



DEVOTION: January 8

Obedience (Life Realities)
ROBERT SIMMS

To him we obey, we belong; so mark well whom or what you serve.

We tend to believe we are our own persons, that we are nobody's servants.

Yet the Scriptures teach that we belong to whomever or whatever we serve. And while we may think that we serve only ourselves, in fact we cannot belong only to ourselves. By creation we were made to belong to God. By sinning we chose to serve another master — sin and the tempter who first presented it as an alternative to God's perfect purpose.

Throughout the Bible we find key Scriptures that teach us that sin is an insidious master: the Psalmist was urgent to avoid having any sin conquer him; Jesus taught that sin is the master of those who devotedly commit it; Peter calls us slaves to whatever controls us; and Paul said that in fact we are servants of one of two masters: sin, or righteousness. Slavery to the first brings death. Service to righteousness, however, brings life.

At the heart of discipleship to Christ is obedience to Him. Many of us call Christianity a matter of "making a decision" for Christ or "receiving" Him—and so it is. But Christian faith is not just making a decision that Christ is Savior, or receiving His forgiveness — it is deciding that He is Lord, and receiving Him as Master. Until we allow Christ to be Lord of our lives and begin obeying Him as such, we will suffer the internal conflict — and perhaps worse — of claiming to belong to Jesus, but actually belonging to another master.

And we must do more than simply *name* Jesus as Lord. We must follow through by doing His will daily. After all, the test of whom we serve is not merely whom we *call* Lord, but whom or what we actually obey.

SCRIPTURES

Psalm 119:133, John 8:34, Romans 6:16, Heb 9:14, Luke 6:46