

You Don't Have To, *but will you?*

I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food. -- Job 23:12 NLT

I have not departed from the commands from his lips; I have treasured the words from his mouth more than my daily food. -- Job 23:12 CSB

The very words of God, His commands, are they a treasure to us? It took centuries for Him, His Holy Spirit to write these through His prophets and servants—*for us!* Do we have a reverence for His Holy Word and Spirit?

Obedience

That “little” thing, the thing that you don’t think matters much, may be the very thing that is keeping your faith in ruins—unstable and unfruitful. Is that tiny bit of disobedience really worth such loss?

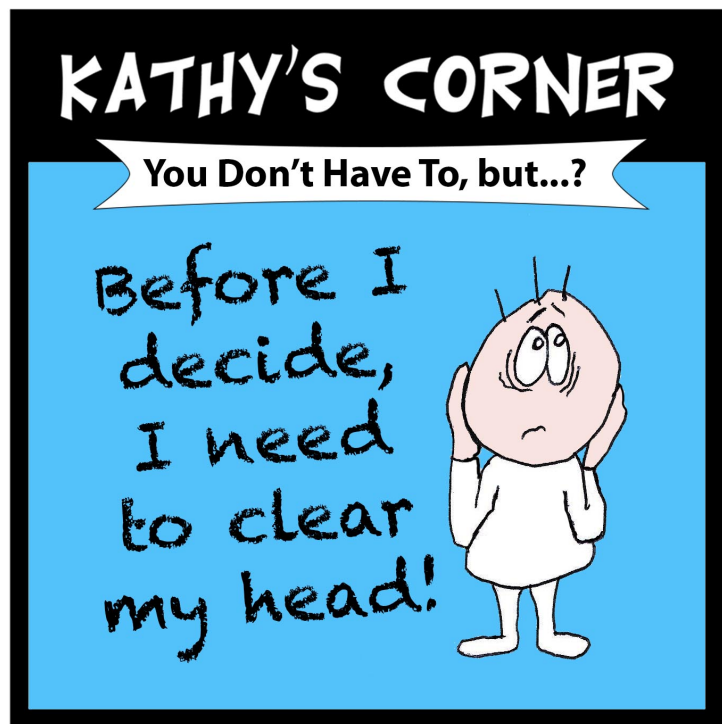
We may think we are pure-hearted, but when we ask God to reveal any area of our lives that is displeasing to Him, we likely will find out a *tiny-little-itty-bitty thing* that God knows is hindering, or obstructing us spiritually. This was the case for me this past week. As soon as I realized how this “small” thing was disobedience, I quit. I gave it to the Lord, and He has made obedience so easy for me. (“...I will rescue you, and you will honor me.” -- From Psalm 50:15 CSB) I continue to rely on His help for obedience. He is the obedience in me and for me.

You may laugh, but here is the story:

Since my childhood I have been drinking diet colas and diet carbonated drinks of other flavors as they became available over the years. I had become so accustomed to them that regular sugar beverages had an undesirable aftertaste to me. Quite a few years ago, I realized that they were not good for my health. It didn’t matter to me. I continued drinking them. At some point early in my journey with the Lord, I knew He really didn’t want me to drink them. Free will—I continued, though I had tried to give them up several times (without His help).

This past year when Annette and Gary were hosting a Prayer Meeting in their home, it was often followed by a meal. One week, I brought a two liter bottle of my favorite drink with me. I didn’t take it when I left which resulted in me receiving a reminder of all the bad-for-me toxic ingredients it contained from both Annette and Jocelyn—which I ignored.

With all the talk of and participation in fasting at NUMA, I wanted to give up something even more important to me than food; I decided to “fast” diet drinks. After a very short time



and an answer to prayer, the Lord showed me that diet drinks were an area of disobedience, and therefore, not an acceptable sacrifice to fast. At this point, I determined that giving up these carbonated delights would be permanent. I am through with them. I have to say that being obedient has been easy with his help and a *heartfelt desire to please Him—love*.

Grey water, not fit to drink—Grey matter, not fit to think! (His thoughts are higher than ours.)

I think the enemy has built a tower of obstructions to hearing His voice into some lives and minds—particularly he has done this in mine. Removing this “little” area of disobedience seems to have caused the tower to topple. This has helped me to hear His voice more clearly. It is, after all, the *little foxes that spoil the vine*—its growth and fruitfulness depend on ridding ourselves of these.

On a larger scale consider verse one and two from Psalm 63:

**O God, You are my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.
So I have looked for You in the sanctuary,
To see Your power and Your glory. (NKJV)**

What is a dry and thirsty land where there is no water? Those two lines might appear redundant, but God doesn't waste anything, so when He says, “Where there is no water,” He is making a point. We definitely live in a land that has lost much blessing from God, and is on the verge of increasingly more serious judgment. It is very dry and very thirsty. A dry and thirsty land can produce nothing useful for its inhabitants. It needs rain—a blessing from God. It needs water, and it has none! It needs to *drink from the water of life freely* (Rev. 22:17) —it needs the word of God which is largely rejected and despised in America. Businesses and systems dare not stand on anything that might hurt the bottom line. Unfortunately, many “churches” are the same and therefore full of compromise. None of these are being solidly built on the Rock, and they will collapse. Thankfully, there are churches—real churches, perhaps like Philadelphia of Revelation from chapter 3:7-11 CSB:

“Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, the true one, the one who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens: I know your works. Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close because you have but little power; yet **you have kept my word and have not denied my name...Because you have **kept my command to endure**, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown.**

What was really being commended here? Many say it was love because the name Philadelphia means brotherly love. There is validity to this as love makes everything God-given real and desirable, but that which was actually being commended, I have highlighted. We need water where no water is. We need the word. **I have not departed from the **commands from his lips**; I have treasured the **words from his mouth** more than my daily food.** -- Job 23:12 CSB **For the word of the Lord is right, and all his work is trustworthy. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the Lord's unfailing love.** (Psalm 33:4-5 CSB) This isn't what we are seeing in a dry and thirsty land that is morally

bankrupt. We see vacant useless land and lives empty of what God has designed for them to possess in Jesus—in God our portion.

Does papyrus grow where there is no marsh? Do reeds flourish without water? (Job 8:11 CSB)

Hebrews 6:7-8: **For the ground that drinks the rain that often falls on it and that produces vegetation useful to those for whom it is cultivated receives a blessing from God. But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and about to be cursed, and at the end will be burned.** (CSB)

Perhaps we can spread the word, and bring the needed rain for God's blessing where God has put us.