

New Testament Church

Lesson 6

Careful Obedience to the Lord's Will
(Submission to the Lord's Authority)

Looking Ahead for a Moment

- In lessons 7 and 8, we will be discussing how we need authority for the things we do in service to God.
- All that will be in vain unless we (1) understand Christ has been given all authority—“King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:16); (2) His authority is expressed in the N.T. Scriptures; (3) the source, then, for any religious teaching or practice is the N.T.; (4) we must completely submit to His authority.

How can we know God's will?

- For individual Christians, and for local churches?
- Intuitively? By what we think or feel is right?
 - “O Lord, I know the way of man is **not in _____**; it is not in man who walks to direct **his own steps** (Jeremiah 10:23).
 - “There is a way that **seems** right to a man, but its end is the way of _____” (Proverbs 16:25).

How can we know God's will?

- “No one knows the things of God except the _____ of _____” (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - The Holy Spirit has revealed the “things of God” so that we can know, too (1 Corinthians 2:12–13, 16).
 - He has revealed in the Scriptures everything we need to know to please Him (2 Timothy 3:16–17).
- In which portion of Scripture do we find God's will for us today?
 - Hebrews 9:15–17.

Don't change what is revealed!

- We must not adapt it to the cultural standards of the day.
- As a church, we can't just go with what makes us the most marketable.
- And we certainly don't "teach as doctrine" what is decided by majority opinion.

Once we know it, how do we respond?

- How does a servant respond to his Lord and King?
 - “But why do you call ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not DO the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).
 - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who DOES the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).
- How do we show our love for Christ?
 - “He who has My commandments and KEEPS them, it is he who loves Me” (John 14:21).

Once we know it, how do we respond?

- How do we form and maintain fellowship with God?
 - “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we KEEP His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not KEEP His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not him” (1 John 2:3–4).
- How does the body respond to its Head?
- But is it really necessary for salvation?
 - “And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9).

How carefully and strictly?

- Any O.T. accounts that can illustrate the degree to which we should obey?
 - Nadab and Abihu offered that “which He had not _____them” (Lev. 10:1–3).
 - What happened to Uzzah? (2 Samuel 6; 1 Chron. 13).
 - The LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order” (1 Chron. 15:13).
 - What about those who did all the Lord commanded—like Noah when he built the ark (Gen. 6), and the Israelites when they conquered Jericho (Josh. 6)?

How carefully and strictly?

- “Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:19).
- “Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).
- Submission is as **wide** as the least commandment and as **deep** as the innermost thought.

“Legalist! You’re just like the Pharisees!”

- “No, I’m just doing what Jesus did.”
 - “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me” (John 4:34).
 - “I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me” (John 5:30).
 - “I always do those things that please Him” (John 8:29).
 - “But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do” (John 14:31).
 - “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:10).

Timothy Got It!

- “If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have **carefully followed**” (1 Timothy 4:6).
- “But you have **carefully followed** my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance...” (2 Timothy 3:10).
- Parakoloutheo: “to follow faithfully, i.e. a standard or rule, to conform one’s self to” (Thayer).

Instructions to Individuals / Churches

- To which are the instructions more precisely stated, more circumscribed?
 - What this local church does in worship today, will it be the same as what we did last week, and the week before, etc.?
 - By contrast, what I do today outside the assembly, will it be the same as what Cary McDaniel does?
- What can be done “at home” can’t always be done “in church” (1 Cor. 11:22, 34; 14:34–35).

Instructions to Individuals / Churches

- What we do individually—is it all “for edification”? (1 Cor. 14:26).
- “But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse” (1 Cor. 8:8).
 - We do a number of things individually that do not “commend us to God”—things that do not make us better or worse spiritually.
 - Is that the case with the things we do collectively?

Instructions to Individuals / Churches

- And so in the next few weeks, when we talk about the things we have authority to do, we'll be **primarily** concerned with the things we do collectively—the things we do as a local church.