

The Year of Obedience

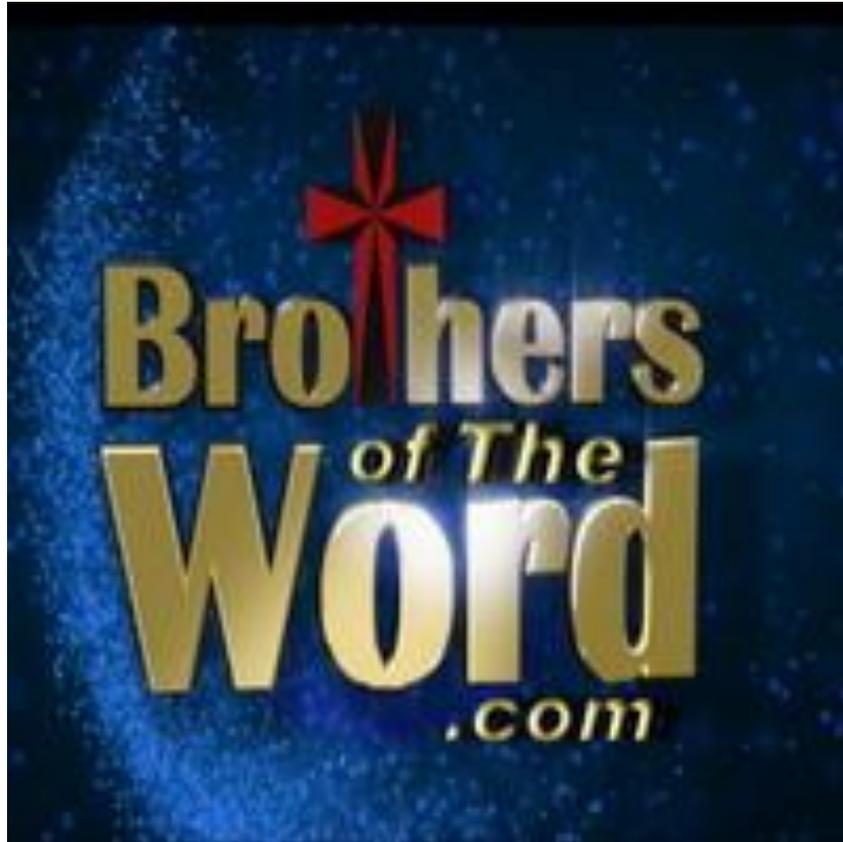
Sermon Title: **The Year of Obedience**

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Speaker: **Elisha Bronner**

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Elisha Bronner: God has all wisdom, all knowledge, all power. When He tells us to do something, He knows what He is talking about.

Female: You are listening to BrothersoftheWord.com. This is the sermon titled, "The Year of Obedience" by Elisha Bronner. This sermon is number 6544.

(Music Playing: 00:00:16 - 00:00:28)

Female: And now for The Year of Obedience.

Elisha Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because brother and sister, you need the word. So, at the end of every year, I take a couple of days before starting off the new year and I sit and I pray and I ask God, like, "GOD, what is Your word for me for this next year?" I don't make a list of goals. I do have goals, but I don't make a list of goals. I don't have a bunch of New Year's resolutions. I sit and I ask God, "What word do You have for me for this year?" So, last year -- well, the year before that now. The end of December 2018, I sat and I prayed and I asked God like, "Lord, what word do You have for me for 2019?" And I come up with my own words. I'm like, "Is it this one?" And it's like, "No, it's not that one." I'm like, "Is it this one?" He's like, "No, it's not that one."

And I go to this list of words until I land on a word and He said, "Yes, it's that one." And so, for 2019, my word was light. And when I said, "Lord, is it light?" He said, "Yes." I'm like, "Great!" Like that means I'm going to be a light on this earth. I'm going to be a light to world and I'm going to shine my life for people to see you. But I didn't realize that sometimes, the Lord works in ways that I don't expect and someone I thought it was for me to be a light. What it really was, was the light of the spirit shining in me, showing me all of my darkness. Showing me all of the hidden places that I have covered, that I ignored, that I want to just bury and forget about. And He shines His light in order to bring freedom, right?

And so, now, at the end of 2019, I sat and asked God like, "Lord, this has been a long year. You're shining Your light in all of my darkness and all of my dark places and exposing things to me that I was aware of, but I forgot about it. I was aware of but didn't really want to pay attention to." Then, so, at the end of 2019, I sat and I was like, "Okay, Lord. It's been a year, but what is Your

word for me for 2020? And what is the word that You have for me?"

And so, I'm thinking like, "Lord, is it going to be victory? Is it going to be break through? Is it going to be blessing? Is it going to be anointing? Is it going to be something huge and something miraculous?" And He said, "No. It's going to be obedience." And I said, "Jesus, I don't want that word." I'm like, "I can take a different word, I'll take surrender. I'll take deeper, I want to go deeper in You. I'll take closer, I want to be closer to You."

He said, "No, it's obedience." And He said, "When you lock in obedience, then you experience victory. When you walk in obedience, you have to go deeper with Me. You have to because you have no other choice because the things that I'm calling you to, you have to depend on Me even more." So, my word for this year is obedience and I don't know what all that entails, but I do know that a part of me is me standing up here right now, because if you know me, you know that I don't enjoy speaking in front of crowds but it is something that the Lord has told me for years now.

He is asking me to step in faith and to obey, and I'm like, "Okay, Jesus. I'm here, I'm going to be obedient." And so, the title of my sermon tonight is The Year of Obedience, because I feel that is not only for me, but for the Body of Christ that we may be obedient to the Lord and even just the small things that He is asking us, because the small things turn into the big things and turn into the might things, they turn into the victory, the miraculous. But it starts up with being obedient.

Here, now and that every day, Monday and simple things that He is asking you to do to just be obedient. And so, the way that we become obedient is by listening to the Father and listening to what He is telling us. But how can we listen if we don't know what His voice sounds like? So, the first step is to abide. It is to abide and to know God's voice through His words, to know God's voice through prayer, to know how He speaks to you because you are living in Him. Because you are resting in Him, because you are remaining in Him, because you are abiding. That is how you know God's voice. That is how you hear God's voice. John 10:27, it says, "My sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me."

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So, the first step is to hear His voice. And when we hear His voice, then we are able to receive the instruction and to know what He wants us to do because He doesn't just speak just for the heck of it. He speaks because He wants us to do something. I do enjoy when the Lord, you know, speak into me and just reassuring me of His love for me and reassuring me that He has great plans for me, and reassuring me that I am valued and I am special and I am His and He is mine. But he also speaks and tells me to do things. Sometimes, things that I don't want to do. But I get into the place of hearing Him from abiding in Him.

So, when we abide, we are able to hear His voice. When we hear His voice, we are able to receive His instruction. And when we receive His instruction, we are able to go and do and obey what He has told us to do. Because if we hear, but then don't act on it, what's the point of hearing? He said what He said for a reason and He wants us to go and do whatever it is that He told us to do. There is purpose for it. There is a reason for it. And so, I remember I was talking to one of my friends and I was saying like, "You know, the Lord is asking me to do this really hard thing like it's so hard, like I don't want to do it." And she said, "Well, He is asking you to do it. So, you know it's either you are going to it or you are not going to do it."

And so, she said, "You know, while I'm over here struggling because of my God, I don't want to do this." She said, "It is a gift to be able to hear from Him in the first place," because so often people are wondering what to do. They have all of these choices that they don't know which one is the right choice to make. She said, "Elisha, you have choices but He has already shown you the right choice to make. He has already shown you the right step to take. So, your only obligation, your only duty is to obey. And so, she said, "To hear instruction from the Lord is a gift. To obey is a gift." And so, hearing is the first step and then our hearing has to lead to obedience because in James 2:17, it says, "Faith without work is dead."

So, why do we need to obey? We need to obey because God is God. Because He is the one who created us, He is the potter, we are the clay. He is the artist, we are the canvas. Whatever He says goes. We are not telling God what we want Him to do, He is telling us what to do and we do it. Psalms 100:3 says, "Know that the Lord

he is God, it is he who made us and we are his. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.” He is the one in charge. He is the Father. He is the one giving the instructions, giving the orders, giving the commands.

Romans 9:20, it says, “But who are you oh man to enter but to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, ‘Why have you made me like this?’” Or, “Why have you called me to do this?” Or, “Why do you want me to do that thing?” We are not the ones to question God, God gives us the orders and we do them. Proverbs, it tells us that to fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. God has all wisdom, all knowledge, all power. When He tells us to do something, He knows what He is talking about. He knows even when it doesn’t make sense to us, even when we don’t understand why He is asking us to do something, He knows and He has a purpose for all the things that He is asking us to do.

So, we step on our faith, we obey in faith because we know that He is a good God, because we know that He is a smart God, because we know that He is wise and He knows what we should be doing even when we don’t understand. And so, we do it anyway. And because He is a good God, He can only give good things. He can only give good instruction. He is incapable of giving bad directions. He is incapable of making bad decisions.

Our bad decisions come from when we stop obeying. Our bad decisions are when we choose to go our own path and choose to do what makes sense to us rather than listening to the one who knows all and sees all. Because Jeremiah 29:11, it says that “He knows the plans that He has for us, not that we know the plans.” He knows the plans.

So, when we listen to Him, we are able to walk and fulfill those plans and purposes that He has and we can trust Him because he is a good father. And the more that you know Him, the more that you know His heart, the more you know His character, the easier it becomes to trust Him because you said, “God, this doesn’t make any sense, but I know that You’re good and I know that You know what You’re talking about, so let me just do it.”

And then later on, you look back and like, “Well, God told me to do that, and I had no idea why, but look what happened as a result of it.” And we should also desire to obey. So, I love Psalms Chapter 119 because the (00:09:48) just going through is very,

very long, but he is just going through and talking about all the reasons why he loves God's words, why he loves God's instructions, why he loves God's commands.

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What he just desires, for God to give him the instructions and to teach him the instruction and teach him the way to go. And so just throughout the whole chapter, it just goes on and on and on. It says, I rejoice in following your statutes, I delight in your decrees. My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times. Your statutes are my delights. They are my counselors and I love another translation.

It says that, "Your laws are my best friends." We don't think of that. When we think God is telling us to do something, it can be a drag or it can be a burden. But it's like, for God to give us command like, that is our best friend. Like, it's so good and so this one just goes on and on and on. There's over 170 verses in that but it just goes on and on and on. He's just talking about how much the law gives him delight, how much God's instructions just desires, and there's stuff to them.

Because he knows that there's life in following Jesus and so, having that kind of desire comes from God. It really comes from God because on our own, we don't desire to follow God. He gives us that desire but He gives us that desire the more that we spend time with Him, the more that we lean into Him, the more that we are close and seek after His heart. That is where he begins to change our heart into -- mold our heart into shape. Our hearts, so that we desire to follow Him, we desire to do the hard things that He is asking us to do, because we desire Him and we desire His glory in the earth.

But we're human and we resist. And He tells us to do something and we don't do. So, just a few reasons why, the first one is, it comes from not abiding in Him. When He is asking us to do something, we're not abiding. We're not even getting that instruction in the first place. We're completely missing out on what he is telling us to do because we are not taking the time to sit down in His presence, in His word, praying, seeking Him. Not just talking, but listening to Him. We're not taking that time to actually receive.

Again, in John 10, it says that, “My sheep, hear my voice.” We have to first hear before we can obey. We have to take that time to hear. We have to abide because that is where we are able to here when we are abiding in Him. One of the other reasons why we resist when God tells us to do something is because we don’t understand it. We rely on our own understanding.

Proverbs 3:5, it says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and do not lean on your own understanding.” And so many times God tells us to do something, but we don’t do it because we’re leaning on our own understanding and we don’t understand. God said to do this, but I’m looking at my circumstances and I don’t see how that is relevant to anything. I don’t see how that will help anything or change anything, so I’m not just going to do it.

Meanwhile, God sees the bigger picture and He says, “My child, if only you would listen and obey, then you will see that there’s so much that follows your one act of obedience that might seem insignificant to you, but there’s so much that follows after it.” But so many times we miss out on it because we’re leaning on our own understanding. The next thing is because of complacency, comfortability. God calls us out of our comfort zones and we say “No, I don’t like that. This doesn’t sound good. It sounds scary, I’m going to stay right here. I’m not going to do it.”

He does that to me a lot and I’m just like, “Jesus, I don’t want to. Like it’s not fun, it doesn’t feel good.” And when that happens, the enemy fills you with fear. He fills you with anxiety. So, then, you don’t move and you stand still. You know what God has called you to do, but you don’t do it because you’re afraid. You don’t do it because you’re like, “Oh my gosh, like that’s so hard and I can’t. Look at me and look at who I am and I cannot do that. I am incapable of doing that but don’t we already know that God knew that before He told us to do that.”

That is what He tells the incapable person to do something so that he is the one who gets the glory from it. And so, I was talking with my friends about something that God telling me to do something and about just being so afraid of doing it. And she said, “Fear is the only thing that the enemy has. That is the only thing he can use against you.” So, when God tells you to do something and then the enemy brings in fear, that means you really need to do it.

That means you need to lean in and push past that fear, lean into the presence of the Lord because He has not given us the spirit of fear but he has given us love, power and a sound mind. He has not given us an anxious mind, but a sound mind. You lean into Jesus, push past the fear and go and do what He has told you to do because the enemy is afraid of what it is that he's called you to do. That is why he fills you with fear because he doesn't want you to shut him down. So, he tries to shut you down, which is why you got to shut him up and listen to Jesus and go and do whatever it is that He has told you to do. So, I have done sometimes good, sometimes bad, but in moments where I feel God leading me to do something and I sit and I'm like, "Okay, Lord, you said to do this and I feel afraid, so let me just go ahead and do it."

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Do it before the fear can get to you. You feel the fear and I take that and I'm like, "Okay, that means I need to go do it right now." And so, it works. You do it before your brain can catch up to what you're feeling and then later you'll be like, "Wow! How the heck did I just do that because like, I was so afraid," but like the Lord is good and His grace is sufficient, and He fills us in order to do things that we are so incapable of doing on our own, but is the power of the Holy Spirit that is in us that allows us to carry out the task that are so, so overwhelming, so daunting, but we are able to do it in His power and not in our own.

Again, that goes back and gives God all the glory, all the credit because it is not me but it is Him. And then sometimes, we just don't have the desire to obey. Sometimes we just don't want to. Sometimes we just don't, but again, in Psalms 1:19, the Psalms again is talking about how much he desires, the long desires to command and just loves it, meditates all day and night. But even throughout that chapter, he says, "Teach me your law. Teach me your statutes." Like, I don't understand, help me to understand, we can ask Jesus to help us to desire to do what he wants us to do. We can ask Jesus to help us continue in obedience. When we just lose the desire to do it. And so, I remember one time -- I don't know what I was doing.

But I just remembered that God was -- I was in a place in my life where God is just telling me to do a lot of things and like, I was like lord, I just don't want to do any of that. But I have to change that around instead of saying God, I don't want to do this to --

lord, teach me how good it is to say yes to you. Teach me that it is a good thing to do what you've called me to do, teach me that it is something that I should desire to do. And so, one of my favorite stories in the bible is just the story of Moses and just his life is so interesting to be honest. Just like as a lot of questions.

But in the life of Moses, we see three things that happen when we finally decide to obey. Three things that happened, when we stop looking at our own circumstances through our own eyes, when we finally surrender everything, and just look to Jesus and say "Okay, God, I'm just going to say yes to you whatever it takes, whatever it costs. I'm going to say yes and I'm going to do it." And so, the first thing that happens is that people are set free because people are connected to your obedience.

God called Moses to go to Egypt to talk to Pharaoh and tell him to set my people free. And Moses was like God, you know I can't speak well, you know I can't do this and I can't do that. And I'm not capable of this and who am I and God said, who is the one who created your mouth? I created you and God knows just how much he felt that he was not adequate enough to do that. He knows how inadequate he felt and how inadequate he probably was. But God still chose him to go and do what God told him to do.

So again, God would get the glory from it. And so God called Moses to do it and eventually, Moses said, "Okay lord, I'm going to do it." God said, I'm even going to give you a helper to help you do it and that was Aaron(ph). So God said, Aaron to help Moses carry out the task that God gave him to do. And so again, the first thing that happens when we finally obey, where we kindly walk in obedience is that people are set free because again, people are connected to our obedience, people are connected to your obedience.

So you're not doing something, it had a direct effect on somebody out there and you might not even know that person yet. But there is a direct effect on that person out there. The second thing that happens when we are finally deciding to walk in obedience and to obey God. Whatever he told us to do is that people worship and they re-discovery God's faithfulness. So in Exodus Chapter 4 versus 29 to 31 it says, Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites and Aaron told them everything the lord has said to Moses. He performed the signs before the people believed.

When they heard that the lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshipped. So if Moses had stayed where he was and not God back and not told the people, Actually God does see you suffering, actually God does know how hard it is.: They wouldn't have bowed down and worshipped. Moses going back to them, it restored hope in God's faithfulness and it evoked in them a response of worship and I look at the definition of evoke because that was something that the lord just spoke to me. The definition of evoke is it brings or recalls to the conscious mind something that was previously forgotten. So, they have previously forgotten how to worship because of their hard circumstances but Moses's obedience caused them and evoked in them a response of worship.

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So, they again remembered because off Moses' obedience. They again remembered, "Wow, I do serve a faithful God. I do serve a God that sees me and knows me and knows everything that I'm going through and can still deliver me. I do serve that God and now, I am going to worship as a response." But if Moses had not gone, they would not have remembered that. It was Moses' obedience that evoked in them a responsive worship.

And the third thing that happens when we act in obedience is that God is glorified. So, things that(ph) always happen -- how we expect them to go when we are obedient -- I'm sure Moses did not expect all the plagues that happened as a result of his obedience but they happened. And in three of my -- well, my favorite plagues -- but just three of the stories that just show how good God is, is the plague of flies.

So, when it happened, God said, "To get up early in the morning and go to Pharaoh(ph) and tell him to let my people go so they may worship me. If you don't go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses. And everything in Egypt would be full of flies, but my people will be in (00:21:07) and there will be no flies there." And that was the first thing.

The second one was the livestock. The plague of the livestock. Every livestock in Egypt -- it died. But, none of the ones that belonged to the Israelites died. The third one was the plague of

darkness. Darkness covered all of Egypt yet all of the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.

So, because of Moses' obedience, God's glory was seen. They were able to see these are God's people and God does indeed have his hand on them. Therefore, they are not experiencing the plagues that are facing the rest of this country. So, your obedience matters. Not just for you, but for the people around you, for the people across the world from you. It matters as a response to God. Just to show Him that you're God and I'm not, and you tell me to do something and I will do it. And your obedience matters so that God will be glorified through everything that He has called you to do.

So, let's live in life of obedience to the Lord, no matter how small or how big it is because again, the small things become the big things. You have no idea how your obedience or your lack of obedience is affecting other people. So, may we live this year -- a year of obedience.

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