

Q2 L13 - Living by the Word of God - 2020-06-27

Doug Batchelor: Hello, to our friends who are listening and watching from around the world in all different parts of the country. We're very thankful that you've tuned in for our "Sabbath School Study Hour" this morning, and we have a very important lesson. It is the last lesson in this quarter study on the Scriptures and--but before we get to that, we want to tell you that we do have a free offer, and the free offer is--because today's lesson is talking about walking in the Word and not just reading it, but obeying it, we're going to talk about obedience.

We have a free offer, and you will really be blessed by this, and not only should you read this, you may want to order this because there's a lot of Christians out there that think that obedience is legalism, and this will answer that question, and that's the title: "Is Obedience Legalism?" And it is a beautifully illustrated study guide. It's got colored pages. It's easy to read. You want a free copy of this? You can call the number, 866-788-3966, or that's 866-Study-More, and another way you can get it is you can actually look at it online, and so, if you want to download it and read it that way, then simply text 40544, and what you text is "SH041." And so text "SH041" to 40544, and then you can read it right there online. Of course, this is only for North America and U.S. territories if you're calling, but we want you to take advantage of that.

Something else I think I should mention is, because this is our last study in our quarter on Scripture, that means we're getting ready to go into a new study, and so I'm really looking forward to this. We're going to be talking about "Making Friends for God: The Joy of Sharing in His Mission." You know, these studies are incredible that we've been doing this quarter. There's three secrets to victory in the Christian life. Prayer--we've been studying prayer in recent quarterlies--reading the Bible, and sharing your faith.

You know, there are three pieces of furniture that were in the holy place of the sanctuary. There was the bread: That's the Bible. There was the light: That is the witnessing, sharing your faith. There's the altar of incense: That's a symbol for prayer. Those are the secret weapons to living a vital, victorious Christian life. So take advantage of the free offer.

You'll want to talk to your local church and find out how you can get the Sabbath School quarterly. I know a lot of people right now are still not meeting in person. A lot of churches are beginning to phase into in-person meetings, and some of the cities, not quite yet. And so you can get this online. And so you can go to the Sabbath School website, and you can study the lesson online. So before we dive into our study for today, we should begin with a word of prayer.

Father in heaven, we just are so thankful for the promise that, if we turn to you and we pray for the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Spirit will come and give us wisdom and understanding. Right now, Lord, as we listen as I teach and speak, we pray the Holy Spirit will take charge of this presentation in every aspect so that the power of the Word might be seen and felt in people's hearts and lives. And we thank You. We claim this promise and pray in Jesus' name, amen.

"Living by the Word of God." We've been talking about all the different nuances of how to study the Word of God, and now we're going to be talking about "Living by the Word of God." You know, the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness, and he said, "If You're the Son of God, turn these stones into bread." And Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" The Lord does not want us just to be looking at the Word. He wants us to be living by the Word. The Word of God is for us to follow, for us to live by, and that's what we're going to study today. We spent the last 12 lessons talking about a lot of different aspects and facets of how to study the Bible and the hermeneutics of the Bible and understanding the Bible and approaching the Scriptures, and the history of the Scriptures. Now we're boiling it all down and talking about the most important thing.

Everything else we've talked about in the past does not matter if you don't live by the Word. So if you understand how to dissect the Word but you're not following the Word, it's all in vain. That's why we have this memory verse, and it's from James 1:22, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,

deceiving your own selves." So God wants us to be doers of the Word.

Now, I've got a lot of Scripture that we're going to be talking about today, and so you may want to get some notes out, and I want to remind our friends that, when the teachers are up here teaching, we often have our own personal notes that we're adding to the lesson notes. We know that you've already got the study guide. Some of you have the teacher's version of the study guide and--but then the teachers of these recorded programs also have our personal notes, and the folks say, "Where'd you get that illustration or that verse? I want that to help me with my lesson." You can get those online. So if you go to the Amazing Facts website under the section where it talks about Sabbath School, you can go to the bottom. It'll say "notes." And so we like to make those available as well.

So, first of all, if you look in 1 John 1, verse 7, it says, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." We read in earlier studies, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." That light is not for just looking at. It is for walking in. Another verse, John 12:35, "Then Jesus said to them, 'A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. He who walks in darkness does not know where he's going.'" Again, Jesus said, "Walk while you have the light."

I remember C.D. Brooks used to tell a story, in his evangelistic meetings, about two boys that were out playing in a park one day. And they were having a great time, and pretty soon they got tired, and they laid back on the grass on this beautiful sunny day, and one of them started thinking about the sun that was above him, how bright it was in his face, and he knew it was hard to look into the sun. And, you know, boys like--they like to be a little competitive sometime.

So one boy said to his friend--they're both lying back on the grass. He said, "I'll bet you I can stare at the sun longer than you." It's like, sometimes kids say, "I think I can hold my breath longer than you." And his friend said, "I bet you can't." And so they said, "All right, well, close your eyes, count to three," and they're going to stare right into the middle of the sun and see who can do it the longest. And they said, "One, two, three," and they opened their eyes, and they stared right into the sun, deliberately, not realizing that all that radiation was doing damage to their iris, and pretty soon they said they can't handle it anymore.

Well, they didn't realize it--what was going on. Then later that day, their eyes got red and swollen. They woke up the next morning. They were just aching, and they had headaches, and their eyes were just about swollen shut. Parents took the boys to the doctor, and the doctor looked at them, and they told the doctor what they had done. He put some ointment on their eyes, and he wrapped them up and said, "Keep the bandages on for a few days." And by a miracle of God's grace, after a few days, he took off the bandages. The swelling had gone down. The redness had gone away, and they could still see. They were young enough where they were healing. And then the doctor sat them down. He told him a very important lesson. He said, "Boys never forget: The light is not for looking at. It is for walking in."

A lot of people come to church, and they like to hear the sermon, and they like to look at the light, and they like to dissect and argue about theology, but they don't ever walk in the light. All of the light in the world, if you understand, you know, everything in the Bible, if you've got a library full of Bibles, if you've got all kinds of theological books, but sin is still controlling your life, it's of no avail.

God doesn't want us to look at the light. He wants us to walk in the light. And the Bible says, if you walk in the light as He is in the light, the blood of His Son cleanses us from all sin. And so--and that's the first one we read. The blood of Jesus Christ, 1 John 1:7, "His Son cleanses us from all sin." Also, 2 Peter 1, verse 19, "And so we have this prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed--" "Heed" means "to follow," "to listen to," "as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart." You know, one of the other things about light is, if you are walking in the light, God increases the light.

You know, just this last week, I was hiking with my son, up in the mountains, and we were actually hiking at night, and it was really nice when the moon came up. You know, as the sun was going down, things

just kept getting darker and darker, but we weren't at our destination yet, so we kept hiking. But, fortunately, after the sun went down, soon the moon rose--and it was almost a full moon--over the ridge, and as it got higher, it got brighter and brighter, and it was so nice that your eyes tend to adjust. And pretty soon, we could see even in the dark. Never had to actually pull out our flashlights, walking in the moonlight.

Well, when you walk in the light that God gives you, it gets brighter. Now, some people, they've had light revealed to them, and they never step out in faith to walk in the light, and then the light goes out. If we are not walking in the light that God gives us, pretty soon we might not believe the light. We may not see the light or understand the light anymore. The best time to do God's will is when He reveals His will to you. I've seen this happen.

Let me explain it a little more clearly. I've seen this happen in so many evangelistic meetings: A person is coming. They're hearing the Bible truths for the first time, and they're thinking, "Wow, I never understood this before. This is amazing." And their lives are being changed, and they're feeling great joy of knowing the truth, but then there's some conviction about the sin in their life, and they realize that they need to make some changes. And they keep coming, and finally, you know--and often they're making changes, but then sometimes a certain truth is presented, and they'll say, "Whoa, I'm not doing that. That's some pet sin in my life. That's precious to me. No way in the world am I ever changing that." And the enthusiasm and the joy and the excitement they had about learning the truth, you watch the lights start to fade from their eyes.

And I've gone to visit people before, and they say, "You know, Pastor, like, I don't understand. When I first came to these meetings, I was so excited, and I heard God's voice, and He was leading me and speaking to me, and all these changes, and now it seems like it stopped." And I'd say, well, brother, sister, did something come up that you stopped listening to? Was there some point of truth that you just said, "I'm not going to accept that"? Said, "Well, yeah, you know, when the evangelist talked about this or that, I said, 'No, I could never do that.'" I said, "Well, when you stop walking in the light, then the light starts to get dim."

You've got to keep doing what the Bible says, which is a very important point we're going to get to now, dealing with the subject of living the Word of God in the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to live out the Word of God in the Holy Spirit? John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you."

Ho, I've got so much I could say about this. You know, I used to go to a charismatic church before I was a Seventh-Day Adventist Christian. A lot of dear Christian people, lovely people, but they made a big issue of speaking in tongues, and they would tell me, "Doug, you've got to learn how to speak in tongues, and if you don't speak in tongues, you don't have the Holy Spirit." Of course, you know, I didn't know everything I know now, but I, just, I didn't think that was right. I said, "I don't see what you're talking about in the Bible."

And--but at the same time, I was learning the Sabbath truth, and so I'd go to my charismatic pastor and say, "What about the Ten Commandments?" And they'd say, "Well, we're not under the law now. We're under grace." I'd say, "Well, but it says here," this and this and this, and I'd show them all the Scriptures that say, you know, "God's law doesn't pass away. It's for eternal," and they'd say, "Well, I know that that's what the Bible says, but that's the letter. We're not being led by the letter of the law. We're being led by the Spirit." And they almost made it sound like that, if they felt in their heart the Holy Spirit was telling them something different than the Bible said, that that was the--that this feeling of the Spirit in their heart was to trump, the very plain reading of the Word. And Jesus said, "No, no, the Holy Spirit is going to bring to your remembrance what I have said." And so the purpose of the Holy Spirit is not to ever say something different from what Jesus said.

The Holy Spirit is going to accentuate and highlight and help you remember what Jesus said. And in the same way, there's been so many times that I'm either preaching a sermon, or we were answering

questions on the radio--you know, when we do the "Bible Answers Live" program, we don't know ahead of time what questions are coming in. I mean, people, they take the--we have volunteers that take the calls, and they'll put a little note in there and say, "There's a question on baptism," or the Trinity, so we only know a moment or two ahead this is what this person is going to ask. We haven't had time to look it up, so right when we take their call, we're saying, "Lord, help us remember where these Scriptures are." And some of them are pretty tough questions, and we pray, "Lord bring to our remembrance what we've studied." And so many times the Lord answers that prayer. Most of the time he answers that prayer.

Now, what God does not do, the Holy Spirit does not bring to your remembrance what you've never read, and so, if you want to have the Holy Spirit bring to your remembrance the Word of Jesus, you need to first read the Word of Jesus. So it's a good idea, every Christian ought to, over the course of every year, every two years, read through the Bible all the way through, even the parts where you say, "Well, it's just--" going through the measurements of the sanctuary, or they're going through a genealogy, let your eyes at least scan over it. It's going to get easier. You'll understand more, and you make it possible then for God to honor that promise to bring it to your remembrance.

So the Holy Spirit will help you in your understanding of the Word and in remembering the Word. John 16:13, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will tell you of things to come." There's another verse that tells us the Holy Spirit is not going to tell you something separate from the Word. He doesn't speak on His own authority. Holy Spirit is going to honor Christ, who is the living Word.

There's a great quote, and it's in your lesson in Selected Messages, Book 1, page 411, "No one is able to explain the Scriptures without the aid of the Holy Spirit. But when you take up the Word of God with a humble, teachable heart, the angels of God will be by your side to impress you with evidences of the truth."

Sometimes the way the Holy Spirit works is through angels actually speaking to us. John 7:17, one of the most important criteria to walk in the Word and to understand the Word is be willing to do what the Word says. "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine--" that means the teaching-- "whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority."

Single most important thing to understand some Bible truth is make up your mind and say, "Whatever it says, I'm willing to do it. I'm willing to do what God is saying in His Word." And then God becomes responsible. I mean, we need to search, then God's responsible to show us. But we do need to, you know, make an effort to search. Hosea says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," then he goes on to say, "because you have rejected knowledge." Some people are destroyed, not because they don't understand, but they never made an effort to know. And so you've got to actually seek, Jesus said, and then you'll find. He doesn't force everything on you. He doesn't force the truth on us. If we're hungry for the truth, "He that hunger and thirsts after righteousness, he will be filled."

Notice, not just hungering for the truth, but "righteousness" means "walking in the truth," being a doer of the Word. Charles Wesley said, "All of my requests are lost in one, Father, Thy will be done." Charles, of course, is that great hymn writer, brother of John Wesley. "All of my requests are lost in one central request, Father, Thy will be done." He means, "Thy will be done in my life." Greatest most important prayer of Jesus was "Not My will. Thy will be done." In the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father, which in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy will be done." Thy will be--what? Be done.

Now, that's what I'm going to talk about for the next few minutes. God wants us to not be hearers of the Word only, deceiving our own selves, but he wants us to be doers of the Word. It's a very small word, "do," D-O. It's a very powerful word, and that word separates the saved from the lost. Now, people say, "Pastor Doug, what you do has nothing to do with your salvation." I hear that all the time. That is categorically not true. They say, "Well, you only need to believe." Believing is doing something. Yeah, you got to believe. Jesus said, "This is the work, that they believe." There is a work. We need to believe.

So what separates the lost from the saved is something you do. You got to do something about Jesus,

and it starts there, and then you need to be doing something about His Word. It's a lie, it's a misconception that you don't have to do anything. You do need to do something. Jesus says, "Come unto Me." That means you need to get up and come. There's an action involved in being a Christian.

So let's talk about this and find out if that's just Pastor Doug's idea or is this what Jesus taught. Look here, for instance, in Luke 6:46. "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things which I say?" God wants us to do what He says. If we're saying, 'Lord, Lord,' you know, we're very religious, we're using His name, we're praying in His name, but we're not doing what He says, he said, "Why do you do that?" Matthew 7, Jesus makes it even more clear here. Matthew 7, verse 21, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? We've cast out devils in Your name. We've done many wonders in Your name.' And I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

They were living lawless lives, but they were very religious. Don't forget, the people who crucified Jesus were very religious, and they even--they wanted to hasten His death so they could run home after killing the Messiah to keep the Sabbath. Now, I'm a Sabbath keeper, and I believe in a lot of the things that the religious leaders believed in. They believed in prayer, they believed in tithing. They believed in fasting, that's all good. Those things won't save you. It's like that proud Pharisee who prayed. He said, "Oh, this praying is good." He says, "I fast, and I pay tithe," and he went to the temple. He did all those things, but he did not go home justified.

So there needs to be a life where you put Christianity into action. Mark 3, verse 32 through 35, "And the multitude were sitting around Jesus, and they said to Him, 'Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside, and they're looking for You.' But He answered, and He said to them, 'Who is My mother? Who are My brothers?' And He looked around the circle of those who sat about Him, and He said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers. For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and My mother.'"

How important was doing the will of God to Jesus? Matthew 7, verse 24, "Therefore whoever hears these words of Mine, and--you know the next word? "--does them, they are likened to a wise man who builds his house on the rock, and the rain descends, and the flood comes down, and the wind blows, and it beats on the house, but it does not fall, because it's founded on the rock. But whoever hears these sayings of Mine," talking about the Bible, putting it into practice, "and does not do them, he's like the foolish man who built his house on the sand--" And you know the rest of the story. The wind blows, and the flood comes, and the rain descends, and that house implodes and collapses and blows away because it was founded on the sand.

The difference between the wise man and the fool is not the Word. They both hear the Word. The difference between the wise man and the fool is one does it. One does not do it. And so God wants us to not just hear the word. He wants us to finally put it into practice.

You know, there's a lot of people that come to church, and they are impressed by the truth, and they make a decision, and they get baptized, and they start following the Lord, but they've got that sin in their life that bothers them, and that's good that it bothers them. The dangerous thing is sometimes those people are still in the church 20 years later, and they're going through all the motions of religion. They sometimes hold religious office in the church, and they've got that same sin, but it just doesn't bother them anymore, and that's the most dangerous thing.

They've made up their mind that somehow God didn't really mean what He said in His Word, that we don't really have to do what the Word says. And Jesus said that's fatal. "Many will come to Me in that day--" He's talking about the great judgment day, "and they'll say, 'Lord, Lord.' He says, 'I don't know you. You didn't do what I said.'" They know His name, they're religious, they've probably read the Bible, but they didn't do His Word. You know--where is it? In 1 John, chapter 2, "Love not the world," verse 15, "neither the things that are in the world, for if any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in

him. For all that's in the world, the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is of the world and not of the Father. And the world is passing away, and the lust thereof," notice this, "but he that does the will of God will abide forever."

God is looking for people that will hear His Word and do it. You know, one of the great appeals that Moses makes in Deuteronomy, he says, "Oh, that My people would fear Me and keep all of My commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever." He wants us to be keepers. He wants us to be doers of His Word. That's what it means when it says, "Living by the Word of God," putting it into practice.

Now, don't be discouraged as I talk, friends, because probably anyone who's listening right now is thinking, "Well, Pastor Doug, you know, I'm not following everything I know." Well, it's a growing process. Are you making progress in following, in doing? You need to be growing and saying, "I'm doing this now, and I'm doing this now," and some things, it takes a while to learn how to do it, but becoming comfortable being a non-doer is fatal. That's the thing, I guess, I'm trying to say.

All right, a few more verses, Matthew--no, let me see here. I'm going to go with Romans 2:13, "For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified." No, wait a second. But doesn't Paul say that we're not under the law--we're under grace? Yeah, and Paul said that too. Paul's the one who said, Romans 13, "Not the hearers of the law are just, but the doers." When Paul says that you're not under the law, when you accept the sacrifice of Christ, you're no longer under the penalty of the law, but he says, "Do we continue in sin, law-breaking, that grace may abound? God forbid." Those of us who love the Lord, we are more obligated now to be doers of the word.

Vance Havner, the famous Baptist evangelist, he said, "The vision must be followed by the venture. It's not enough to stare up the steps. We must step up the stairs." A lot of people spend their Christian life staring at the steps, and they study the steps, and they evaluate the steps, and they argue about the steps. They don't ever go up the steps. And this is what we're talking about today.

In Matthew chapter 21, verse 28, "But what do you think?" Jesus said. This is one of his parables. "A certain man had two sons, and he came and he said to the first one, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' And he said, 'I will not,' but afterward, he regretted it, and he went. Then he came to the second son. He said likewise. He answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go." And then Jesus asks this, just, very simple question: "Which of the two sons did the will of his Father?" They said, "The first one." The first, he said, "I'm not going to," but he repented later, and he did. He finally did it. They said, "The first one." And Jesus said, "Assuredly I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots will enter the kingdom of God before you, for John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and the harlots believed him. They repented of their sins. And you sought, and afterward, you did not relent and believe him." Even after you saw the great revival among the publicans and the tax collectors and the sinners, they didn't repent.

Oswald Chambers said, "God doesn't want our success. He wants us. He doesn't demand our achievements. He demands our obedience. It's only by obedience that we understand the teachings of God." Someone else said, "There are times when I've deceived myself into thinking, talking about the will of God is a substitute for doing it." That reminds me of the story in the Bible where Samuel the prophet says to king Saul, "I want you to go fight against the Amalekites, that enemy nation, and I want you to annihilate them and their cattle, and everything they've got, their donkeys their sheep--everything.

And so Saul goes, and he fights against them, and he's victorious in the battle, but he thinks, "Well, you know, that might be a little extreme to annihilate all these really--boy, they've got some really quality camels and donkeys and sheep and goats and don't the people deserve the spoils of war?"

So they come back from the battle, and King Saul sees Samuel the prophet, and he said, "How're you doing?" "Blessed of the Lord. I've followed the commandment of the Lord. I defeated the Amalekites." And he didn't even kill the king. He's bringing the king back as a captive to show off. And Samuel says, "If

you've obeyed the commandment of the Lord, then what is the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen that I hear in my ears?" "Oh, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, all the cattle? Oh, yeah, we didn't kill them." The people wanted to sacrifice them to the Lord.

Basically, they didn't want to continue sacrificing their own cattle, so to save themselves, they stole the ones that they were supposed to annihilate, and that's when Samuel said, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is the sin of witchcraft." And so, when people say, "Well, God didn't really--He's not real specific about doing some of these little things--" God means what He says. His words, especially, you know, the commandments of God, they're not suggestions.

It's kind of like--even for those who are religious, you think of Uzzah the priest--and they were given very clear instructions on how to transport the ark, and the priests were not supposed to lay hands on it. But because they did not obey instructions and they were moving the ark on an ox cart instead of the priests carrying it, and the oxen stumbled and the wagon wiggled, and Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark and he put his hand on the holy ark of God. He died, and people think God is very severe. God told them what to do and what not to do, and they just disobeyed, and they thought God is not particular in little things.

God means what He says, and in the great judgment day, if our sins are not forgiven, we will give an account for everything that we've done. And that's why He'll forgive our past sins, our bad doing, but then, when we repent, He wants us to now be doers of the Word. "Man shall live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

I'm enjoying this lesson because I think it's a subject that's really neglected. All right, moving along here, Philippians 2, verse 12, and it says here, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not in my presence always, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you."

You don't have to worry about obeying in your own strength. God will give you the power and the ability to obey. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure."

Now, I want to pause there just for a moment. I think it's a wonderful thing that, when you read the Word of God and as you follow the Holy Spirit, there's power that changes you. You're transformed. There's a new heart that's given you. Your will is changed by the will of God. And so he says, "It's God who works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you might become blameless and harmless children of God, without fault, in the midst of a crooked and a perverse generation, among whom as you shine as lights in the world". Christians ought to be different in the world, be advertising for Jesus. "holding fast the word," Here's where the Word comes in-- "holding fast the word of life, so that I might rejoice in the day of Christ, that I've not run in vain, or labored in vain."

Paul means in teaching you the Word. Deuteronomy 4, verse 4--notice what did Paul said. Paul had said, "Holding fast the word of life." If you look in Deuteronomy 4, verse 4, it says, "But you who held fast to the Lord your God are alive today." You know, Moses talks about cleaving unto the truth, holding fast. I think the word there for "cleave" is "to be glued" to the Lord. They used to make this glue out of the hooves of the goats or the horses back then, and it's using this ancient term that "We are glued to the Lord." We go where Jesus goes. We cleave to Him. We hold fast to His word. And God uses every kind of term and analogy He can to try to illustrate how closely we are to cleave to Him that we might be able to obey.

So then we're into the section, "Learning from Jesus." Very important point: Do not wait until you understand everything before you obey what you do understand. Some people, they just say, "You know, one of these days, some things are still not clear," and so they don't make their commitment to Christ. If you wait until you understand everything before you obey, you never will obey. If there are some things that you do understand, follow the things you do understand.

By the way, I think it's a principle of truth in life, every element of truth you obey, you will receive a corresponding blessing for that truth that you obey. I know a people who--they pay tithe. There are other areas in their life, they are not Christians, but they are convicted about tithe. They get the blessings and the promises that God gives to those who pay tithe because they obey that commandment.

I know people--they may have other areas in their life where they're disobedient, but they honor their father and mother. There's a promise that goes with that, "that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you." I do think that God, in some respects, there are certain promises that He will never detach from obeying, and you will receive those promises because it's just cause and effect. And so follow whatever truth you do know--you'll be blessed. That'll increase your faith and say, "Maybe I ought to follow everything, and I'll have all the blessings that God wants me to have."

As a Christian, you're a follower of Jesus. How thoroughly did Jesus obey? Christ obeyed in every area of His life. Now, look at the example of Christ, how I used the Word, Luke 4, this is the great temptation of Christ. Luke 4:13--I'm sorry, Luke 4:3-13, "And the devil comes to Him in the wilderness, and he says, If you're the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

And we read this already. "Jesus said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" Then the devil, taking them up on a high mountain, said to Him, 'All authority is given me, and I'll give it to You and the glory of it.' He said, 'It's been delivered to me, and I give it to whoever I wish. Therefore if You will worship me, all will be Yours. You don't need to die for the sins of the world, I'll give You the world.' Jesus answered and said, 'Get behind Me, Satan. It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'" Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written, "He'll give His angels charge over You to keep You, and in their hands, they'll bear You up lest You dash Your foot against the stone.'" And Jesus answered and said, 'It is written, you shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Now, notice, all three temptations, Jesus said, "It is written, it is written, it is written." By the way, which one of the apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, was a witness to the temptations of Christ? None of them. It says, "He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." Christ was alone. So how did the apostles learn about Jesus' battle with the devil? He must've told them about it--was probably not too long after He called the apostles. He said, you know, "Here's what I've experienced," and they recorded this.

How did Jesus meet every temptation? He told the disciples, "I fought every temptation with the Word of God." It is written, it is written, it is written. Matthew 11, verse 10, "For this is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I sent My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.'" When He identified John the Baptist, He said, "He's the one because it is written." John 5:39, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. These are they that testify of Me."

The whole essence of the Bible is about Jesus. And this is one of my favorite subjects. I could use another three hours right now to teach this. I wrote a book called "Shadows of Light: Seeing Christ in All the Bible," and when you read through the Bible and you look at the stories of the Bible, I mean, there's very plain Scriptures like this where Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures. These are they that testify of Me." "In the volume of the book, it is written of Me." Moses and the prophets--He went from Moses and the prophets in Luke chapter 24, and showed them from the Scriptures that He was the Messiah.

But I see that--Jesus, in the story of Joseph. I see Jesus in the story of Adam. Even Paul makes an analogy of Jesus being the second Adam. I think it's interesting. Adam goes to sleep on the sixth day. God opens his side, takes out a rib and gives him a wife. On the sixth day of the week, Jesus goes to sleep. His side is opened with the spear. Through that stream of blood and water, the church is born, His bride.

There's just so many analogies between--Noah and Christ. Noah found grace. It's through Noah all the world is saved. Through--I mentioned Joseph. You know, Joseph is betrayed for the price of a slave by his own brothers, and he forgives them, and he feeds the whole world bread, which is a symbol for the

Word of God, and forgives everybody. I see Jesus in the story of David.

Matter of fact, the three most outstanding Old Testament characters that are types of Christ--Joseph, David, Moses, but there are many others. I mean, Moses, you know, he's a great savior. He's a great type of Christ. And Moses was a great law-giver. Christ is the great law-giver, and there's so many analogies. And so, when you read through the Scriptures, the New and the Old Testament, you're finding the story of Jesus. Even examples in the New Testament. In the life of John the Baptist, you see parallels to Christ. In the life of Stephen--Stephen is unjustly tried by the Sanhedrin. He prays for the forgiveness of those who are executing him. He's taken out of the city like Jesus. The Bible talks about the clothes were laid down at the feet of Paul. There were clothes laid down. They argued over clothes when they crucified Jesus, and you start looking, and you see Stephen went through the same experience of Christ, three and a half years after Jesus, which is how long Jesus also taught. And so even in the New Testament, you can see types and shadows and analogies of Jesus.

And so we learn from Christ and His example here. Deuteronomy, 9, verse 23, believing and obedience goes hand in hand. "Likewise, when the Lord sent you from Kadish Barnea, saying, 'Go up and possess the land that I've given you,' then you rebelled against the commandment of the Lord, and you did not believe Him nor obey His voice." When they don't obey the Word, it's because they don't believe, and you can read in Hebrews 13--I'm sorry, Hebrews 3, verse 18 and 19, "And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but those who did not obey? So we see they could not enter because of unbelief."

Disobedience is really unbelief, and without belief, you cannot be saved. Faith is one of the most misunderstood and mis-taught subjects in Christianity today. People think that you can have the faith of devils and go to heaven, that all you have to do is say you believe that Jesus died for you on the cross and that you believe that He died for sin--and the devil knows all of that.

Christian saving-faith is a faith where you believe and you act upon that faith. If I tell you that a tornado is going to come--you're sitting here in the room--a tornado is going to come in five minutes and totally demolish this building, do you say, "Amen, Pastor, like, we believe you," and you don't get up and move? You don't believe me. So, Jesus, when He talks about it, "Whosoever believeth in Him will not perish but have everlasting life," yes, it does start with a simple calling out to Jesus, believing He can save you. But then that belief goes on by believing He can save you from sin, not just the past penalty, but He can save you from the power, the present power of sin, and ultimately the presence of sin in heaven. And so this is the kind of faith, a faith that Jesus can really save you from your sins, not in your sins. You can come to Him in your sins and ask for mercy and justification, and then He saves you from your sins through sanctification. So there needs to be a following, a living of the Word that happens in the life.

All right, moving on here, who is it? Dwight L. Moody said, "Never think that Jesus' commands are a trifle, nor dare to trifle with anything He has commanded." "Obedience is the key that unlocks the door to every profound spiritual experience." "Obedience," and this is Samuel Dickey Gordon said, "Obedience is the eye of the Spirit. Failure to obey dims and dulls the spiritual understanding."

When we know what God wants, and we neglect to obey, our spiritual understanding can get dull. If you want your spiritual insights to be sharpened and clarified, walk in the light that you have. Remember, the light is not for looking at. It's for walking in. 1 John 2:17, "The world is passing away, and the lust, but everyone who does the will of God will abide forever."

Oswald Chambers said--I know I'm going fast. It's because I got so much to share with you, friends. Oswald Chambers says, "Obedience to God will mean that some other time--that at some time or other you enter into desolation."

Yes, there are challenges when you obey. Jesus went into the wilderness, and He was tempted, but He came out victorious. What about Jesus versus Scripture? Are the words of Jesus more important than maybe some of the other parts of the Bible in the Old Testament? I mean, why do Bibles have red letter? If it's all the Word of God, why isn't it all red? I know they got a new Bible now. It's got the words of God

in the Old Testament are in blue, and, of course, the words of Jesus in the New Testament are red. And I think it sometimes helps us identify who's speaking.

Notice what Jesus says, John 5:45, "Do not think that I accuse you before the Father. There is one who accuses you--Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believe Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me." There is no conflict between the words of Jesus and Moses. Some people say, "Well, that's the Old Covenant, and now we've got the New Covenant." The Bible tells us that it's all the Word of God. The New Covenant is the same law of Moses, written in our hearts--same principles. Moses 5:20--Matthew 5:21, "You've heard that it was said by those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you--"

Now, is Moses saying that his--or is Jesus saying His words trump Moses, that it eclipses Moses? "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be in danger of hellfire." So is Christ saying that his word is less--or more important than the Old Testament? Matthew 5:27, "You have heard it said by those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'" That's one of the Ten Commandments. Jesus said, "But I say to you--" now, is Christ going to say it's okay to commit adultery? No, he said, "I say to you whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery in his heart." Jesus is not taking and nullifying the words of Moses. Jesus is magnifying the words of Moses.

So when he said, "But I say to you," he's making it bold. He's underscoring, he's highlighting. Proof for that, the prophecy about the coming Messiah said, Isaiah 42:21, "The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake. He will exalt the law and make it honorable." I think one version says, "He will magnify the law and make it honorable." So Jesus did not come to do away with. He said, "Do not think I've come to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn't come to destroy, but fulfill."

Now, quiet times with God--got a couple of minutes to talk about that. One of the ways that we're going to have the power and the strength of the spirit is you must spend time with God. You will become like Jesus. You will love Jesus as you commune with Jesus. To know God is to love Him. You cannot obey Him if you do not know Him. You will not know Him if you don't take time to know Him.

You need to spend time with Him every day in prayer, in reading His Word, even the days you don't feel like it. Even the days you feel you're too busy, you must be religious about it, that's right. It needs to be a priority with you. Psalm 119, verse 147, "I rise before the dawning of the morning, and I cry for help. I hope in your word." Look into the Word early in the day. This is when the children of Israel ate the manna. Psalm 119, verse 148, "My eyes are awake through night watches, that I might meditate on Your word." Meditating on the Word even in the night, rising in the morning. When you lay down, when you rise up, surround yourself with the Word of God. Psalm 46, verse 10, "Be still and know that I am God."

There's a time to be quiet and enjoy our time with God. Psalm 62, verse 1 and 2, and verse 5, "Truly my soul silently waits for God." You've heard of quiet time with God. "From Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense, I'll not be moved." My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is come from Him." Even Jesus told the apostles, "Come aside by yourself to a deserted place and rest a while."

Spend time in nature, communing with God. It's one of my favorite things to do is just--is to get out and get as far away from civilization as I can and just spend some time quietly with God. And, for me, "quietly with God" might mean sitting on the top of a 450-horsepower quad, but I get out in nature, and that's how I'm spending my quiet time with God. No, but, really, you get out there, and you're surrounded with the things of God, and you can stop, and you can pray, and it is quiet, and you can see God in nature, and it's--there's something majestic, something awesome about that, but we need that quiet time.

And then, the last point--I only have a moment to talk about this: Memory in song. Commit the Word to memory. That's how God's Holy Spirit will bring it back. Psalm 119, verse 11, "Your word I've hid in my heart that I might not sin." And one way we do this is by singing the words of God. "Now therefore, I

write down this song," Moses says in Deuteronomy 31:19, "write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel. Put it in their mouths." They were to teach the Word of God in song to their children. Numbers 21, verse 16, "From there they went to Beer, which is a well, and the Lord said to Moses, 'Gather the people together, and I will give them water.' Then Israel sang this song: 'Spring up, O well. All of you sing to it.'" So they were to sing a song and remember how God supplied water for them. It's like that song, "Spring Up, O Well," and "Like the woman at the well, I was seeking."

And so we write these songs to help us remember the Word of God. A lot of good hymns--one of the ways you know a good hymn, it helps you remember the Word of God. Ephesians 5:19, "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart for the Lord." And then Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching in admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord." These things help us remember the Word of God.

Wow, well, that's been a great quarter studying Scripture. Next week, we're going to be talking about making friends for God. I want to just prepare you for that. Don't forget our free offer, "Is Obedience Legalism?" We talked about being doers of the Word today. Once again, if you didn't catch this at the beginning, call 866-788-3966. You can get your free copy, or text "SH041" to 40544. God bless you. By His grace, we'll study His Word together again next week.

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Announcer: Amazing Facts, Changed Lives.

Male: I grew up here in New York City, I guess, dealing with all the temptations that you would have in a big city, everything that you could imagine that you could run into. Drugs, crime was always here. When I was at a young age, I actually got into trouble with the law, and my only out was to join the military at the time in order to not do time. So I left New York and traveled the world a little bit while I was in the military. Eventually, I came back.

Having grown up as a hip-hop kid, I eventually found myself working in the music business, actually. I worked at a couple major radio stations, hip-hop, reggae. I was at all the big reggae shows, working them. No matter what I did to try and satisfy myself, nothing really worked. I remember I used to play at this one club in Manhattan. We used to play there every Friday night.

So I came home one Saturday morning after leaving the club, and I turned on the video channel like I usually do. So there was this guy on the video channel, talking, and he was definitely out of place, but the things that he was saying just totally amazed me. I never heard anyone speak about the Bible like this before, so I started coming home early on Saturday mornings just to catch this show. I found the things that he was saying, absolutely amazing to the point where it literally made me stop and start to think about how I was living my life. So I found that all of these things that I have been doing to try and find happiness were actually not making me happy at all but were really just leaving me empty inside.

When I started reading the Bible and it started to make sense, I started to make changes. I even tried to keep the Sabbath, which I failed at miserably. So I was actually invited by Amazing Facts to go to see a live series at one of the local churches, but after going the first night, I ended up going another night and another night. I stayed for the entire series. That was the day I made a decision that changed the rest of my life forever.

I gave my life to Christ, and everything was different after that. I made a decision to give up the music business, stop hanging out at all of the clubs. I made a decision that was eternal for me and for my family. I started going to church. I got a position in church where I was actually in charge of the personal ministries department, and the same Amazing Facts studies that changed my life, I actually got to share them with people and sit down with them and tell them about Jesus.

Doug: Have you ever heard a mouse howl like a wolf? Well, what would you expect would happen when a creature changes its destiny from the hapless prey to mighty predator? From the outside, they look very much like just an oversized field mouse, cute brown fur, white on the underbelly, nice little beady eyes, but that's where the similarities stop.

Grasshopper mice are very unusual, making them the objects of great interest for animal researchers. These furry little creatures are found in the harsh deserts of North America. They're very territorial in nature, and they will monopolize and fend off 25 acres. They don't build their own homes but sort of confiscate the burrows and the homes of other creatures. They're not called grasshopper mice because they hop around, but it's because they eat a lot of grasshoppers.

In fact, scientists have discovered grasshopper mice are the only mice that are purely carnivorous. They hunt much like cats or weasels, stalking their prey in a predatory fashion, and when they pounce, they are ferocious, sometimes even taking on snakes and scorpions and centipedes. When a grasshopper mouse gets into a fierce battle with a snake or a scorpion or centipede, they may be bit or stung several times, but what is amazing to researchers is they've noticed, when they are bitten, they somehow shake it off because they convert the toxin and the venom to painkiller.

I think you can understand why this information would be of special interest to scientists that are trying to discover new ways for people to deal with chronic pain. One of the most intriguing characteristics of these little creatures is, when they're defending their territory or celebrating a victory over some adversary, they'll throw back their head and let out this earthshaking howl. It's a mousy howl, check it out.

[howling]

Doug: The grasshopper mouse is not the only member of creation that can survive encounters with venomous predators. In Luke 10:19, it says, "Behold, I will give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. Nothing will by any means hurt you." We don't have to be the biggest and the strongest to defeat our enemy and let out that victory roar. When God called David to be king, no human would've guessed that he had it in him. He was young and insignificant. From the outside, he looked like there was no greatness in him, but when God looked at his heart, he saw courage, humility, compassion, and love. David wasn't perfect, and he made mistakes, but through God's power, he was able to conquer giants.

Friend, God does not intend that you live out the rest of your life cowering and trembling like a little field mouse. If God can take the grasshopper mouse and give him courage so that he fights snakes and scorpions and centipedes, if God can put in the heart of David the courage to fight giants like Goliath, then he can give you that same courage. The Scriptures say, "God has not given you the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind." And you could have that peace in your heart when you invite the Prince of Peace in your heart. Why don't you do that right now?