

# God's Instructions for His Church

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[ 0 : 00 ] 1 Timothy chapter 2, would you stand with me as we read verses 8-15 in honor of the Lord.

In a place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling.

Likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness with good works.

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man. Rather, she is to remain quiet.

For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

[ 1 : 22 ] May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? About 15 years ago, I was in a church and the pastor was talking about controversial passages of Scripture.

And he said to the church, If you want to know a passage of Scripture that I will never preach on, it's 1 Timothy chapter 2, verses 9 through 15.

That was 15 years ago. This passage was controversial during a time when culture accepted the differences between men and women, at least in terms of their biology.

I can't think of many other passages in Scripture that are more counter-cultural or challenge the views of gender today than our text this morning.

A church seeking to be culturally relevant will not address this passage of Scripture or other ones like it.

[ 2 : 37 ] And as a result of that, we're seeing, I think, the dysfunction and the disunity amongst churches and denominations who have either ignored or denied the clear instruction of God's word regarding gender and the complementary roles God has given to men and to women who he created in his image.

We've witnessed the dysfunction and the disunity in our society through attempts made to redefine gender and redefined gender roles.

Society has also put a lot of pressure on the church to compromise and to conform its convictions so that it doesn't appear sexist and avoids being labeled as misogynistic, that we hate women, or chauvinistic, that we think men are superior to women.

But the issue of gender and gender roles, what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman, strike at the core of what it means to be created in God's image.

It strikes at the core of God's design, his design for men, women, marriages, families, societies, and his church.

[ 4 : 03 ] Friends, the church that is most relevant is the church that is least like the world and is the most like Jesus. It's a church that obeys his instruction and patterns itself after his design.

It's a church that upholds the truths that he's revealed and prioritizes his mission to seek the lost, to win them, not by being like them, but being like Jesus.

And being like Jesus means obeying his instructions. And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is that men and women glorify God in worship by submitting to his instructions for his church.

Men and women glorify God in worship by submitting to his instructions for his church. Paul wrote 1 Timothy around AD 62 to 64.

And so to best understand his instructions in our text this morning, we'll need to consider them in their immediate context, the immediate context in which this letter was written.

[ 5 : 15 ] But to fully grasp and to fully understand the instruction of our text, we need to go back to a different time. We need to go back to the beginning of time, to the first man and the first woman who God created, creating them in his image.

And we read about that in Genesis chapter 1, verses 26 through 27. Then God said, let us make man in our own image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him male and female, he created them. God created Adam first out of the dust, out of the dirt.

Maybe that's part of why men like to be dirty. I don't know. But God breathed life into Adam and he put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.

Then God said that it was not good for Adam to be alone and that he would make him a suitable helper. But before doing that, God had Adam name all of the animals that God created.

[ 6 : 36 ] And we surmise that as Adam watched this parade of animals going by, elephant, giraffe, monkey, ant, that he noticed that these animals had a match and that he did not.

He didn't have a match that was suitable for him physically, intellectually, and emotionally. So God put Adam into a deep sleep and from his rib, he formed Eve.

Maybe this is why women are more re-informed than men are. But I think the location where Eve was taken from Adam is significant. God didn't take something out of or off of Adam's head like a piece of his hair.

That might have signified that she was to rule over him. God didn't take something off of or out of Adam's feet. That might have signified that he had the right to trample over her.

God took Eve from Adam's side to be by his side, under his arm, to be protected and near his heart, to be loved.

[ 7 : 55 ] Whatever the case, we know that God then brought Eve to Adam. Like a father, I picture God walking Adam's bride down the aisle to her groom, entrusting him with a tremendous gift.

And it was love at first sight. We read about what Adam said in Genesis 2, 23 through 24. Then the man said, this at last, at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She will be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore, the Bible says, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh.

All was well. Then Satan entered the scene and he challenged God's design by going first after the woman Eve.

He assaulted God's instructions. He assaulted the order that God established. He tempted her not only to eat from the forbidden fruit, but to assume her husband Adam's role, to take the lead for them.

[ 9 : 12 ] And she ate and she gave some to Adam. And Adam, who was supposed to be the leader, followed her in eating the fruit. Then when God enters the garden, Adam and Eve hide.

And though Eve was the first to eat of the forbidden fruit, God doesn't call out to her first. He calls out to the man. He calls out to Adam to give an explanation why they were hiding.

Adam, as the leader, was, again, supposed to be Eve's protector. But Adam, we see, continued to abandon his role because of sin, refusing to take responsibility for what had happened.

In Genesis 3, 9 through 11, it says, But the Lord called to the man and he said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden. I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.

God said to him, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? And the man said, You know, God, I messed up. It's my fault.

[ 10 : 14 ] I assume responsibility. I know I'm supposed to be the leader. Please forgive me. No, what does he do? The woman, the woman, he blames her and then God, whom you, this was your idea, you gave her to be with me.

And she gave me the fruit of the tree and I ate. And the Lord said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And she said, The serpent deceived me and I ate.

And the battle of the sexes, the confusion over gender roles began in the Garden of Eden as a result of sin. God performed the first sacrifice to clothe Adam and Eve to cover their shame, but their sin had consequences.

Their sin brought a curse. God said to Eve in Genesis 3.16, I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing. In pain you shall bring forth children. And hear this part, your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you. Then in Genesis 3.17-19, those verses record Adam's curse.

[ 11 : 25 ] His work would be laborious and toilsome. And as would his relationship be with his wife at times.

sin had turned the harmonious roles God ordained for men and women into an offensive struggle. A battle for power and for control.

A desire also to reject God and his instructions. This is why things are the way that they are in this world. However, this isn't the way things should be in the church.

because Jesus has come. He has lived the sinless life that we could not live.

He sacrificed his life on the cross dying and rising victoriously on the third day. He has undone the effects of the curse for those whom he's saved.

[ 12 : 28 ] In salvation we are born again. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We are transformed. We can resist sin through the new desire we have to do what pleases God by obeying his instructions.

Satan was also cursed in the garden. God promised that one day the offspring of the woman would crush his head. So he has in Jesus.

Through faith in Jesus we have peace with God and we can live in peace with one another as we recover the roles he's established for men and women and reflect them to the sinful world.

This is the aim of Paul's instruction to Timothy in this letter to restore to put back into order in the church the principles the truths the relationships the roles that our sin has put into disorder.

And so Paul states that this is his purpose very clearly in chapter 3 verses 14 through 15. I hope to come to you soon but I am writing these things to you so that if I delay you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God which is the church of the living God a pillar and a buttress of the truth.

[ 13 : 52 ] In chapter 2 Paul gives instructions about how God's people are to order themselves how they are to behave when they gather to worship and as we've seen we are to prioritize prayer and as men and women of God we are to glorify God in worshiping by submitting to his instructions and the roles that he's given to each of us uniquely in his church.

In verses 5 through 18 Paul gives three instructions about how men and women are to glorify God by submitting to these instructions that he has for his church.

Now look these instructions are plain. It's our sin nature. It's our desire to rule over ourselves and determine our own truth that complicates them ignores them misinterprets them and in some cases just outright rejects them.

This creates disorder it displeases God and it could as we read in Revelations the letters to the seven churches it could result in Jesus snuffing out the light of the church that rejects his instruction.

we are called to pray and proclaim we are called to reflect Christ and we can't do that if we reject his instruction.

[ 15 : 28 ] Maybe you're here this morning and you you're not a Christian this is all new to you these instructions may seem offensive to you but you've seen how a rejection of God's instruction has brought disorder chaos anger and division in our world perhaps even in your own life if you'd be honest with yourself those coexist bumper stickers don't seem to be working God's ways are better than our ways his instructions promote peace unity harmony and they are intended for our good and so please don't jump to the wrong conclusions without hearing out the instructions of his word this morning and I hope that you will listen you will also hear the gospel and I hope that you will be saved that you will be restored to God through faith in Jesus

Christ that you will have peace with God through his son and so there are three instructions here in our text this morning for how men and women glorify God by submitting to his instructions for his church and we start with the men men glorify God through the purity of their attitudes in prayer men glorify God through the purity of their attitudes in prayer again in verse 8 continuing on with his theme of prayer Paul says I desire them that in every place the men should pray lifting up holy hands with anger or quarreling the instructions Paul gives in these verses are intended to be followed noticed in every place these aren't specific instructions just for the church in Ephesus but

for every church and I would say every church for all time Paul directs his instruction about prayer in verse 8 specifically to men when the church gathers to worship now this doesn't mean that women can't pray in church 1st

Corinthians 11 5 and verse 13 talk about women praying in church but that church must be read in light of 1st Corinthians 14 34 through 35 but here we see that men are commanded to serve as spiritual leaders in the home as well as in the church this should be visibly seen when we gather as the church to worship the primary issue here though is the attitude men have when they pray and so Paul here tells them that they are to pray lifting holy hands the Old Testament is full of examples of men imploring God through prayers with outstretched arms with hands lifted up Aaron Ezra David all and there are others examples of men who prayed with lifted hands even Jesus in Luke 24 50 records him lifting up his hands as he blessed his followers but the emphasis here isn't so much on the physical positions of the hands but what the hands symbolize hands symbolize activity and so holy hands symbolize a holy life psalm 24 3 through 5 says who shall ascend the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place he who has clean hands and a pure heart who does not lift his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully he will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from God the God of his salvation so when we pray in the worship service we must have the right attitude a desire to glorify God a desire to seek his will to humbly!

ask for his help and to take what we're doing in prayers seriously men are to pray Paul says without anger and without quarreling they are to pray to God along with the people of God whom they should seek to be at peace with Paul's concern captures what Jesus said about worship in Matthew chapter 5 verses 23 through 24 so if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you leave your gifts there before the altar and go first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift now here Paul doesn't state specifically what things were causing men to pray with angry and quarrelsome attitudes but one thing I think we can all agree on is that men tend to take pleasure in arguing and for those of you men who are married

[ 20 : 45 ] I'll give you a second to recover from that elbow that you just got in your side but look networks like ESPN and if I was sitting down by my wife I would have gotten one of those for sure but networks like ESPN understand this most of their programming isn't actually programming covering games as they're happening but men around a table talking about the games that happened and arguing about them and we find that as men to be entertaining whether it's sports or it's politics men enjoy making arguments and defending their arguments and men love to be right and we hate to be wrong and all God's women said amen right I remember in college I was living off campus with some of my teammates and we were having an argument over a basketball player named Lonnie

Baxter most of you have probably never heard of Lonnie Baxter Lonnie Baxter played basketball at the University of Maryland and I thought for sure that Lonnie Baxter was a top 10 pick in the NBA draft that year and my roommate was sure that he wasn't a top 10 pick that year and we went back and forth each of us convinced that the other was wrong now this was before smartphones and we didn't have the internet in our apartment so at around 830 9 o'clock I left our apartment and I went up to our school to the library on campus found a computer searched for Lonnie Baxter and discovered I was wrong and I took my time driving back to the apartment and as soon as I opened the door my roommate said he wasn't drafted in the top 10 was he and I said to him well he should have been you don't know who he is so he shouldn't have been that that resolves that argument but the curse of sin has brought toil to men we've seen in our work and I think as a result of that men we often feel underappreciated we often feel disrespected and that makes us angry and that makes us quarrelsome at times but James 1 19 through 20 says know this my beloved brothers let every person be quick to hear slow to speak slow to anger for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God we have a tendency to rush into corporate worship without taking time to examine our own hearts first our own attitudes the church in Ephesus had issues with false teachers and surely that had an effect on the church we've read about that and we'll read about it some more they were teaching things these false teachers things that

Timothy and other godly leaders in the church were supposed to dispute chapter 6 verses 3 through 5 Paul notes and he's speaking of these false teachers that they're conceited that they're men who crave controversy and they're prone to quarrel and so as men I think we need to understand and as believers we just need to understand it's okay to be angry but we must be on our guard against our

righteous anger becoming a self-righteous anger that makes us lash out in sinful ways and that don't communicate the love of God Ephesians 4:26 or 27 says be angry and do not sin do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil we all need to examine our hearts before we worship and prepare our hearts for worship and here's I think how we can do that one as we've already talked about before we take communion make sure that you're not in conflict with

God because of some kind of unconfessed sin make sure you're not in conflict with another brother or sister in Christ that you seek peace with them and so ask yourself as you get ready in the morning as you sit down in the pew before we worship is there a sin in my life that I'm unwilling to confess and that I need to repent of and if it's a conflict with somebody in this church ask yourself is there anything in my life right now that is causing me to be in conflict with someone in my church and if so then seek to make it right seek them out if that's the case right now seek them out after service and if you are called to come before the church and pray make sure that you take that seriously not saying that we don't but saying that we should be more aware of the fact that we are praying we are in communication to God in his church before his people and for his people because look if we don't take prayer seriously or even the things

I think that we do here seriously people will know unbelievers can tell if when you pray you don't seem to care about or truly trust in what you are saying or who you're praying to so we need to examine our attitudes and make sure that they are pure when we worship especially when we pray now the second instruction and this is for women women glorify God in worship through the purity of their attire in church women glorify God in worship through the purity of their attire in church verse 9 the beginning of verse 9 likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel with modesty and self control now some of you ladies might be thinking well what about the men shouldn't they also dress respectably yes they should but here's the thing I think just as men have an unhealthy tendency to be angry and to argue more than women so women tend to more than men have an unhealthy concern about their physical appearance this isn't true of all women just as it isn't true of all men that they're hot heads!

[28:04] pertains to their physical appearance and that's really unhealthy women are often portrayed as objects of desire not as people created in God's image societal pressures have played a big part in communicating to women that they must look a certain way and dress a certain way to be valued to be accepted to be desired and to be loved while men like to argue more than women like to shop more than men TJ Maxx for example ever gone to TJ Maxx or any other clothing store for that matter but let's look at TJ Maxx they have this little tiny section for men over here in the corner and it's got some rows of clothes and it's all cramped in that little tiny spot and then all the rest is just clothes and shoes for the ladies not all men but most men more than women don't care that much about their clothing some of you men who are older than me have joked to me about items of clothing that you have that are older than

I am and I believe you because I have t-shirts from college that are older than some of the people in this room and I'm not ready to part with them yet now Paul is not suggesting that women should dress slovenly that's not what he's trying to say the Greek word translated as adorn is *kosmeo* from which the English word cosmetic derives that word in the Greek means to arrange it means to put in order or to make ready you should put in order you should get ready the Greek word translated as respectable in the ESV is *kosmeo* which conveys the idea of conducting oneself in a manner that is fitting and appropriate this word is most commonly associated with the behavior of leaders in the church and they're living out a life that is in harmony with Christian values and teachings Paul uses this same word in chapter 3 when he talks about the qualifications for an elder proper adornment of the outside expresses self control it expresses what the heart adores most in worship our adoration should be directed towards Jesus and promoting things that honor him and don't take the focus off of him and the rest of verse nine Paul addresses more specifically some of the ways the women in the church in Ephesus were directing the focus off of Jesus in worship into themselves and so he says not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire now nobody look around but some of you this morning have your hair braided you have gold on you have pearls on in India women wear a lot of gold when I was there in in

January noticed that they wear a lot of gold and they wear these bright beautiful saris is that a sin well I think it depends on the intent biblical scholars think that in Ephesus women were the fashion was to weave gold and pearls into their hair and to braid it in these ways that drew a lot of attention

to themselves and it was a way for them to flaunt their wealth to everyone else and so the intent behind Paul's admonition here is hairstyles and accessories that distract others from worship again it's a hard attitude it's the motivation behind whatever it is that you wear are you dressing to draw attention to make people envious of you or to boast in what you have by the brands that you wear making sure people can see that brand on your clothing in verse 10

Paul says that instead of that you should adorn yourself in attire that keeps the focus on Jesus he says but what this is how you should adorn yourself with what is proper for women who profess godliness with good works so for example I'm conscious of what I wear on Sunday morning because I know that there are some things that I could wear up here that would be a major distraction to you in our context if I didn't wear shoes that would be a distraction for you when we were in India in January if I did wear shoes that would have been a distraction for them if I wore shorts if I wore a Kansas City Chiefs jersey you wouldn't pay attention to the message would you you would be thinking either why is he wearing that or you would be thinking cool

[ 33 : 40 ] I'm going to wear something like that too either way the focus would be off the message and that can't be the case and so I wear what I wear to try to not distract you from the preaching of God's word and that's how we should all feel about how we dress that we don't want to distract anyone from worship and also church we need to be mindful that there are people who have visited our church and they have no idea about this passage they've never read this they've never heard this we need to be mindful also church that some women aren't trying to be provocative at all in what they wear it might be all that they have to wear I was in my church in Leavenworth one of our members was involved in a prison ministry and his wife was a mentor for a lot of the ladies who were either married to the men or who were whatever in some kind of relationship to them and one of those prisoners got out and he got married to one of these ladies that this member of our church was mentoring and this lady who was married to a prisoner she didn't have a good lifestyle growing up she didn't have good examples of women in her life and so my church member just disciplined her and poured into her didn't say anything to her about her clothing and then one day this lady said to her will you take me shopping

I want to dress more like you it was a heart change first and that heart change resulted into a lifestyle change and so when you get ready in the morning ask yourself men and women why am I wearing what I'm wearing who am I trying to impress and how can I dress and what can I do today that will draw more attention to the Lord we should live not to attract people to ourselves but to attract people to Christ now the third instruction men and women glorify God and worship by fulfilling the roles he assigned to them men and women glorify God and worship by fulfilling the roles he assigned to them in verse 11 Paul says let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness! seems obvious to us that women should be taught God's word but it was not so obvious to the people Paul was writing to in the first century in first century Jewish culture women were not encouraged to learn and most rabbis refused to teach a woman the temple in Jerusalem was laid out in a series of courts the court for the men was located nearer to the holy place while the court of the women was outside of that court and they were not allowed to go inside and be in the court of the men Greek women were even more constrained William Barclay says the respectable Greek woman led a confined lifestyle she lived in her own quarters into which no one but her husband came she did not even appear at meals she never at any time appeared on the street public assembly by herself so what

Paul is saying here is that women should not be excluded from learning in church now it appears to be the case that some women in the church took this new found freedom and liberty to an extreme and they sought to not just learn but to teach and so Paul says in verse 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man rather she is to remain quiet the Bible teaches from Genesis to Revelation that men and women are spiritually equals they are equally valuable but the Bible says men and women were created with different roles and these roles complement one another the greatest example of this kind of complementary relationship is between God the Father and God the Son both are fully God and yet they are one yet the Father and the Son have different roles as does the Holy Spirit the Son submits to the Father we read that in Philippians chapter 2 verse 8 and the Father directs the Son we read about that in John chapter 14 verse 31 and Jesus didn't complain!

[ 38 : 36 ] about this Jesus never said why do I have to be the one who submits all the time and even in the garden he says yet not my will but your will be done to the Father there are different

roles amongst the persons of the Trinity though each is equally God and each is equally valuable God has designed men and women to reflect this to reflect his image with different yet complementary roles again the setting here is the worship service God calls men to serve as elders and elders are tasked to teach his word not all men are called to be elders and not all men are called to preach God's word and if you're not preaching God's word whether you're a man or a woman or a child you should sit quietly and submit to the instruction of

God's word this isn't to say that some women don't have the gift of public speaking and leadership the issue is the proper setting to exercise these gifts Priscilla and Aquila both instructed Apollos in Acts chapter 18 verse 26 but that was in private and it wasn't in the worship setting Titus 2 3 through 4 instructs women to teach other women what we all need to do what we all need to do is get Satan's lie out of our minds that the only role of significance is the role of leadership leaders don't have it better there is a lot of responsibility that comes with leadership and with preaching and teaching God's word James says in James 3 1 not many of you should become teachers notice he says my brothers for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness verses 13 through 14

Paul says for Adam was formed first and then Eve and Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor here's Paul's point Eve was not suited by nature to assume the ultimate position of leadership and responsibility when she stepped out from Adam's protection and leadership she was vulnerable Satan attacked and she sinned and Adam violated his leadership role and he followed Eve he neglected his role too the fall then resulted not simply from disobedience to God's command but a violation of his appointed roles for men and women when the order God established is disobeyed disorder is the result and so in verse 15 Paul says yet she will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self control now from the rest of scripture we know that this can't refer to salvation that would contradict the clear teachings of the

New Testament that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone the future tense and the use of the plural pronoun they indicates that Paul was not referring to Eve in verse 15 Paul teaches here that women are preserved from the stigma of the fall by bringing up righteous children mothers often but not always spend more time with their children than their fathers do and because of their distinct God designed ability to bear children they have a connection with their children that a man can never fully understand and maybe even appreciate the pain associated with birth was the punishment for the woman's sin but the joy and the privilege of rearing the next generation to know and follow the Lord delivers them from the stigma of that sin now what if you don't have children or if you're not married as a woman what does this mean for you what means the same thing you have an opportunity in this church in this place to help bring up the next generation and

I know that was true for me my Sunday school teacher I've talked to about her before growing up as a young boy was Elma Ross Elma was grew up in the country she was tough she never got married she never had kids and she was willing she had the courage and the guts to teach the third and fourth grade boys Sunday school class and we loved her we loved her she taught us God's word she taught us well she was patient with us she instructed us she loved us she treated us as if we were her children and I thank God for women like Elma Ross so how do we adjust our lives according to what we've heard accept

[ 44 : 21 ] God's instructions for his church accept God's instructions for his church because you know what friends the church is his church this is his house and if we take liberties with his instructions for his church we do so to our peril and we can't do that we can have conversations about these things and we should but ultimately we will do what God's word says because God is God and he's right and it's his instructions that we will follow and that we will obey and if you don't know God I pray that you today having heard the gospel see your need for a savior like Jesus your life will continue to be in disorder until you know him until you've been saved by him and it's not about who you are and what you must do it's about realizing that you're a sinner and that

Jesus is the savior the only savior that you need to be saved and to have peace with God and if you have questions about that to come and find me after church I'll be down here at the end I'd love to talk to you and if you have any other questions about any of the other things that we've gone over in scripture this morning that we've covered in our sermon I'd love to have that conversation with you as well but for now let's all accept that God has much good will be done through that let's pray Lord

we thank you for this time that we've had to be in your word Lord we thank you for your instructions that are clear it's our sin Lord that would make them or tempt us to want to create confusion here where there's clarity and so

God I pray for our men in our church that they would be the men that you've called them that we would seek you that we would lead by following you that we would follow closely to you and that Lord so often as we see in the church men just abandon these roles and the women are forced to have to pick up and lead because they are too lazy or too cowardly to fill that role Lord may that not be the case in our church I pray that our men would lead well I pray that our men would lead thinking about you most and foremost others than themselves last Lord I pray for the women in our church God we're so thankful for what they do the many many things that they do that go unnoticed Lord thank you for godly women in this church and for the good work that they do to glorify you and we pray that these things would continue in our congregation and for those churches and those places that have these things confused

Lord I pray that we would have these conversations with them and we would speak the truth and love to them that all of us Lord who you have saved and who you have called would decide that it is best to do what the Lord says no matter what the consequences might be and Thank you.