

# Faith Includes Submission And Surrender

## Submitting to the Lord Jesus and His Gospel

John 6:28-29 shows that the main work God requires of humans is to believe in Jesus Christ: *Then they said to Him, 'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'*"

Verses such as Ephesians 2:8-9 reveal we are saved by faith. But note other New Testament verses teach that we are saved through submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the demands of His Gospel. Some Christians may believe that it is contradictory to say we are saved by faith and also by submission to Jesus as Lord. But note true faith in Christ includes such submission.

In 1 Peter 1:22, Peter said: *"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."* In the original Greek, the word *"obeying"* here is *"hupakoe"*. *"Hupakoe"* means *"obedience, generally the obedience which every slave owes his master"*.<sup>1</sup> Perschbacher says that in 1 Peter 1:22, *"hupakoe"* means *"submission"*.<sup>2</sup> In this verse in Greek, the expression *"have purified"* is in the perfect tense. The perfect tense refers to a *completed* action with continuing effects. The word *"truth"* in the above verse refers to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In its context, 1 Peter 1:22 relates to 1 Peter 1:23-25 which mentions when believers were born-again through believing the preached Word of God or Gospel.

Therefore, 1 Peter 1:22 teaches that the souls of believers were purified through the Holy Spirit as completed actions at conversion and this purification was received through their *obeying and/or submitting* to the demands of the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel is the Good News about Jesus Christ and what He has achieved through His death and resurrection by God's undeserved grace. The Gospel also contains a statement of what God expects of humans responding to it.

Hebrews 5:9 is also referring to salvation being received through submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience or submission to His Gospel: *"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him."* In Greek, the word *"obey"* above is a form of the word *"hupakouo"* which is the verb form of the word *"hupakoe"* used in 1 Peter 1:22. In the context of Hebrews 5:9, *"hupakouo"* means *"obey, follow, be subject to"*<sup>3</sup> or *"to render submissive acceptance"*.<sup>4</sup>

The submission-to-lordship aspect of the word *"hupakoe"* or *"obeyed"* is seen in its usage in 1 Peter 3:6 in reference to Sarah's relationship to Abraham: *"As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord..."*

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<sup>1</sup> Bauer, page 837.

<sup>2</sup> Perschbacher, page 417.

<sup>3</sup> Bauer, page 837.

<sup>4</sup> Perschbacher, page 417.

Romans 6:17 says: ***“But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”*** In the original Greek, the word **“obeyed”** here is a form of the word “hupakouo” in Greek. Bauer states the word **“obeyed”** in Romans 6:17 is used with “the thing to which one is obedient or which one embraces in *full surrender*”.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, Romans 6:17 indicates that at conversion believers obey or submit in their hearts to the doctrine of the Gospel.

## **Being obedient or in submission to the faith**

Acts 6:7 refers to Jewish priests becoming **“obedient to the faith”**: ***“And the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”*** In the original Greek, the word **“obedient”** is a form of the word “hupakouo”.

A saving faith submits to Jesus as Master or Lord at the point of conversion and then *results* in the person aiming to obey God in specific matters after conversion. Bauer says that in the context of Acts 6:7, “hupakouo” means “obey, follow, be subject to” and is used with “the thing to which one is obedient or which one embraces in *full surrender*”.<sup>6</sup> Perschbacher says that the form of “hupakouo” used in Acts 6:7 means “to render *submissive* acceptance”.<sup>7</sup>

A form of the word “hupakouo” is used in Ephesians 6:5 and Colossians 3:22 in relation to slaves obeying their masters. Ephesians 6:5 says: ***“Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters...”*** Saving faith partly relates to receiving Jesus as Master in a similar way to how a slave relates to a new human master who has just now taken possession of him from his previous owner.

The word **“obedience”** is used in Romans 15:18 and 16:19 in relation to the obedience or submission of all the Roman believers to the Gospel. In Greek, Romans 16:19 uses “hupakoe” and Romans 15:18 uses a form of “hupakoe”. Perschbacher says “hupakoe” in Romans 16:19 means “submissiveness” and the form of “hupakoe” used in Romans 15:18 means “submission”.<sup>8</sup> Romans 15:18-19 says: ***“For I will not dare to speak of any of the things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient – in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”***

## **Obeying or surrendering to the Gospel**

Romans 10:16 and 2 Thessalonians 1:8 refer to people who do not obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Greek, the word **“obey”** in these two verses are forms of the word “hupakouo”. Therefore, these two verses are referring to people who will not submit to the Gospel’s demands for a response of trusting surrendered faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

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<sup>5</sup> Bauer, page 837.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Perschbacher, page 417.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Bauer says that Romans 10:16 and 2 Thessalonians 1:8 use the word “*obey*” in relation to “the thing to which one is obedient or which one embraces in *full surrender*”.<sup>9</sup> This thing is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In one sense Jesus Christ Himself is the Gospel.

There are many other verses which show that saving faith at conversion includes submission to Jesus Christ's Lordship. The usages of the Greek word “apeitheo” in John 3:36, Acts 19:9, Romans 2:8 and 1 Peter 4:17 relate to this. “Apeitheo” means “unwillingness or refusal to comply with the *demands* of some *authority*”<sup>10</sup> or “disobey, be disobedient...disbelief, be an unbeliever”.<sup>11</sup>

In John 3:36, “apeitheo” or “*does not believe*” is used as an approximate opposite of “pisteuo” or “*believes*”: “*He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*” In John 3:36, “apeitheo” refers to *not believing* in Jesus Christ and *not complying* with His *demands* over our lives as the highest *authority* or Lord.

Acts 19:8-10 states: “*And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*”

In these verses we see that after Paul spoke about the Kingdom of God for three months, many refused to believe. In Greek, the words “*did not believe*” is a form of the word “apeitheo”. Acts 19:10 reveals Paul also preached the Word about Jesus as Lord. In the context of preaching about God as King, Jesus as Lord and associated matters, the form of “apeitheo” used in Acts 19:9 relates to not complying with His demands over their lives as King and Lord.

In 1 Peter 4:17, Peter refers to those who will be severely judged for having not obeyed the Gospel of God: “*For the time has come for judgement to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God.*” The Gospel contains the demands of God Who is the ultimate authority in relation to what must be the response of people to the Lord Jesus Christ and to what He has achieved through His death and resurrection.

In Romans 2:8, Paul speaks of God judging those who do not obey the truth. Romans 2:8-9 says: “*But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish...*” The “*truth*” here refers to Jesus Christ (see John 14:6) and His Gospel. Galatians 2:5, 2:14 and Colossians 1:5 refer to “*the truth of the Gospel*”. Ephesians 1:13 mentions “*the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation*”.

Romans 2:8-9 quoted above confirms that those who do not comply with the demands of the ultimate authority – the Lord Jesus Christ and His Gospel – are not saved and will suffer eternal punishment.

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<sup>9</sup> Bauer, page 837.

<sup>10</sup> Louw and Nida, page 468.

<sup>11</sup> Bauer, page 82.

## Being in subjection to Christ and His Gospel

2 Corinthians 9:13 states: **“While, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ...”** In the original Greek, the word **“obedience”** here is “hupotage” which means “to obey, to submit to, obedience, submission”.<sup>12</sup> By using “hupotage”, Paul is here saying receiving the Gospel involves submitting to its claims and to the Lord on whose authority the Gospel is based.

In 2 Corinthians 9:13, Paul relates submission to the confession involved in receiving the Gospel. In Greek, the word **“confession”** here is a form of the same word used in Romans 10:9 in relation to confessing Jesus as Lord. So when taken together, 2 Corinthians 9:13 and Romans 10:9 reveal the confession of Christ's Lordship at conversion relates to submitting to Him and is *not mere words*.

“Hupotage” is also used in 1 Corinthians 15:28 in relation to all things being *subjected* to the Lordship of the Son of God: **“Now when all things are made subject to Him...”**

The word “hupotage” is also used in Galatians 2:5, 1 Timothy 2:11 and 3:4 and is translated **“submission”** in each of these verses in the New King James Version. “Hupotage” is derived from the word “hupotasso” which Vine says is “primarily a *military term*” meaning “to *rank under*”.<sup>13</sup> Bauer says “hupotasso” means “*subject oneself, be subjected or subordinated, obey*”.<sup>14</sup>

Forms of the word “hupotasso” are used in Romans 13:1, 13:5, Titus 3:1 and 1 Peter 2:13-14 in relation to us being in submission or subjection to human civil governing authorities. Titus 2:9 and 1 Peter 2:18 uses words from “hupotasso” in relation to slaves being *subjected* or *submitted* to the authority of their *masters*.

Forms of “hupotasso” are found in Hebrews 12:9 and James 4:7 in reference to being subjected or submitted to God. Hebrews 12:9 shows the connection between being in subjection to God the Father and having eternal life: **“...Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live.”** In Greek, the words **“shall be in subjection”** and **“live”** are in the future tense. James 4:7 states: **“Therefore submit to God...”**

Ephesians 5:24 uses a form of the word “hupotasso” in relation to the church being subjected or submitted to Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:22-24 says: **“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”**

In Greek, the form of the word “hupotasso” used in Ephesians 5:24 is in the present tense. Note Paul does not say the church will only one day in the future be submitted or subjected to Christ. Paul would have used the future tense if he wanted to say this submission will be only a reality in future. The church in Ephesians 5:24 refers to *every* born-again believer. So in this verse, Paul is saying every believer is at present submitted to Christ as Lord. Anyone who is not submitted to Him at present is not a part of His Church.

No believer is ever perfectly submitted or subjected to Christ as Lord in this earthly life. James 4:7 infers this when it commands those who are already believers to submit themselves to God. As Romans 8:7 shows, any carnal-mindedness in us is not subjected to God's Law. Also,

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<sup>12</sup> Louw and Nida, page 468.

<sup>13</sup> Vine, page 606.

<sup>14</sup> Bauer, page 848.

Hebrews 2:8 reveals that not all things are in practice submitted to Christ as yet. But this does not detract from the fact Ephesians 5:24 reveals all the members of the real church are at *present* submitted or subjected to Jesus Christ.

## “Peitharcho”

The Greek word “peitharcho” means “to *submit* to authority...by obeying”<sup>15</sup> “Peitharcho” is derived from the Greek word “peitho” which means “depend on, trust in, put one’s confidence in” in verses like 2 Corinthians 1:9 and 2 Thessalonians 3:4, “be sure, certain” in Romans 2:19 and “obey” in Galatians 3:1 and 5:7<sup>16</sup> and “archo” which means “rule over something or someone”.<sup>17</sup> Note also a word derived from “archo” is “archon” which means “ruler, lord, prince”.<sup>18</sup> A form of “archon” is used of Jesus Christ in Revelation 1:5 when it says He is the ruler. So “peitharcho” basically means *submitting* to someone as *your lord or ruler*, this resulting in the *fruit* of being willing to obey.

Forms of the word “peitharcho” are used in Acts 5:29, 5:32, 27:21 and Titus 3:1. In Titus 3:1, a form of the word “peitharcho” translated as “*obey*” is used in the context of submitting to the rulership of others: “**Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work.**”

Acts 5:32 is a key verse in that it infers God gave the Holy Spirit at regeneration to those who were willing to submit to His authority and rulership (obviously by faith) in an ongoing sense from the point of conversion: “**...the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.**”

Acts 5:32 does not teach we receive the Holy Spirit at the new birth on the basis of how obedient we have been to God prior to receiving Him. Galatians 3:2 and 3:5 both show the Holy Spirit is received by faith and not by works of obedience.

## Surrender to Jesus as Lord – an element of saving faith

As shown later in Chapter “Greek words for ‘faith’”, one meaning of “pistis” – the word for “faith” in the original Greek New Testament – is “surrender”. This is why in Luke 14:15-27, in the parable of the great banquet, Jesus showed that the surrender to Him of ourselves, our desires and goals is one key aspect of the type of faith that receives the Gospel of God’s Kingdom and salvation.

Revelation 19:9 refers to “**the marriage supper of the Lamb**”. The Lamb is Jesus Christ (see John 1:29 and 36).

The parable of the great banquet refers to Christ inviting people to His marriage supper. Each of the three invited people in this parable made *excuses* and refused their invitation to come to the feast because of various things they preferred to do instead. The first had bought a field and wanted to see it. The second desired to use five oxen he had just purchased. The third had just been married to a wife and preferred to be with her. This parable symbolically reveals

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<sup>15</sup> Louw and Nida, page 467.

<sup>16</sup> Bauer, page 639.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, page 113.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

that people refuse Jesus' invitation because of surrendering themselves to other things than His Kingdom.

People can today refuse to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour because of not wanting to surrender certain things to Him. They may deliberately not wish to yield their job, house, money, possessions, time, reputation, sport, entertainments, friends, relatives, sinful pleasures, themselves or any number of other things to Him.

## **Giving our self-life to God**

Luke 9:24-26 also reveals one aspect of saving faith is surrendering or giving our life to God's rule: ***“For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what advantage is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?”*** The context here relates to our final salvation and not just discipleship here on Earth. Matthew 10:37-39 and 16:25-26 relate to similar matters.

Luke 9:24-26 is not referring to a state of non-existence but of our self-life changing from its concentration and dependence on itself to a focus and surrender to God.

### **Bible Study Questions**

1. Explain how 1 Peter 1:22 and Hebrews 5:9 reveal we are purified and saved through submission to Jesus Christ and His Gospel.
2. What does the expression ***“obedient to the faith”*** in Acts 6:7 mean?
3. What does Paul mean when he uses the expression ***“obedience”*** in Romans 15:18 and 16:19?
4. Explain what Romans 10:6, 2 Thessalonians 1:8 and 1 Peter 4:17 mean when they refer to people not obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
5. Why does Paul use the Greek word “hupotage” in 2 Corinthians 9:13 in relation to our confession of the Gospel of Christ?
6. Explain what the Greek word “hupotasso” means in Hebrews 12:9 and Ephesians 5:24 in reference to our relationship to God.
7. Explain what the word ***“obey”*** means in Acts 5:32.
8. What excuses did people make in Luke 14:15-27 for not attending the marriage supper of the Lamb?