

“We Must Obey God Rather Than Men”

by Bill Crews

The obligation to do something wrong, something sinful, cannot be placed upon any person in any relationship as being a duty that inheres in that relationship. Anyone who is a Christian should know that when any human authority calls upon a Christian to do something sinful, the Christian then *“must obey God rather than men”* (Acts 5:29, where the apostles had been commanded to stop preaching the very message that Jesus had commanded them to preach). Yes, the husband is over the wife (Eph. 5:22-23), the parents are over their children (Eph. 6:1), civil authorities are over citizens (Rom. 13:1-7), principals are over teachers and teachers are over students, masters are over slaves (Col. 3:22-4:1), elders are over the flock in which they were appointed (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17), but God is over all (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 4:6; Jn. 19:17)!

In many wedding ceremonies each promises to love, honor, and cherish (and the woman, to obey) the other in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, for better or for worse, till death parts them. But neither thereby commits self to sin or to join the other in sin. There the line must be drawn, for *“we must obey God rather than men.”*

In the Scriptures Adam forthwith joined Eve in sin, but he wasn't obligated to or compelled to, and shouldn't have! She was beguiled or deceived into sinning (Gen. 3:1-6; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14), but the record says, simply, *“And she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat”* (Gen. 3:6). Ananias and Sapphira *“agreed together to try the Spirit of the Lord”* (Acts 5:9). It was a collusion on their part, both were therefore guilty, and they suffered the same fate. Solomon began his reign over God's people in the kingdom of Israel on a very good note (a sense of unworthiness and a desire for divine help in ruling God's people), but the time would come when, in violation of God's law, he chose for his wives foreign women. Not only did he allow them to bring their idolatry into the kingdom with them; he even accommodated them and joined them (1 Kings 11:1-10).

It is foolish and dangerous for a Christian to choose as a life's companion someone who is not a Christian. Many who have done so have testified to the truth of that statement (any who might disagree will never know what it might have been like had he or she married a Christian). It is wonderful when a Christian is able by influence and teaching to convert his or her mate. It is wrong and tragic when a Christian allows an unbelieving mate to influence or pressure him or her into forsaking the Lord and His truth. It is best not to become bound to an unbeliever, but if you already have, **let nothing influence you to be anything but a Christian, one who puts Christ first in all things.**

And where is this article headed? My main point is this: I have known of many preachers of the gospel who have drifted away from the truth of the gospel, embraced religious or philosophical error, and forsaken the Son of God. (Do not be surprised; a child of God can fall away; preachers are just human beings, like others.) And what do their wives do? In most cases they join them in their apostasy! Like Adam, they go along with their mates. They decide to do wrong with them. At least once in a while I would like to hear of one who put her foot down, firmly, and stated, *“I am grieved that you have taken this course, but I will not take it with you. I love you deeply, but I love the Lord and His truth more.”* This should be done because *“we must obey God rather than men.”* God will accept no excuse for losing your soul.

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