

Module 2: Walking as a Disciple

A disciple walks in obedience – Part 2 (God’s Will)

Last week, we looked at the importance of obedience, especially obedience to God’s Word and God’s commandments. This week, we continue to look at the importance of following God’s will for your life and His will in general.

Obedience is the key to walking in a pure relationship with the Lord. Yet these days obedience is often compromised, for we live in days where everyone does as they see fit. It reminds of the Scripture out of *Judges 21: 25* *In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes (AMPLIFIED)*. They were therefore not following the will of the Lord, for we need to understand the will of the Lord is NOT the ways of the world, for the will of the Lord is one of goodness, love, kindness, purity and holiness while the ways of the world is one of jealousy, rage, hatred, strife and violence.

In the days of the judges, following the reign of Joshua, we find the Israelites had fallen into wickedness. We read of this account in *Judges 2: 7* *And yet they did not listen to their judges, for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed down to them. They turned quickly out of the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not so. 18* *When the Lord raised them up judges, then He was with the judge and delivered them out of the hands of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to relent because of their groanings by reason of those who oppressed and vexed them. 19* *But when the judge was dead, they turned back and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, following and serving other gods, and bowing down to them. They did not cease from their practices or their stubborn way.*

On several occasion does one find in the Book of Judges the phrase that everyone did as they saw fit. People were idolatrous, rebellious and they had a wonderful time partaking in their flavour of pleasure and deceit. The Israel nation were therefore no longer following in the footsteps of God, as diligently presented and upheld by Moses and Joshua.

We are therefore presented in the days of judges with a nation that had fell victim to moral relativism, which means that everyone’s truth was based on their own outlook, perception, understanding and standards. The moral code of the day was therefore not determined by God’s righteous law but each and every one’s own form of truth. Moral relativism is when one ascribes a truth which is only relevant to oneself and of one’s immediate surroundings. It is therefore man following his own will, and not the will of the Lord.

It is a frightening situation when mankind no longer seeks to be governed by absolute truths, but rather seek to be governed by their own moral compass and by their own sense of right and wrong. Quite simply, this is idolatry and

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rebellion against the divine and natural laws of God that will always supersede the laws of mankind. For when we turn our back on God and seek to do as everyone sees fit as in the days of judges, then we find a pending chaotic system of functionality where nothing makes sense. Why would anything after all make sense when rebellion and idolatry is the fodder of the devil?

It says in Romans 1: 18For God's [holy] wrath and indignation are revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who in their wickedness repress and hinder the truth and make it inoperative. 19For that which is known about God is evident to them and made plain in their inner consciousness, because God [Himself] has shown it to them. 20For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made (His handiworks). So [men] are without excuse [altogether without any defense or justification], 21Because when they knew and recognized Him as God, they did not honor and glorify Him as God or give Him thanks. But instead they became futile and godless in their thinking [with vain imaginings, foolish reasoning, and stupid speculations] and their senseless minds were darkened.

Indeed, in the days of Judges the people no longer honoured and glorified Him as God or give Him thanks, instead they became futile and godless in their thinking [with vain imaginings, foolish reasoning, and stupid speculations] and their senseless minds were darkened.

We see the measure of such a fall in *Judges 17: So after he returned the silver to his mother, she took two hundred shekels of silver and gave them to a silversmith, who used them to make the idol. And it was put in Micah's house. 5 Now this man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and some household gods and installed one of his sons as his priest. 6 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit. 7 A young Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, who had been living within the clan of Judah, 8 left that town in search of some other place to stay. On his way he came to Micah's house in the hill country of Ephraim. 9 Micah asked him, "Where are you from?" "I'm a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah," he said, "and I'm looking for a place to stay."*

Judges 17 relates the story of Micah who found no problem in serving the Lord while having idols in his house. He also installed a personal priest, even though the Law of Moses dictated that priests must come from the Levite tribe and must be stationed at the tabernacle. We also read of another priest who had left his town, supposedly because the priest wasn't being taken care of by the other tribes as commanded by God. Micah would eventually offer the Levite, who had arrived seeking help, lodgings if he stayed and became his personal priest. Everything we read in Judges 17 speaks of a situation where everyone was doing fit as they saw – the Levites were rebellious, the people were idolatrous and the people in general were

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making up their own rules and regulations as they pleased. There was no more absolute truth, meaning no absolute truth was governing the people only a philosophical sense of moral relativism.

Indeed, people were doing as they see fit in the days of judges because the people had no king. The Book of Judges ends with 25: *In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit. (NIV)* The story of Samuel follows the age of judges, with Samuel being the priest and the prophet who anoints a king in the form of Saul and later David. A king was needed to guide the people, but it was God's intention for the people not to have an earthly king but to serve the King of Heaven. Yet they remained rebellious, choosing an earthly king, not heeding the warnings of taxes and wars and being submitted to a centralized government.

The message from judges is clear – if one follows no king, you follow your own way and so end up in trouble. And this applies to us today more than ever – but we need to follow the King of kings. We need to follow the most High Lord and we need to do as He commands and dictates because of our love and respect for Him.

A disciple follows and obeys a King - Jesus. And the Lord's word is true. His guidance is pure. A disciple does not do as he sees fit. He obeys. He listens. And he follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

God's will – His very intent for your life, His purpose and design and mandate – must be followed and obeyed above all else. For then we shall walk in blessing, and in favour with the Lord. This reminds me of *Proverbs 3: My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; 2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart, 4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct[a] your paths.*

If we truly seek the Lord's Presence and His glory in our lives, then obey and trust Him, and acknowledge His will. For this is the duty of a disciple.

In 1 Corinthians 6 Paul writes the following: *11 But you were washed clean (purified by a complete atonement for sin and made free from the guilt of sin), and you were consecrated (set apart, hallowed), and you were justified [pronounced righteous, by trusting] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the [Holy] Spirit of our God. 12 Everything is permissible (allowable and lawful) for me; but not all things are helpful (good for me to do, expedient and profitable when considered with other things). Everything is lawful for me, but I will not become the slave of anything or be brought under its power.*

Paul thus alluded to the fact that everything is permissible but not all things are helpful and that everything is lawful, but that he will not become the

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slave of anything or be brought under its power. Paul was speaking from a point of view of someone who was serving the Lord under the Covenant of Blood, and not the Law, but he still made the point that there must be a prevailing sense of right and wrong which one adheres to and follows. And that conscious movement adopted by Paul to obey in the pursuit of a holy and pure life sprung forth out of his service to God and not man. Paul was thus under the Covenant of God and so came under the submission of God's ways, and by this submission followed God's absolute truths instead of doing as he sees fit.

Just as it was alluded in the days of judges of the importance of following a king, so Paul also made this point clear. From the judges to Paul, we find a shift from the Law to Grace but no matter the shift, man needs to be governed by a king, and in this case as with us today, it is the heavenly King whom we should be obeying and following all the days of our life. Without a king who sits on the throne of our heart and who captures our soul in the embrace of love, we are doomed by a destructive approach towards moral relativism.

Question is, are you led daily by the King of kings or are you determining your own path? A disciple of the Lord seeks no other path or way except the way of the Lord. For the Lord Jesus is the Way, Truth and Life. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out to lead us in all Truth and to be our counsellor, advisor and helper. The Spirit has come to lead us in the will of the Lord, in the path of the Lord and the way of the Lord. Why? Because when we follow the will, way and path of God by walking in His Spirit and Truth we shall walk in His goodness, strength, holiness and purity. The will of the Lord also seeks to lead us to those green pastures and quiet rivers of Psalm 23.

It says in Proverbs 19 verse 21: Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails. And also Isaiah 55 verse 9: As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

You see, we need to follow the will of the Lord, and we need to follow His path and we need to follow His ways for ultimately His purpose shall prevail. And indeed, His ways and thoughts are higher than ours! We need to therefore trust and have faith in God's direction, purpose and desire for our lives. As disciples we need to walk in that faith and trust, and be obedient to His will, to His purpose and to His ways.

A prevailing atmosphere of everyone doing as they see fit (therefore following one's own will) leads to a situation as described in *2 Timothy 3: 1BUT UNDERSTAND this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear]. 2For people will be lovers of self and [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing),*

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disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane. 3[They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good. 4[They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God. 5For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].

Indeed, we need to follow a King lest we stumble in our ways of doing as we see fit, for such ways are foolish, unwise and rebellious. Only when follow the true King shall we be guided and strengthened in true wisdom, as His hand rests upon us and His love leads us down to green pastures and quiet waters. **At the end of the day, a disciple of the Lord does not do as he or she sees fit. They follow God's wisdom, His plan and His way.**

Yes, we do not do as we see fit. We do not do as we please. It is not about our will but the will of the Lord. It is not about our plans, but the plan of the Lord. It is not about our wisdom, but the wisdom of God that we must seek and follow. Let us remember *Mathew 6: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* And also ... *33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Matthew 6 is a prayer that we have heard and said many times, but it remains shocking how we have become casual and nonchalant when repeating these words, not grasping the true meaning of this prayer. If we can truly abide in the perfect will of God, then we shall abide in the perfect life of Jesus. In other words, there is perfect life in the will of the Lord.

And so we must always remember that a disciple obeys the will of God above all else. This was after all the teaching of Jesus in John 15, where He urges His believers to abide in Him so that He may abide in them. And this only happens when we truly abide in His will. But then again, we need to know God (John 10:10) so that we may know His voice and thus know His will. We need to be filled by the Spirit for the Spirit of God knows the mind of the Father (1 Corinthians 2:11-12), thus the will of the Lord.

Let us pause for a moment – because these days it seems that the Lord is asking us more and more to pause, reflect, consider and ponder deeply upon our walk with Him – what is Jesus really asking us to pray? He is not just giving us a simple form of a prayer to recite blindly and without any passion or love - He is asking us to pray the ultimate prayer of deceleration regarding our faith, our hope, our obedience, our willingness, our faithfulness, and our desire to serve Him.

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Jesus is asking us to live a life where our relationship with Him and our relationship with each other reflect the state which exists right now in heaven. Are we grasping this? We are praying for His will to be done on earth as it is heaven, meaning that in heaven there is love, there is truth, there is holiness, there is honesty, there is fairness and there is unity among all. How the Lord is longing for His people to grasp the essential truth that He wants His will, settled in heaven, to be reflected in us and governing us.

And there is no greater testimony of our desire to follow Him as His children than by the prayer of asking the Lord that His will be done and not ours. And that “will” in the Greek language speak of desire, purpose and intent. Therefore, Jesus instructs us to pray that the will of the heavenly Father - that same Sovereign Lord of Isaiah 61 - be done, and we are to seek, pursue and desire that God’s purpose, desire, intent and desire for us all in this world be done, and not our own.

But can we truly look in the mirror and can we truly look deep into our hearts and honestly say that we are seeking the will of the Lord? Are we truly living a life according to His will that reflects the glory of heaven and therefore His complete love?

If we truly seek to walk in God’s love, His life and light, then we need to seek His will, but not only seek it, submit to it and yield to it. It is one thing to pray for His will, but it another to actually yield and submit. If we pray for God’s will to be done, we are asking God’s plan and purpose to take centre stage at the expense of our own plans.

It is easy to say Lord let Your will be done, but are we actually submitting to His will and are we really yielding to it? Many are our plans but only the plan of the Lord prevails. So often we can pray for His will but in our hearts we still seek our own way and we seek for own plan to come into fruition. And when seek to follow our own way and the road leads down a rocky path, how often do we need blame God?

It is indeed a very powerful prayer when we truly submit and yield to God’s will, for this is when we completely and utterly give our lives in to His hands. This requires ultimate trust, faith and sacrifice. If we truly seek God’s life and to walk in divine live, then this is a step we need to take - to yield completely and utterly without question or argument.

It is all about the will of God. From the beginning to the end is has always been the will of the Lord. For this reason, again, Revelations 1 reads: 8 *“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*

The will of the Lord - His intent, purpose and desire - existed at the beginning and will exist at the end, always pure, always true, always perfect, always real and never wavering. From the beginning until now and until forever it has always and will always and shall always be about God and

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about His will for our lives – we who are the masterpiece of His creation. And His will is so designed and so exists to prosper us, to protect us, to make us joyous and blessed. And to prosper speaks primarily of being more like God in spirit, soul and body.

And now we may ponder what the will of the Lord is. The long and the short of it is that for every individual the Lord has desired a certain path be walked – and that this journey becomes a journey of spiritual discovery and revelation as we seek Him, pursue Him and desire Him. The long and the short of it in broad strokes is that the Lord has called us all to be set apart unto Him – set apart in His love, truth, holiness, purity, life and light. We have been called to love Him and to love each other as He loves us.

Above all, the will of the Lord is for us to walk in the realisation that we are born to be His sons and daughters, here on earth and for all eternity. It is only when we allow ourselves to follow His will – therefore seek His ways and purposes and delights above our own – that we truly learn to be children of the Most High.

It is only when we come to the realisation that it is all about God and that when we seek Him above all, as Jesus urged as to do in Matthew 6 that His perfect and complete and beautiful will for our lives will be consecrated to His glory and to our eternal profit.

So, let us then pause and consider that when we pray that His will be done, that we indeed allow God to guide and lead us as His children of light in a world of darkness to the honour and glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Let us truly seek for His will to be done in our lives to reflect His will and way, as it is in heaven.

God is indeed the Alpha and the Omega – and to walk in the will of the Lord requires us to walk in fear and in the love of God. That is after all the will of God – to love Him and to love each other as we should. And as we have seen, we cannot do so unless we have learned to walk in the fear of God, to cultivate a holy consciousness and be aware of His holiness and His will.

In the post-modern world mankind loves to be in control of his own destiny and fate, labouring daily to build his own empire or kingdom. But sadly as man keeps to his own will, he will gather treasures that rust. We can only find our true purpose, peace, security, hope and future in the will of the Lord. And so Jesus called us to seek first the Kingdom of God and then all things will be added. No matter how intelligent, wise or clever we think we are we will cause greater wear and tear to our spirit, soul and body when we keep walking in our will and not the will of the Lord.

Indeed, when we walk in the will of the Lord we walk in His footsteps and we therefore walk along a path made straight and the rough ways smooth. The Lord will go before those who follow His will and seek His glory. He knows what is best for us. He must be in control to keep us straight on our course

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through life. We, however, have to submit and come under His complete sovereignty and authority

At times we forget Matthew 22 which says “Teacher, which kind of commandment is great and important (the principal kind) in the Law? [Some commandments are light—which are heavy?] 37 And He replied to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (intellect). 38 This is the great (most important, principal) and first commandment.”

Obedience should always be our focus when it comes to our spiritual walk, and we must become careful that our pride does not prevent us from following the word of God. We must also be careful that we do not become man-fearing instead of God-fearing, for then we tend to follow in obedience man instead of following God above all else. The Lord must thus always remain the centre and all of our lives and He should be the one who dictates our path. It is easy at time to get our priorities wrong, to even place ministry above a relationship with God, or we would cling to this world, even our families, above God as He dictates.

A disciple need to remember it is ALL about God, and His Kingdom, and His Truth, and His Way, and it is about bringing the lost unto Him. It is certainly not all about our kingdoms and stature and importance. We need to obey Him, obey His will, and we need to walk as the Spirit leads and guides.

The Lord deserves all our attention and devotion, otherwise the greatest commandment flies out of the window. He deserves our utmost obedience, no matter what He asks or commands, for we are His disciples.

In conclusion, let us be reminded of the following Scripture: John 14:15 "If you love me, keep my commands ...

In other words, if we love the Lord, we shall obey; we shall submit, yield to His wisdom and be led in Spirit and Truth.

This is the duty of the disciple – to seek the Lord’s will, to seek His Kingdom and to follow in the ways, teachings and commands of the our Lord Jesus.