

## **East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:**

Transformed: The Obedient Life

Speaker: Crystal Perez

Date: May 26, 2024

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**Introduction:** In this message, guest speaker Crystal Perez continued the "Transformed" series, focusing on the transformative power of obedience in the Christian life. Drawing from various scriptures, she emphasized that obedience out of love is the most effective way to become like Jesus, even when it is costly or difficult. Crystal also addressed the challenges of obedience in our individualistic culture and the difference between behavior modification and true heart transformation.

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### **Key Points and Discussion Questions:**

1. **Obedience out of love equals transformation:** Crystal explained that God desires our obedience because He wants us to experience "shalom" (well-being, wholeness, and prosperity). She emphasized that obedience motivated by love, rather than fear or duty, is what truly transforms our hearts.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Why is obedience out of love more transformative than obedience out of fear or duty?
- How have you experienced the difference between behavior modification and heart transformation in your own life?

**Supporting Verses:** Deuteronomy 6:1-6 - "These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe...so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands...so that you may enjoy long life...so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey...Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."

### **Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Moses gave these instructions to the Israelites as they prepared to enter the Promised Land, emphasizing the importance of obedience and love for God.
  - **Theological Significance:** This passage reveals God's desire for His people to obey Him out of love and reverence, resulting in blessing and well-being.
  - **Application:** We should examine our motivations for obedience and seek to cultivate a deep love for God that inspires us to follow His commands.
2. **There is value in obeying God even when we don't feel like it:** While emphasizing the importance of obedience out of love, Crystal also acknowledged the value of obeying God even when we don't feel like it. She encouraged the congregation to develop a faith history with God, trusting in His goodness and faithfulness even when obedience is challenging.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- How can we cultivate the discipline to obey God even when we don't feel like it?
- Share an experience where obeying God was difficult, but you later saw the value in your obedience.

**Supporting Verses:** John 14:15 - "If you love me, keep my commands."

#### **Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Jesus spoke these words to His disciples during the Last Supper, emphasizing the connection between love and obedience.
  - **Theological Significance:** Jesus' statement reveals that our love for Him should be the primary motivation for obeying His commands.
  - **Application:** We can demonstrate our love for Jesus by choosing to obey Him, even when it is difficult or goes against our natural inclinations.
3. **Jesus is our example of obedience in the face of suffering:** Crystal pointed to Jesus as the ultimate example of costly obedience, highlighting His submission to the Father's will in the Garden of Gethsemane and His sacrificial death on the cross.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- How does Jesus' example of obedience encourage and challenge you in your own journey of following God?

- In what areas of your life is God calling you to costly obedience, and how can you lean on His strength to follow through?

**Supporting Verses:** Philippians 2:8 - "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

**Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Paul wrote to the Philippian church, encouraging them to imitate Christ's humility and obedience.
- **Theological Significance:** Jesus' obedience to the point of death on the cross demonstrates the ultimate example of submitting to God's will, even when it involves suffering.
- **Application:** As followers of Christ, we are called to imitate His obedience and humility, trusting in God's plan even when it leads us through difficult or painful circumstances.

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**Conclusion:** Crystal's message challenges us to embrace a life of obedience to God, motivated by our love for Him and our trust in His goodness. As we seek to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, we must be willing to obey even when it is costly or uncomfortable, knowing that God's ways ultimately lead to our well-being and His glory. By looking to Jesus as our example and relying on the Holy Spirit's power, we can cultivate a lifestyle of obedience that flows from a transformed heart.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. In what areas of your life is God calling you to deeper obedience, and what steps can you take to submit to His will?
2. How can you cultivate a love for God that motivates and sustains your obedience, even in challenging times?
3. What is one lesson from Jesus' example of obedience that you can apply to your current circumstances?

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**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus, who modeled perfect obedience and sacrificial love. Forgive us for the times we have resisted Your will or obeyed out of fear or duty rather than love. Help us to grow in our love for You, so that our obedience flows naturally from a transformed heart. Give us the courage to follow You even

when it is costly or difficult, trusting in Your goodness and faithfulness. May our lives be marked by a deep commitment to obeying Your commands, so that we can experience the abundant life You have promised. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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## **References:**

### **Primary Sources:**

- "Transformed: The Obedient Life," East Hill Church, 05/26/2024. Delivered by Crystal Perez.
- Sermon Transcript, East Hill Church.
- The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV). Biblica, Inc.™, 2011.

### **Secondary Sources:**

- Contextual and Theological Insights: Derived from general biblical scholarship and commentaries relevant to Deuteronomy 6:1-6, John 14:15, and Philippians 2:8.

### **General Sources on Biblical Studies:**

- Chan, Francis, and Danae Yankoski. "Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God." David C Cook, 2013.
- Tozer, A. W. "The Pursuit of God." Moody Publishers, 2015.
- Willard, Dallas. "Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ." NavPress, 2012.

### **Collaborative Contributions:**

- LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon transcript and related biblical passages.

### **LLM Training Data:**

- LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to September 2023.