happiness.

1. **Faith** (*Ro. 5:1-6* Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this

grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us).

- a. *Rees Howells*: Although we may be away from the presence of people, how hard it is to silence the voices of self.
- b. *Ted Sutherland*: The secret of a happy life is not to get what you want but to live with what you've got. Most of us spend our lives concentrating on what we don't have instead of thanking God for what we do have. Then we wake up, our life is over, and we missed the beauty of the present. Think about that.
- c. *Isaiah 26:3* God will keep in perfect peace all those whose trust in Him, all whose thoughts are fixed on Him. (*Pro. 3:5-9* Trust in the Lord)
- d. *Psalms 119:165* Great peace have they who love God's law and nothing [shall offend them] or cause them to stumble.
- e. *Author Unknown*: He who is not content with what he has would not be content with what he would like to have.
- f. *Thomas Manton*: We have peace with God by the righteousness of Christ, and peace of conscience by the fruits of righteousness in ourselves.
- g. *2 Cor. 5:21, Titus 3:5*
- h. *Dorothy Kerin*: Obedience is the key that unlocks the door to every profound spiritual experience.

2. **Fellowship** (*Ps. 91:1-5* He who dwells in **the secret place** of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ² I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust. Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. ⁴ He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. ⁵ You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day; nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday).

- a. *Oswald Chambers*: The secret place of the Most High is that place where we are at one with God and God is at one with us.
- b. *Charles Brent*: Peace comes when there is no cloud between us and God. Peace is the consequence of forgiveness, God's removal of that which obscures His face and breaks union with Him. The happy sequence culminating in fellowship with God is **repentance, pardon and peace**—the first we offer, the second we accept and the third we inherit.
- c. *Rom. 8:1* There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
- d. *G.A. Studdert Kennedy*: Peace does not mean the end of all our striving. Joy does not mean the drying of our tears. Peace is the power that comes to souls arriving up to the light where God Himself appears.
- e. *Oswald Chambers*: If you have received the Spirit and are obeying him, you find he brings your spirit into complete harmony with God, and the sound of your goings and the sound of God's goings are one and the same.
- f. *Psalms 37:4* Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you ...

- g. *John Balguy*: Contentment is a pearl of great price, and whoever procures it at the expense of ten thousand desires makes a wise and happy choice.
- h. **Matt. 7:13-14** Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Closing and Invitation: *Closing and Invitation: A snake lurks in the grass so take the high road.* Every Middle School Science teacher needs two things in his or her room—an fish aquarium and a snake tank. Even though I hate snakes I had a 20 gallon aquarium in my room that was home to my 24 inch South Florida Yellow Rat Snake. The kids loved that snake and would come by after school to play with it. He was harmless and inexpensive to feed—just a small mouse or two a week. Most of the kids loved to watch the snake eat, although some thought it was gross. When I dropped the mouse into the snake house he would move slowly towards his prey. He would corral the mouse into a corner of the aquarium and then just lay and wait—tongue twitching from time to time. After a few minutes he would lunge towards the mouse, wrap his body around the little white creature. Each time the mouse inhaled the snake would tighten his hold on it. In a minute or two the mouse could not expand its chest. The snake suffocated it to death and then ate the mouse.

Several years ago I took a leadership class and the instructor was from Washington State. He mentioned the fact that there are an array of trails in the Cascades. People traveled from great distances to hike in those mountains. He mentioned a very interesting fact about the Cascades. He said that a person can ascend and hike at a certain altitude in the mountains above the *snake line*, a place where creepy crawly serpents do not wander—my kind of country.

There is another snake line that we should walk above; that place where we are vulnerable to being influenced by the power of darkness. D. H. Lawrence said, “The world is dreaming, it has gone mad in its sleep, and a snake is strangling it, but it can’t wake up.” View world news on any given day and you will get the feeling that the world is on the brink of insanity. The invisible kingdom of darkness led by the devil, that serpent of old, is ushering humanity down a path of self destruction. He has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the glorious light of Christ, who is the image of God. But there is hope; we can walk above the snake line through faith and obedience.