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## **Exchange 1 March 2014 Discussion Questions: “Growing Gracefully”**

Can you think of times in your life when obedience has been difficult?

How did you feel when your parents required obedience from you? Do you think it is a natural part of growing up to challenge and rebel?

Are we pre-disposed to obey authority figures?

Is obedience the foundation of a functioning society? What do we think the balance is in Australia between obedience and insubordination?

Can obedience eventually lead to a loss of individuality?

Can blind obedience be a bad thing? Are there times when blind obedience is necessary?

God’s commandment is clear – ‘do not steal’. In the classic ethical dilemma, is it ok to steal a loaf of bread to feed your starving family? Is this a lack of obedience or a different understanding of what God requires of us?

Is there a difference between obedience and legalism?

The Pharisees in the Bible were very obedient, yet Jesus repeatedly expressed disapproval of the way they lived. Are some rules more important than others?

If someone has complete faith that God knows what is best for him or her, will it be easy for that person to obey? Was it difficult for Jesus to obey? Why or why not?

When the rich young ruler asks Jesus what is required for salvation (Mark 10:17), Jesus first lists a known set of rules, but then adds another requirement (giving everything to the poor). Why this addition, why not just have a complete list?

Are some people called to obey different commands than others? If so, why? And how do we know what God asks of us?

Stanley Milgram, influenced by the events of the holocaust, said “The disappearance of a sense of responsibility is the most far-reaching consequence of submission to authority.” Is it possible to be so intent on following certain orders that we disobey other more important directives? Can such orders come from both civil and religious sources?

When might obedience to God’s will be used as a manipulation by man? How can we protect ourselves from this manipulation?

Is obedience optional in order to be saved? Why is obedience so important to God when he makes it clear that we’re saved by grace not works? How can we feel secure in our salvation?