



*"Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby you have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will you die, O house of Israel."*

– Ezekiel 18:31

## “IF YOU WILL LISTEN”

### IT'S SIMPLE, REALLY

In Deuteronomy 28 Moses spelled it out in very clear terms. Others explained it as well. We have two choices. Here's the first one:

1. ***IF YOU WILL LISTEN** carefully to hear the voice of Yahweh your God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I am commanding you today, that the Yahweh your God will set you high above all people of the land:*

2. *All these blessings will come on you, and overtake you, if you will listen to the voice of Yahweh your God.*

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

Then for 12 more verses Moses rehearsed the blessings and promises of God. These blessings and promises would result from listening to God and obeying Him.

Then he went on to explain the second choice:

15. *But **IF YOU WILL NOT LISTEN** to the voice of Yahweh your god, to be careful to do all his commands and his statutes that I am commanding you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you.*

Deuteronomy 28:15

Then for 53 more verses Moses enumerated the many curses and pains that result from not listening to God. Some people may not know how to listen to God ... or perhaps they don't want to listen. But God guides those who are willing to listen. The trouble is, most people aren't listening.

This isn't rocket science. It isn't hard to grasp. It is quite simple. We can choose to listen to God, or we can choose to ignore Him. It's our choice. Our lives will go either well or go bad depending upon which of these two choices

we make.

A typical response might be: *"But that is too easy. If acquiring God's approval and blessings were that simple everyone would rush to do it, and that hasn't happened."*

My answer is ... it really is that simple. God blesses all who honestly listen to Him. The problem is that people have been misdirected into a non-Christian mindset that perverts their thinking. Also, there is a large percentage of people that have no interest in looking into the matter.

### TO WHOM DO YOU LISTEN?

Everyone listens to someone. To whom we choose to listen makes all the difference. It is your life's greatest decision ... the most important decision you will ever make.

I hope you have elected to listen to God. But you are free to choose to not listen if that is what you prefer. God lets you decide.

You don't have to listen to God. You can ignore Him if you want. But everyone listens to someone. It is inevitable. So if you choose to not listen to God, then you need to ask yourself to whom, then, do you listen?

There are only two choices. **1.** Listen to God, or **2.** Listen to man. If you prefer to listen to man, that usually equates to listening to yourself. When you choose to listen to man (yourself) you declare yourself to be your own god. It means you make your own rules, and those rules usually change from day to day ... or even moment to moment. Like a little child who has no parental guidance ... no established parameters ... a man who is his own god makes his own rules as he goes ... to suit his changing moods. His ethics have no base except whatever he desires from moment to moment. He is adrift in a sea of disorder, blind and lost, and with no means to learn his location. It is the worst blunder a man can make. It was Adam's fatal mistake when he chose to *"be as God, knowing good and evil"* (Genesis 3:5).

Adam chose to ignore Yahweh preferred to be his own god. That turned out badly for him. It caused him to lose his

relationship with God. He also lost the good life and the protection God had arranged for him.

16. *To the woman he said, I will greatly increase your pain in conception; in pain you will bring forth sons; and your longing will be to your husband, and he will have dominion over you.*

17. *And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your woman, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, Do not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in grief will you eat all the days of your life;*

18. *Thorns and thistles will it bring forth; and you will eat the herbs of the field;*

19. *By the sweat of your face will you eat food, till you return to the ground; for out of it were you taken: for you are of dust, and to dust will you return.*

Genesis 3:16-19

Adam lost his whole way of life as a result of choosing to be his own god (his own lawmaker).

As for us, living under God, and under Christ's Kingship, is a continual observing (learning) the dynamics of his laws. As we learn how God's laws work we find that doing what is right brings us blessings and protection from God. In contrast, doing that which is wrong brings us suffering, loss, and pain. It seems a very basic and simple lesson. But most men are stubbornly bent on rejecting God.

God's message to us is: "That which is right makes life easy and blessed; and that which is wrong makes life hard and painful. It is an immutable principle.

## SO SIMPLE AND CLEAR

And yet, men have figured out ways to foul it up. How could men fail to understand something this simple and clear? God doesn't expect men to be flawless or to never make mistakes. Men make mistakes. We were created with the need to learn from mistakes. We learn by experiencing the pain of wrong choices, and realizing the importance of making right choices. But that is not what Adam did, and it is not what most men today are doing.

God forgives or overlooks mistakes. Mistakes are not the problem. The problem is that most men don't want to be told what is right or wrong. They want to be able to do anything their hearts desire, and without recrimination or judgment. When men rebelliously make bad choices, those are not merely mistakes. Those are acts of rebellion, and God does not overlook those.

This is not something new. This is the way God has always dealt with mankind. Thinking of yourself as your own lawmaker (your own god) is also referred to, in Scripture, as acting "presumptuously."

22. *And if you have made a mistake, and not observed all these commandments, which Yahweh has spoken to Moses,*

23. *That which Yahweh has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that Yahweh commanded Moses, and from that time forward among your generations;*

24. *Then it shall be, if anything is committed in the congregation by ignorance without knowledge, then all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savor to Yahweh, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering.*

25. *And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire to Yahweh, and their sin offering before Yahweh, for their ignorance:*

26. *And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourns among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.*

27. *And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.*

28. *And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sins ignorantly, when he sins by ignorance before Yahweh, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.*

29. *You shall have one law for him that sins through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourns among them.*

30. *But the soul that does anything presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproaches Yahweh; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.*

31. *Because he has despised the word of Yahweh, and has broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.*

Numbers 15:22-31

12. *And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not listen to the priest that stands to minister there before Yahweh your God, or to the judge, even that man shall die: and you shall put away the evil from Israel.*

13. *And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*

Deuteronomy 17:12-13

In Scriptural vernacular, to "sin presumptuously" means to knowingly make a conscious decision to act or think against the laws of God. In other words, to act upon your own desire rather than God's law.

This simple concept explains the great sin that man can commit against God. This sin comes in thousands of ways. Man devises new ways daily to commit this sin, but in essence it is always the same.

It always manifests as man refusing to listen to God and preferring to follow the thoughts of his own little, fertile-but-corrupt mind. When man cuts his moorings with God and strikes off on his own it can only lead to problems. God, who created us, knows our limits and the dangers we should avoid.

God, speaking to Israel through Moses, explained clearly that He readily overlooks (forgives) men's MISTAKES that they do through ignorance. This has always been true, and still is today. Likewise, God offers to educate us and teach us His laws. Through ignorance men can act wrongly without bad intent. But once we become aware of God's wishes, we are no longer ignorant, or innocent. At that point our misbehaviors are no longer innocent.

Man's sins committed knowingly and "presumptuously" (rebelliously) are NOT FORGIVEN until that man repents of his rebellion (presumptuous mind set) and begins honestly listening to God instead of choosing to listen to himself.

## THE BIBLE TELLS US

15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that listens to counsel is wise.*

Proverbs 12:15

12. *There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

Proverbs 14:12

14. *Every man is tried when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*

15. *Then when lust has conceived, it produces sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death (spiritual death).*

James 1:14-15

What does God require of us? He requires that we LISTEN TO HIM and seek his ways. In order for that to happen we first need to STOP SEEKING MAN'S WAYS. This is our recipe for spiritual life.

The ways of men without God are Beast System ways and are based in greed, self worship, and dishonesty. Jesus set the ultimate example for us. He chose to not serve Himself, but to serve his Father. This goes against the thinking of the natural man. But it is the answer for all the ills of mankind. Jesus' Father loved us and commissioned Jesus to give of Himself and shine a light upon us to save us from the blindness and darkness that men had chosen.

## WHAT IS "SUCCESS"

"Success," as viewed by man's system, is the development of skills in theft, deception, greed, and cruelty. To succeed in this mindset one cannot have a functioning conscience. A successful man in today's system must learn to ignore his conscience when it tells him that something is wrong. To the common modern sociopath, monetary profit is power and it is the thing that defines what is right. Those with the most profit/profit are the winners. Thus, winners are

automatically right, even when it means that they must hurt innocent people in order to be winners.

You see, at the bottom of all the wrongs conjured up in the minds of men is basic lack of faith in God which also means a lack of love for our fellow man. With God, things are simple, clear, and consistent. But with the game plans of presumptuous men, things are complicated, confusing, and always in flux ... always changing. "Right" and "wrong" change from day to day in the world of men. On the other hand, with God's system the principles of right and wrong never change. That makes God's ways easy to learn.

The problem is that men are always looking for ways to take advantage of others. They are always looking for ways to cheat one another by changing principles and inventing ways to justify their greed and jealousy. The natural man likes to twist words like "truth," "freedom," and "salvation" so that their true meanings get lost. Men who will twist word meanings will cheat, steal, and lie. It is a basic truism.

The biggest word twisters include Bible translators, preachers, politicians, bankers, and those who chase after Wall Street.

## CAN WE TRUST OUR CONSCIENCE?

There is one particular objection that must be put to rest. This objection nearly always comes up in any meaningful discussion of the subject at hand.

The objection is this: "If we cannot trust man's ways, how can we know when a teacher or a leader is deceiving us, or when our own minds are deceiving us? Must we wait for a voice from the sky to guide us before we make any important decision?"

These scriptures are usually brought up:

9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Jeremiah 17:9

15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes:*

Proverbs 12:15

So, how can we trust our minds? It seems that our minds (our hearts) don't normally guide us according to the will of God.

5. *Trust in Yahweh with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding.*

Proverbs 3:5

These teachings from Scripture warn us against trusting our own minds to reason and to guide our thinking. Certainly, Scripture advises us to think and reason. But what Scripture warns against is us depending upon our own reasoning without guidance from God.

Our minds are wonderful organs created by God to serve us well. However, our minds were not created to act alone. They are meant to receive principles from God, and then to apply those principles to our lives. You see, our minds are not an end to themselves. Rather, they are more like conduits. One end of the conduit is connected to our

lives. The other end needs to be connected to the mind of God. God's end (the mind's connection to God) is what makes it all work. This stabilizes and corrects the other end ... i.e., our minds. Thus, our minds are wonderfully created to do their jobs. However, left to itself without connection to God a man's mind is incomplete and goes adrift. That gets man into trouble ... big trouble.

So while our minds are wonderfully made, they are not designed to act solely on their own. Left to work on their own, without guidance from God, our minds lose their moorings. A mind that tries to work without God's guidance turns a man into a "fool." Our minds need guidance from God in order to work as they were created to work.

So the answer is ... the only time we can trust our minds is when they are subject to God for guidance. When we look to ourselves alone, we wander off into uncharted territory. That is when we act presumptuously, i.e., on our own, rejecting God's guidance (see page 2). That is when we create great problems for ourselves.

## DOING WHAT IS RIGHT

During the time of Moses and the Judges, Israelites were directed to listen to the teachers God sent to them. The Israelites were to follow God's teachings as related to them through teachers of his choice, like Moses, Joshua, and the Judges. These men were not 100% infallible. But God was guiding them so that they didn't drift off course too far, and always found their way back to center of the road as directed by God.

In the books of Judges and Samuel we read about a time in Israel when men did not take it upon themselves to be lawmakers. God had given them law through Moses. These people of that time were not perfect. They made mistakes and sinned at times. However, when they went astray they were brought back to godliness by the laws of God that had been established by Moses. In other words, men did not take it upon themselves to countermand the laws of God, or to make their own laws based upon the leading of their own hearts. To them, "right" was defined as doing what God commanded them to do (to the best of their own understanding). In their minds the concept of "right" was moored to the teachings of Moses.

This prevented men from inventing new laws based upon their own wishes or greed. So at that time "doing what was right," as stated in Scripture, meant doing what they understood the laws of Moses to declare.

Thus we read in Judges 17:6, and 21:25 that "*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*" That didn't mean that the Israelites were lawless and did anything they wanted. Rather, it meant they followed what they understood to be "right" based on their interpretation of the laws of Moses.

Proverbs 12:15 tells us, "*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens to counsel is wise.*" The "fool" is the man who listens only to his own fleshly desires and ignores the guidance of God.

## WHO IS LISTENING?

Indeed! Who is listening? And to whom should we listen? Should we listen to men elected by other men to be designated as "lawmakers"? Have men created law that keeps us safe and secure? Or is it the case that we have been listening to men designated as "lawmakers" who have corrupted everything that was good and wholesome in the land? Have these "lawmakers" (i.e., government officials) been concerned about what is best for the people?

The answer is ... government officials as we know them are controlled by powerful individuals at the top of the food chain who have no interest in the welfare of common citizens.

Today, Americans are listening to the wrong people. They are listening to politicians, TV newsmen, and godless church spokesmen. So, who is listening to God?

God never stopped speaking to us ... through his chosen teachers, and mainly through his Son Jesus who also speaks through his chosen teachers as well as through direct communication with individuals who are willing to listen to Him. God still speaks to us, but most people are not listening.

So, I repeat: **WHO IS LISTENING FOR GOD'S GUIDANCE?** I don't mean listening to me. I mean listening for God's guidance (and yes, some may come through me).

1. *Who has believed our report? and to whom is the arm of Yahweh revealed?*

Isaiah 53:1

## PRACTICE LISTENING TO LEARN

Hearing God's guidance is a practiced discipline. He speaks to us through our conscience, not from church pulpits. It won't come through loudspeakers or TV. It certainly won't come from government sources.

Rather, it comes through your internal thinking. God gives you thoughts. He convicts you of truths when you listen for his quiet voice. He comes to you in the quiet time, when He has your attention. He speaks to us when we are not being distracted by crowds. Often when we are alone.

People who walk around with ear phones worry me. They are listening, but not to God. They don't allow themselves a quiet environment where they can think and consider God's thoughts. God speaks to people who think, and people who listen for Him ... not to people who constantly bombard themselves with noisy electronic interference. Consider 1 John 4:5 where he compares those who listen to God, and those who don't listen.

5. *They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them.*

6. *We are of God: the one knowing God hears us; he that is not of God hears not us. By this know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*

*Ben Williams*