

THE CRY

for Obedience

Through the obedience
of the One Man
the many will be made righteous.
“This is My Body,
broken for you...”

word
MADE
flesh



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We celebrate *obedience*
as our loving response to
the grace of Jesus.



From the Editor

Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis. Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum et dedit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen.

Christ became obedient for us even to the death, death on the cross. Therefore God exalted him and gave him a name which is above all names.

During my undergraduate days at Asbury University, I had the privilege of participating in the Asbury Chorale, one of the school's choirs. In the fall of 2012, we performed a piece called "Christus Factus Est" by Anton Bruckner, a composer from the Romantic period (late-1800s, see pg. 14 for more details). When translated from Latin, the title stands on its own: "Christ became."

The beautifully layered piece, ornate with dissonance and roving harmonies, takes its text from Philippians 2:8-11, which reads:

"And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Much of the score is in a minor key. It begins by emphasizing the word obediens, or Christ's obedience. It is dark and somber, perhaps painting the picture of Jesus weeping at the Garden of Gethsemane — that moment when the words of Christ's obedience in the face of a bitter cup would echo throughout eternity: *Not my will, but yours, be done.*

At the very end of the piece, something extraordinary happens. After staying in a minor key for the whole of the song, somber and remorseful, the very last note suddenly and unexpectedly changes to a major key, finishing the line "and gave him a name which is above all (switch to major key) names." The song ends bright and open, hopeful and with celebration at the name of Jesus.

Obedience, the surrender of one's own will, was Christ's loving response to the Father, and

so, Christ overcame death and made a way for us back to the Father. He is exalted and Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Indeed, this is reason to celebrate.

Bruckner's composition has stayed with me for 5 years, partly because of the beauty of its sound, and partly because the timeless words have echoed in the chambers of my heart ever since. I hadn't ever really thought about Christ's complete and total surrender to the will of God — and it wasn't out of obligation, but for love.

In the gospels, Jesus stated, "If you love me, you will obey my commandments." This was not a conditional statement. He was not saying "I'll know you love me when you obey me." Rather, *I believe it was a promise*; because we could never keep his commandments on our own (that is why he had to come, after all), he promises that our love for him will lead us to obedience. It won't always be easy, but loving him will inevitably gear our hearts toward the will of the Father so that in all things we might also say, "Not my will, but yours, be done."

Obedience's road isn't always easy, or pretty. It may lead us all to our own crosses, moments when God leads us to surrender completely to him and empty ourselves for His cause. Where will that take us? God only knows.

But I am hopeful for the outcome. I am hopeful when I read in the following pages of sons and daughters who are living in obedience unto the Father and changing lives in the process. In their obedience, some have transitioned into other countries to serve among those in need. Others obediently work day in and day out to reach those whom much of the world does not care to reach.

In their loving response to the grace of Jesus, Word Made Flesh staff and volunteers all over the world walk in obedience and their stories, and the stories of those they are reaching, are exalting the name of Jesus and bringing glory to God the Father. I pray the stories in this issue of The Cry inspire and encourage you in your own, obedient walk. May we, like Christ, become obedient to the end for God and for those He loves.

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"Christ became obedient for us even to the death, death on the cross."

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Cover/Back Photos by Jorge Castorena

Inside contributed by WMF Sierra Leone. (Staff helping to paint a building in the community)

The Cry is an advocacy publication of Word Made Flesh that invites readers to learn and share in the stories of our friends who suffer under poverty and injustice.

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From the Executive Director

Obedience. We can tend to cringe a bit when it's mentioned. Obedience is a term that carries a whole lot of negative cultural baggage. Throughout history, ranging from the oversight of families to that of nations, people have far too often used the idea of obedience to perpetuate harm on others. The idea of obedience has been used as a coercive tool to keep people subjugated, preventing people from realizing God-given freedoms of heart, mind, and action.

“In celebrating communion, we celebrate the life of Jesus and we celebrate each of us choosing internal wholeness over the choice for external safety.

Yet, despite unfortunate connections, the idea of obedience is a lifestyle celebration of Word Made Flesh because of redemptive aspects related to it that we see in Scripture. We journey humbly with the idea, but humility notwithstanding we do believe that it is a core characteristic of living into a healthy God-following life.

The obedience that the world requires is often that of coercive subjugation which leads to superficial, external compliance based on the desire to avoid

external difficulties and comes coupled with an internal sense of emptiness. However, the obedience that God offers as a possibility for our lives is a call to self-chosen internal commitments which can lead to a great many external difficulties, but provides an ongoing sense of internal purpose and fulfillment in the midst of oppressive situations and environments.

As I write this, I think of Jesus' promises of bringing "life and life more abundantly," (John 10:10) [as opposed to those who would steal, kill and destroy] and peace - "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27) Obedience to the call and guidance of Jesus Christ as communicated through the Scriptures and through the communication of the Holy Spirit in our lives holds a key to abiding internal joy.

Walter Brueggemann refers to this God-following obedience to Life and Love as "subversive obedience" and my friend William Apel refers to it as "transformative obedience."² They connect these terms of subversive and transformative to God-ordained obedience because such obedience can be contradictory to the desires of rulers of the world. Egypt did not want the Hebrews to leave their slavery, the authorities did not welcome Jesus' message in his day. Thus, Peter and the apostles found it necessary to say, "We must obey God rather than any human authority." (Acts 5:29)

Today, because of the self-chosen obedience of Jesus to the plan of God even though that journey brought him to the experience death on a cross (Ph. 2:8), the Body of Christ around the world seeks to remember Jesus'

obedient sacrifice through the practice of Communion in various forms. In celebrating Communion, we celebrate the life of Jesus and we celebrate each of us choosing internal wholeness over the choice for external safety. We remember (we "re-member" - we bring ourselves together again and again) and redeem (we think again and think anew about) Christ's brokenness through not forsaking the gathering together of ourselves around the idea that there is nothing broken that God cannot make whole. By the grace and power of God, self-chosen obedience in the footsteps of Jesus allows for hardship to become redemptive suffering giving possibility for new life to be birthed.

I love the God-breathed audacity that in ongoing hope of Resurrection we call the remembrance of the brokenness of Jesus' body The Great Thanksgiving and that it is coupled with remembrance of the liberation of the Hebrews from Egypt. Truly the God of Life is amazing beyond words!

In this issue, you'll read about one of our Artist Ambassadors who is an artisan bread maker. I so appreciate his heart and work. The imagery and efficacy of Communion, the Word Made Flesh, and Jesus being our Bread of Life broken from the foundations of the world who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29; Rev. 13:8) poignantly coalesces in the work of a bread maker.

The people of Word Made Flesh around the world seek to live according to the obedience that Jesus Christ exemplified in His own life as they see people grievously suffering bearing metaphorical crosses of sin, marginalization, suffering, oppression, poverty, derision...many tragedies of the both body and soul. Word Made Flesh staff seek to walk alongside and with



people in solidarity and community, sharing the burdens of daily life (Gal. 6:2) as Jesus did so that Good News might be better made present for all people—especially those deeply burdened by the systems and structures of this world.

Obedience is etymologically related to the idea of both 'hearing' and 'leaning toward' (to hearken is one sense of this). One must allow oneself to hear the Word of God and then act on such hearing.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer offers a sobering call for us to be just such people for the sake of God:

“Who stands fast? Only the one whose final standard is not their reason, their principle, their conscience, their freedom, or their virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all this when they are called to obedient and responsible action in faith and in exclusive allegiance to God— the responsible person who tries to make their whole life an answer to the question and call of God.”³

(Heb. 5:9, Rom. 1:5, 1 Peter 1:14 all encourage us in this direction) [language in above quotation made inclusive]

I pray that we all, each in our needed way, will seek to responsibly make our lives an answer to the question and the call of God and so therefore “stand fast” on behalf of ourselves and others. This is the obedience that we celebrate.

CLINT BALDWIN
Executive Director, Word Made Flesh



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¹ Brueggemann, Walter. (2011) *Truth-Telling as Subversive Obedience*. Ed. K.C. Hanson. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books

² Apel, William. (1998) *“Who Stands Fast?” Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Thomas Merton on Obedience*. ITMS Seasonal, v. 23, n. 2, pp. 3-10.

³ Apel, Ibid., p. 3.



Word
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THE **CRY**
for Obedience

10.23.17

Learning to Listen & Obey

By Adriana Ciobanu, *Executive Director of WMF Moldova/La VIA*

When I think about obedience* I recall how many times a day I expect my children to obey me. My 16-year-old son ought to do everything I ask immediately and quickly and my 5-year-old daughter should pick up her toys right away. Of course, things don't go according to my expectations and sometimes nothing happens at all. In that case, I choose to get down near my daughter and together pick up the scattered toys. When I do this I notice that she responds more calmly and even with joy.

As we work with children at our Community Center one of our rules is to obey the first time. After that, consequences follow. This has been our strategy up to this point. However, this year we decided to alter our methodology and look beyond behaviors to discover what is behind disobedience, violence or other deviant actions. Our new priority as teachers is to instill positive qualities so that the children become responsible, pleasant and respectful.

*In Romanian the word for obedience, *la ascultare*, means both to listen to/to obey

For most of the children it's hard to obey because obedience requires submission, following rules, and humbly accepting consequences. It's hard for them to adopt this behavior because their instinct tells them to fight back, rebel and follow their own rules which give them a sense of safety.

Maxim and Dorin are two orphaned brothers who spent two years living on the streets and begging, but have been in our community trying to adapt for almost a year. Obedience is a huge challenge for them. They have learned to follow the rules of the street and survive. Instead of obedience, they often resort to violence and aggression.

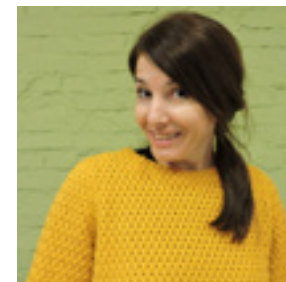
At the beginning of each school year when the children's program starts up again at the Community Center, we, (the staff) set out our expectations for each other with trust that they will be respected and obeyed.

In all of these processes, I am a disciple learning to listen to the children who come to the Community Center, to the children who are orphaned, to my community and to my own children. I am learning to listen to each person's struggles, pain, desires and expectations. I'm learning to listen to words of encouragement and to listen even when the truth hurts. Through each of these voices I am learning to listen to/obey the Lord, to submit, to understand His will and to humble myself. The journey of obedience continues. May the Lord help us all!

ABOUT ADRIANA

Adriana was born in southern Moldova and grew up within the Soviet Union when Moldova was one of fifteen Soviet Republics. She lived and experienced this political system until 1990 when Moldova gained independence.

Adriana worked with American volunteers in the Peace Corps for twelve years which deeply influenced her personal development and worldview. She has a happy family with two children, a family which grew bigger in 2010 when she joined the WMF/La VIA community!



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(Above & Right) Photos from La VIA Community Center in Moldova



"God
is present
in these
things."



DAVE KRATZER
WMF ARTIST AMBASSADOR

Word Made Flesh Artist Ambassadors believe deeply in WMF's mission of walking in solidarity with and among persons experiencing extreme hardship and vulnerability. Our ambassadors in the practice of their art exemplify the same Spirit in which WMF does its work. They are to us extensions of our community, assisting WMF in enacting the Good News of Jesus.

Obediently Present

It is early in the morning. I scale flour, water, salt and yeast into the mixing bowl. The process of mixing bread for the day has begun. Thousands of times I have done this, but still the mystery of it persists. Inert, colorless, and sterile, these ingredients of flour, water, salt and yeast will be transformed. They become bread: aromatic, colorful, delicious, nourishing.

For nearly twenty years now I have been playing with the basic ingredients of bread: flour, water, salt and yeast. Often, usually when I find myself hurried and distracted, I lose sight of the mystery unfolding in front of me. But on good days I slow down and pay attention, practice wonder, and celebrate the beauty of the process unfolding in front of me. God is present in these things

Recently I began working as a baker with DV8 Kitchen. Our mission is to employ people who, because of addictions or a criminal history, need a second chance. As with baking bread, I am learning to see God's mysterious presence among these amazing and resilient people. God is present.

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"As with
baking bread,
I am learning
to see God's
mysterious
presence among
these amazing
and resilient
people."





(Opposite) The women of Kangondo with WMF Rwanda staff. The community serves to empower women and their children whose lives were destroyed and impoverished in the 1994 Rwandan civil war.

This journey of obedience in service is not by my own strength, but by the grace and mercy of God that is upon me every day.

“Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to Him” (Psalm 128:1). Obedience leads to God’s promised blessing of life. The disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden meant losing favor with God. The obedience of Abraham in Genesis 12 shows that his total submission to God’s would result in blessing. The examples of obedience throughout the Bible have taught me the importance of obedience in my relationship with God. This inspired me and encouraged me to serve and empower others.

Those lessons of obedience have played a big role in my life and my desire to serve others. “Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him. And you will eat the fruit of your labor; blessing and prosperity will be yours” (Psalm 128:1-2). Obedience is the rule of life, and without it we cannot fulfill our life’s calling.

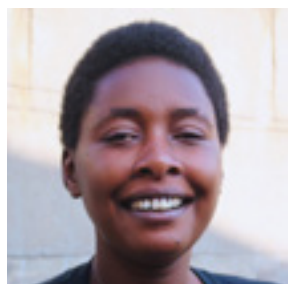
For now, Jesus is calling me to obey God’s call through serving the women of Kangondo through leading them in Bible studies and prayer, where we all share testimonies and the word of God. This helps them also to change their lives and to obey God’s commandments.

ABOUT IMMACULEE

Immaculee was raised by relatives in Muhanga district of Rwanda following the death of her mother when she was just seven years old. By the grace of God she was able to complete her studies, and has a bachelor’s degree in accounting. She currently lives in Kigali with her husband, Clement. They are expecting their first child this December. Immaculee has been working with WMF in Rwanda since 2016.

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(Above) Immaculee with WMF Rwanda Community Director Shelbye Renfro (left) and WMF Rwanda staff member Annie Jones.

The Journey of Obedience

By Immaculee Uwamaliya, *Volunteer, WMF Rwanda*

As stated in the WMF lifestyle celebrations: “We celebrate obedience as our loving response to the grace of Jesus”

Obedience is submitting to what God requires of us.

Obedience means doing one’s duty and obeying the command of elders, superiors or authorities. This is the general concept of obedience in the Bible.

At Word Made Flesh, obedience helps us to do our duties well with the grace of Jesus Christ. His love helps us also to love the people we serve. This journey of obedience in service is not

by my own strength, but by the grace and mercy of God that is upon me every day.

Obedience is the center of our relationship with God and serving Him. Obedience to God proves our love for Him (1 John 5:2-3), demonstrates our faithfulness to Him (1 John 2:3-6), glorifies Him in the word (1 Peter 2:12), and opens avenues of blessing for us.

When God’s children obey their Heavenly Father, He is glorified. Jesus told us that others will see our good deeds and glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). Of course, performing good deeds requires obedience to the one who calls us to good deeds. A Christian’s testimony of holiness is a strong witness that God is at work in the world.

The Obedience of Saying Yes (and No)

By Ryan Kuja, *Community Director, WMF Colombia*

“I imagine that yes is the only living thing.”
— ee cummings

The Edge, Inside and Out

On a towering rocky precipice high above the sea at the end of the African continent, we looked out over the cacophonous watery expanse, eighteen foot waves marching across the swirling abyss of green and grey. From that stormy, swell washed height, Katie and I were acutely aware that together we had arrived at another precipice, an interior cliff edge of not knowing which direction to take. Did the obedient way forward, one in which we would honor our vocations—both together as a married couple and as individuals—mean staying in this rural village on the Indian Ocean coastline of South Africa? Or did it mean saying goodbye, leaving and possibly never coming back? Would obedience come by saying yes or by saying no to the opportunity to stay and move beyond the season of discernment we’d been in and begin the next steps of pursuing our vision of a rural community development initiative in this place?

The first time I stood in this village nearly a decade earlier, the rocky precipice was there, but the interior one was absent. Back then in this very location, I had an inner vision in which I saw the Kingdom of Heaven fully manifest in this place. The

tension of “the already” and “the not yet” of God’s Kingdom had given way to an unrestricted, complete inbreaking of shalom.

I was captive to that vision of God’s shalomic harmony; for eight years it haunted me, seduced me, and eventually lured me back. I returned there with Katie on two occasions in 2011 and 2012 for several months each time to explore the possibility of moving there following graduation from seminary. Together with the community, Katie and I discerned the creation of a missional project rooted in an asset based approach to community development.

Over the course of those months spent getting to know the land, the people, the sea, and the community, Katie and I also came to get to know ourselves in new ways. A few weeks after we stood together on that rocky precipice above the tempestuous winter ocean, a mirror of our own unsettled souls, we had realized that saying yes would mean capitulating to obedience to something other than our deepest selves, God, and the shalomic vision I had been given.

In that South African village, together Katie and I discerned that to be faithful to our depths, to our lives, to our God, saying no was required. Despite the shalomic vision and hope, obedience, paradoxically and painfully, meant saying no.

Yes and No: A Whole

Perhaps yes is the only living thing, as the great American poet ee cummings wrote, because no is also alive in its own distinctive ways. We can only say yes if we also say no. If yes is the via positiva, the way of affirmation, no is the via negativa, the way of negation. If yes is kataphasis, affirmation, no is apophasis, literally “to say no” in Greek. Yes is the only living thing because yes only exists at all because of no. Yes lives alongside no as night does day. Yes and no are not opposites, but rather they create a whole, a dialectical embrace. Saying yes and saying no are two complementary dimensions of a single contiguous process of obedience. The path of obedience comes through discerning to what we will say yes and to what we will say no.

Articulated thus far has been a rather circuitous way of connecting my and Katie’s past to the present, the then to the now—where we stand atop another

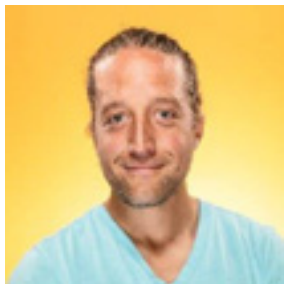
cliff edge: beginning a new WMF field in Medellin, Colombia.

I imagine that yes is the only living thing. And I imagine that saying no is an integral aspect of what has brought us to this new cliff edge. We aren’t in South Africa as we had thought we would be five short years ago. Instead, we are poised to begin something new in Colombia, something which, of course, exists in a future that hasn’t yet been written, in a narrative yet to be told, with cliff edges of interiority yet to be navigated.

To all of which we say yes.

ABOUT RYAN

Ryan and his wife, Katie, are among the newest members of the WMF staff. They are being commissioned this month to begin the work of WMF Colombia. Ryan is a spiritual director, writer, and freelance theologian with a master’s degree in Theology & Culture from The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology, a post graduate diploma from Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in the UK, a bachelor’s degree from University of Vermont and currently working toward a master’s degree in Counseling Psychology. He has spent many years living in economically marginalized communities in South Sudan, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, India, and the Caribbean.



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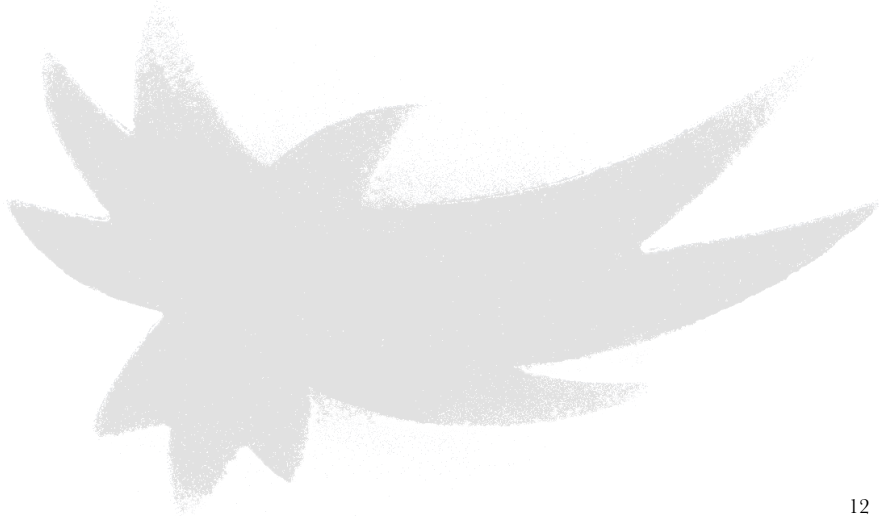
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(Above) Children preparing to surf near Ryan and Katie’s community in Coffee Bay, South Africa (Opposite) The Montessori Preschool in Coffee Bay where Ryan and Katie volunteered.



To Trust and Obey

BOLIVIA

By Sunday Daleng, *Associate Director of Operational Leadership, International Office*

“Until you have given up your self to Him you will not have a real self.”
— C. S. Lewis

Obedience as I have seen it in my own life can be described as an exercise with meekness that can sometimes bring pain to self but it brings great delight to God. Yet, in the process of obediene, the soul enjoys unimaginable blessings and richness in this life and in the hereafter. Real self can only be evident through obedience to the God who owns us all.

I was offered a job in a great company after my graduation. The position was especially preserved for me by the CEO of the company, who said he needed a Christian for that position and the head of department suggested no one else but me. As I walked through my decision-making, I was reminded of all that the Lord had done for me, like healing me completely from epilepsy and placing in me a passion to the unreached. So, I turned down the generous offer and I accepted to work in a Christian ministry with little pay and benefits instead.

Within the week that I obeyed that innermost desire to serve the unreached I met a Board Member of a bank and he inquired what I was up to after my graduation.

“I have accepted to be a missionary,” I told him.
“Will they pay you?”
“It’s not about payment,” I answered.

This for me was somewhat to check my obedience to the service of the Master, the obedience to the call which I had claimed he had put in me. I was offered something “better” but I turned it down. This has taken me through different platforms, to different places and even different continents. But the ultimate goal remains to proclaim the kingdom of God. Here I am today 24 years after that first decision to obey. I am still pursuing to remain obedient to this call upon my life, here at Word Made Flesh and with Nathaniel Mission in Lexington, Ky.

Nothing else satisfies me. The songwriter captured it well when he wrote:

*“When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.
Trust and obey, for there’s no other way,
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”*

ABOUT SUNDAY

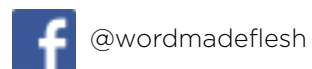
Sunday Daleng is a doctoral degree graduate from Asbury Theological Seminary. He has a passion for the lost and the least, and is doing post-doctoral academic training at Word Made Flesh in order to implement what he learns in this position into his ministry back home in Nigeria.

While in Nigeria, he served as national coordinator of an international Christian ministry, preacher, and leader of revival meetings in different churches and ministries. Sunny and his wife, Salome, are co-founders of Peniel Outreach Ministry International – a ministry in Nigeria with focus on outreach to the lost and the least, as well as leadership development. They live in Wilmore, Ky., with their four children.



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ON OBEDIENCE

LEARN MORE

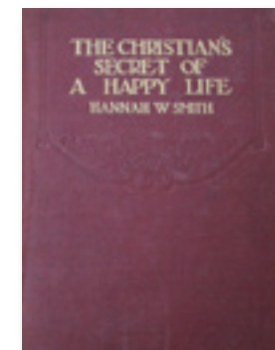
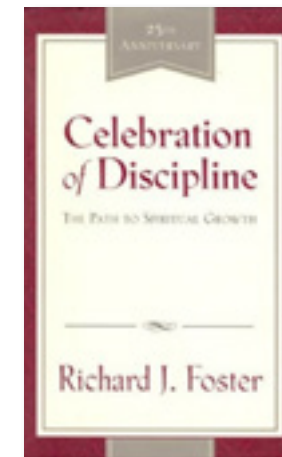
As we reflect on this lifestyle celebration, we invite you to explore some of our staff top picks from media and resources that deal with obedience.

Read



EUGENE PETERSON encourages readers in a society in which we are obsessed with the immediate. Peterson’s time-tested prescription for discipleship remains the same — a long obedience in the same direction. Tucked away in the Hebrew Psalter, Peterson discovered “an old dog-eared songbook,” the Songs of Ascents that were sung by pilgrims on their way up to worship in Jerusalem. In these songs (Psalms 120-134) Peterson finds encouragement for modern pilgrims as we learn to grow in worship, service, joy, work, happiness, humility, community and blessing.

RICHARD J. FOSTER explores the “classic Disciplines,” or central spiritual practices, of the Christian faith. Along the way, Foster shows that it is only by and through these practices that the true path to spiritual growth can be found. In the twenty years since its publication, “Celebration of Discipline” has helped over a million seekers discover a richer spiritual life infused with joy, peace, and a deeper understanding of God.



HANNAH WHITALL SMITH was aware of the age-old problems that plague humanity, even when she wrote this work 130 years ago. We worry about our family, our health, our money, our time, and in the process we run ourselves ragged. In her studies, Smith discovered that there is a way to handle the stressors in our lives in ways that build us up instead of tearing us down through living faithfully in the rest and comfort that Jesus offers us. True happiness does not come from an absence of difficulty, but through the loving embrace of our Savior.

Watch



BROTHER SUN, SISTER MOON

This film is a dramatization of events in the life of St. Francis of Assisi from before his conversion experience through his audience with the pope, including his friendship with St. Clare. The film illustrates St. Francis’ journey of obedience to the call, a decision that continues to influence us here at Word Made Flesh as well as the Body of Christ around the world. Rent it [here](#).

Listen



ANTON BRUCKNER was an Austrian composer best known for his symphonies, masses, and motets. The first are considered emblematic of the final stage of Romanticism. Bruckner’s compositions helped to define contemporary musical radicalism, owing to their dissonances, unprepared modulations, and roving harmonies. Listen to his “[Christus Factus Est](#),” a moving piece which takes its text from Philippians 2:8-10, chiefly, “he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

(See page 2 for our Editor’s reflection on this piece as it relates to the WMF lifestyle celebration of obedience)

Follow Word Made Flesh



Leaping to Obey

By Mary Grimm, *WMF Papua New Guinea*

The first time God requested anything of me, I was seven years old. He asked for my whole life. In that moment, I had a sort of vision of what that would entail. It scared me so much that I said, “No!”

Three years later I was introduced to an over-simplified Evangelical Christian version of salvation — “Ask Jesus into your heart.” I tried “praying the prayer” hoping it would appease God and get me off the hook. God made it clear that nothing less than everything was acceptable.

When I was fourteen, I gave in. I gave my whole life over to God. Others have expressed a feeling of profound joy or elation upon conversion. I felt relief. I was no longer fighting with God. We could get on now with being friends.

That year, God called me into missions, and I — with all the eagerness of someone experiencing being whole for the first time — accepted.

This is how my story of faith and obedience began. Yet all of my life I have been suspicious of authority, idolizing my own control. God, in His mercy, has been patient beyond reckoning. He has pursued me when I ran, waited while I wrestled with my pride and will, and protected me as I danced dangerously close to too many ledges.

When I met Benjamin (my husband) and as we began to grow together, I was at first disturbed and then intrigued by his perspective on obedience. He jumped to attention as a soldier to his commander (a relationship as foreign to me as breathing underwater). Where I had often spent years determining whether or not to obey after being given a command by God, Benjamin would leap immediately at any opportunity to serve and please his Lord. As our life together progressed, I began to realize the beautiful simplicity and blessedness of this approach.

We have both gotten into a habit of seeking God’s will with eagerness and responding when He directs with even more eagerness. Every “Yes” leads to an unimaginable sequence of miracles, beautiful encounters, and experiences of divine provision. Slowly God is building in us a sense of profound security completely unrelated to worldly possessions or circumstances.

I look back at my life and wonder how I ever thought it was okay to dither and drag my heels when the God of the universe had given me a direction. I thank God for His unfailing faithfulness and patience.

(Center) Mary’s first typing students in the remote village in the East Sepik Region of PNG.

I have often heard people in the States say that God doesn’t do miracles anymore. My experience is that many people are so fettered by the ‘safety’ of money, possessions, and back up plans, that the notion of saying “yes” with nothing held back is anathema. When God is all you rely on, miracles abound and the adventure is breathtaking. I am convinced that God’s plan is truly better than ours, but you will not know this in your soul until you step out in

“I am convinced
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He Brings Us Through

By Benjamin Grimm, *WMF Papua New Guinea*

Mary and I have been following a winding and highly adventurous path in preparing and finally coming to PNG, and then having to unexpectedly leave and wait for visas in Australia. The things we have been ordered to do and the places we have been told to go...it’s like something out of an Indiana Jones movie — impossible payments, cars that should not drive, total strangers who put themselves at our disposal without any pretense, and supplies that show up out of nowhere. An important question which must be made in all this heady talk is: why? The answer is that God supplies these things to meet our needs (Matthew 6:25-33) but as verse 33 points out — it’s not about you! It’s about doing His plan. His awesome, amazing, incredible, impossible, (insert several other superlatives) PLAN!

How many people can see every consequence of their decisions? None you say? We know God sees everything. We know He has plans and tests that are for our good (Proverbs 3:12). So is it difficult then to recognize that an omniscient and Almighty God whose name is Jealous (Exodus 34:14) and Love (1 John 4:8) desires you to be well and seeks after you persistently? Is it such a stretch to believe He will bring you through circumstances regardless of what you see and understand?

Example given: We could have easily become grumpy and withdrawn in our hideously overstayed wait in Australia for PNG work visas. We miss our PNG home, family, and friends. We even miss speaking Yamano. But according to our prayer: He has used us here in Australia. What’s more He heard the cry of our hearts to bandage wounds, bring hope and inspire

faith. Many people donated medical supplies for the work of WMF Papua New Guinea. If we had not been delayed in obtaining our visas to return to PNG, none of the eleventh hour shipments, help, and logistics would have shown up and we would be struggling against a proverbial mountain of interconnected problems. Did you know, as I write this, YWAM’s Papua New Guinea ocean carrier is docked at the slip in Cairns for refit? This has happened on the same night that the support team at the church and I had been talking about renting a container to get all the supplies to PNG. That’s right: so many supplies have been donated to WMF Papua New Guinea that we cannot possibly carry them back in our personal luggage but need to ship them via ocean-going vessel.

So think about this little slice of what God is using us for and apply it to your situation today, right now. What has He been telling you to do? Don’t know? Ask. Fervently. Then listen. Carefully. (Matthew 7:7) God has a perfect plan for your life starting this very moment. If you haven’t been seeking Him as though your very life depends on it, you are missing out on the greatest fulfillment you will ever know.

ABOUT MARY AND BENJAMIN

Mary and Benjamin Grimm are working as WMF staff alongside the Yamano people of Papua New Guinea. Mary focuses on creating adult literacy programs and completing a translation of the Bible in Yamano. Benjamin focuses on addressing medical and economic needs. They live with their daughter, Joya, in a remote village in the East Sepik Region. The Grimms look forward to partnering with the Yamano in establishing a long-term Word Made Flesh community presence that will be of service to the Yamano and the surrounding communities.



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Meet our Staff

WMF STAFF



Doina Micrincor
WMF Moldova Community Center
Nurse /IMPACT Club Coordinator

"He led me to a place of safety, for he delights in me."
Psalm 18:19

I was a fifteen-year-old adolescent in the village of my birth when I discovered my heart's desire to serve among vulnerable children. Back then I did not know the Lord. Years passed and God changed me. When I became His child, the desire to serve among children-at-risk came to life in my heart.

During my first year of medical grad school, I asked a friend to help me find an organization that served among vulnerable children where I could volunteer – and thus I came to La VIA (WMF Moldova). In 2013 I was invited to join the staff of this community which is like a family in Christ for me.

I joined staff as medical assistant/nurse where, together with the children and their pain, I grew to know God better. This God, who, for love of me, brought me out to a safe place where I can love, cry and rejoice with the children and their families who are often an example of faith, hope, simplicity and sincerity.

This year God's blessings continue to cover me as I anticipate becoming a mother in the month of December!

CONNECT WITH WMF MOLDOVA:
Email the Moldova Community Director
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Andy Baker
Regional Coordinator,
WMF South America

Andy loves family and a good adventure. He's also passionate about his contribution to world. He believes that an honest faith journey will lead us to look beyond ourselves and consider the needs of others. In 2001, Andy and his wife Andrea moved to Bolivia to serve vulnerable populations in the sprawling city of El Alto. Together they founded Word Made Flesh Bolivia, a ministry presence in the red-light district of El Alto and SutiSana, a social enterprise that offers alternative employment to survivors of prostitution and human-trafficking. Currently Andy serves as Regional Coordinator for South America, offering oversight and support to WMF fields and staff in the region. He is father to 4 active boys and husband to one amazing wife.

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[WORDMADEFLESH.ORG](http://wordmade flesh.org)

Lifestyle Celebrations

ABOUT WMF

WORD MADE FLESH IS UNITED IN AN INTENTIONAL SPIRITUALITY THAT IS EXPRESSED THROUGH NINE CORE VALUES. EACH ISSUE OF THE CRY FOCUSES ON ONE OF THE CELEBRATIONS

Intimacy We celebrate intimacy with Jesus to be our highest calling and our created purpose.

Community We celebrate community as a means for discipleship and service.

Submission We celebrate submission to Jesus, each other and the poor.

Obedience We celebrate obedience as our loving response to the grace of Jesus.

Service We celebrate service as an expression of our fellowship.

Brokenness We celebrate brokenness as our responsibility in ministry among the broken.

Humility We celebrate humility before God and humanity.

Simplicity We celebrate simplicity as a privilege in identification with Jesus and the poor.

Suffering We celebrate suffering as a willing sacrifice in serving Jesus

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Our staff and communities are funded by donations from people like you. Please visit wordmade flesh.org/donate/ to support our work around the world.





our vision

Word Made Flesh is called and committed to serve Jesus among the most vulnerable of the world's poor. This calling is realized as a prophetic ministry for, and an incarnational, holistic mission among the poor. We focus our energy to make Jesus known among the poor while reconciling the church with the poor.

Please consider supporting WMF by purchasing an annual print subscription of our advocacy journal. Visit purcharity.com/the-cry

THE **CRY**

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