

Adjustments to God

When God speaks to you to reveal what He is about to do, that revelation is your invitation to adjust your life to Him. Your faith will be most clearly demonstrated by your actions. Actions you will take include the adjustments you must make to be in a position to obey the Lord. Once you’ve adjusted your life to the Lord, you act in obedience. Then God accomplishes through you what He has purposed to do.

Matthew 6:33

³³ But **seek first the kingdom of God** and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Esther 4:14

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And **who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?**

Job 42:1-2

¹ Then Job answered the LORD and said: ² “I know that you can do all things, and that **no purpose of yours can be thwarted.**”

Matthew 5:17-20

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to **fulfill** (*walk it out as it was intended to be walked out*) them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore **whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same** will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but **whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.** ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your **righteousness** (i.e. 1 John 2:3-6, “³ *And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.*” ⁴ *Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,* ⁵ *but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him:* ⁶ *whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.*”) exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Luke 14:33

“Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my Disciple.”

Adjustments prepare you for obedience. You cannot continue life as usual or stay where you are and go with God at the same time. This truth is demonstrated through Scripture. For instance:

- Noah could not continue life as usual and build an ark (see Gen. 6)
- Abram could not stay in Ur or Haran and father a nation in Canaan (see Gen. 12:1-8)
- Moses could not stay on the back side of the desert herding sheep and stand before Pharaoh (see Ex. 3)
- David had to leave his sheep to become king (see 1 Sam. 16:1-13)
- Amos had to leave the sycamore trees to preach in Israel (see Amos 7:14-15)
- Jonah had to leave his home and overcome a major prejudice in order to preach in Nineveh (see Jonah 1:1-2; 3:1-2; 4:1-11)
- Peter, Andrew, James, and John had to leave their fishing business to follow Jesus (see Matt. 4:18-22)
- Matthew had to leave his tax collector’s booth to follow Jesus (see Matt. 9:9)
- Saul (later Paul) had to completely change directions in his life to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (see Acts 9:1-19)

These men had to make enormous adjustments! Some had to leave family and country. Others had to renounce prejudices and change their values. Others had to leave behind life goals, ideals, and desires. They had to yield everything to God and align their entire lives to Him. The moment they made the necessary changes, God began to accomplish His purposes through them. Each one, however, learned that adjusting one’s life to God is **well worth the cost**.

You may be thinking, but God will not ask me to make major adjustments. Scripture shows that God most certainly requires adjustments of His people. He even required them of His own Son: “*You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich*” (2 Cor. 8:9).

If you want to be a disciple – a follower – of Jesus, you have no choice. You must leave where you are to follow Him. You must make major alterations in your life to follow God. Until you are ready to make any change necessary to follow and obey what God has said, you will be of little use to God. Your greatest single difficulty in following God may come at this point of full surrender.

We tend to want to skip making adjustments and go directly from believing God to obedience. If you want to follow Him, you don’t have that choice. His ways are so different from yours (see Isa. 55:9, “*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*”) the only way you can follow Him requires an alignment of your life to His ways.

The rich ruler desired eternal life, but he didn’t want to make the necessary adjustments to Jesus. He considered his money and wealth to be more important. Jesus knew that people cannot love God completely and love money at the same time (see Matt 6:24). Jesus asked him to put away what had become his god – his wealth. The young ruler refused to change his priorities, and he missed experiencing

eternal life. The rich young ruler’s love of money and his greed made him an idolater (see Eph. 5:5). He missed coming to know the true God and Jesus Christ, whom God had sent. He wanted to gain eternal life, but he refused to do what was necessary to obtain it.

Elisha responded much differently. He had to leave family and career (farming) to follow God’s call. You may have heard the phrase burning your bridges behind you. Elisha burned his farming equipment and killed his oxen, cooking the meat and feeding the people of the community (see 1 Kings 19:19-21). He was not about to turn back! When he made the necessary adjustments, he was in a position to obey God. As a result, God worked through Elisha to perform some of the greatest signs and miracles recorded in the Old Testament (see 2 Kings 2-13). Elisha had to make major changes on the front end of his call. Not until he took those actions did God work through him to accomplish the miracles.

When God invites you to join Him, the task will have such God-sized dimensions that it will cause you to experience a crisis of belief. Your response will require faith. Faith will be demonstrated by action. The first thing you will do is adjust your life to God. The second step will be to obey what God asks you to do. You cannot go on to obedience without faith making necessary adjustments. The order is (1) faith, (2) adjustments, (3) obedience. No one can sum up all God is able to accomplish through one solitary life that is wholly yielded, adjusted, and obedient to Him!

Sometimes an adjustment may involve several of these areas at once. For instance, Peter’s experience with Cornelius probably required adjustments in Peter’s relationships with Gentiles, his thinking and beliefs about what is religiously pure, his commitments to the traditions of the Jews, and his actions regarding fellowship with Gentiles. Being able to place a title on an adjustment is not as important as identifying what change God wants you to make to Him, His purposes, or His ways.

Some people have asked whether a major adjustment is always involved in joining God’s work. Anytime you go from where you are to where God is working, from your way of thinking to God’s way of thinking, from your ways to God’s ways, or from your purposes to His purposes, a major adjustment will be required. Now, you may make adjustments at one point in your life that will prepare you for joining God at a future time. When the time comes for obedience, you will have already adjusted to God and you will not sense a major adjustment is required.

Remember, because God loves you, His will is always best! Any adjustment God expects you to make is for your good. As you follow Him, the time may come when your life and future may depend on your adjusting quickly to God’s directives.

You don’t adjust your life to a concept. You align your life to God. You alter your viewpoints to resemble His. You change your ways to be like His ways. After you make the necessary adjustments, He will tell you what to do next to obey Him. When you follow Him, you will experience Him doing through you something only He can do.

David Livingston (medical missionary to Africa): *“Forbid that we should ever consider the holding of a commission from the King of kings a sacrifice, so long as other men limit the service of an earthly government as an honor. I am a missionary, heart and soul. God himself had an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am, or wish to be, but in this service I hope to live. In it I wish to die. I still prefer poverty and missions service to riches and ease. This is my choice.”*

Livingstone considered a missionary work in Africa a higher honor, not a sacrifice.

Jim Elliot (missionary to Quichua Indians in South America): *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”*

Jim Elliot was willing to give up his life for heavenly reward. He was killed by South American Indians as he sought to spread the gospel to those who had never heard about Jesus.

Oswald J Smith (missionary statesman of Canada): *“I want Thy plan, O God, for my life. May I be happy and contented whether in the homeland or on the foreign field; whether married or alone, in happiness or sorrow, health or sickness, prosperity or adversity – I want Thy plan, O God, for my life. I want it; oh, I want it!”*

Oswald Smith wanted God’s plan for his life so much that he was willing to be content with any pleasure or adversity.

C.T. Studd (missionary to China, India, and Africa): *“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice is too great for me to give for Him.”*

C.T. Studd was open to make any sacrifice for Jesus’ sake.

You cannot stay where you are and go with God in obedience to His will. Adjustments must come first. Then you can follow in obedience. Keep in mind that the God who calls you is also the One who will enable you to do His will.

Obedience Requires Adjustments

1. You cannot stay where you are and go with God at the same time.
2. Obedience is costly to you and to those around you.
3. Obedience requires total dependence on God to work through you.

When you are willing to surrender everything in your life to the lordship of Christ, you, like Elisha, will find the adjustments are well worth the reward of experiencing God. If you have not come to the place in your life where you have surrendered all to His lordship, decide today to deny yourself, take up your cross (*service for God and of others*), and follow Him (see Luke 9:23, “*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross (service for God and of others) daily and follow me.*”).

“Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my Disciple.” **Luke 14:33**

You cannot continue doing things your way and accomplish God’s purposes. Your thinking cannot come close to thinking like God. For you to do the will of God, you must adjust your life to Him, His purposes, and His ways.

Only obedience and God’s affirmation of our obedience would reveal that we were doing God’s will.

2 Corinthians 11:23-31

²³ Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one – I am talking like a madman – with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. ²⁴ Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶ on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; ²⁷ in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸ And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? ³⁰ If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

Sometimes obedience to God’s will leads to opposition and misunderstanding. Because of his obedience Paul suffered much for the cause of Christ. The beatings, imprisonments, and danger listed in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27 (above) sound like more than one person could bear. He concluded one letter by saying, “*I bear on my body the marks of Jesus*” (Gal. 6:17). Paul had not had these experiences before he began to do the will of his Lord. Obedience was costly to him. Even so, Paul could still say, “*I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection form the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me*” (Phil. 3:10-12).

The Apostle Paul revealed the adjustments he made to do God’s will when he said, “*I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some*” (1 Cor. 9:22). Your adjustments and obedience to Christ may be difficult as well.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

⁷ So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, **a messenger of Satan to harass me** (*a New Testament Job*), to keep me from becoming conceited. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Obedience is Costly

One of the most demanding adjustments to doing God’s will is deciding to obey even when obedience is costly to those around you. You as well as those around you may have to pay a price for your obedience.

When Moses obeyed God, the workload of the children of Israel was increased, and the foreman were beaten. The Israelites paid a price for Moses to do God’s will. When Jesus did the Father’s will and died on the cross, His mother had to suffer the agony of watching her Son be cruelly killed. Jesus’ obedience put Mary through a heartbreaking experience. His obedience brought fear and pain to the disciples. For Jesus to do God’s will, others had to suffer. When Paul followed God’s will in preaching the gospel, others were led to respond to God’s work in their own lives. Jason and some others were arrested by a rioting mob and were accused of treason because of their association with Paul. Frequently, Paul’s obedience to God’s will endangered the lives of those who were with Him.

You have heard many Christians say, “I really think God is calling me to serve Him, but after all, my children need me, I can’t put my family through that.” Your children certainly need your care, but do you suppose that if you obediently responded to God’s activity, He would provide for your children? . . . You can trust God with your family! I would rather entrust my family to God’s care than to anyone else in the world.

Deuteronomy 11:18-32

¹⁸ “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹ **You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.** ²⁰ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ **that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied** in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. ²² For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to

him,²³ then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.²⁴ Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea.²⁵ No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.

²⁶ “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, ²⁸ and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. ²⁹ And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on **Mount Ebal** (*Read Ancient Tablet Found – Name of God: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/archaeologist-claims-to-find-oldest-hebrew-text-in-israel-including-the-name-of-god/>*). ³⁰ Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? ³¹ For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, ³² you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.

Luke 14:25-33

The Cost of Discipleship

²⁵ Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate (*not love more than God*) his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not bear his own cross (*service for God and of others*) and come after me cannot be my disciple . . . ³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

In summary, when God speaks to you to reveal what He is about to do, that revelation is your invitation to adjust your life to Him. Your faith will be most clearly demonstrated by your actions. Actions you will take include the adjustments you must make to be in a position to obey the Lord. Once you’ve adjusted your life to the Lord, you act in obedience. Then God accomplishes through you what He has purposed to do. Adjustments prepare you for obedience. You cannot continue life as usual or stay where you are and go with God at the same time. This truth is demonstrated through Scripture.

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Experiencing God, “Knowing and Doing the Will of God” – Henry & Richard Blackaby, Claude King