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# [Faith and Partial Obedience](https://public-api.wordpress.com/bar/?stat=groovemails-events&bin=wpcom_email_click&redirect_to=http%3A%2F%2Ffaithencounters.impart.org%2F2024%2F04%2F11%2Ffaith-and-partial-obedience%2F&sr=0&signature=f335ff7d9f43d5c4eb9844f024701756&blog_id=127938330&user=d4772d34747c29138d6356de987fff13&_e=&_z=z)

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | https://0.gravatar.com/avatar/3f13af1d3e2a35ad581f9ba697fd060a4b7d8a719664a4a449058f8ff4e8c587?s=96&d=identicon&r=G | **Martha Rodman**  April 11 |   Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. 1 Samuel 15:22. NLT.  Does anyone else do a quick spiritual check up when you hear or read this verse? The context of this verse is difficult. The first king of Israel, Saul, had some serious character flaws. God gave him, through the prophet Samuel, very strict instructions to him concerning their long-time enemies, the Amalekites. This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies has declared: I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek for opposing Israel when they came from Egypt. Now go and completely destroy the entire Amalekite nation--men, women, children, babies, cattle, sheep, goats, camels and donkeys. 1 Samuel 15:2. NLT. These types of instructions are difficult to read (and write!), but it was clearly God's will to deal with them in this manner. { For reference to the "whys" you can read Exodus 17: 8-10, Numbers 24:20, and Deuteronomy 25:17.} King Saul was very clear on what the assignment was. Unfortunately, he only partially completed the job. He captured Agag, the Amalekite king, but completely destroyed everyone else. Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of the sheep and goats, the cattle, the fat calves, and the lambs, everything, in fact that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality. 1 Samuel 15:8-9. NLT. Saul took it upon himself what part of God's instructions were worth following, and which weren't.  He then blames the army and the people. He even tried justifying his actions by saying they were going to use the animals as a sacrifice to the Lord. But neither Samuel nor the Lord buys it. My friends, God is looking for full obedience from us as He was with Saul. What happens when He tasks us with an assignment has to do with revealing what is in our heart. I must admit, I too, am guilty of partial obedience.  But, not to boast, there have been times when I actually obeyed His personal instruction for my life. So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Galatians 5:15-17. When I was 21, I went to a New Year's Eve party. My friend served wine coolers. It was the first time I had actually had a drink. I was nervous but also happy to celebrate as an "adult". I really liked the taste and the feeling. I only had one and a half drinks, but because of my "virgin" situation. I could feel the effects. As I went to bed that night, clearly and directly, I heard the Holy Spirit tell me I can't do that, because I liked it too much. It was so clear and resonated in my spirit that I knew it was the voice of wisdom speaking.  I felt God's love and care for me through those words, but I also heard the warning. By His grace, and His alone, I listened and obeyed. I clearly knew what the Holy Spirit was saying to me. To ignore His words of advice would be to act thoughtlessly. Since then, I have seen the devastation alcohol addiction has on families. A college friend spent time in jail for a manslaughter conviction where alcohol was involved. Another friend's son died at a young age because of the abuse alcohol did on his body. I don't know what the cost of disobeying His word to me would have been, but I know that my children have not had to pay that cost. I am grateful for God's yeses and His nos. I don't judge others who choose to drink alcohol. It is between them and the Lord. The scriptures obviously do not prohibit it. But for me, it is a "no", and I am ok with it.  Saul's partial obedience cost him his relationship with the Lord, as well as Samuel. I wonder what my "part obedience" in other things has cost me. I know He is a merciful and forgiving God, but I also know we can't expect partial obedience to bring us the blessings and benefit of full obedience. I think when we pick and choose the things we are obedient to is actually setting ourselves up as the god of our life. It is overstepping our bounds as His followers, never a life-giving move for anyone, right?  Friends, I am not perfect at this either. The good news is we have a forgiving Savior that knows how to convict us and help us. I want to see the fruits of obedience in my life, no matter the cost because I can trust Him that they will be good.  Father, please forgive our partial obedience to You. I know when we truly realize that You are Lord of our Life it is the best decision to make, no matter how we may perceive the cost. Help us to learn from Saul's mistakes. Lead us and teach us to not only listen, but to obey, in Jesus' Name, amen. |