

Bereshit- In the beginning, Sh'mot- these are the names, Vayikra-He called, B'midbar-in the wilderness, D'varim- Words

In the beginning, these are the names, He called, in the wilderness and gave His words

from the beginning, the Lord's intentions, were to draw a people to Himself, even in a wilderness or a desert, and give them His words.

That's exactly what He did.

Deut.4:11-14

And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom.

[12](#)Then the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice.

[13](#)And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.

[14](#)And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.

Deut. 5:4

The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire

The Lord brought His people near, face to face, to a mountain burning with fire to the heart of heaven, and He gave them His commands.

The title of the message today is "After His Heart"

In this series we have been learning about intimacy. Intimacy-the process of reciprocating relational pursuit leading to deeply knowing God. When you think of intimacy with the Lord, maybe you think of prayer times in your closet or a quiet place. Maybe you think of sitting listening to worship music soaking in the presence of God. When you think of intimacy with the Lord maybe you picture tears in your eyes, certain feelings of being held or being comforted, receiving power or insight. I want to make it clear, these are all a part of intimacy and are right and good.

But have any of you ever thought of obedience as intimacy with the Lord? Today, we are going to focus on how obedience to God's commands not only reveals His heart toward us but actually helps us to dwell with him in even greater intimacy and even minister to Him.

It is not obedience or intimacy, but rather the Lord wants us to see that our obedience strengthens intimacy with Him.

It's important for us to give a quick side note on why obedience can be such a difficult topic.

What shall we do? The Hebrew mindset vs. the Greek

Acts 2:37 after the message of Peter at Pentecost the people said, what shall we do

While John was baptizing preparing the way for Jesus

Luke 3:10 the crowds asked what shall we do

Luke 3:12 the tax collectors said what shall we do

Luke 3:14 the soldiers asked what shall we do

The greek mindset

In John 18:38 Pilate asks, "What is truth?" with no response from Jesus

Acts 17:21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

We don't have time to go into hellenism and all the ways that the greek mindset affected the church but suffice it to say, the greek mindset was largely summed up in always learning and doing nothing with it, whereas the Hebrew mindset was what should we do. We can be negatively affected by the greek mindset as we study the Word because we walk away from sermons and time in the word without asking what shall we do, but rather being content just having absorbed knowledge

Even during the 16th century the great "reformer" Martin Luther said: "We should throw the epistle of James out of this school, for it doesn't amount to much. It contains not a syllable about Christ. Not once does it mention Christ, except at the beginning. I maintain that some Jew wrote it who probably heard about Christian people but never encountered any. Since he heard that Christians place great weight on faith in Christ, he thought, 'Wait a moment! I'll oppose them and urge works alone.' This he did." and so today people are still confused about works and faith

But the words of Jesus make it clear: **Obedience to His commands demonstrates our love for Him**

1 John 2:3-6

And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. [4](#) Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, [5](#) but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: [6](#) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

This has to inform our understanding of intimacy...the word intimacy isn't used in the Bible and outside of sexual relations between a man and a woman any dictionary definition is unhelpful. The best way for us to understand intimacy is

1 John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

John 14:15-16

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever

Practical Application: By the end of this message today, it is my sincere desire that everyone in here would escape the lie that our walk with Christ can be primarily intellectual, but that our focus would be on doing the work of God. Recognizing that obeying His Word will bring you greater depths of intimacy with Him than you have ever known. That dad's would not just read the Bible to their children, not just teach others, but then begin to ask the question, now what must we do?

John 14:21-24

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered him, "**If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.** 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

Jesus says that if you have and keep the commands of God, you love Him. He goes on to say that if you love Him, You will be loved by the Father. To know and be known by the Father, to love and be loved by the Father, This is intimacy. He goes even further, explaining that not only will you be loved by the Father, but that Jesus and His Father will come and make their home with you. He also adds that if you do not keep His words, you do not love Him. Do you think of keeping the commands as demonstrating your love for God and not keeping the commands or doing what His word says as proving that you don't love Him?

He makes a house for those who obey His commands.

1 Samuel 2:35

And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do **according to what is in my heart and in my mind.** And **I will build him a sure house,** and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever.

This was Samuel. The high priest Eli, and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas were not obeying the Lord's commands. The Lord had determined to remove them from the priesthood and install Samuel who would obey.

Do you remember what was said about David?

1 Samuel 13:14

But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought a man after His own heart and appointed him ruler over His people, because you have not kept the command of the LORD."

Acts 13:22

After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, **a man after my own heart**; he will do everything I want him to do.'

David was a man after God's own heart, this was demonstrated by the fact that He did what God wanted him to do.

Imagine if we had a world full of children who were always learning and absorbing knowledge, had all the information in the history of the world at their fingertips but they grew up and never did anything. Imagine how horrible it would be if churches were full of men who had access to limitless authors and speakers and sermons and absorbed all knowledge but all it ever produced were debates and disgruntled church hoppers. Imagine if we lived in one of the richest nations ever and all we ever did was produce great songs about winning the nations and we never actually went.

2 Sam. 7:11

...and I will give you rest from your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that **the LORD will make you a house.**

Throughout David's life, he had failures, but the testimony of the Lord over his life was that He did all that the Lord had in mind for him to do. And the promise given to him because of this was the Lord would make him a house.

This house is an intimate and consecrated space...a place of protection

Matthew 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Obedience to the commands of the Lord becomes a house for you where you and the Lord dwell together. It becomes a place of intimacy and protection. It is a promise from the Lord that if you obey His commands, He will dwell with you and make a home for you.

When intimacy is strong between a husband and wife, the storms of life do not destroy the home that they have built. So it is with you and the Lord, obedience to His commands creates an intimacy like a house that stands firm in the middle of the storm.

He is ministered to by those who obey His commands

Many times when we think of intimacy with God in times of prayer, it is a time when we are being ministered to by His presence. But we see something amazing happening with those who follow His instructions and are after His heart.

1 Samuel 3:1-3

Now the boy Samuel was **ministering to the LORD** in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

2At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. **3**The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

Samuel, a priest after God's heart, who would do all that the Lord desired, was ministering to the Lord.

But this was not just Samuel who ministered to the Lord.

Ex. 32:28-29

28The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. **29**Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the Lord today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day."

Deut. 10:8

At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD to **stand before the LORD to minister to him** and to bless in his name, to this day.

2 Sam. 6:14

And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a priestly garment.

v.22

22 Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this, even to be humiliated in my own eyes!

Practical Application: How often is your thought, Lord I want to bless your heart? Regardless of what I get, I want to be pleasing to you, I want to minister to you. For Samuel to minister before the Lord he couldn't be afraid of how young he was, young men in here, is fear of man or fear of failure paralyzing you from attempting to minister to the Lord's heart. I want to tell you now, time itself will not heal your fear of getting it wrong...and if you let the lie of I'll obey Him when I'm older stop you, you'll be older one day and you still won't be obeying Him and the Lord will need to raise up a Samuel to rebuke you.

For David to minister to the Lord before the ark, he endured scorn from Michal, his wife. She ridiculed him for his passion before the Lord...husbands you be bold and audacious

before the Lord, even foolish...if you go after His heart, you'll be a much better leader for her anyways

As a wife submits to her husband, so we obey His commands

Ephesians 5:24

Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

This word "submits" is Hupotasso (G5293) to place under subjection or obey

There is no greater picture on earth of the relationship between Christ and His church than a husband and wife. While Ephesians 5 gives many responsibilities to the husband for how he is to be toward his wife, the wife is given a clear direction here, submission. This is not demeaning, but rather representative of the church's duty to Christ, to submit to His instructions and leadership.

Remember the definition we gave for intimacy? To know fully, even as we are fully known. Assuming the husband is fulfilling his duty to love his wife and lay down his life for her, how much would it hinder intimacy for the wife to deny her husband of her body, to refuse to listen to his instructions or to carry out His will.

The truth is the church is full of people who are doing just that, denying Jesus our husband of our bodies, refusing to obey His instructions, expecting only Him to do His part while we constantly receive and ask for more.

We must admit, we have not obeyed you Lord, we do not truly know You...

But the Lord has provided the solution:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"The day is coming," says the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. [32](#)This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife," says the LORD.

[33](#)"But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days," says the LORD. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. [34](#)And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the LORD.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already," says the LORD. "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins."

The Lord will write His instructions on our hearts today and cause us to know Him