

Obedient to the End

Archibald Rutledge, one of America's best-loved outdoor writers and the first poet laureate of South Carolina, wrote that one day he met a man whose dog had just been killed in a forest fire. Heartbroken, the man explained to Rutledge how it happened.

Because he worked out-of-doors, he often took his dog with him. That morning, he left the animal in a clearing and gave him a command to stay and watch his lunch bucket while he went into the forest. His faithful friend understood, for that's exactly what he did.

Then a fire started in the woods, and soon the blaze spread to the spot where he was, in perfect obedience to his master's word. With tearful eyes, the dog owner said, "I always had to be careful what I told him to do, because I knew he would do it."

If a dog can be expected to obey his master, how much more should we who know the Lord and have been redeemed be obedient to His commands? It is a thought-provoking question early in 2007 as we consider our lives and our relationship to God. Joyfully, I can report that visits to our centers assure me that our associates are serving our residents out of personal obedience to God.

This year, may you and I be so dependable in doing the Lord's will that our Master would be able to say of us, "I knew he (or she) would do it!"

--Beecher Hunter