

Some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe.

Acts 28:24

Store In My Heart Hebrews 10:36

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

Have you ever heard the word "sticktoitiveness?" I have, many times and in many different situations. I am convinced that the Hebrew writer gives us a pretty good definition for that word in this verse. We need sticktoitiveness in our service to God. We need to keep on keeping on. Paul encouraged the Corinthian brethren to be "steadfast" in their work for God.

No matter what happens in life, we need to keep moving toward God. There is never a time we should slack in our service. We must keep paddling or we will drift along with the current of the world around us.

If I want the promise, I must endure! Keep on working. Keep on studying. Keep on believing. Keep on, keeping on!

"Obey God Rather Than Man"

Dan Henderson

In the early days of the Church, the Apostles, who were chosen by Jesus to be ambassadors and witnesses of the salvation found in His death, burial and resurrection, worked tirelessly in teaching the people of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas about Jesus. This brought them into conflict with many of the rulers in that area. Their message was drawing thousands to the Christ and away from the leadership that had enjoyed authority and power for many years. These apostles were using the facilities available and that were essentially controlled by Jewish leaders to teach these things. These leaders were putting forth every effort to stop such teaching even to the point of physical punishment and imprisonment of those who were doing such teaching.

In **Acts 5** we have the account of a trial of the apostles following their arrest while teaching in the temple in Jerusalem. This chapter tells us they had returned to the temple at the instruction of the Lord's angel that released them from prison just the night before. They were in prison at that time for healing the sick in such numbers while they taught the people that these leaders became jealous of their following. When reminded at this trial of the orders given to stop teaching in the name of Jesus this was their response:

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29

This was the response of the apostles to the rulers of their day. We often use this as an example for our responses to the laws of our government that may interfere with serving God. We need to be careful that we do not use this simply to avoid the laws of our government that we do not like or seem inconvenient to us. The apostles were responding to an order to stop teaching the Gospel. This was a direct opposition to God's Will. I can recall no similar order from any government official in my lifetime. Of course, I am only familiar with the government of the United States and the individual states found therein. While such a direct order is not the only thing that might violate God's Will, there is certainly a high threshold for such a stand as the apostles took in this instance. We have a responsibility to obey those who rule over us, but we are not to violate the Will of God.

While applying this principle to our secular government is certainly



valid, there is another application we must not overlook. The rulers making this demand were not only secular, they were also the religious rulers of the day. The apostles were telling the religious leaders that they had no authority to make laws regarding serving God! This was a rebuke of the assumed authority of the leaders of the Jewish nation. When we study the writings of the apostles, we find even they did not claim such authority. These men understood that all authority came from God. They merely taught what God commanded. Responding to a similar demand at an earlier trial, Peter and John gave a similar response:

But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." **Acts 4:19-20**

We would do well who are leaders and teachers among God's people today to keep this in mind as we go about fulfilling our responsibility. No matter how it may seem to help the cause of Christ, if we teach rules and regulations that are not found in God's Word our instructions should be ignored by those who desire to please God. No man has authority to make rules for God's people. Only God has that authority. Maybe it would be more convenient to sprinkle or pour some water over the one who desires to obey the Lord, but Jesus and his inspired writers used the word that calls for immersion. It might be more pleasing to our ear to include a few, or many, mechanical instruments in our song praise to God, but God stated that the instrument He wanted was the human voice and heart. There are any number of other human innovations found among religious people today, but our first question in assessing their usefulness must be, did God approve this practice.

You see, this statement from the apostles cuts both ways. It is a reminder that only God has authority to give law. It is also a reminder that we are required to obey God's Law no matter what we or others may think about that Law. God expects strict obedience. We do not have the privilege of deciding what is best for our present situation. If we are to remain in fellowship with God, we must do what He requires as revealed in His Word.

Are you following the teaching of man or God? The teaching of God is found in His revealed Word. If what you are doing is not taught in Scripture as from God, it is the teaching of man, and you need to leave that practice and obey God. *"We must obey God rather than men."*

For Our Information

Contact Us

We like opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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Jack Brooks is feeling better, his recent test were good, and he has a stress test next week.

Gloria Hurst is improving but still has a cough.

JoBeth Henderson chemo treatments on Tuesdays.

Paula Laubach is still dealing with difficult back and leg pain.

Sue Soliday has tests and doctor visits for her stomach issues.

Leta Rivera still has regular help from a caregiver.

Tommy Robinson will have radiation treatment for his cancer.

Ruben & Brenda Keisler should return this week.

Next Sunday Evening - **Isaiah 43:22** Wednesday - **Singing**

Are you reading your Bible regularly?

The CHURCH OF CHRIST
MEETS HERE

 10:20 AM • Sunday Worship Service
5:00 PM • Sunday Night Bible Study
7:00 PM • Wednesday Bible Study