

Extravagant Obedience

Extravagant obedience leads to abundant life (Luke 2:41-52). When Jesus is twelve years old, His parents (Joseph and Mary) accidentally leave Him in Jerusalem as they head back to their hometown of Nazareth. Once they realize that Jesus is not with them, they return to Jerusalem and eventually find Him in the temple sitting and talking with the teachers. Though fully God and fully man with exceptional insight beyond his age, Jesus chooses to model obedience to His parents and returns with them to Nazareth. And because of His obedience, He increases in wisdom and favor with God and man. The same principle applies to us: our obedience to God leads us to the life we truly desire. Our obedience to Him shows that we love Him and trust the grandeur of His heart.

GET THINGS STARTED

What story can you tell from your upbringing of trying to convince your parents (or someone in authority) that something you did in disobedience really was not that bad, or that it was not you at all? How did it work out for you? Why do you think disobedience becomes less funny or cute as we get older?

GO DEEPER

1. From Hebrews 5:8-9, how did Jesus *learn obedience* through what He suffered? What do these verses mean, and what makes obedience, even when it is hard, worth it?
2. In John 14:31 and 1 John 5:3-4, what does obedience have to do with love? How is our obedience an act of love, and how is our disobedience a reflection of our lack of trust in God's love?
3. According to Hebrews 10:24-25, how can Biblical community help us in our obedience?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. How well are you living in obedience to God right now? What lie(s) of the enemy are you possibly believing that make disobedience attractive?
2. What truth about God and His heart do you need to embrace more so that your desire to obey Him increases?
3. What is your next step in obedience to God? What is He possibly calling you to step into or to step away from in this season?

PRACTICE IT NOW

In a posture of prayer, ask God as a group to stir your heart for greater obedience to Him. Ask Him for more grace to trust His heart and to believe that obedience leads to abundant life. And ask God for a willingness to confess and repent of your disobedience with full transparency before Him (He knows it all anyway). As a group, take time to encourage one another through stories or testimonies about how obedience produced life and joy.