

## SHOWING OUR LOVE FOR OUR HEAVENLY FATHER THROUGH OBEDIENCE...

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There is no doubt that God, Our Heavenly Father, loves us deeply. Everything that He has done has been for our benefit, indeed, our salvation. He has never forsaken the righteous, nor has He ever allowed the faithful to stand alone (**Matthew 28:20**). From before the foundation of the world we had been pre-determined to be a people who would take the message of salvation to others. This message would not be our message, but the message from God (His message) — which made it incorruptible and everlasting (I **Peter 1:23**). We, as the Lord's people, are blessed beyond measure,

What inherent responsibilities, then, do we, as this blessed number, have? What is expected of us? How shall we conduct ourselves in a world that, by-and-large, has little to no interest in God or eternal salvation. The Bible has consistently given us examples of His people being ridiculed, persecuted, and often killed. The Biblical accounts can range from Samson to Stephen (historians give us information on the apostles themselves). We are reminded that all who try to live in a God-authorized manner will suffer persecution (II **Timothy 3:12**).

We know this continues today because of the large number of people in some large countries (and even in our own country) that despise God altogether. They have been Communists, Fascists, Nazis, Socialists, or the European Enlightened, or followers of some party and its ideology. The world in every generation has always *seemed* more complicated than that which preceded it, but in the end there has been only a slight modification at best.

Times change, but human nature remains pretty much the same. The irony of that statement is in the fact that God does not change either (**James 1:17**). His expectations and commands for us have been the same since the church was established on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. The expectations are not very different from what was demanded in the Old Testament. Though we obviously do not live under the old covenant, we are still to be faithful to God and keep His commandments (**John 14:15; 15:10**). This is done through obedience. The word means to submit to authority or reason; reverence for the source of a command; and to pay attention with resulting conformity to what has been advised or commanded. Obedience to God is the primary problem man has obstructing his way to salvation. Jesus tells us that our love for Him is manifested through our obedience to His will ("IF YOU LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS"). This is not hard to do, according to the Lord ("AND HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS" I **John 5:3**).

So we make our commitment not only to hear what he says to us; but also to do those things that are commanded (expected). By this our love not only becomes real, but quite tangible as well. We feel more complete and lifted as His children when we abide in His word. It strengthens us and builds us up in the most Holy faith.

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What is more obvious now than ever is the need for others to fully understand the love of God, and how that love will transform their lives. People are always looking for solutions to problems. The larger job in this case is that these very same people are not able to recognize that the main problem is that they live without a knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus is revealed to us in the scriptures. Many do believe they know Him, but only through what they have been told, not from what they have read. This is where we come in.