

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness: Complete Obedience

I. BARTLE HALL PROPHECY: A NEW APPROACH TO HOLINESS

- A. Paul Cain received two visions (Jan. 1990 and Sept. 1996) of large young adult gatherings in Bartle Hall with prophetic music and apostolic preaching that would be confirmed with signs and wonders. Over the crowd Paul saw a banner that read, "**Holiness unto the Lord.**" The Lord told him that these young people would receive revelation and impartation of a "new approach" to holiness. In these gatherings, God will release grace to find freedom from bondage and compromise.
- B. This "new approach" includes the value, pleasure and confidence (in our weakness) foundational to the NT approach to holiness that is energized by encountering intimacy with Bridegroom God. The only valid way to approach holiness is the way taught in the New Testament. However, throughout Church history this way has been obscured. God wants to renew us to this way.

¹⁹ ***Boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way... (Heb. 10:19)***

II. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: CORE VALUES OF THE KINGDOM

- A. The Sermon on the Mount is the "constitution of God's Kingdom." It is the litmus test to measure our success in life, spiritual development and ministry impact. Our foundational call is to live out the 8 beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12) as we pursue 100-fold obedience (Mt. 5:48; 6:22).
- B. We need a paradigm shift in our heart focus as the way to position ourselves for greatness.
- ¹⁹ ***Whoever breaks...the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom...but whoever does and teaches them...shall be called great.... (Mt. 5:19)***
- C. Jesus called us to be perfect or complete in our obedience by seeking to walk in all the light that the Spirit gives us. The attainment of victory begins by declaring war against all compromise.
- ⁴⁸ ***You shall be perfect (walk in all the light you have) as your Father...is perfect. (Mt. 5:48)***
- D. The pursuit of "complete obedience" includes ***bridling our speech*** (Jas 3:2), ***disciplining our physical appetites*** (1 Cor. 9:27), ***managing our time*** (for service and prayer with the Word) ***and money*** (to increase the Kingdom beyond our comfort and honor; Mt. 6:19-21) and ***making a covenant with our eyes*** to refuse to look upon anything that stirs up lust (Job 31:1).
- E. Success or winning is to finish our life with a testimony of complete obedience (responsiveness).
- ⁵ ***By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death...before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. (Heb. 11:5)***

¹⁶ ***Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory... (2 Cor. 4:16-17)***

- F. We have 3 dimensions of our calling in God (internal, external and eternal).
1. Our primary calling is our **internal calling** to be a faithful disciple of Jesus that deeply loves God and people and embraces what the world calls weak (humility, serving, giving, fasting, praying, etc) without regard to honor or money or the size of our ministry.
 2. Our temporal **external calling** includes our position (function) in the marketplace, a ministry organization or our home. This dimension is what most people focus on.
 3. Our **eternal calling** (in the age-to-come) has a much larger impact than anything we will accomplish now. The apostles made many references to their calling in the age-to-come.

III. THREE LIFE FOCUSES AS SEEN IN SCRIPTURE

- A. **Heart obedience**: to establish a history in God of living in complete agreement with the Spirit. A vibrant heart is our most valuable possession. It is what Jesus died for and what we keep forever.
- B. **Ministry impact**: to make an impact on others by the power of the Holy Spirit
- C. **Blessed circumstances**: to enjoy personal comfort (our eternal destiny in the garden of Eden)
I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. (3 Jn. 2)

IV. OUR PRIMARY CALL: A LIFE OF COMPLETE OBEDIENCE

² Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience (perseverance). ⁴ Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask...and it will be given to him. (Jas 1:2-5)

- A. James gave us definition to what our life is about in this age. Our primary call is to establish a history of walking in complete obedience according to the light the Holy Spirit has given us.
- B. Paul prayed that people become complete in their responsiveness to the Holy Spirit. To perfect what is lacking in others includes knowledge of truth, heart responses and ministry impact Paul prayed that the saints would receive grace to walk in a way that God would consider them to have been substantially responsive in following through in obeying the Spirit's leadership.
- Praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? ...12 May the Lord make you increase and abound in love...13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God...at the coming of our Lord Jesus... (1 Thes. 3:10-13)***

We also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him... (2 Thes. 1:11-12)

- C. Agreement of the heart or responsiveness to Jesus' leadership is the heart of the Bride. To live blameless is live without compromise according to the light one has received. This is not the blamelessness of the gift of righteousness
- D. The Scripture presents two aspects of being complete before God. First, the moment we are born again, we are instantly made complete in Christ in our legal position (justification) because of Jesus' work on the cross (2 Cor. 5:17-21). Second, we progressively become "***complete in our obedience***" in our living condition before God (sanctification).
- ¹⁰ *You are complete in Him... (Col. 2:10)*
- ⁹ *This also we pray, that you may be made complete. (2 Cor. 13:9)*
- ¹² *Epaphras...always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. (Col. 4:12)*
- ²⁸ *We preach warning every man and teaching every man...that we may present every man perfect (mature) in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor... (Col. 1:28-29)*
- ²² *Abstain from every form of evil. 23 May God...sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord... (1 Thes. 5:22-23)*
- E. Our primary objective and challenge in this life is become complete in our obedience.
- ¹⁰ *May God...after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish...and settle you. (1 Pet. 5:10)*
- Keep this commandment without spot, blameless until...Christ's appearing... (1 Tim 6:13-14)*
- F. Scripture uses different terms for the same truth: it exhorts us to be complete in our obedience (2 Cor. 13:9, 11; Phil. 1:6; Col. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:17; Heb. 13:20-21; Jas. 1:4); perfect (Mt. 5:48; 19:21; Jn. 17:23; Gal. 3:3; Eph. 4:13. Col. 1:28; 1 Thes. 3:10; Jas. 2:22; 3:2; 1 Pet. 5:10; Rev. 3:2); mature (Phil. 3:15); blameless (Lk. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:6-8; Phil. 2:15; 1 Thes. 3:13; 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:2, 10; 5:5-7; 6:14; 2 Pet. 3:14; without spot (Eph 5:27); Worthy (2 Thes. 1:5-12; Lk 21:34-36; 20:35-36; Col. 1:9-10 Mt. 10:37-38; 22:8; Rev 3:4-5; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thes. 2:12); Stand (Lk. 21:36; 1 Cor. 10:13; 16:13; Eph. 6:10-14; Phil. 4:1; Col. 4:12; 1 Thes. 3:8; Rev. 6:17).