

## Did You Obey the Gospel Last Week?

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Last week, someone obeyed the Gospel. Someone obeying the Gospel is always encouraging. But, what about us? Did we obey the Gospel last week? The question is not, “Did you get baptized last week?” The question is related to baptism; however, it is not limited to baptism. The question is about the impact the Gospel had on our lives last week. As we ask this personal question, consider the following.

**1. The Gospel is...** We need to be reminded about what the Gospel is. Some think the Gospel is burdensome, legalistic, and restrictive. Others think the Gospel is wise advice for life. How does the Bible explain the Gospel?

First, the Gospel is God’s good news for us. News is different from advice. News is about factual events and the consequence of those events. Paul began his letter to the Romans by writing how he was, “set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 1:1-4).

This introductory text explains God’s good news. The Gospel was promised in the Old Testament. The Gospel concerned God’s son coming to earth in the flesh. The Gospel is about how Jesus was raised from the dead. The Gospel is about the consequence of the resurrection of Jesus: God has declared Jesus to be the Messiah and our Lord.

Secondly, the Gospel is God’s plan for our salvation. As Paul continued his letter to the Romans, he described the consequence of the Gospel. He stated that through our faith in the Gospel, we can be saved (Rom. 1:16). Believing the good news of God is how we share in the salvation of the Gospel.

Third, the Gospel is our only hope. Obedience to our resurrected Lord is the only *Way* we can be forgiven of our sins. Paul once preached, “Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39).

**2. The Gospel is designed to daily reshape us.** Now that we have a fresh definition of the Gospel, we can return to our question: did we obey the Gospel last week. The Gospel is intended to work in our lives. It renews our minds and transforms our living (Rom. 12:1-2). We are to participate in this process daily (2 Cor. 4:16).

More specifically, God uses the Lord’s Supper as a weekly method of reflecting on our obedience to the Gospel. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial/reminder of the cross of Jesus. It is a reminder of the Gospel. By observing the Lord’s Supper, we are look back on the past week and discern the extent to which we were obedient to the Gospel.

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote, “Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world” (1 Cor. 11:28-32).

At the cross of Jesus, God pronounced judgment against sin and evil (John 16:7-11). God showed in the present what He will do in the future concerning sin and evil. Until the final judgment of the world, we are to use the cross of Jesus to make judgments of sin in our lives. We do this to avoid being condemned with the world.

When we take the Lord’s Supper, we are to be asking, “Did I obey the Gospel last week?” We identify sin and areas of weakness in our lives. We resolve to repent and improve in the coming week. We seek greater faith to do what may be difficult in the work of repentance. In this way, the Lord trains and disciplines us. A weekly self-examination promotes daily renewal.

**3. Will you obey the Gospel this week?** The cross of Jesus is not just about looking at the past week. The cross of Jesus is about renewing us presently and propelling us forward. Therefore, obeying the Gospel this week may involve...

- Identifying sin
- Repentance
- Prayer
- Being baptized
- Worship
- Sharing the Gospel
- Serving others
- Being a more self-giving spouse/parent
- Engaging with the local church

### **Conclusion**

Obeying the Gospel has deep, far-reaching implications in our lives. If we think that obedience just involves baptism, we limit our submission to a past event with no present meaning. In other words, we will never be renewed and transformed. Obeying the Gospel is to be a present, ongoing activity.

The Gospel changes us incrementally over time. However, this change does not occur by default. By faith, we must participate in making changes in our lives. The Lord’s Supper aids in this incremental process. In the spirit of self-examination, did you obey the Gospel last week? Will you obey the Gospel this week?