

Guidance in life through Obedience to Christ
Psalm 119:105-106

Introduction: *Psalm 32:8-11; Proverbs 3:5-7*

1. We all need guidance in our lives, but who are we allowing to give us that much needed guidance?

A. There are many voices in the world clamoring for our attention and offering to help us with whatever concerns we may have –

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me...a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”

B. All these voices could lead us astray if we are not careful – “And he (Jesus) said unto them, Take heed what ye hear.”

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

Note: When listening to voices it is important to remember –

1) God will never lead you contrary to His Word – “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness...from such withdraw thyself.”

2) If there is any compromise involved it is not God speaking to you – “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.”

3) Listen to the cautions of the Holy Spirit – “But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

4) Is the person I am receiving counsel from a godly spirit filled believer who knows God's Word – *“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens unto (godly) counsel is wise.”*

C. The only one however who can give us perfect guidance in life is our heavenly Father – *“...all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.”*

Note: But to receive His instructions we must...

1) We must be listening to Him – *“Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.”*

2) We must be trusting Him – *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”*

3) We must obey Him - *“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”*

2. Obedience can be defined as doing what God says, how he says, and when He says to do it –

Note: All three of these aspects are required, or it's disobedience.

A. To intentionally ignore what the Lord says and 1# do what we desire, 2# in the way we want to do it 3# and according to our time schedule is outright rebellion –

“For rebellion [is as] the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness [is as] iniquity and idolatry... An evil [man] seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.”

B. In essence we are telling God that our way is better, and we want control of our own lives -

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe [and] to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth...And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God...But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.”

Note: We often try to excuse our deliberate disobedience by claiming that we just did not know any better or that we made a mistake, but in reality, we are rebelling against God -

C. Life at its best is only found in obedience to the Lord – “guidance and blessing through obedience.”

- 1) He created us -
- 2) He loves us -
- 3) He knows exactly how we should live our lives -

Note: To turn our backs on His plans for our lives is equivalent to rejecting the best He could possibly give us. That is so foolish!!!

God says – *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected (hopeful) end.”*

The wisest thing we can do is to submit to the Lord and learn what is required to live in obedience to Him – *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

Note: That is why the following is so important –

- 1) Reading and studying your Bible faithfully – *“search the scriptures.”*
- 2) Meditating on Scripture – *“Lamp unto my feet...”*
- 3) Hiding God’s Word in your heart – *“Thy word have I hid in my heart...”*
- 4) Attending all the services of your local church – *“Forsake not”*
- 5) Listening to the pastors preaching and teaching – *“receive my words...”*

- 6) Keeping a tender and open heart – *“harden not...”*
- 7) Responding to the invitation

3. Obedience is seldom easy –

A. Obedience requires that we . . . lean not on your own understanding –
Proverbs 3:5-7

B. Obedience requires that we be sensitive to the Holy Spirit – *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”*

Note: One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth –
(John 16:13) “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

C. Obedience requires that we be aware of God’s timing -

Note: Whatever the Lord tells us to do is to be done according to His time schedule not ours. *Isaiah 64:4* says that the Lord acts in behalf of those who wait for Him.

Quote: Since God is omniscient, He knows the perfect timing for every situation. If we get ahead of Him or lag behind, we’ll miss what He had in mind. To help us, He’s given us an internal timer in the person of the Holy Spirit. When we’re sensitive to His voice, He shows us when to move ahead.

D. Obedience requires us to walk by faith, where the way is not always clear
– *“Walk by faith and not by sight...”*

Note: Obedience would be much easier if we knew exactly where we’re going, but sometimes God calls us to step out in faith when the way is not clear.

Note: He will however reveal the way as we move forward in obedience – *“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

E. Obedience requires us to follow God's instruction even if it seems unreasonable – *“My ways are not your ways...”*

1) The Lord might ask us to do something which seems illogical – *“My thoughts are not your thoughts...”*

2) The Lord might ask us to do something which is beyond our ability – *“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”*

Note: Even if we feel unqualified, afraid, and resistant, instead of making excuses or denying that God could have possibly said that, we should be like Joshua. When the Lord told him to conquer Jericho by marching around it seven times, he must have thought it was the strangest battle plan ever devised. But God knew exactly what He was doing and secured the victory through Joshua's trusting obedience. (*Joshua 1:9; 6:1-20*)

We can never put the Lord in a box by confining Him to what seems reasonable to us.

F. Obedience requires us to have courage –

Note: When God called Joshua to accomplish the gigantic task of leading the Israelites into the promise land, He told him, *“Be strong and very courageous!”*

Note: God also told him =

- 1) Do not be Afraid
- 2) Do not be Dismayed
- 3) For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go

Note: The same is true for us today. Courage is essential for obedience in the Christian life.

If we're afraid of the challenges God places before us, we need to cast aside those fears and move ahead believing that He will be with us every step of the way.

G. Obedience requires us to accept conflict –

1) Obedience to the Lord often results in conflict with others -

Example: This is what happened to Peter and the apostles when they were preaching about Jesus in Jerusalem. When they were confronted by the Council and told to stop preaching, they replied, *“We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).*

2) If we stop doing what God says every time someone objects, we’ll never fulfill His will – “Do I seek to please men or God...”

H. Obedience requires us to be willing to be corrected by God and others – Humility!

Note: The correction of the Lord and the rebuke of others is not always present but it is necessary to keep us on the path of obedience – *“... have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”*

Conclusion: review: Obedience is seldom easy

- 1. Obedience requires that we . . . lean not on your own understanding**
- 2. Obedience requires that we be sensitive to the Holy Spirit**
- 3. Obedience requires that we be aware of God’s timing**
- 4. Obedience requires us to walk by faith, where the way is not always clear**
- 5. Obedience requires us to follow God’s instruction even if it seems unreasonable**
- 6. Obedience requires us to have courage**
- 7. Obedience requires us to accept conflict**
- 8. Obedience requires us to be willing to be corrected by God and others**

Note: Our responsibility is to obey God and leave all the consequences to Him.

Since the Lord has promised to guide us, we have nothing to fear if we're following His leadership. He is sovereign over everything and controls all the consequences. There is nothing He cannot handle or will not provide for us if we'll listen, trust, and obey Him.

- 1) Think of a time you disobeyed the Lord by either not doing what He said, not doing it as He desired, or doing it at the wrong time. What happened as a result? What lessons did you learn?
- 2) Have you ever sensed the Lord calling you to something that seemed unreasonable? How did you respond? Looking back, what have been the results of your choice to either obey or disobey?
- 3) Look at the list of requirements for obedience – How well have you been obeying the Lord?