

Indy 500 (Obeying God) (Listening To God)

*Love the Lord your God and keep his requirements, his decrees, his laws and his commands always.
Deuteronomy 11:1*

The Basic Bible Truth

God expects obedience from His children. It is the only way that we can win the race of life. But we must know His commands if we are to obey them. Diligent Bible study, followed by careful obedience is the key.

The Object

A Race Car
A Track Set Up With Some Obstacles
A Timer



This light weight “race car” can be easily carried around flat and screwed together on site. This activity is for teams of two or three. One person gets into the car, picking it up and holding it in their hands. They are then blindfolded and a second individual calls out directions for the blind driver to follow. The idea is to not hit any obstacles or pylons. The circuit around the course is timed, with penalty time added for hitting anything.

The Lesson

Obedience to God is simple in theory, but difficult in practice. We tend to be stubborn, self-centered individuals. God referred to the Israelites wondering in the desert those 40 years as stiff-necked people. God’s commands and laws are actually quite simple. They are relatively uncomplicated, and straightforward. But their lack of humility hindered their ability to obey God. They wanted to do things their own way.

If we are honest with God, we must admit that we have a tendency to think more of ourselves than we ought. We compare ourselves with others around us and are “glad that we are not that bad.” God warns

us about living life that way. Our standard, our measurement that we judge our lives by, must be the Bible. God's holiness is beyond our comprehension, and it is the standard that He says we must use. Absolute perfection is His demand upon us. Thankfully, He also knows that we will struggle intensely trying to accomplish this. Jesus Christ voluntarily died on a cross to pay the price for our imperfections, and that is the only way that God can even consider our lives as acceptable. Our standing before God is solely based upon the righteousness of Christ imputed into our lives at salvation.

God takes our despicable selves and, if we are willing, begins the process of making us more and more like His Son. In much the same way as a sculptor might create a magnificent statue, He works patiently on our lives. It is said that a young man asked a famous sculptor one day how he did such magnificent work. The reply was profound. He simply said that he removed everything from the block of marble that didn't look like his subject. That is precisely how God works in our hearts and minds. His subject is the perfection of Jesus, and He is slowly but surely working in our lives to make us more like Him.

Sometimes there is sin in our lives that must be addressed before God will use us to our fullest measure. And that striving for the best that we can do should be the goal of each of our lives. Not that our work will gain us anything before God. We serve Him because we love Him and, as a result of our relationship with Him, we love others. That kind of attitude and outlook on life, will result in genuine joy for the believer, because it is then that we are in His perfect will, serving him.

One other pitfall must be avoided. I have met many people over the years that became quite proficient with their service to God, and unfortunately, also became arrogant and proud. Their lack of humility was often their undoing.

It is our desire to push at the boundaries that cloud up issues of sinful behavior. Rather than accept a simple black and white judgment, we want to push at the fences and see just how far we can go until we get ourselves in trouble. God's fences work two ways. They keep us in and away from dangerous behavior. But fences do something else as well. Fences keep unwanted things out of the field.

All in all, God wants the very best for us. The Bible is not just a big book of "don'ts". It is a big book of "do's". If we will do as God has asked, if we will do as He has demonstrated through the life of Jesus, we have tremendous freedom in Christ. Freedom from guilt, freedom from fear, freedom from worry...need I go on? As the song says, all we need to do is to trust and obey. Good advice any day.

Obedience also requires listening. God has described Himself as a *still small voice*. The noisy world with all of its glitz and glamour tends to overshadow the quiet prodding and nudging of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Listening well requires complete attention. I am a woodworker by trade and in my business I am constantly around, and working with, large woodworking machinery. I have all of the safety devices in place, but all it takes is a moment of distraction to cause irreparable harm. It has taught me to remain incredibly focused on whatever I happen to be doing.

Generally that is a good thing, however, I recall a moment when my daughter was small and I was sitting on the couch thinking about the day while waiting for supper. She had evidently been telling me about her day and I did not hear a word she was saying—I was focused on what was going on in my head at the moment. I was suddenly brought back to reality when I felt her little knuckles knocking me on the forehead and saying, "Hello, is anybody there?"

I'm afraid we treat the Holy Spirit with much the same behavior. The cares and concerns of the day and the things we have had to deal with overshadow His gentle demeanor. His whispers are all too often overlooked. We must be listening.

You will notice that as the racers were going around the course, there were two things at play. The driver needed clear directions. And they also needed to be willing to follow directions. That meant listening well, because the leader could see the race course in details far better than the driver could. God knows the route we need to take. We need to listen to His directions for our lives and not argue, but blindly obey. He knows what He is doing.

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