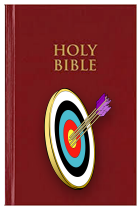


Spot On

Restoring the Hebraic foundational emphasis on the processes of how you live your life:



- the responsive actions our Lord commands all of His followers,*
- and their responsibility to deferentially obey by grace the One they love*

Spot 14. Does Your Walk in Christ Entail Ongoing Obedient Trust or Is It A Belief System Without Responsibility?

American lives are *busy* as we rush from one obligation or task to another. If something isn't scheduled on the ever-present cellphone reminder, then it's likely to go undone. The average person's life is a checklist: meals—√; appointments —√; even Bible reading—√. While checkmarks may give you satisfaction that you've finished something, they also reinforce a "one and done" mindset. And the "I did that already" approach can impact how you understand God's Word.

A number of popular Bible translations give the unintended impression that if you obey a command *once*, you've done it. Part of that misinterpretation comes from the differences between English and Hebrew, the language in which the first Scriptures were spoken and then written down. For instance, the English language emphasizes the *subject* of a sentence — the *who* or *what* noun — and then a verb makes known what action is taking place. The Hebrew emphasis of word order is on the *verb* — the action which took place — and then who or what did that action. In Scripture, the obedience factor is key!

Hebrew and Aramaic (a similar language) were commonly spoken among Jesus and his followers and just about everyone else in Israel at that time. And Hebrew was the language used by the priests when they approached God. God specifically used the Hebrew language and Hebraic thought patterns as the means for His people to *know Him* and learn His commands to *obey them*. That's significant because nowhere in the Bible do you find our Father being content that people merely know about Him or just speak about His commands WITHOUT DOING THEM! Living out His commands in obedient trust and continuing to walk in His way as Abraham did is far different than just having a mental awareness that God has specific standards for His people.



This **responsive obedience** which pours out of someone who trusts Jesus as Lord evidences their grateful appreciation for the grace that was given to them by the Father when they were born from above. When someone genuinely repents and turns to Christ to be reconciled with Father, they long to follow and obey their Lord as the indwelling Spirit empowers them. In other words, they have "ears to hear". That phrase which is so often repeated by Jesus goes way beyond listening to words and then forgetting them. From a Hebraic framework, to "hear" is to "obey". So, when the Spirit makes something known to you as Truth, you are expected as Jesus' own to put it into action!

As noted earlier, a number of commonly used Bible translations have missed the significance of the **active response** of obedience. They've missed how essential from our Lord's perspective is WHAT YOU DO about what's been revealed to you. A notable exception to this pattern of mistranslation is the *Complete Jewish Bible* by David H. Stern. This translation was penned in the manner in which the first century Hebrews would have understood clearly the expected *obedient response* to what Jesus spoke. That's why so many of those who heard Him marveled at the AUTHORITY with which He spoke (Matthew 7:28,29). Jesus wasn't just reciting scriptural words which others had recorded. He was speaking as One Who had intimate contact with the God Who had inspired the writers!

Stern's translation also accurately translates the grammatical sense of whether an action is a one-time occurrence or an *ongoing pattern*. He often uses the assisting words "keeps on" or "continues to" or "goes on" to convey that what was being done was the *regular practice* of the person doing it. Let's look at some examples of how 2 popular versions miss the *ongoing nature* of what we who follow Jesus today are to do, and how the *Complete Jewish Bible* clearly gets that across.

NIV "If you **declare** with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that **you believe** and **are justified**, and it is with your mouth that **you profess** your faith and are saved" (Romans 10:9,10).

NKJV "that if **you confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one **believes** unto righteousness, and with the mouth **confession is made** unto salvation" (Romans 10:9,10).

CJB "that if you **acknowledge publicly** with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord and trust in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be delivered. For with the heart one **goes on trusting** and thus **continues toward righteousness**, while with the mouth one **keeps on making** public acknowledgement and thus **continues toward deliverance**" (Romans 10:9,10).

In Luke 11:10, NIV and NKJV are similar in presenting what could be construed as a one-time effort:

"For everyone **who asks** receives; the one **who seeks** finds; and to the one **who knocks**, the door will be opened."

CJB: "For everyone who **goes on asking** receives; and he who **goes on seeking** finds; and to him who **continues knocking**, the door will be opened."

Here's a final example to reinforce the difference between *occasionally choosing* a Christlike response and *continuing by His grace* to walk in the steps of Jesus day by day, action by action.

NKJV *"In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not **practice righteousness** is not of God, nor is he who **does not love** his brother"* (1John 3:10).

NIV *"This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not **do what is right** is not God's child, nor is anyone who **does not love** their brother and sister [actually, "and sister" is not in the Greek text]"* (1John 3:10).

CJB *"Here is how one can distinguish clearly between God's children and those of the Adversary: everyone who does not **continue doing what is right** is not from God. Likewise, anyone who **fails to keep loving** his brother is not from God"* (1John 3:10).

What To Take Away From This Discussion:

The pattern of **ongoing obedience** to our Lord is so essential today in this era of self-willed lawlessness when so many Christians have compromised with the world's ways and values and goals. Giving lip service *to God* and *about Him* are pervasive because so many have disconnected their beliefs from any response of ongoing holiness and obedience to Jesus and His Word. And perhaps the mistranslations they've used have encouraged that disregard.

JESUS said that the person who loves Him will keep on obeying His commands (John 14:15,21). So if someone says they love Him but continue in the sinful ways of the world, do they really love Him? Or, are they making their personal idea of God to be who they *want* Him to be — even if their idea plainly contradicts the clear teaching of God's Word?