

Call to Obedience # 445
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
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My sheep hear my voice...and they follow me (John 10:27)

When you became a Christian, you entered into a partnership with Jesus, meaning that from then on you and Jesus would do everything together. That is at the heart of all the apostolic teaching. That is why the phrase “in Christ” is mentioned 74 times in the epistles.

So, when you were born of God, Christ Jesus moved into your heart and He instantly began to tell you what to do. Do you remember that? Let me remind you that following your rebirth, Jesus told you to pray, or to go to prayer meeting as all early Christians did. No, He did not shout at you. He spoke to you in a still, small voice. Following your rebirth, Jesus told you to witness and to win souls to Christ. How are you doing with that? He told you to rearrange your financial priorities and to keep the Sabbath day holy. He told you to stop all of your ungodly entertainment and ungodly friendships, other than to witness to your lost friends. He told you to make confession and restitution. He may have told you to sell your house or to change your job, etc.

If you did not do any and all of these things that Jesus told you to do, He stopped talking to you. Your relationship with Him ended there. Yes, please get it: when a servant no longer does what his Master tells him to do, it is over. The servant gets fired. The Holy Spirit will not dwell in a disobedient heart. He keeps no loafers nor rebels on His staff. However, the devil will put you under the illusion that, if you keep going to church and reading your Bible and praying a little, you are still in. But my friend, that is a fantasy. Christianity is an “either-or” religion. There is no middle ground. Remember, this is the first lesson for all Bible readers to learn. When Adam and Eve ate that which was not theirs to eat, their relationship with God ended. God drove them out of the garden and it was not a pretty picture. God has zero tolerance for sin.

Therefore, it is disobedience that prevents us from hearing the voice of God, from being led by the Spirit. The very thing in your life that is not surrendered is what prevents you from hearing His voice and following. Until we accept that, we go nowhere. Jesus taught this by saying: *...whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14:33). Of course, when we are talking here about disobedience, we are talking about willful disobedience, and not about sins of ignorance which we all have at

times. Of those ignorant sins, we are being cleansed continually by the blood of the Lamb as *...we walk in the light as He is in the light* (1 John 1:7).

Again, if we want to hear the voice of Jesus, to be led by the Spirit, the price is total obedience to what He tells us to do: obedience without delay. You can always tell when a man lives in obedience—he has the joy of the Lord. At your rebirth Jesus told you what to do. If you disobeyed and want to get back in, confess your sins, repent and start up again where you left off. **Jesus' door for the prodigal to come home is always open. He still has a work for you to do.** So come on home, my friend, what are you waiting for? Finish the course that He has set before you with joy.

Then, once you have the basics down, the Lord is ready to get you fine-tuned and lead you by the Spirit in the details of your life. That means you need to attend His classes conducted by the Holy Spirit. Whenever you want to learn something new, you have to attend classes. Whether you want to be a cook, a physicist, a nurse or an airline pilot, you must attend classes. You must schedule classes into each day.

Remember, the Holy Spirit is a teacher and *...he will guide you into all truth...* (John 16:13; 14:26). That means He can tell you where to go, what to do, what to purchase, whom to call and encourage and on and on. The Bible is full of stories like this, of God leading men and women by His voice. Take note that the degree of your spiritual fruitfulness is directly related to: 1) your intimacy with Jesus, and 2) how much you are led by the Holy Spirit to be in the right place, saying the right things, in the right spirit, at the right time.

One of the biggest mistakes Christians make is they think they can learn to walk in the Spirit without attending the Holy Spirit's classes. Yes indeed, there is an initial great illumination once the Holy Spirit comes into your life, but you still must attend classes. You still have to learn to wait on God. **Every day, the Holy Spirit is waiting on you to be quiet and listen to what He has for you that day.** And that takes time. The more you want to learn, the more you have to attend class and listen. Many of you have your prayer time in the morning, when you do your asking, and perhaps your thanking, but there is very little or no time spent listening. We learn by observation, by the art of meditation and by reflection. Yes: *Be still, and know that I am God...* (Ps. 46:10). It takes us a while before we become quiet within ourselves.

Where are you with this and your God, my friend? Can you give God 20 minutes? How about half an hour or an hour of quietness so He can begin to

teach you all things? As you do so, He will show you things about Himself, He will show you things about yourself: whether you have briars, thorns, spots and wrinkles or sins in your life that need to be removed. He will show you whether you are behind Him, ahead of Him or in step with Him. He will eventually give you, little by little, instructions directing your activities each day. Again, if you want to play in a symphony, you need to spend hours practicing daily for several years. If you want to play in God's symphony, walking step-by-step with Him, you have to do likewise. If you do not pay the price, your whole life will be like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals: abrasive, repulsive and fruitless.

Moses tended sheep in Midian for 40 years. At the end of 40 years, God had changed Moses from a self-sufficient, proud governor in Egypt to a man He could talk to face-to-face, the meekest man on the face of the earth, with whom He could do anything He wanted to do. Was it worth it? Abraham planted a grove and there he waited on God. Isaac meditated in the fields in the evening time. John the Baptist and Jesus were quiet for the first 30 years of their lives. Paul waited on God three years in the Arabian desert before he started to preach; and then he continued to wait on God until he died.

You say you have no time to wait on God. Does that mean you have time to waste your whole life and to suffer the consequences of your wrong choices during the rest of your life and for all eternity? My friend, I have no time to waste. **Waiting on God is not a waste of time but the best investment and the most efficient use of your time.**

David was a busy king, but because he knew waiting on God was not a waste of time, he took time to call upon the Lord seven times a day. Daniel was Prime Minister of a big empire and he met with God three times a day. There are surgeons and engineers and mothers who do likewise. Susanna Wesley, the mother who gave us two of the most influential men of God in history, John and Charles Wesley, birthed 19 children; yet she found time each day when she waited on God to get direction. She would just simply pull her apron over her head when it was time to meet with God and everybody let her alone as she was communing with Him.

In this matter of waiting on God, do not be deceived and think that quality makes up for quantity. It is a matter of both quantity and quality. Here excuses are inexcusable. Oh yes: *...they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not*

be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Is. 40:31). It is your choice. Do you want to fly like an eagle or crawl like a worm through life? Who covers more ground, the eagle or the worm? Who has more adventure, the eagle or the worm? The one gives you beauty and grace, the other agony, disappointments and weariness.

In summary, to hear the voice of God, to be guided into all truth that you need for your life: 1) get right with God and stop making excuses; 2) attend the Holy Spirit's classes. Relax, listen and praise His name. As you wait upon Him, you may sometimes find yourself in different zones as you pray: adoration, holy worship, divine revelation, illumination, observation, refinement, exploration and adaptability. There are times when God will, all of a sudden, help you to discover hidden treasures of His marvelous kingdom. Or there may be times when God will take you on a journey into the third heaven as He did with Paul. Remember, the Holy Spirit was given to us to guide us into all truth. Will you let Him do this for you?

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