

Love, obedience, and blessings are connected by God. Men who try to detach them from one another do a disservice to their fellow man and dishonor the Almighty. Therefore, take heed to the Word not the world.

- Steven F. Deaton

The fear of the LORD prolongs days,
But the years of the wicked will be shortened.
The hope of the righteous will be gladness,
But the expectation of the wicked will perish.
The way of the LORD is strength for the upright,
But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

- Prov. 10:27-29

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What Every Man Needs

People agree that every man need something—it all depends on who you ask as to what that something is. Ask a matchmaker and she will tell you every man needs a wife. Ask a car dealer and he will tell you every man needs a car. Ask a financial advisor and he will tell you every man needs a sound financial plan. Whether or not every man needs any or all of these is somewhat subjective. In some cases these may be wise or even biblical. It is better to marry than burn and we are admonished to work hard and prepare for the future (1 Cor. 7:1-9; Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4, 5). However, these are not necessarily what every man needs.

What every man (and woman) needs is to be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (Jn. 1:29). With the exception of the mentally incompetent—whether young or old—every person is a sinner (Rom. 3:23). We all grow to the age when we understand right from wrong and we choose at some point to do wrong. In this condition we are separated from God and doomed to eternal punishment; “dead in trespasses and sins” (Isa. 59:1, 2; Eph. 2:1).

A wife, car, or sound financial plan will not redeem a man from sin. The act of getting married does not save a soul. Having a nice car—house, clothes, boat—will not redeem one person. The best financial planning cannot transfer one from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God. Peter said, “Know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from you fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

Only the blood of Christ can give us what we all need—forgiveness (Rom. 5:9; Heb. 9:12). It is in Christ and through His blood that we go from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (Col. 1:13, 14). If we fail in this, we have failed altogether. “For

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what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Mk. 8:36). If a man has the best wife, or a woman has the best husband, yet never turns to Christ, what good will it do in the end? None. If a man has the best financial plan, a good job, saves and spends wisely, helps the poor, and is able to afford the nicer things of life, but he neglects to plan for his soul, what good will it do? None.

Let us keep before our minds what every man (and woman) needs—salvation. Not only do we need it for ourselves, but we need to consider others. Our neighbors need the redemption found in Christ, not necessarily tips on losing weight, what the hottest stock is, how to fix his boat, or where to find the best flowers to plant. Nothing is wrong with discussing these things, but do not forget what is truly important.

- Steven F. Deaton

Love, Obedience, and Blessings

In the religious world in general there is a disconnect between love, obedience, and blessings. The usual view of love is merely an emotion; something warm and comforting, but little else. Obedience is limited to one thing; you must have faith. Blessings come with few if any conditions. However, the religious world of man is not what we find in the Word of God.

The Bible teaches there is a connection between love, obedience, and blessings. Love will compel us to obey the Lord who will then bestow spiritual blessings on us. Love without obedience is a fleeting feeling. Blessings experienced in such a condition are only those common to mankind (Acts 14:15-18).

Moses admonished the children of Israel to love and obey the Lord and promised that if they did this, God would bless them greatly. He said, “Therefore you shall love the Lord your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always” (Deut. 11:1). They were to do this so they could “be strong, and go in and possess the land” and “prolong [their] days in the land” (Deut. 11:8, 9). They were warned not to be deceived and “turn aside and serve other gods and worship them” (Deut. 11:16).

For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him—then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you (Deut. 11:22-25).

Moses summed it up with these words,

Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known (Deuteronomy 11:26-28).

God does not lead His children to conquer lands and nations today. However, He will fight for us. He will give us strength in our time of need (Heb. 4:16). He will arm us for the battle (Eph. 6:10-18). He will provide the way of escape from temptations (1 Cor. 10:13). He will not forsake us (Heb. 13:5, 6). And, no one will be able to snatch us out of His hand—not even the devil himself (Jn. 10:27-30; Jas. 4:7). “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).

If we love God we will keep His commandments (Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 5:1-3). If we keep His commandments, He will bless us with all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).

What commandments are we to keep? All of them (Matt. 28:19, 20). We are to flee sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:18). We are to abstain from alcohol (1 Pet. 4:3, 4). We are to assemble with the saints (Heb. 10:24, 25). We are to pray without ceasing (1 Thes. 5:17). On and on we could go. Space in this article does not permit us to cover them all. However, the Bible gives “us all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet. 1:3). Look there for a complete list of all things required of the one who loves God.

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