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# **That You May Observe To Do**

**#1321-B**

**Series: What the Word Says About the Word**

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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# That You May Observe to Do

*Thank You for Your patience, Father. You love us so much. We can't really grasp the depth of that love, but we thank You for it. We can praise You for it. We can love You for it.*

*Settle our spirits, we pray in these moments, that the thoughts that crowd into our minds might be dissipated, so the eyes of our spirits may focus on truth.*

*We pray, Father, that we not come to be entertained or even to be educated, but to be changed. And we just pray that would happen this morning.*

*Speak to us this morning, Father. Lift us out of the lethargy that Satan so imposes upon our spirits, and bring us into the plane of spiritual excitement.*

*In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Have you ever wondered what the story of Noah would be like if God had tried to use you to build the ark instead of Noah? Take your record of obedience—how completely you obey, how quickly you obey, and how continuously you obey—would that ark ever have been built at all? Would it have floated? Or would you still be haggling over the plans?

One writer gives this modern scenario (and I really like it) of a less obedient Noah. It goes like this.

*And the Lord said to Noah, "Where is the ark which I commanded thee to build?"*

*And Noah said to the Lord, "Verily, I have had three carpenters off work because of illness. And the gopher wood supplier hath let me down, yea, even though the gopher wood hath been on order for twelve months. What can I do? Oh Lord, it's out of my control."*

*And the Lord said to Noah, "I want that ark finished even after seven days and seven nights."*

*And Noah said, "It shall be so, Lord."*

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*But it was not so. And the Lord said to Noah again, "What seemeth to be the trouble this time?"*

*And Noah said unto the Lord, "Mine subcontractor hath gone bankrupt. The pitch, which Thou commandest me to put on the outside and on the inside of the ark, hath not arrived. The plumber hath gone on strike. Shem, my son, who helpeth me on the ark side of the business, hath formed a music group with his brothers, Ham and Japheth. Lord, they won't work! I'm beside myself."*

*And the Lord began to get angry. "What about the animals, the male and female of every sort I ordered thee to gather together?"*

*And Noah said, "They have been delivered to the wrong address, Lord. UPS is tracing it now. Hopefully, they'll be here by Friday."*

*"What about the unicorns?" The Lord said somewhat fearfully.*

*"Oh, I meant to tell you," Noah quickly replied. "I've been told they're a discontinued line."*

*Noah began to wring his hands and weep saying, "Lord, Lord, Thou knowest how it is..."*

*"Yes, my child," the Lord is said to have responded, "I know how it is. That's why I'm sending the flood."*

Farfetched? Not really. Considering my record of faith (or lack thereof) and my record of obedience (or lack thereof), I'm sure if I had been Noah, the ark would never have been built, let alone in time for the flood. Let's remind ourselves of the scenario exactly as it happened in Genesis 6:5.

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. (Genesis 6:5,6)

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. (Genesis 6:8)

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Genesis 6:13)

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“Noah, I want you to build an ark of gopher wood, make the rooms like this, and make them these dimensions.”

Beginning in verse 17, it says,

I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life [flesh] under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.

But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.

You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

(Genesis 6:17-21 NIV)

Here's your memory verse.

Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him,  
so did he. (Genesis 6:22)

Have you ever wondered the difference in history, had that verse read: “And Noah tried, but he just couldn't pull it off?”

He wasn't being asked to pick up a loaf of bread on his way home. He wasn't being asked to make it to church on time and wear his nametag. He was being asked to build a boat on dry land, a boat so big it would hold a representation of every living creature on earth. He had a limited crew, a hostile environment and no proof at all it was going to ever rain, except a word from God. What a life verse that would be, if you would just insert your own name in place of Noah's.

Thus did \_\_\_\_\_; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Imagine the story of the children of Israel if Moses and Joshua had said, “You know, we really would like to do what the Lord wants us to do, but you know it's a lot of trouble.”

In reality, the tides of history ebb and flow around the lives of men and women who will obey. Obedience to God really has to do with implicit, absolute obedience. It's something that's a foreign language in today's curriculum. Now this is going to be a

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tough lesson. I know we've said that every week, and every week, I guess, it has been. This one's important—really important in the context of this whole series.

I want to give you a quiz this morning, because I know you like them. The quiz is this; it's a simple one. You see, I don't think we listen to God anymore with the intent of obeying. Now here's the quiz. How many of you were here last week, (you can answer that one), and were convicted in some measure that God wanted you to memorize and meditate on the Scripture faithfully? You don't have to raise your hand, but raise your heart and let God know, because He knows anyway. You were here and you were convicted that there was something God wanted you to do. Now a week has passed, right?

Question 1: Have you done it? To what degree? Were you satisfied with much less than what you anticipated God expected?

Here's the crucial question.

Question 2: If not, how disturbed are you about it? Or did you think you'd just come back this morning and get something new to tickle your fancy and think about, and think maybe it would be neat to do that? I told you it's going to be hard. Or did you think, *God understands and He never expected me to get carried away and obey so quickly*. Oh, really?

Now I'm going to ask you another question.

Question 3: What is the purpose of Bible study? I wish every Bible study group, every Sunday school class, and every accountability group would sit down together and ask themselves that question. I think a lot of people get together, study the Bible, go home, prepare to come back, do the same thing again, and never sit down and ask themselves why they're doing it. I wonder how many of our Sunday schools and fellowship groups ever ask that question.

Well, some of you may remember we have been looking through Psalm 119. I'm going give you a few verses and see if you can catch a key word in there that may tell you why you study the Bible. Okay?

Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. (Psalms 119:2)

Thou has commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.

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Oh, that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!  
(Psalms 119:4,5)

I will keep thy statutes; Oh, forsake me not utterly.  
(Psalms 119:8)

Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.  
(Psalms 119:17)

Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it to the end.  
(Psalms 119:33)

Now in your lesson there are twenty-two passages in that one chapter that say the same thing.

Here are the rest of them not read on the DVD.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.  
(Psalms 119:34)

So shall I keep thy law continually, for ever and ever.  
(Psalms 119:44)

You are my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep Your words.  
(Psalms 119:57 NKJV)

I made haste, and did not delay to keep Your commandments.  
(Psalms 119:60 NKJV)

I am a companion of all who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts.  
(Psalms 119:63 NKJV)

The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.  
(Psalms 119:69 NKJV)

Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, so that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.  
(Psalms 119:88 NKJV)

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.

I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word.  
(Psalms 119:100,101 NKJV)

I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments.  
(Psalms 119:106 NKJV)

Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God!  
(Psalms 119:115 NKJV)

Your testimonies are wonderful; Therefore my soul keeps them.  
(Psalms 119:129 NKJV)

Redeem me from the oppression of man, that I may keep Your precepts.  
(Psalms 119:134 NKJV)

Rivers of water run down from my eyes, because men do not

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keep Your law. (Psalms 119:136 NKJV)

I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O LORD! I will keep Your statutes.

I cry out to You; save me, and I will keep Your testimonies.  
(Psalms 119:145,146 NKJV)

Did you happen to catch the key word? I knew you would. It's "keep." Now that word "keep" is translated obey. In some translations and in some places, it's translated "preserve" or "watch over." It means to preserve the integrity of a command or instruction by doing exactly what you're told. Do you begin to see why there is so much attention on it in that chapter? And do you begin to see that the reason you study the Bible, the reason you appropriate Scripture, the reason you personalize Scripture is so you may "keep" it obey it? Whatever the personal cost, your one driving force, your one concern, ought *not* to be accumulation of knowledge, but to process instruction for the purpose of obeying. You got it? Process instruction for the purpose of obeying.

We don't like that word obedience, do we? In every generation, it seems the word obedience is more difficult for the common man to grasp. The closer we get to the Lord's return, the harder it'll be. Obey—it stirs up thoughts of resistance and rebellion. Fallen angels have a problem with it. It's not a new problem. Eve had a problem with it. God just gave her one restriction. She could do anything else she wanted. But she took that one restriction, she ran it through the computer in her mind and she came up with three things:

- 1- Did God really say He was going to limit her options?
- 2- Did anyone, even God, have a right to tell her what she could or couldn't eat?
- 3- Was God violating her civil rights?

Now I'm serious. Those are the questions. If those arguments sound familiar to you, it's because Satan really isn't that innovative. He just tells us what we want to hear over and over and over. He wraps it in a slightly different package, but he tells us the same thing.

The Bible pulls no punches. The Word of God has a singular purpose. It is to cause obedience, which causes transformation.

We'll read some other passages.

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Walk after the LORD your God in fear, and keep His commandments, obey His voice; serve Him and cling to Him.  
(Deuteronomy 13:4 paraphrase)

That's all you need to do.

Obey the voice of the LORD your God, do His commandments which I command you today.

(Deuteronomy 27:10 paraphrase)

And thou will return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

(Deuteronomy 30:8)

I have taught you these things, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land when you go to possess it.

Therefore keep them and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations...

(Deuteronomy 4:5,6 paraphrase)

And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments [these things], that you might observe [do] them in the land which you cross over to possess.

(Deuteronomy 4:14 NKJV)

But the word is very near you, in thy mouth and in your heart, that you may [what?] do it.

(Deuteronomy 30:14 NKJV)

Now I don't know if you get the picture or not. I just took one little word from the Old Testament to show you that the entirety of Scripture has the same words: *observe*, *obey*, and *do*. And I think that word *do* says it all. It's a very simple word, isn't it? It's an easily understood action verb. How many of you are parents? Have you ever laid in bed at night and said to yourself, "Oh, if that child would just do what I ask him?" Have you? Of course, you have. Have you ever wondered how God feels?

One of our key passages in looking at it in terms of memorization and meditation, is Joshua, chapter 1, beginning with verse 7. I want us to read it one more time to find out why we meditate. Remember meditation is not an end within itself, neither is memorization.

Only be strong and very courageous [Why? That you appear spiritual to all of your friends? No, I don't think that is what it says. It says] that you may observe to do according to everything] all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that



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you may prosper wherever you go.

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night [continuously, why?] that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Joshua 1:7,8 NKJV)

So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go."

(Joshua 1:16 NKJV)

Sounds like a Noah verse, doesn't it? "All you commanded us, we will do; and wherever you send us, we will go." Now, suppose you were there with Joshua that day, you were with a crowd, and you were in verse 16 shouting out, "Lord, yes! Wherever You send us we will go. Whatever You tell us we will do. Amen." And Joshua calls you over to the side and says, "Samuel, would you mind doing KP duty for the next three weeks, please? We need some help in the kitchen." You might say, "Josh, I mean, Sir, for a couple of days maybe. But I don't think it fair for you to ask me to do it for three weeks."

Can't you just see old Joshua cock his head a little and say, "But wait a minute. I thought you said, 'Whatever you ask me, I will do, and wherever you send me, I will go?'" "Oh, that," you say. "That was at the end of that big revival meeting and when you gave the invitation, I was kind of emotional. But this is real world stuff now, Joshua, and I've got my rights!"

You might fault the man for his response, and rightly so; he doesn't understand obedience. The question I want to ask you this morning is, "Do we?" Sometimes I wonder if we don't have a two-by-four in our eye that's obscuring our vision. Now think about it. When you came to Christ, what did you do? You handed Him the keys to your life, and said, "Here, Lord, take over. Wherever you want me to go, I'll go. Whatever you want me to do, I'll do." Maybe you didn't say it in those words, but you basically said, "Lord, come into my heart, take over my life and be my Savior and Lord."

That word "Lord" means you have a master. It means you become a slave. That's what it means. In your case, it's a double blessing, because:

- 1- Someone just became responsible for your life.
- 2- That person will never do anything but what's best for you.

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So, it's a win-win situation.

But what your new "Lord" did was, to just give you a simple instruction manual, a set of clear guidelines so you can be a good slave. That sounds like a neat deal. He only asks you to do three things, doesn't He?

1- Memorize the Book. (I've got to get around to doing that.)

2- Think about it all day long, review it, and evaluate your life in the light of it. (I've got to do that, too.)

3- Do everything it says to do, exactly like He says it.

That's all he wants. That means obey, no matter what people think and no matter what your feelings dictate, because the Lord is trustworthy and He's your Lord. In other words, if your God says, a lie is an abomination to the Lord, then it is. And you have two options then:

Option 1- You quit lying and tell the truth.

Or,

Option 2- You're in absolute disobedience to the Lord.

You say, "Wait a minute. I don't lie often, and I don't lie big." That's not the point. The size of the lie is not the issue to God. The *choice* to lie is the issue. That would be the same as saying to God, "I just barely murdered him." Either you did or you didn't.

Illustration 2: It will get more personal. If your Lord says that worry is a sin, and He does, then it is a sin. You say, "I come from a family of worriers. (Not warriors, worriers.) My mother worried, my father worried. I was raised to worry. I can't help it." Have you ever heard that? If you've ever done any counseling, you have. That's a lie straight from Satan!

God sent His Son to die for you, and sent His Spirit to live in you. What you used to do or what your parents did, only gives Him greater room to glorify Himself, and gives you get extra grace. Now my Bible doesn't say to stop worrying based on your temperament or your upbringing. He commands us to stop worrying based on who He is. He's a sovereign God who provides all our needs. And the more unnatural it is for you to stop worrying, the more supernaturally God can come in and free you from that curse and get the glory. He said to all of us, phlegmatics, sanguines, choleric, melancholics and any other categories man has put together, "Be anxious for what? Nada.

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Nothing—absolutely nothing.” So that means if you’ve been a Christian for more than a few days, and you are not gaining ground rapidly in the area of worry, something is wrong. Don’t be satisfied that you are dealing with the problem until you are overcoming it. It’s a sin to worry. God said it, I didn’t.

You say wait a minute, “I memorized that verse.” All right. “I’ve been meditating on it.” All right. “And I’m all worried about it.” Oh, no. Then why did you meditate on it? You say, “To remind me of God’s perspective.” No. That’s a side benefit. You meditate, why?” That you may observe *to do* whatever it says to do.

So, the purposes of the passage are these. How do you stop worrying? You choose to. The Word convicts. You choose. God enables. You say, “I’m working on it.” No, don’t work on it. Do it. Now I don’t mean it’s not a process, I mean it’s not a procrastination process. You don’t say, “Someday I want to stop worrying.” What that really means is, that if I ever get around to it, I’ll work on it. God never meant you to phase out of sin. He didn’t mean to kind of work on not worrying so much, or not lying so much, or stealing so much. Or, “Lord, I’m going to kill a little less next year. I killed three guys this year; I’m going down to two.” “Lord, I’m only going to tell four lies a month. I’m making progress.” “Lord, I’m not going to steal cars any more, I’m just going to steal television sets.” Don’t you see how simple and how silly it sounds?

Now don’t take this statement out of context, guys. It will really get me in trouble. God never meant for you to work at loving your wife. Don’t take it out of context. God didn’t say that. He said to love her, now, today, and from this point on, for you to be as one. You don’t ever stop. You say, “She’s not loveable.” More grace. Meditate on the command until you’re sure it’s the will of God, and then your only choice, my friend, is not to work on it, it’s to do it. God will give you the strength. God will give you the love, but you make the choice. You continue to make the choice to love her sacrificially, humbly, continually, and tenderly. You say, “It’s not any fun.” God never said it would be fun. He said there would be rewards in heaven where moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal.<sup>1</sup> That’s what He said.

You and I live in a world where disobedience is excused through the use of the big two lies: procrastination and justification.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 6:19

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Procrastination says, “Someday I’m going to do it, God understands.” Justification says, “I must have misunderstood. Nobody can do that.”

Got a bad temper? Don’t get angry; stop it. Don’t tell your husband, “I come from a family of Irish redheads and we’ve all got tempers.” My Bible says,

“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”

(Proverbs 16:32 NKJV)

The more anger you used to have, the less reason you have to live with it one more day. You’ve seen what it can do. You’ve memorized that passage that let’s you know anger is a violation of the longsuffering of God. You meditate on it day and night. And when the battle heats up and Satan moves in, and you begin to get angry, you stop momentarily, make a choice and say, “It is written.” And you choose not to get angry.

When you make that choice, at that instant, the Spirit of God will move into your life. He will fill you with His Spirit, and infuse you with grace, calm your spirit and you will not get angry. Should you do everything but that last step, though, you’ll be 95 years old, if you live that long, still struggling with a temper. And you’ll be incredibly accountable, but just as incredibly angry. But you say, “I meant to get over it.” God is not impressed with your intentions.

How would you like it, if you came to the end of your life, and you went to enter into the courts of heaven, and God met you and said, “You know, I really meant to save you. I just never got around to putting your name in the Lamb’s book of life.” That makes no sense. I take God at His Word. We do, you see, on the promises. It’s just on the commandments, we don’t.

The reason the world was so amazed at the new Christians, following Pentecost, is they were so filled with God, that they were living godly lives. Paul, a ruthless murderer, was chained to a Roman guard, demonstrating love. Peter, a loud-mouthed condescending traitor, who denied the very Lord who saved Him, had become the author of a manuscript of understanding, conciliation and humility. John, the tenderhearted one, was now filled with boldness, yet still enveloped in love. They were turning the world upside down. Why? Because they took God at His Word. His Word said stop lying; they stopped. It said stop

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stealing; they stopped. God said stop coveting; they stopped. And a lying, stealing, coveting world was amazed.

In today's Christian world, we don't honor humility, obedience, or faithfulness, even in our children. We honor talent, accomplishment, and power. God isn't impressed with accomplishments. God is impressed with obedience that comes from the heart.

I say to you today, the major issue facing the church today isn't a parking space, staff positions or buses. The major issue facing the church today is the same as it's always been. It's obedience. Until we return to teaching on sin and demanding obedience, we'll never bring real joy to the heart of God, and we'll never change the world in which we live. God isn't impressed with how many people we get here on Sunday morning through our programs. God is impressed with how many people who come on Sunday, have transformed lives on Monday.

Now, let's get personal. You say, "Let's don't." Let's do. Let's look at your life. This is your life. What does God see? We know He looks at the heart. We already know He wants us to memorize and meditate on His Word, and we're going to get around to that someday. But beloved, unless we take the last step, it doesn't matter. We are hypocrites. What God wants is obedience.

Now I am not referring to sinless perfection. Until Jesus comes, you will be a sinner, and you will sin. I John 1:8-10, makes that very plain, very clear. What it means is, that occasionally you will slip and resort to old habits, or yield to temptation. It will grieve your heart and you will confess it immediately. But, beloved, if you, according to II Corinthians 3:18, are continuing to grow in "ever-increasing splendor, from one degree of glory to another," your life ought to be so much different today than you were even a year ago, that your countenance, your bearing, should be barely discernable. The mind of Christ—humility; the essence of Christ—love; the freedom of Christ—grace; the cleansing of Christ—mercy, ought to be so evident in your life, people see nothing but Christ in you.

I don't care if you're going to ten Bible studies a week, if your life isn't changing, if you're still self-centered in your behavior, protective of your reputation, and self-serving, you're a fool. That's what the Scriptures say. I don't mean a return to legalism. I mean a return to a simple, obedience by faith.

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Illustration: God says,

“Be content with such things as you have.”

(Hebrews 13:5b NKJV)

Hello. Do you know what that means? Now, somehow, I don't think that verse is all that complicated. I don't see any real theological tongue twisters there. I'll bet you could go to seminary somewhere, where some professor could spend a whole session on it, with 36 interpretations of that verse. But I don't know why we don't just take it for what it says? It says, “Be content with what you have!” And God is so gracious He even gives us a reason,

...I will never leave you nor forsake you.

(Hebrews 13:5c NKJV)

What more could you ask for?

So based on that, God commanded you to be content. He didn't ask you to, He commanded you to. You say, “But wait, I went into Susie Smith's house the other day, and her living room was bigger than my house and her garage was bigger than my yard. I don't feel content when I go into her house.” Big deal. He never told you to feel content. Contentment is not a feeling. Contentment is a choice. God said it, and that settles it.

So, every time you see Susie, you meditate on that verse. As you do, you worship God for His provisions for you; that He's given you what you do have, and that He'll never leave you and He'll never forsake you. Susie may lose that house. She may lose her Jaguar. She may lose everything the way Job did. But neither you nor she can lose that eternal home nestled in that grand suburb where the streets are made of gold. So, stop it and be content.

You say, “But I've been that way all my life.” That means you only have to make the choice over and over and over for the rest of your life, because you've made those opposite impressions thousands of times. It may never be natural; it will always be supernatural, which means God will get the glory.

You see, I think we have settled for less than God's best. We have settled for mediocrity in character in the church today, while striving for excellence in activities, programs, buildings, and numbers. That's not what God is after. God is after changed hearts. We better get busy getting after what God's after.

So, what do you do? You take inventory. You get someone who

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cares about you to help you take inventory. You look for areas in your life that you're struggling with, where there needs to be dramatic change, and you ask God to help you see that. Before a determined period of time has passed, you are not going to be the same.

Don't be afraid of that word "sin." It's a good word. It defines why Jesus died. It defines why a holy God sacrificed His only begotten Son. It defines the reason for hell. It defines the line between unbroken fellowship with God and separation. It's a good word. It's not a good thing, but it's a good word. And don't be afraid to use it where your own life is concerned. Modern psychology has tried to destroy that word. It's a very important word to God because it represents the thing that comes between us and Him. So, look for sin. God said it. Look for sin.

Begin looking in your own heart at your attitudes, and the behavior that reflects your attitude, and do these things. Look for the sin, and then look at that aspect of the nature of God that's the antithesis of that sin. It's terribly important. Let me give you some illustrations in case you need a starting place. Let's say your problem is that you are not humble and your proud of it. Philippians 2 says,

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation [zilch, nothing for you] ...

...he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

You meditate on that verse. And then you think about it. "Now wait a minute, the Lord Jesus lives in me and there's not a prideful bone in His body. So, if Christ is going to live through me, then pride has got to go." So, you begin to meditate on the antithesis of pride, which is the mind of Christ. You then begin to appropriate (we'll talk about that in a minute), that mind as you are confronted with opportunities to be proud.

Anger. How many of you have a problem with anger? You get angry at the thought of it. But anger, you see, is a violation of the suffering of God. The Scripture says to put away anger, once and for all. That's what it means.

Maybe your problem is discontentment, as we've talked

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about. Maybe your problem is lust, or fear, or worry, or temporal values, or lying. The Scripture says stop lying; tell the truth. God is truth. So, God in you can't lie. To get you started, I've given you a few suggestions of literal attitudes and sins that all of us struggle with. There may be one or two of those that have really been besetting in your life.

<b>An area of sin</b>	<b>A verse to claim</b>	<b>Jesus is...</b>
pride	James 4:6, Philippians 2	meek
anger	Proverbs 16:32 Ephesians 4:31	longsuffering
discontentment	I Timothy 6:6 Hebrews 13:5	sovereign
lust	II Timothy 2:22	holy
fear	II Timothy 1:7 I John 4:18	love
worry	Philippians 4:6,7	peace
temporal values	Proverbs 30:8 Matthew 13:22	spirit
lying	Ephesians 4:25 Proverbs 19:22	truth
immorality	I Thessalonians 4:3 I Corinthians 5:1	holy
bitterness	Ephesians 4:31 James 3:14	sovereign
procrastination	James 4:14	faithful
slothfulness	Ecclesiastes 10:18 Proverbs 12:27	faithful
unforgiving	Luke 6:37 Matthew 6:14	mercy
weakness	II Corinthians 12:9-10	omnipotent

Now the key is that you focus not just on the sin, but on that element of the nature of God that cannot live with that sin. Therefore, you are then allowed to appropriate that aspect of God's character as you ask Him to change you. You see otherwise, you focus on the sin and you become sin oriented. And what you do is you get angry that you are sinful and you may fight it in your own energy, and you'll never get the victory. But if you see



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the corresponding aspect of the nature of God, you're reminded that God lives in you, and that God in you cannot produce sin. Then you say, "Lord Jesus, I'm about to get angry again and I want to appropriate the longsuffering of God. Please, pour Your patience through me and kill that anger now." And suddenly He takes control, the Holy Spirit fills you and floods your mind with patience and longsuffering and you're not angry anymore. That's the key.

Make yourself a thread of verses or a series of verses that ties in with the problem.

- 1- Start with the sin.
- 2- Go on to how God feels about it and the results of it.
- 3- And then who God is that will not allow that to go on.

It will change your life. It's not a game. This is not just another Sunday school lesson, folks. This is what we're here for. This is what it's all about—Christianity. If my Bible is true, your anger should be a thing of the past. Your lying days should be over. Your lust should be submerged under the blood of Christ. You should be meditating day and night, day and night, day and night, in the Word of God, so that those things should be gone. But the reason you meditate is so you may observe to do (there's your word) all—do all.

Well, you want an assignment, I know. I can see you're just begging for it.

1- Continue the process, or begin the process of Scripture memory in the areas of your life where you struggle.

2- Meditate day and night. I want to remind you one more time for the next seven days, day and night doesn't mean once in the day and once at night. The word literally means continually without stopping. Make it a pattern in your life that you don't let the Word get out of your mind. "On the tip of your tongue" is what the literal meaning of it is.

3- As you meditate, ask God to show you clearly those areas where you need to observe to do. And begin to focus on those areas. Remember to focus on the corresponding quality of the nature of God who lives in you.

Lastly, let me encourage you this week, as you begin to struggle with these areas in your quiet time or as you meditate,

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visualize in your mind and pretend that you're Noah. Picture yourself as old Noah and the world is falling apart, and the Scripture says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be..."<sup>2</sup> And it is. Let's imagine, here you are old Noah, God comes up to you and says, "This is what I want you to do this week. Maybe I'll tell you to build a boat, but either way, the question is, are you going to obey immediately? Are you going to argue? Are you going to question it? Your anger may be a room in the ark. Are you going to stop playing games and deal with it? If not, when the rains of judgment come, your ark is not going to float. Your discontented spirit may surface in a thousand ways, and mess up the whole project. God says to observe to do.

Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

For we brought nothing into this world [got it?], and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

Isn't God simple? Doesn't He make it plain? You brought nothing in, you take nothing out.

And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. ["I order you," He said, "to be content."]

(I Timothy 6:6-8 NKJV)

Now don't say, "I'm working on it." Say, "God, I am going to meditate day and night on that verse so it consumes my mind and my thought patterns; that I will choose every time I start to be discontent to allow the Spirit of God in me to provide His provision of grace, and I will be content." And every time you start to covet you will say, "Lord, I must be content with what I have. You have said, 'You will never leave me. You'll never forsake me.'"

Maybe your problem is fear. I hate to tell you this, but fear is sin. If you accept it and live with it, it's a choice. You say, "It's normal for me. I've always been fearful." That might be so. But Scripture says,

Perfect love casts out fear. (I John 4:18b)

For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (II Timothy 1:7 NKJV)

Now either God means what He says, and He says what He means, or He doesn't. The next time fear envelops you, deal with it. It's a choice. Don't just say, "It's my cross to bear." Beloved, Jesus bore that fear on that cross, already.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 17:26

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The Christian life is not nearly as complicated, I don't think, as we make it. It is a simple gospel. Let me define it one more time. Sin messed everything up. It caused us to miss God's best. He gave us a plan to deal with it. He wants us to take the sin, confess it, and apply the Word of God continually, directly to the diseased area of our lives until it's healed. Now for some of us, it may take applying the same medication hourly for the next fifty years. For others, it may be one of God's one-shot miracle drugs, and it may be cured. But the question isn't how long it takes. The question is "Do I have to live with this sin the rest of my life?" The answer is no!

This book of the law must not depart out of your mouth, but you must meditate therein day and night [why?], that you may observe to do according to all [everything] that is written therein...  
(Joshua 1:8)

Everything? Everything! Do it? Do it! You say, "Lord, I've tried that before." "Yes, My child," the answer comes. "Now it's My turn. Put this salve of the Word in your heart and spend however long it takes to meditate on it, until you have the power to overcome it and live in victory. Don't settle for less."

Had we been Noah, there would never have been an ark, or it never would have floated, because most of us don't understand, in this generation, what obedience is. We are filled with excuses. We have a master's degree in procrastination and justification. The animals won't cooperate. The lumber's too hard. The nails are too rusty. Besides, what's the hurry? It hasn't rained in days. Flood? What flood?

I'll tell you what flood. The flood that will envelop your soul the day you realize you're out of time and you never quite got around to pouring the Word into your heart and praying it back to God, so you could capture His mind and obey it the way He wants you to. It may be the day He calls you home. It may be the day the Lord descends from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel. Either way, it may be soon. I beg you, beloved, let's just get on with the ark. Let's get on.

Let's pray.

*Our Father and our God, what a tough subject. I pray that it's been taught in love. But, Father, we put up with so many things we don't have to. We live outside the realm of victory so often, when we don't need to. You've told us simply to meditate*

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*on Your Word, day and night, night and day, day and night, that we may observe to do everything that is written therein.*

*Most of us don't memorize. Those that do, often times don't meditate. Even when we do, Father, sometimes we forget the reason we're supposed to be doing it, is that we may simply observe to do everything that is written therein. Lord, it would be so much simpler, if we could just do what You ask us to do, and watch You bless us.*

*Satan is such a deceiver. Some folks here today, Lord, have been worried for forty and fifty years. Some folks have been fearful. Some folks have been struggling with anger and bitterness. The world, and all the counselors the world can offer, told them it's something they have to live with because they had the wrong parents.*

*Lord, we have a perfect Father. We don't have to live in that state anymore. By Your grace, this week, may there be continuous victories in our lives, that we may observe to do for the rest of our lives.*

*In Jesus' name. Amen.*

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