

## **OBEY GOD-DEFY TYRANTS! #1**

### **“The Word of the Lord for 2023”**

#### **I. Introduction**

#### **Happy New Year!**

I hope you all had a happy holiday season. Personally, I spent many hours of my much-needed time off seeking the Lord’s direction for a topic to teach on moving ahead into the New Year.

#### **What might be the Word of the Lord to us for 2023?**

The stakes are high. We are in a battle for the soul of America. There is spiritual wickedness in high places. The Antichrist agenda to reconstruct our country and strip us of our freedom is evident everywhere. Yet millions of our fellow-Americans, (Including many professing Christians), seem blissfully unaware of what’s going on and remain complacent, even to the point of voting for those who seek to further enslave them.

I was wrestling with how to apply the biblical worldview to the warfare waged against us, with so many sermons subjects swirling around in my mind to the point that I felt like my mind was about to EXPLODE! Then I seemed to hear...

#### **Psalm 46:10**

**Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth!**

The impression was, “If you’ll be still, I will speak.” This was the principle discovered by the prophet Elijah when at his wit’s end:

**1 Kings 19:11-12**

**Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and **broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord...****

Spiritually speaking, this is what's happening today; the Lord is passing by!  
We're witnessing winds, fire, and earthquakes. Read on...

### **1 Kings 19:11-12**

**But the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.**

This is how it happens; when we're able to stop looking at the wind, the fire and the earthquakes, we can hear the still, small voice of the Lord.

I had been seeking the Lord for a title for a new year teaching series that could convey the essence of His word to His people in these turbulent times.

This is what I heard...

### **"Obey God-Defy Tyrants"**

These 2 concise commandments came so clearly I knew I had my marching orders moving into this New Year. And with that in mind, we'll be taking the next few months to unpack the principles contained in these 2 precepts.

Here's a preview of some of the upcoming sermons in the series:

### **Dominion Or Domination?**

Dominion is godly; domination is ungodly. God gave godly men dominion over creation; but sinful men seek to dominate over other men; the desire for domination and control is how tyrannical governments come to power.

### **The Tactics of Tyrants**

The Bible teaches us that the tactics of tyrants have not changed since the beginning. To know tyranny when you see it is half the battle.

### **The Power of Language**

Whoever controls the language controls the culture; there's a satanic purpose behind the 'woke' culture and the redefinition of terms like marriage, man and woman, and so on.

### **Angels of Light**

Tyrants of old ruled with an iron fist; obviously evil. But modern tyrants subdue the citizens under their control by deceiving them into thinking it's all for their own good.

### **Educated Idiots**

Gary DeMar has said, "Whoever controls the schools rules the world." This is why tyrants always take over the public education systems and seek the control of our children. They must be defied.

### **1984 is Now**

George Orwell's dystopian description of a world under the control of 'Big Brother' government in his book '1984' has proven to be prophetic. 'Big Brother' is here-but we will see that even Orwell did not believe the tyrant would succeed.

### **Christianity Ala Carte**

The decline of American culture can be traced to how the modern American church has replaced a biblical worldview with a self-styled, syncretistic worldview; a little bit of this and a little bit of that. Mixture. Compromise. And here we are.

### **What is the Mark of the Beast?**

One tactic of tyrants is controlling people through fear; one fear for many Christians is the dreaded 'mark of the beast'. I want to look to the Word and show you why it ain't gonna happen.

That's a preview of what we'll be working on in the weeks to come; but tonight I want to begin diving deeper into the dynamic connection between obeying God and the defiance of tyranny.

### **Theme**

**Our obedience to God will always require the defiance of tyrants.**

The nature of tyranny always forces the issue: We will either obey God and defy tyrants or we will obey tyrants and defy God.  
The tyrannical, totalitarian state is always on a collision course with the Kingdom of God over the issue of obedience. Let's dive a little deeper into this...

## II. Obey God-Defy Tyrants

### A. What Does It Mean to "Obey God"?

1. The blame for the pathetic current condition of American culture can be traced to the pathetic condition of the modern American church when it comes to the *Lordship* of Jesus Christ.

2. Our pews are filled with counterfeit Christians who claim Jesus as Savior but do not obey Him as LORD.

**A.W. Tozer**

**"Jesus Christ today has almost no authority at all among the groups that call themselves by His name."**

3. I dare say some sitting here see the Gospel itself as more of an invitation than a command. But the Apostle Paul spoke of the Gospel as a command sinners must obey.

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-8**

**...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

a. The Apostle Peter said something similar...

**1 Peter 4:17**

**For the time has come for judgment 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 Biblical Illustrator**

**The gospel is a statute, a law to be obeyed; it comes with the highest authority. Unless it is translated into our lives, and embodied in our actions, it is a curse. It is not enough to go and hear the gospel, to speak about it or approve it, unless we obey it.**

4. The Lord Jesus Himself asked this question of those who call themselves His people...

### **Luke 6:46**

**But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?**

a. He gave this somber warning in the Sermon on the Mount...

### **Matthew 7:21**

**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**

b. The Apostle John cited obedience and commandment-keeping as the only sure sign of truly knowing the Lord...

### **1 John 2:3-4**

**Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

c. Notice: He does not say keeping the commandments will save us-he says keeping the commandments is the sure sign that we are saved.

5. The modern American church has become so focused on grace at the expense of obedience that many who go to church on Sunday live just like the world the rest of the week. In the name of grace, everything is permitted. But...

### **Zig Ziglar**

**If God had wanted us to live in a permissive society, He would have given us 10 suggestions, not 10 commandments.**

6. When God's people refuse to obey God's law He turns them over to tyrants. This is what happened in 2 Chronicles 12...

**2 Chronicles 12:1-2,4**

**Now it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom and had strengthened himself, that he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel along with him...And it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the Lord...**

a. This is where we are today-a godly nation that has turned away from obedience to God-a nation God has turned over to tyrants.

**2 Chronicles 12:5**

**Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah, who were gathered together in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, "Thus says the Lord: 'You have forsaken Me, and therefore I also have left you in the hand of Shishak.'**

b. The people began to suffer under Shishak and there was a partial repentance.

**2 Chronicles 12:6**

**So the leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, "The Lord is righteous."**

**2 Chronicles 12:7**

**Now when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.**

c. When the people repent, God says He will not destroy them. But...

### **2 Chronicles 12:8**

**“Nevertheless they will be his servants, that they may distinguish My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.”**

**However, they will become his servants so that they may recognize the difference between serving Me and serving the kingdoms of the land. (HSCB)  
...so that they may see how different my yoke is from the yoke of the kingdoms of the lands. (BBE)**

6. This is where we are today: God is not going to destroy America; but He is going to let us experience a season of tyranny until we wake up to see the difference between life under God and life under tyrants!

7. The lesson can't be any clearer-the time has come to repent and OBEY GOD! This will put us into position to rise up and DEFY TYRANTS.

### **B. What is a “Tyrant”?**

#### **Tyrant**

**A cruel and oppressive ruler who governs without restriction.**

1. In ancient times, a tyrant was a ruler who seized power without legal right to it; in modern times, it can refer to any governing authority that exercises the illegitimate use of such power to control others.

2. Remember this: with tyrants, it's all about power and control.

#### **Tyrannical Government**

**Political authority that exerts harsh, cruel, or unjust control over the people.**

3. The Bible teaches us the farther a nation moves away from God the closer it moves toward totalitarianism.

#### **Totalitarianism**

**A system of government that is centralized and dictatorial and requires complete subservience to the state.**

4. In other words, as the brilliant English author George Orwell said, means that the state essentially takes the place of God.

### **George Orwell**

**A totalitarian state is, in effect, a Theocracy, and its ruling class, in order to keep its position, has to be thought of as infallible.**

5. The totalitarian state sets itself above God and replaces His law with its own law, then commands the people to obey.

### **George Orwell, "Literature and Totalitarianism"**

**The totalitarian state sets up unquestionable dogmas, and it alters them from day to day. It needs the dogmas, because it needs absolute obedience from its subjects, as dictated by the needs of power politics.**

4. This is why Christians committed to obeying God will always come into conflict with the totalitarian state, as we see in Acts 4 and 5.

a. The Jewish council, the political power of that day, had forbidden anyone to teach in the name of Jesus; so they dragged the apostles into court.

### **Acts 5:27-28**

**And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine...**

### **Acts 5:29**

**But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."**

c. This verse sums up our sermon series: To Obey God is to Defy tyrants!

d. We see the same thing in Acts 4...

### **Acts 4:18-20**

**So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is**



**right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."**

5. Today we see something similar in America; there is an open assault upon the Church:

- Pastors who speak the truth are threatened with loss of the tax exemption
- Conservatives are cancelled or shut down on social media
- President Biden has just set himself above God, signing a law that actually redefines marriage!

6. Meanwhile, surveys say that only 1 out of every 10 Christian pastors will preach about the cultural issues of our day; some cite Romans 13 and say they must always submit to the civil authorities.

a. Yes, Christians are commanded to obey the law; but not when obeying man's law means breaking God's law.

**John Knox**

**True it is that God has commanded kings to be obeyed; but likewise true it is that in things kings commit against His glory, God has commanded no obedience.**

a. John Knox ran the risk of being tried for treason in standing against the unjust laws of his day.

**John Knox**

**Let it be noted that the prophet of God sometimes may teach treason against kings, and yet neither he nor such as obey the word spoken in the Lord's name by him, offend God.**

6. America's founding fathers were accused of tyranny when they rebelled against the tyrannical reign of England's King George. Their defense?

**Benjamin Franklin**

**Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God.**

(This is the official motto of the State of Virginia to this day)

### III. Close

#### A. Review: So What Have We Said?

1. The Word of the Lord for 2023 is:

**OBEY GOD-DEFY TYRANTS**  
**We ought to obey God rather than men.**

2. The other side of the coin is:

**IF WE DISOBEY GOD WE *WILL* OBEY TYRANTS**

3. We are being pushed into a place where neutrality is impossible; the modern American tyrants must attack the Church because their socialist system cannot tolerate God. As stated clearly by Hitler henchman Martin Borman...

**Martin Borman**  
**“National socialism and Christianity are irreconcilable.”**

3. We are being pushed into a place that calls for courage; tyrants always rule the world through the infection of fear. We must defy them. The world is waiting for the Church to arise...

**A.W. Tozer**  
**A frightened world needs a fearless church.**

**Closing Prayer**