

TOPIC: OBEDIENCE

REFLECTIONS OF GOD'S GRACE BIBLE STUDY

What Are You Willing to Give Up?

Yesterday I was talking to a dear friend of mine, and she was telling me about some things God is doing in her life. She told me how God had laid it on her heart to give some things up. The first thing He asked her to do was to give up something that had been a passion of hers for many years. It was a talent He had given her that she used to bless others. You may ask why God would ask her to give that up when it was a good thing. Two things she told me stood out. One was that she had prayed about who to pass her equipment and materials to. God laid a young girl on her heart who had a like passion. When my friend blessed her with these things, the girl's mother said it was an answer to her prayer about something God had laid on her heart that He wanted her and her girls to do. The second thing my friend said was that after she made the decision to give this up as God had directed her, she felt a peace that this season of her life was over and God was moving her in a different direction.

As I thought about this conversation this morning while getting ready for work, God placed this thought in my heart: What are you willing to give up? Right then my ears were tuned in to the song playing on the radio. Toby Mac's song "Made to Love" was playing, and it was at the bridge of the song "Anything I would give up for You ... Everything, I'd give it all away."

God asks us to give up things for different reasons. Sometimes it is because He is using us to answer someone else's prayer, as in my friend's case. Other times that thing means more to us than Him, and He wants to be first in our lives. In Matthew 19, a young man came to Jesus and asked what he should do to have eternal life. Jesus said "Keep my commandments," to which the young man replied that he had done this from his youth up, so he inquired what he was lacking. See the young man knew that just works—doing good—wasn't enough. Jesus told him to sell all he had, give it to the poor, and come and follow Him. But the young man went away sorrowful because he had great possessions. It wasn't the man's wealth that was the problem, for God wishes to bless us and prosper us. The Lord knew that this man valued his wealth and possessions more than he valued a relationship with God, so He asked Him to give up everything that was holding Him back.

At other times, God asks us to give up something to reveal something about ourselves to us. Take a look at Abraham. In Genesis 22 God asked Abraham to give up his only son Isaac as a sacrifice. God is omniscient ... He knows our hearts and whether we will give up what He asks. He asks us to give it up so we will know our response. He wants to reveal our hearts to us. Am I willing to give up something so precious to me? Abraham was willing to give up his son Isaac because he had faith in God and His promises to him.

So I ask you today, "What are you willing to give up?" God may be asking you to give up possessions, or your time, or your passions, or your most precious things. **First Samuel 15:22 says, "To obey is better than sacrifice."** Whatever God has laid on your heart, when you give it up in obedience to Him, He will flood you with His peace. If God has asked you to give something up and you haven't been willing to do it, don't follow the young man and walk away sorrowful. Instead, ask God to give you faith like Abraham to let go and follow God's will for your life, so you can bask in His peace and joy.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

(Romans 15:13)

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

(1 Samuel 15:22 KJV)

Toby Mac's song "Made to Love" (click play button to listen)



DEVOTIONAL STUDY FORM

Date:

Scripture Passage:

Step 1: **Prayer for Insight**

(Check When Done)

Step 2: **Meditation**

Six ways to meditate on a verse:

1. **PICTURE IT!** Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. **PRONOUNCE IT!** Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **PARAPHRASE IT!** Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **PERSONALIZE IT!** Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
5. **PRAY IT!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **PROBE IT!** Ask the following nine questions:

Step 3: **Application**

Is there a...
SIN TO CONFESS?
PROMISE TO KEEP?
ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?
COMMAND TO KEEP?
EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?
PRAYER TO PRAY?
ERROR TO AVOID?
TRUTH TO BELIEVE?
SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?

Step Four: **Memorization** (What verse will I memorize?)

Verse: