

The Instructions of God

Commentary for February 16, 2024 — The Blessing and the Challenge

God gives us instruction. The instruction is a demonstration of His love, care, and consideration for us, but also His challenge and call for us:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind ... Love your neighbor as yourself.”

• **Matthew 22:37, 39**¹

“The angel went to her and said, ‘Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.’

Mary was greatly troubled at his words, and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; His kingdom will never end.’”

• **Luke 1:28–33**

God’s instruction has undoubtedly, proven to have worth to societies. In the article, [The Ten Commandments](#), Dr. Ernest Martin informs us that:

“... most civilized countries, those countries that have themselves developed laws and principles for humans to live by, have one way or another said in their legal documents that they have been inspired by the Ten Commandments.”

This article also shows the difficulty in fulfilling these seemingly simple commands of God (Commentary: [Ten Commandments for Today](#) — David Sielaff).

Not only can some directions be tough or hard to follow, but also **troublesome**. For example, Jesus informs His disciples:

“I am going away ... I have told you now before it happens ...”

• **John 14:28–29**

“But, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

• **John 14:26**

“... Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.”

• **John 14:27**

Further, consider the instructions Jesus gave His disciples in Matthew chapter 10:

“Do not get any gold, or silver, or copper, to take with you in your belts — no bag for the journey, or extra shirt, or sandals, or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.

¹ Bible references are from the *New International Version (NIV)*.

Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person, and stay at their house until you leave ... If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town, and shake the dust off your feet

... I am sending you out like sheep among wolves ... Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. On My account, you will be brought before governors and kings ... But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say, or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

... You will be hated by everyone because of Me ... When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

• *Matthew 10:9–11, 13–14, 16–20, 22–23*

That does not sound like an easy, straightforward, or comfortable trip. Yet, Paul tells us in Hebrews and Ephesians:

"[God] will equip you with everything good for doing His will."

• *Hebrews 13:21*

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

• *Ephesians 2:10*

With regards to obedience, John 14:21 states, "Whoever has my commands and keeps them, is the one who loves Me."

John 14:23–24 declares, "Anyone who loves Me, will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and We will come to them, and make Our home with them. Anyone who does not love Me, will not obey My teaching ..."

Finally, we can take solace in knowing what is stated in Deuteronomy 31:8, "YHWH, Himself, goes before you, and will be with you; He will never leave you, nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

How God Blesses, Challenges, and Assists (Continued)

An angel of the Lord (Gabriel, Luke 1:19) said to Zechariah:

"... Your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you ... he will be great in the sight of the Lord ... He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God ..."

"Zechariah asked the angel, 'How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.'"

• *Luke 1:13–16, 18*

"Moses said to YHWH ... 'I am slow of speech and tongue.' YHWH said to him ... 'Now go; I will help you speak, and will teach you what to say.'"

... Then say to Pharaoh, This is what YHWH says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, Let my son go, so he may worship Me.'"

• *Exodus 4:10–12, 22–23*

“When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this [Stephen’s response to their charges], they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.

... But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God ... At this, they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him ...

... While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then, he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he fell asleep.”

• Acts 7:54, 57–60

Overall, note how precise and detailed God’s instructions are for those who acknowledge His authority and seek to obey Him. To each audience, God is very specific as to what He expects from us. He gives His instructions according to our maturity.

With respect to God’s instruction(s) and transparency, John 15:15 states, **“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends ...”**

These calls and challenges are not easy, yet, **“no word from God will ever fail”** (Luke 1:37).

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