

Teaching Script



Week 4 – 02/27/22 – Central Church of Christ



INTRODUCTION

When I was 14 years old, my dad started talking to me about driving. When I rode places and sat next to him in the front seat, he'd explain why he did certain things behind the wheel. I was excited for him to even *talk* to me about driving, because that meant we were getting closer to it being a reality in my life!

When I turned 15, I took a test to get my learner's permit. It was a lot of questions about driving laws and rules. When I passed that, I was ecstatic. I thought, "Now I can *actually* drive. As long as one of my parents are with me, I can now get behind the wheel."

But, not so fast. My mom informed me that before I drove in any way, shape, or form, I had to take driver's ed. And unfortunately, the next available class was two months away. It was agony! At this point, my two closest friends had already turned 16 and were driving by themselves.

Finally, driver's ed class arrived. I was ready to start driving with the instructor on day one. But first I had to endure another four days of classroom learning before any of us could actually go out on the road. Once again, it was more information and less driving.

By the end of the week, we finally had a chance to drive. After *years* of anticipation, I finally got behind the wheel for what seemed like less time than a commercial break.

Soon after that I turned 16, got my license, and started driving around by myself. And I learned something very quickly: **learning about driving is a lot different than actually driving.** As much as I gained information about it, thought about it, and anticipated it, it wasn't quite the same as actually doing it.

TENSION

The same can be said for a lot of things in life, right? And it can also be true in our walk with God. Growing up, I knew a lot about God. I believed in God. But it was way more information than it was application. I listened to sermons. I bowed my head and closed my eyes during prayer. I said all of the right things. I even believed those things. But it didn't have much effect on my everyday life. I was taught by my parents and my church to obey God, but I was content to just believe in Him. **And my life seemed to be doing just fine without all of the rules and regulations that seemed to come with Christianity.**

A lot of this had to do with how I viewed God. Maybe you can relate to some of these views.

First and foremost, **I viewed God as a judge.** I pictured God up in Heaven, sitting on a throne, observing my life. And I was pretty sure He gave me a thumbs-down most of the time.

As you can imagine, this was an exhausting way to follow God. There wasn't much peace, and there was hardly any joy. And it's not that my parents or church raised me with this idea—I just grabbed ahold of it somewhere along the way and never let go. I knew that I was supposed to obey God, and when I didn't, guilt and shame weren't good motivators for me.

At the same time, **I viewed God as an insurance policy provider.** He was an insurance protection plan to keep me out of hell, and that was as far as it went.

I also viewed God as a theoretical God. He was all about religion, the Bible, and church on Sunday. God was more of an abstract concept than a real being. Otherwise, He wasn't a part of my everyday life.

And finally, **I viewed God as a bodyguard.** He was there to keep me safe and protect me.

Bottom line? **Because I viewed God this way, He wasn't personal, and neither was my faith.** And because it wasn't personal, I saw no reason to listen and do what He said. Maybe you have different views of God than I did, but whatever it is, we all have views of God, and we all have an idea of how God views us. And those views influence whether or not we actually do what He tells us to do.

In this series, we've been talking about questions that Jesus asked. When Jesus walked on Earth, He was showing God's heart to mankind. And He asked questions to engage the souls and minds of people who He loved so much. When we examine these questions, we discover more about the heart of following God. Today's question, which is all about obedience, is no different.

TRUTH

Today we're looking at one of Jesus' sermons found in the Gospel of Luke. As usual, when Jesus spoke, it was powerful. He told stories. He challenged current forms of thinking and believing. Being a brilliant teacher, He asked questions. This is Luke recording Jesus' words.

"A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs are never gathered from thornbushes, and grapes are not picked from bramble bushes. A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart" (Luke 6:43-45 NLT).

Jesus doesn't start with the crowd's behavior. He starts with their heart.

If you're familiar with King David in the Old Testament, you know he was a man who had many setbacks in his walk with God. He committed adultery, had an innocent man killed, and failed to discipline his children—including a son who eventually formed a rebellion against him. Yet God called David:

"A man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22c NIV).

David was far from perfect, but his heart continued to pursue the One who is.

So, Jesus then asked this question:

"Why do you keep calling me, 'Lord, Lord,' when you don't do what I say?" (Luke 6:46 NLT).

Jesus is implying that He doesn't just want to be our Savior. He also wants to be our Lord. **He doesn't want us to just be believers. He also wants us to be disciples.** He wants us to humble ourselves before Him and show Him honor and respect. Plus, it's what's best for our lives and our futures. That's why Jesus continues with this:

"I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house

right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins” (Luke 6:47-49 NLT).

Put another way, “If you want God to show up in your life on a larger scale, you can’t just lean on listening to sermons. You can’t just rely on learning more religious information. You have to actually *do* some things with what you’re learning. That’s what helps your faith change and grow.” Like me at 15 years old—there was a big difference between learning about driving and actually driving. My driving improved and grew the most when I actually got behind the wheel.

Our faith works the same way.

Faith is about doing, not just hearing.

When we go to church, listen to sermons, read spiritual books, follow Christian podcasts, but do nothing different, then we’re following a theoretical God. He may be our Savior, but He’s not the Lord of our lives. We’re believers, but we’re not disciples. When Jesus was on Earth, He didn’t call His disciples by saying, “Believe in Me.” No, He said, “*Follow me*” (Matthew 4:19 NLT).

But here’s the kicker: we have to obey from the proper motivation. If you hear this sermon and think that God the Judge will give you a thumbs-down if you don’t do what He says, that may motivate you for a little while, but it won’t work long-term. **If we could do enough good stuff to please God, He wouldn’t have needed to send Jesus.** Since the beginning of time, human beings have been coming up short in doing enough, so God sent Jesus to do it for us. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice for us, it went from *do* to *done*.

Jesus said this:

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10b NIV).

God sent Jesus because He loves us. Jesus died for us because He loves us. Jesus came back to life, defeating sin and death. God is referred to as a “Good Father.” He wants great things for us! He wants us to experience less regret and more joy. He wants us to have more health and more purpose. We are His sons and daughters! There are zero indicators that God wants anything for us other than what’s in our best interest.

The apostle Paul put it this way:

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT).

Whatever view of God you and I had growing up, the truth is that for those of us who have placed our hope and trust in the Person of Jesus Christ, God says that we’re brand-new creations. He says that we’re holy. He says that we’re righteous. Not because of what we *do*, but because of what Jesus has *done* for us.

What if it wasn’t a matter of what we do, but more about accepting the completeness of what Jesus has done for us—and who that makes us in return? Nothing we can do can will ever increase or decrease His love for us. After all, that love was the reason why He died for us! **We can enjoy God and partner with Him to decrease the mess in our lives and move us toward more freedom.** We can partner with Him and depend on Him to help us actually do what He says.

God loves you. He smiles over you. He wants good things for you. Take your hands off the top of the cup and let Him fill it up. Let Him lead you toward more freedom.

APPLICATION

But how does this play out in our everyday lives? I think it starts by our view of God. He’s not a judge waiting for you to mess up. He’s not an insurance policy. He’s not a bodyguard. **He’s a Father—it’s our job to trust Him.** It’s our job to trust that . . .

- Jesus took care of it all.
- He already made us new.
- He loves us and likes us—even when we mess up.

- He's big enough to handle when we mess up.
- He'll walk with us and partner with us as we mature, instead of waiting on us to mature in order to be close to Him.
- He's here with us now, instead of over there at the finish line.

Then, let's identify one area where we can move from information to application. What's one thing that we've heard a lot about but haven't done anything about? What's one way that we can stretch our faith by obeying what God asks us to do? What's one way we can move our house from the surface-level to a foundation on rock? What's something you've been learning about that you could put into practice?

- Maybe it's spending some intentional time with your spouse or kids.
- Maybe it's getting involved and serving somewhere.
- Maybe it's forgiving someone.
- Maybe it's giving or tithing.

Take time to pray and ask God to show you an area where you can move from hearing to doing.

LANDING

Imagine if, instead of thinking that it was your responsibility to please God, you saw it as an opportunity to partner with Him to walk you out of your mess and into more freedom? And imagine if you started doing some of the things that the Creator of the universe asks you to do.

God loves you! He said that He came to Earth so we can have an abundant life. He wants good for you. We can trust that when He asks us to do something, it's for our best. **Faith is about doing, not just hearing.** So let's partner with God and stretch our faith.

Small Group Discussion



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever learned about something only to discover it was very different to actually do what you were learning about? Can you share about your experience?
2. A lot of us have developed misconceptions about who God is. Why do you think those misconceptions are so easy to start to believe?
3. What are some misconceptions you've had about God? Would you mind sharing them? How did they affect your relationship with God?
4. Read Luke 6:47-49. Why do you think doing what you read in Scripture puts your life on a more solid foundation than just hearing and reading about it?
5. What is the difference between believing in Jesus and following Jesus?
6. Since we don't obey God to earn our salvation — Jesus did that for us — why do you think God wants us to follow and obey Him?
7. What's one area of faith you've been learning about that you can put into practice?