

Is God Your Lord?

1 Chron 28:8

1

8 “So now, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek after all the commandments of the Lord your God so that you may possess the good land and bequeath it to your sons after you forever.

Is the Lord, your God? This is the basic question that every Bible class should start with. It is impossible to talk about god’s Word if one doesn’t believe in God. But I believe that this statement goes far beyond the surface understanding of it. Yes, contained within it is the question of our initial acceptance of the existence of God, but the depth of the question speaks to our hearts. It wants to know where we put God in our list of priorities. It asks our mental acceptance if we truly believe to the point of commitment. It demands that the question of who or what we choose to submit to be answered.

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Is the Lord Your God?

In this passage David is speaking to the Israelites and is demanding of them to answer the question. The whole of our relationship with God hinges on the depth of our answer. David tells the Israelites that they must...

3

“Observe and seek after all the commandments of the Lord your God”

David ties the obedience and seeking of God’s Law with this idea of God is our Lord. The greater we feel that God is our Lord the more committed we will be to keeping His commandments and seeking after them.

Every public speaking course I have ever been in teaches that the average audience can only retain three, maybe four, major points. The idea of a cogent oratory is to make a major point and then support it with evidence so that it is the major point that is retained by the audience. Now what the so-called experts say is that an average audience only retains three or four major points, but they also concede that if talking to an audience that is especially knowledgeable on the topic of discussion then the probability of their retaining more of the discussion increases dramatically. I also know that you are far from an average audience. You have both a knowledge and a desire to observe and seek after God and His commandments. But just as great, if not greater, is the love you have for God and His truth. That said, this isn’t intended to be a lecture from speech 101, but there are some points that I see from David’s discussion with the Israelites on their obedience and desire to obey God that I would like to address...

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- 1) Obedience, true obedience, is spiritual
- 2) Seeking God’s Law indicates the truest sincerity

- 3) Obedience is a proof of the greatest love
- 4) Seeking God's Law illustrates a mature character of heart
- 5) The danger of excuses
- 6) How can man understand the mind of God
- 7) Why Obey

So, we've got a lot to look at, let's get started. The first point is...

- 5** 1) Obedience, true obedience, is spiritual

Heb 5:9

6

9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

This concept of obedience is the most argued over, most misunderstood part of man's relationship with God. The world is full of people that have decided they want nothing to do God or His Law because they don't like what they perceive to be the restrictions of obedience. The religious world is full of people that choose to only partially obey God's Law, they choose to pick and choose which Laws they will obey and to what extent they will obey them. The Church is full of people that have become inured to their own weakening of faith and commitment. This is a very real danger that we all face and must be on the constant alert against.

1 Cor 10:12

7

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

Paul's warning here is for all Christians. Take heed, don't get so caught up in what we think we know or what we think our strength is that we lose sight of weaknesses. That is, I believe, tied to the idea of obedience being spiritual. Paul says it this way...

Rom 6:17

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17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

It can't be said much clearer, obedience to the teaching of the Word must come from the heart. There is our next point...

- 9** 2) Seeking God's Law indicates the truest sincerity

Eph 6:5

10

5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

11 Sincerity is defined as:
The quality of being free from pretense, deceit, or hypocrisy. "The sincerity of his beliefs is unquestionable"; synonyms: honesty, genuineness, truthfulness, integrity, probity, trustworthiness

This is what Paul was saying in Eph. Honesty, genuineness, truthfulness in obedience is what he calls...

12 ***“Doing the will of God from the heart”***

This is how we are to pursue being faithful and obedient to God. Now, what this means is that there are no half-way measures in obeying God. That is what so many in the world try and do, obey God just part way. That's deception. It is either a vain effort to deceive God, or it is us deceiving us.

Rom 16:17-18

13

17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. 18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Deception of the heart, whether from external sources or internal is what leads men away from God, is what causes men to cease obeying. Truest sincerity, truest honesty, in our obedience to God is illustrated by the commitment we have in seeking after God.

The next point is...

14 3) Obedience is a proof of the greatest love

John 14:15

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15 If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

If we had no other scripture to prove this point, this one would be enough. Christ says that if we love Him, we will keep His commandments. But the truth of the matter is that there are many passages that talk about the love that is required in our obedience. Just about the whole book of 1John talks about the love we are to have towards God and each other. Love is the key, the key that opens the door to sincere obedience from the heart.

Now our next point...

16 4) Seeking God's Law illustrates a mature character of heart

Seeking to know God's Law in love and sincerity should be the ultimate goal of every faithful follower. Now please don't misunderstand this. I am not saying that the new convert is mature in their knowledge or understanding. Not at all...

Heb 5:11-14 17

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. **13** For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. **14** But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

No, the maturity here is the recognition that we need God, we need Christ, we need their love which is seen in their Word that leads us to faithful obedience to that Word. Maturity is aging, growing to completion, and when someone, regardless of their age, realizes that they need to be saved from their sins, that's a maturity of its own. That's a maturity of the character of the heart that leads one to faithful obedience. A babe in knowledge and understanding may at times have a more mature or complete character of heart than the one who has been a Christian for many years. Having knowledge and understanding is not necessarily maturity. Having a zeal for and a desire to seek God is not the exclusive territory of long-time Christians.

2 Tim 2:15 18

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Whether one who has just come to God or one has been a child of God for a goodly number of years, the responsibility for us all is that we are to study God's Word to show ourselves approved. This brings us to the next point...

19 5) The danger of excuses

Let me remind you of the discussion we had just a moment ago about deceptions. Man's deceptions towards us and our own deceptions of ourselves. Excuses are the bane of faith. They make us justify behavior that in others we would see as sinful. They make us accept behavior in ourselves that we recognize to be aberrant according to the scriptures. No one makes us do anything that we don't choose to do. Ignorance is no excuse. Excuses lead to sin. Excuses overcome the heart. Excuses can destroy obedience. But, this said, how can man know what it is he is to do?

20 6) How can man understand the mind of God

Isa 55:8 21

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.
9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Why did God love man so much that He sent Christ?

John 3:16

22

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

We can't begin to fathom the thoughts of God or even the way He thinks, to ask why of God verges on the foolish and is even, at times, the height of arrogance. God is far above man in everything. The Psalmist speaks to this in...

Ps 139:17

23

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

Man can't comprehend the thoughts of God, and that should make them all the more precious to the believer. We can't deduce the thoughts of God, but that doesn't mean we can't know what God intends for us. The truth of the matter is only by searching the Word of God, through the teachings of the Holy Spirit, can man know what God wants Him to know. God has given man everything man needs...

2 Peter 1:5-8

24

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, **6** and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, **7** and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. **8** For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Man can't understand the mind of God, but he can understand what God wants from him. He can understand what he needs to do to be saved through Christ. There is our next and last point...

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7) Why Obey

John 12:49-50

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49 For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. **50** I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

Obedience to the commandments of God are what leads us to the promise of eternal life.