

"In Remembrance"

A thought from Pastor Gabe Skillo.

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ"

I Timothy 4:1-6, 11



FOLLOWING GOD?

IS IT POSSIBLE TO FOLLOW GOD WHILE FOLLOWING ANOTHER?

In the ministry I have heard many people say, "I will not obey my parents. I will not follow a man. I will not submit to my husband. I will not follow anyone else other than God. I will never let a pastor lead me." Many times, when these phrases are used the person is trying to come across as a devout follower of God. They make these statements to show that their allegiance and submission is only to God. They boldly come across that if they were to submit to anyone else they would be wronging God. Is this right? Is this Biblical?

RECOGNIZING OUR AUTHORITY

A great place to start in the Bible on this topic is in 2 Peter 1:16-21. In verse 20-21 it says, "*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" What this means is that the authority of Scripture does not come from man, a church or a religious leader; it comes from God! Scripture comes from God. Scripture is God's Word. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 3:16, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*" God gave us the scriptures for those purposes. We don't need any other books or guidelines. The only handbook for the Christian faith is the Bible. So ultimately, IF a Christian whole heartedly follows God's Word, it is automatic that they are wholeheartedly following God.

Is it wrong to steal? Why? Because the Bible says. So, if you never steal because you follow the Bible, is that a form of following God? Absolutely. Is it wrong to kill? Ask yourself why. The reason it is wrong to kill is because the Bible said it. If someone does not kill, they are following God as they follow His Word. I could ask you about committing adultery, bearing false witness and coveting and all three of those would be wrong because God's Word says it is. Therefore, if one does not commit adultery, bear false witness (lie) or covet he is following God by following God's Word.

When we follow anything in God's Word we are following God.

THREE COMMON AREAS WHERE CHRISTIANS STRUGGLE FOLLOWING GOD

There are three very common areas that Christians do not follow God. Take these into consideration:

1. In Ephesians 6:1-2 it states, "*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)*" So, if a child obeys and honors their parents are they following God? Yes. They are following God because they are following His Word. The Bible places the parents as the authority over their children. If a child is following God, then he will in return obey and honor his parents.
2. In Ephesians 5:22 it says, "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*" So, if a wife submits herself unto her own husband is she following God? Yes. The Bible places the husband in the position of leading the home and marriage. Therefore, if a wife is following God, then she will in return submit herself unto her husband.
3. In Hebrews 13:17 the Bible says in reference to one's pastor, "*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*" So, if a church member obeys and submits them self to their pastor

are they following God? Yes. The Bible gives the leadership or “oversight” (I Peter 5:2) in the church exclusively over to the pastor of the church. This Biblical authority is not given to the men or even to the deacons. With that in mind, in a church, if a church member is following God, then he will in return obey and submit himself unto his pastor.

Children, follow God as you obey and honor your parents. To not obey and honor your parents is not following God. Wives, follow God as you submit yourselves unto your own husbands. To not submit to your own husband is not following God. Church members, follow God as you obey your pastor and submit yourself to his leadership. To not obey and submit to your pastor is not following God.

There are many children who feel the need to dictate things to their parents, but things will work out best if they trust God’s Word and obey and honor their parents. Many wives feel as though their husband is not fit to lead or they don’t trust his decisions, but a marriage will always work out best if we follow God’s Word. Many church members have an urge to lead the church instead of allowing the Pastor to lead the church. The children’s ears have been closed to their parents in this day and age; the wives have become stubborn and unyielding, and the church members want to lead rather than listen.

THE LOGIC IN FOLLOWING GOD

What would you say to a child that only obeys his parents until he disagrees? Then, he switches parents. The switching parents comment is comical. However, when put in the other two perspectives, the comparison helps us to see how unbiblical it is to change your spouse or church because of an unwillingness to submit to authority. What would you say to a wife that submits to her husband until she disagrees? Then, she switches husbands. Is that following God? A wife once said, “If I have to submit to him I will divorce him.” Is that right? Why is it largely accepted to switch churches when we don’t like something the pastor said, or we didn’t like that message, or we don’t like the color of the paint, or he made a decision we disagree with? Is the church member following God who switches churches because they can’t follow the pastor? Absolutely not. The word submit actually means: to yield one’s opinion to the opinion or authority of another. If we were to define child, wife or church member submission today by many people’s actions it would be defined as “run, leave or resist”. Switching parents, husbands, or churches due to an inability to submit is unbiblical and the one who does that is not following God. A child may say, “I will obey as long as I want to.” A wife may think, “I’ll let him call the shots until I disagree.” A church member may state, “I’ll trust him as long as he doesn’t upset me.” Biblically and by definition not one of those scenarios is actual obedience or submission and not one is following God.

The Bible gives warning in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 of things that will happen in the last days, *“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”* It is so important for us to not just have a “form of godliness” but to have true submission to God.

The truth in this article can be applied in many areas. Follow God as you follow His Word. The truth... when one follows God’s Word he follows it all.

By not following others we are not following God. Children, get behind your parents; follow God as you follow your parents. Wife, get behind your husband; follow God as you follow your husband. Church members, get behind your pastor; follow God as you follow your pastor.

The main cause for these three common areas is rebellion. In the end, this rebellion is not towards the parent, husband or the pastor but rebellion towards God. It’s possible that this article may upset some readers. However, we have to ask ourselves who the reader is upset with. Is he upset with the author of the article or the author of the Bible? When one fully submits to God and follows Him, they have no problem submitting themselves to others.