



Accessing the Kingdom - Part 2: Surrender and Obedience

by John Himmelberger

Intro

It's not what we know that transforms us , it's what we surrender to. This teaching highlights how obedience flows not from control or performance, but from trust, identity, and submission to God's heart. Kingdom access begins where resistance ends.

My Intention and Assumptions

I hope that your relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is strengthened through this teaching. My assumption is that you have read or are reading all 66 books of the Bible for context. This is meant to be 'salt' and make you thirsty. You're welcome.

About the Author

John Himmelberger is a teacher, pastor, and lifelong learner. With decades of experience walking with Jesus and leading others into transformational truth, John brings a grounded yet radical perspective rooted in Scripture, personal growth, and kingdom living.

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Introduction: The Gap Between Knowing and Living

- **Last week's question:** *Is it true?* We explored **the validity of truth**.
- **This week's question:** *Now that we know the truth, are we living it?*
- There is often a *disconnect* between knowledge and practice.

Common Symptoms of This Disconnect

1. **Intellectual Christianity** – People accumulate knowledge without transformation.
2. **Selective Obedience** – Choosing which truths to follow based on comfort.
3. **Religious Pretension** – Outward appearances of faith but no real fruit (*Matthew 23:3*).

Reflection: Why do we resist living out what we claim to believe?

1. Truth Requires Transformation, Not Just Agreement

Jesus didn't come just to give us correct doctrine; He came to change us from the inside out.

Key Scripture: *"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (**Romans 12:2 AMP**)

Three Barriers to Transformation

1. **Comfort:**
 - Change feels **disruptive**; we resist **surrender**.
 - Example: Israel longed for Egypt's security even after being freed (**Exodus 16:3**).
2. **Fear:**
 - We cling to **false identities**; What if living in truth changes who we think we are?
 - Truth forces **self-examination**; fear makes us resist it.
 - Example: Peter denied Jesus because he feared what truth might cost him (**Luke 22:54-62**).
3. **Pride:**
 - We prefer **being right** over being **transformed**.
 - Admitting we need change requires **humility**.
 - Example: The Pharisees rejected Jesus because they didn't want to admit they were wrong (**John 9:40-41**).

Deep Application Questions

- Are we allowing truth to **reshape our identity and choices**?
- What comforts, fears, or prideful areas are resisting change in our lives?

Practical Step: Identify one area where you've resisted change due to comfort, fear, or pride. Write it down and **pray for the courage** to surrender it.

2. Knowing Truth Isn't Enough; We Must Live It

Faith is not just about believing the right things; it's about putting them into action.

Key Scripture: *"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely listeners who hear the word but fail to internalize its meaning..." (James 1:22 AMP)*

The Problem: Knowledge Without Application Leads to Deception

- The danger of **"spiritual hoarding"**; accumulating wisdom but not using it.
- Example: The **rich young ruler** knew the law but wasn't willing to obey Jesus (**Matthew 19:16-22**).

Two Forms of Self-Deception

1. **Spiritual Apathy** – Hearing truth but not acting leads to a dull conscience.
2. **Rationalization** – Knowing truth but excusing ourselves from applying it.

Reflection Questions:

- Where in our lives do we **hear truth** but fail to **apply it**?
- Are we being **hearers of the Word** or **doers**?

Practical Step: Identify **one truth** you've learned recently but haven't lived out. Write down an action step and take **one step toward obedience this week**.

3. Truth Costs Us Something

Walking in truth comes at a price; but the freedom it brings is worth it.

Key Scripture: *“If you abide in My word... you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31-32 AMP)*

Three Costs of Walking in Truth

1. **The Cost of Surrender** – We must let go of our way and fully submit to Christ.
 - Example: Paul had to surrender his religious achievements to follow Jesus (**Philippians 3:7-8**).
2. **The Cost of Rejection** – The world opposes those who live in truth.
 - Example: Jesus warned, *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first”* (**John 15:18-19**).
3. **The Cost of Obedience** – Walking in truth demands action.
 - Example: Jesus said, *“Take up your cross daily and follow Me.”* (**Luke 9:23**).

Deep Reflection:

- What personal **comforts, relationships, or habits** is truth challenging?
- Are we willing to pay the cost of **obedience**?

Practical Step: Identify a **difficult truth** you are struggling to obey. Ask God for **strength to walk in it**, no matter the cost.

4. Truth is Meant to Be Shared, Not Hidden

The purpose of truth is not just personal transformation; it's to bring light to the world.

Key Scripture: *“You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before men.”* (**Matthew 5:14-16 AMP**)

Truth Should Be Evident in Our Lives

- **Living in truth changes the world** around us.
- Truth should be visible in:
 - Our **workplaces** (integrity, honesty, excellence).
 - Our **friendships** (love, wisdom, boldness).
 - Our **families** (leading with grace and truth).

Truth Must Be Shared With Love and Wisdom

- **Ephesians 4:15** – Speak the truth in love.
- **Colossians 4:6** – Let your speech be full of grace and seasoned with salt.

Reflection Questions:

- Are we hiding the truth out of fear or **boldly living it out**?
- How does our daily life reflect the truth we claim to believe?

Practical Step: Identify one area where you can **shine Christ's truth** more boldly this week.

Closing Thought: Are We Truly Changed?

- The real question isn't *Do we know the truth?* but *Is it shaping us?*
- Truth is **not just an idea**; it is **a life surrendered to Jesus**.
- **Luke 9:23** – Jesus calls us to *follow* Him, not just believe in Him.

Final Challenge

1. **What truth do we need to surrender to this week?**
2. **Where do we need to stop just hearing and start living?**
3. **What's one bold step we can take to live out truth today?**

Prayer:

Lord, transform us beyond knowledge; make us doers of Your Word. Help us to surrender to truth, even when it costs us. Give us boldness to shine Your light in every area of our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Recap of Key Scriptures

- **Romans 12:2** – Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
- **James 1:22** – Be doers of the Word, not just hearers.
- **John 8:31-32** – The truth will set you free if you abide in it.
- **Matthew 5:14-16** – Let your light shine before men.
- **Luke 9:23** – Take up your cross and follow Jesus.

Next Steps

- **Commit to action:** Write down a personal **obedience step** for this week.
- **Invite accountability:** Share this challenge with someone who will walk with you.
- **Pray for courage:** Truth requires boldness; ask God to empower you.

Truth isn't just meant to be known; it's meant to be LIVED. Are we ready?