



Following instructions precisely

*1Sa 15:2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. 1Sa 15:3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. 1Sa 15:10 Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, 1Sa 15:11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments..... 1Sa 15:28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the*

*kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.*

King Saul paid a huge price for not obeying the precise instructions of God to him through the prophet Samuel. To draw a parallel into modern times, it is evident that submission to authority in Church to follow precise instructions is a big problem today. It seems that it is a bigger problem in the secular world as well. The results are rebellion and idolatry which stems from pride. Rebellion is as witchcraft and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry. This is what was said to King Saul. It may seem as harsh words and his punishment extreme but what people do not realise is, God is serious. King Saul's failure to follow God's instructions to him as his final authority was treated by God as witchcraft. Maybe, King Saul thought that he could do what he liked because it was not God who spoke to him directly but Samuel the prophet. Maybe, he thought he could always talk his way out of it with a man which he tried to do in explaining his error to Samuel. What he did not realise was, the instructions he received through the prophet, though he was a man, was actually from God.

People who do not follow instruction precisely as given to them by authority endanger everything and everyone around them. Authority is given but it can also be taken away. God did precisely that with King Saul. The reason God has people in authority is to instruct those who need to follow the instructions and to have a covering over them when carrying out the instructions. In other words, an Ambassador who is sent by his country to represent his country must follow the instructions of his government and by doing so has the protection of his government though he is in a foreign land. This is what Diplomatic Immunity is all about. Likewise, we too are ambassadors for Christ and we need to follow His instructions to us through the Holy Ghost precisely. Otherwise, there are consequences not only for us but for the people around us and even the nation. Since we live in an age of grace and not the law we take instructions from God through His people and the Holy Ghost very lightly and end up doing what we want.

The Church is in trouble because it does not often follow the commandments of God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. In the book of revelation we see a simple statement of Jesus after He rebukes the seven churches and warns them. "If you have an ear, hear what the Holy Spirit is saying." Why is Jesus saying this? He is saying this because He will take action on those who do not listen to Him. That action is extremely severe. There are far too many churches following their own agenda and are in serious trouble because of this.

Likewise, individuals who are in authority in Church and have a position must follow the instructions given to them precisely or else they jeopardise the stability of the church (local body). They allow the infiltration of the devil through witchcraft and rebellion and jeopardize the lives and well being of many others including their own families. When Achan took things that he should not have at the battle of Jericho, he failed the instructions of his commanding officer Joshua who had been given those instructions from God. This brought disaster to Israel in a subsequent battle and loss of life along with shame. As a result, Achan and his entire family lost their lives through disobedience and were stoned to death. I don't suppose God was fooling around or meaning that His instructions be taken lightly.

Many people have made the mistake in the Church that is very similar by not following the instructions of their superiors. Many a church has suffered silently because of this form of rebellion

and eventually suffered splits and even have had to close their doors. Jezebel spirits and the like get into people who have a mind of their own and use them to undermine authority because they cannot accept the vision of the church or the instructions of their leaders. When instructions are not followed precisely, the authority figure in any scenario is compromised. When this happens frequently or in a widespread manner, rebellion follows. An army cannot do what it wants. It must follow the instructions and commands of its leaders. Soldiers give their lives to keep this discipline. They say to themselves that they are under orders and feel the need to fulfil them at any cost. Such men are rewarded and save the day in battle.

It never ceases to amaze me how a simple instruction cannot be carried out. It seems that the moment the instructions are given, questions are raised as to its validity and reason. Then it is challenged in the mind of the person who receives that instruction and often time fear, laziness and pride take away the discipline of fulfilling that instruction. I believe that character has a lot to do with how instructions are kept and carried out. If character is not refined by the Holy Spirit in a person and the value of life understood by the individual, then, even simple instructions will be not carried out correctly. In listening to the instructions of the Holy Spirit many have missed it and have not received what was intended for them while others have failed their destiny.

When the Holy Spirit gives instructions, it is the still small voice of God speaking. *1Ki 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice... 1Ki 19:15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: 1Ki 19:16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. 1Ki 19:17 And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.* Entire nations and individuals were affected by these instructions of God to Elijah. His own well being was restored and assurances received. Elijah had to follow them precisely otherwise it would not come to pass and he would be in jeopardy of losing out himself.

I do not believe that in any arena of life, we can afford to ignore, disobey or decide for ourselves the instructions that are given. How we carry out these instructions will either work for our benefit or for our detriment whilst affecting others. We must work to understanding the instructions given and fulfill them precisely. When Elisha gave instructions it was like this. *2Ki 9:1 And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramothgilead: 2Ki 9:2 And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; 2Ki 9:3 Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.* Had the man tarried, he would have been a dead man.

Many a person has died because they have disobeyed the instructions of the Holy Ghost. Others have not received their healing or blessing. When ministering, many have not listened to the instructions of the Holy Ghost and have relied on their own wisdom to minister life. Life, death and well being depends on following instructions precisely. Let us learn to do that and we will do well. There is always a reason for an instruction. If the instruction is asking you to do wrong, it can easily be avoided. If it is not and it is an instruction you are required to follow under authority, then it is for the benefit of all concerned. Many an embarrassment and unnecessary tension can be avoided by following instructions. Between brothers and sisters in the Lord, offence and disagreements arise out of instructions not being followed precisely. If they are followed, it makes for an easier life.

The self training of one's heart to listen and obey is a very valuable pursuit and discipline. That kind of discipline begins in the closet with God. Once we learn to hear from God, we must also learn to obey God in what we hear. Many wonderful men of God have given us insight into this discipline that they themselves have experienced. Their testimonies are invaluable. Contrary to this discipline, in today's world, we are taught to make our own way and do things we think is best. When we do come to follow instructions often time we are challenged to make our own decisions and yet follow instructions precisely. This is mostly evident in spiritual warfare when what God tells us is opposed and we have to make up our own decisions as to whether we listen to God or do it our own way. Knowing to follow instructions is wisdom and power to win warfare. When Israel followed the instructions of God they won but when they failed to do that, they lost to their enemies. Often time, they made faith decisions in following instructions precisely. The hour is upon us when we must make choices to humble ourselves and follow instructions. This is humility and obedience to the cross which produces the best results. Phil 2.5:11