

divine disobedience

"if it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men." rom 12:18

that's exactly what the world wants us to do. they want us to conform to their newly adapted form of the truth. but that's not what God tells us to do. He says, "if it is possible." bend where possible, but not to denial of the truth.

we really do live in an age of compromise, don't we? and many are willing. we see it in the world of politics where shady deals are made behind closed doors which basically amount to one politician saying to another, "you scratch my back and i'll scratch yours." we see it in our schools today where according to surveys conducted in recent years cheating by students has become commonplace, even among the most gifted of students. we see it in many marriages today where couples compromise or surrender the vows they made to one another on their wedding day by bailing out at the first hint of disharmony or dissatisfaction. we see it in the business world, our legal system, and even in many churches where pastors and laypeople and entire denominations have compromised their belief in the bible as the true, inspired, and inerrant word of God and instead try to make it fit with our culture rather than vice versa.

so with all this compromise going on all around us, the question is how can we who are christians live an uncompromising life of total allegiance and commitment to our Savior Jesus Christ in the midst of such a

compromising culture? that's what i want to talk to you about today.

and the first point that i want to make today is this: we need to recognize that compromising one's relationship with the Lord never – and i mean never – produces lasting positive results. and just to drive that point home to us and make it as clear as possible, God has provided us with a whole multitude of examples in the bible that illustrate this truth.

adam and eve, aaron with the golden calf, samson lost his strength, his sight, and ultimately his life. david compromised God's moral standards, peter compromised his self-proclaimed love for Christ, denying Him three times, judas compromised three years of discipleship with Jesus and lost his eternal home in heaven. and on and on it goes.

we have examples also of the uncompromising. i think of daniel who was delivered by God from a den of hungry lions for his uncompromising refusal to stop praying to the God of Israel when he was ordered to do so. or what about his 3 contemporaries: shadrach, meshach, and abednego. they ended up tossed into the hottest of furnaces, and got to walk there with the living God. would that not be an experience to testify about?

and that takes us to the final point that i want to talk about this morning, and that is: we should live an uncompromising life not out of a desire to get something back from God or because by so doing we're hoping to somehow earn salvation for ourselves, for the

Bible makes it abundantly clear that no person can be saved through their own works and efforts. we live an uncompromising life out of nothing but pure love, gratitude, and appreciation for all that our Savior Jesus did for us because, you see, He never once compromised, He never once wavered, He never once faltered in His allegiance to us and the plan of salvation that His Father had sent Him to this earth to carry out on our behalf.

Jesus resolutely endured all He knew lay before Him in Jerusalem... the beatings and scourgings, the betrayals and denials by his closest companions, the cross and the nails, the rejection and humiliation, the cold dark tomb. in spite of knowing all of that, He still set out to go there and face it head-on because that's what He had been sent into this world to do for you and for me.

and you know what, my friends? because He did that for us, because He willingly sacrificed himself in our place on the cross to pay for our sins, we can now find forgiveness for all those times that we have failed to live an uncompromising life in the midst of a compromising world. we can find pardon for those times we've gone along with the crowd and failed to take an uncompromising stand for what we knew was right and good and God-pleasing. and we can find the strength and motivation to follow in our Master's footsteps and through the power of His Holy Spirit live a life of uncompromising devotion to this uncompromising Savior.

the day came when elijah stood before a hoard holding various truths and beliefs and boldly said, "how long

will you waver between two opinions? if the Lord is God, follow him; but if baal is god, follow him.” the same question that elijah posed to the israelites is before us today and really every day. who are you going to serve? who are you going to follow? to whom are you going to pledge and give your love and devotion? what will be your truth? is it going to be the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? or are you going to pursue the other false gods of today: money, materialism, technology, sex, alcohol, career, or any of the other hundreds of gods that are calling and clamoring for your attention and commitment? will you remain silent or even affirm them in their beliefs, giving credence to their deeds as they insist, essentially stamping approval on their path to damnation.

i pray not. i pray that the true God will send His Holy Spirit into our hearts, causing His life-giving, life-changing Spirit to move in, take over, and take complete control so that we will be able to do what i firmly believe all of us really want to do. that is to fearlessly and courageously live an uncompromising life in the midst of a compromising world, a life that will be a fitting response and a beautiful tribute to the One who never compromised in all that He did for us.

stand against the crowd. stand against the lies and deception. stand for the truth and God. i pray for brave divine disobedience to prevail.