

Speaking to the soul



Commandments

Then Moses told them, “Do not keep any of it until morning.” But some of them didn’t listen and kept

some of it until morning. But by then it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell. Moses was very angry with them. Exodus 16:19-20

The rule couldn't have been simpler. The bread or manna that God gave to his people every morning would sustain them for the day ahead, but it couldn't be kept overnight. Formed by the secretion of insects, if it was left it would soon become mouldy and inedible. All the people needed to do was to obey this very simple rule and all would be well. But people will be people, and some decided that it was a silly rule that didn't apply to them and that they would try to hang on to the food. Moses was understandably angry with them.

Why is it that human beings find it so hard to obey? The story of humanity from the Garden of Eden onwards is one of persistent disobedience. This is tragic because all the blessings of this life are on offer to those who will obey, and disobedience invariably leads to one form of disaster or another. Jesus spoke much about obedience and made it clear that a relationship with him absolutely depended upon it. In saying that, he pointed out that his relationship with his own heavenly Father was also based upon obedience. There is an old song that sums this up very powerfully: "Trust and obey, for there's no other way / to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." It's so simple and yet we all struggle to live this way completely.

The commandment that Jesus gave to his disciples was to love one another, just as he had loved them (John 13:34-35). This is still the fundamental rule that we are commanded to obey. Loving other people is often tough and

costly. When we reach out in love it is sometimes thrown back in our faces but, whatever the circumstances, the command is always to love. Jesus knew the high price of love better than anyone, but obedience to this command is always the best possible way to live.

QUESTION

Do you struggle to obey God's commands? If so, in what ways?

PRAYER

Lord God, I thank you that you are so forgiving. Teach me afresh the blessing of obedience. Amen

