

“Why You Should Never Take a Break from Obedience”  
(Psalm 119:105-112)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

Last time, we considered why you should love God’s Law as psalmist did.

Why did he love it?

Was it because – as many Dispensationalists believe – being an OC believer,

He thought he could earn his salvation by his works? No.

He loved it because it is good.

Because it showed him how God wanted to be loved,

How God wanted him to love his neighbor,

How he could do what he did for God’s glory.

It showed him the only way to take something out of this world

Into the world to come where he could enjoy it forever.

That’s why Paul kept it.

That’s why Jesus kept it.

That’s why God gave you the power to keep it – the desire –

By writing it on your hearts by His Spirit.

Because He loves you and not only wants you to know what is good,

But wants you to do what is good,

So that it will work together for your good.

That’s also why you should – as the psalmist –

Meditate on it, apply it, seek to keep it, and fight against every temptation to turn from it.

B. Preview.

This evening's theme is a good follow up on this:

Through the psalmist, the Lord tells you

Not only that you should do these things,

But that you should always do them.

II. Sermon.

A. You should never take a break from obedience. It's clear that this was what psalmist purposed to do:

"I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, *even* to the end" (v. 112).

Seeing their importance,

He wanted to keep them always.

Notice that even though he was a believer,

This was something he had to purpose to do –

To incline his heart to keep God's commands –

Because the tendency was still there not to do it.

Sanctification – becoming more like Jesus –

Isn't automatic, it's cooperative.

God alone makes you alive, but then you have to work with Him.

Paul says, "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13).

But how much effort do you need to put into it?

Is it okay just to do this sometimes?

No, it has to be all the time.

Here's one thing from which you can never take a vacation/holiday.

Again, consider Jesus.

Did He ever take a break from obedience? No.

Since His is the example you are to follow, neither should you.

What does the Bible call taking a break from obedience? Sin.

What happens when you sin?

You lose ground; you become more like the world and less like Jesus.

Since your goal is to be like Him, you need to do as the psalmist purposed in his heart he would do: "I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, *even* to the end" (v. 112).

B. Notice he doesn't leave it there, but gives us a series of reasons why we should always obey:

1. You should never take a break from obedience because to do so would be to walk in darkness.

The Law is a light: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (v. 105).

It shows you the right way to go – the only safe way.

If you don't walk by its light, you're walking in darkness – in sin and ignorance.

When you do that, you're sure to get into trouble.

When our family used to go camping, and we needed to find our way somewhere after dark, we had to use a flashlight.

If you didn't have one, it was hard to get from one place to another without tripping, falling or getting hurt.

The same is true of God's Law – if you don't have it,

Or if you have it and choose not to walk by its light, you'll trip and fall.

Just look at the people of this world – who walk everyday in darkness –

Look at how many get hurt, offend others, suffer broken relationships,

Broken marriages, how many ruin their lives, and commit suicide.

If they had God's Law, listened to it, and lived by it,

They would be safe.

You don't have to walk in darkness – you have the light of His truth.

You need to use it, listen to it – not sometimes, but all the time.

You wouldn't turn your flashlight off at night while walking next to a steep cliff,

How much more should you not turn His light off

When walking in such a dangerous world?

2. You should keep it continually because, like the psalmist, that's what you vowed you would do: "I have sworn and I will confirm it, that I will keep Your righteous ordinances" (v. 106).

When did you do that?

You did when, by God's grace, you decided to follow Jesus, as we saw this morning.

Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).

Those are His conditions – that's what He requires.

If you're coming after Him, that's what you agreed to!

If you're a member here, that's also what you vowed to do when you joined this church:

“Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord, and do you promise that, in reliance on the grace of God, you will serve him with all that is in you, forsake the world, resist the devil, put to death your sinful deeds and desires, and lead a godly life?” (Question 4).

You bound yourself to obey the Lord –

Not just part of the time, but all the time –

From now until the time you enter heaven/perfection.

That doesn't mean you'll always succeed, but it does mean you will always try.

3. You should obey at all times because obedience revives your soul: “I am exceedingly afflicted; revive me, O LORD, according to Your word” (v. 107).

We've seen that the psalmist was under attack by physical enemies.

When you're under attack, you need the Lord's help.

But to get His help, you need to obey.

And so the psalmist prayed the Lord would revive Him

According to His promises, as he set his heart to obey.

You also have enemies that are continually attacking you,

Perhaps not physical, but certainly spiritual –

They don't attack your body, but your soul.

The devil is continually laying snares in this world

To entice your flesh/sinful corruption, to get you off the path and fall;

And he's pretty good at it.

What can you do to protect yourself?

Stay on the path! You're safe as long as you're on it.

How can you?

By using the light of the Law – obey!

When Satan succeeds in getting you off the path –

In getting you to sin –

You grieve/quench the Spirit and grow weaker,

So he can more easily overcome you.

But when you obey, the Spirit works more mightily in your soul,

And so you have greater strength to stay on the path

And can resist the devil more easily.

Do you want greater spiritual strength?

Do you want the power to overcome sin?

To love God and others?

To be a witness in word and life to others?

You need more of His Spirit.

Obeying Him is one very important way to get there,

And the Law shows you how.

4. You should continually obey because as believers, this is what you have asked the Lord to help you to do: “O accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me Your ordinances. (v. 108).

If you love the Lord, that's what you want.

And if that's what you want, you certainly have prayed for this,

As the psalmist did,

And as Jesus commanded you to pray:

In the Lord's prayer, He says when you pray, say,

“Our Father, who is in heaven;

Hallowed by Your name.

Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:9-10).

When you pray for this, aren't you praying that you would obey as well as others?

And if you pray for it, shouldn't you also try to do it?

5. You should obey the Lord continually because it is the only safe path: “My life is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget Your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have not gone astray from Your precepts” (vv. 109-110).

Why does the psalmist tie his danger and obedience together in his prayer?

Because he knows that the only way to be safe in a world that is full of danger is to obey the Lord – as we saw earlier.

If you want God to take His promise to protect you seriously,

You must take His command to obey seriously.

Don't forget as well, that disobedience is stepping off the path of safety into danger.

Why does God command you to have no other gods before Him?

Because if you worship other gods that don't exist,

You will miss out on the only true way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Why does He tell you not to associate with someone with a quick temper?

Because you will soon find yourself becoming like him.

Solomon writes, “Do not associate with a man *given* to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself” (Prov. 22:24-25).

Why should you steer clear of someone who is restless and constantly changing,  
Especially in the areas of religion and politics?

Because they’re much more apt to get into trouble, and you with them.

Again, Solomon writes, “My son, fear the LORD and the king; do not associate with those who are given to change, for their calamity will rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin *that comes* from both of them?” (24:21-22).

The same is true of all of God’s commandments:

He tells you to do these things because not to do them will injure you and others.

It is the only safe path.

6. Finally, you should continually obey God’s Law because you are blessed to have it: “I have inherited Your testimonies forever, for they are the joy of my heart” (v. 111).

Remember why it’s a blessing to have it:

It shows you how to love God and man,

How to glorify God in all you do,

How to take something out of this world that you might enjoy it forever,

How to walk safely through this world,

And how to keep yourself spiritually strong.

And then consider the fact that not everybody has it.

I mentioned before how many stumble, fall and are destroyed every day

Because they don’t.

But God has given it to you.

It's your inheritance because you have trusted in Jesus.

The Lord gave it to you to be a blessing.

Listen to what Moses once said to Israel, "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. Your eyes have seen what the LORD has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, the LORD your God has destroyed them from among you. But you who held fast to the LORD your God are alive today, every one of you. See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. So keep and do *them*, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons" (Deu. 4:1-9).

Moses said they should be thankful that they had both God and His commands.

That's what you have through Jesus Christ, and so you should be thankful as well,

And show God your thankfulness by loving His Law and keeping it.

As the psalmist said, "They are the joy of my heart."

But remember, this is something you must do continually.

The psalmist concludes, "I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, *even to the end*" (v. 112).

Is that what you have purposed in your heart to do?

If you want to go through life with your eyes open,

If you want to know the truth regarding what pleases God,

If you want His blessings here and in the world to come,

This is what you need to do:

May the Lord give you His grace to see this and to keep His commandments.

Amen.

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