



OBEDIENCE & RESPONSIBILITY

CONVERSATION #1: WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT

ICEBREAKER: I KNOW I SHOULD ...

Take a few minutes to finish each of these sentences honestly. Each person in your group should answer.

- I know I should go to bed earlier, but ...
- I know I should stop scrolling, but ...
- I know I should eat better, but ...
- I know I should apologize, but ...
- I should have that hard conversation, but ...
- I know I should ask for help, but ...

Most of us don't struggle with knowing what the right thing is. We struggle with following through when it's inconvenient, uncomfortable, or when our feelings don't line up. That pattern shows up everywhere - in our schedules, our relationships, and our responsibilities. And it shows up in our faith, too.

STUDY: TRUST AND OBEY

As we grow in our faith, we're learning a whole new way of living. But early on, it's natural to filter obedience through how something makes us feel, how convenient it is, or what we get out of it. We tend to obey when it feels right - and hesitate when it doesn't. But Jesus invites us into a different pattern. He connects obedience not to mood or motivation, but to love.

READ JOHN 14:23-24

- What stands out to you about what Jesus says here?
- What are the most common reasons you delay obedience - feelings, fear, convenience, or cost - and which one shows up most often for you?
- According to these verses, what does it reveal when we consistently hear Jesus' words but don't keep them?
- How does obeying someone's words communicate love differently than simply agreeing with them?

Jesus doesn't say love for Him is proven by how strongly we feel or how sincerely we intend. He says it's revealed by whether we keep His words. Obedience is where belief moves from agreement to action. And Spiritual growth happens when we stop waiting to feel ready and start responding in trust. When we choose obedience, not because it's easy, but out of love, that's the shift toward maturity. You may not always feel like obeying. But every time you choose to, you're letting love take shape in your life.

ACTIVITY: SOLID ROCK OR SHIFTING SAND

Before we examine our own lives, we're going to take a minute to consider another one of Jesus' teachings on this topic. And this time, He used a powerful word picture to explain the importance of obeying even when we may not feel like it. **READ LUKE 6:46-49**

Now think about the people you've observed over the years - friends, family members, coworkers, public figures, even past versions of yourself. Consider what you've seen people build their lives on. In the chart below label if these foundations are firm or if they are unstable.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Career or achievement | Firm / Unstable | Money or financial security | Firm / Unstable |
| Comfort and convenience | Firm / Unstable | Relationships or approval | Firm / Unstable |
| Character and Integrity | Firm / Unstable | Reputation or Popularity | Firm / Unstable |
| Control or self-reliance | Firm / Unstable | Pleasure or escape | Firm / Unstable |
| Family or Legacy | Firm / Unstable | Dependence on God | Firm / Unstable |

ACTIVITY: THE STORM TEST

One thing worth noting from Jesus' parable is that storms aren't selective. They don't show up only for people who make bad choices or lack faith - they come for everyone. Pressure, loss, conflict, disappointment, and temptation eventually test every life. The difference Jesus points out isn't **if** storms come, but **what they reveal** when they do. Storms don't create our foundation; they expose it. And when the rain falls, and the ground shakes, what we've been building on becomes impossible to hide.

- What kinds of "storms" tend to expose weak foundations in your life?
(Stress, conflict, exhaustion, disappointment, temptation)
- Why do you think it's easier to hear Jesus' words than to put them into practice?
- What past storm did you feel shook your foundations on some level?

As we grow in our faith, the questions we ask begin to change. Mature followers of Jesus don't start with, "*How do I feel about this?*" They've learned that feelings are real - but they aren't always reliable guides. Instead, they ask a better question: they ask "*What does love require of me?*"

That question shifts the focus away from comfort, convenience, or personal preference and places it on faithfulness. Love asks how to honor God, how to respond in obedience, and how to act in a way that reflects Christ - even when it's costly or uncomfortable.

CHALLENGE: NO BETTER TIME THAN NOW

This week, choose one act of obedience you've been putting off - maybe it's a conversation you've been avoiding, an apology you know you owe, a step of forgiveness you've delayed, or a spiritual habit you've intended to start. Set a specific time to act on it this week and follow through. Don't wait for the right feeling. Choose obedience and let love lead.