



# Truth For These Times



## 41. IS GOD PARTICULAR?

There are many people in the world today who feel that God overlooks detail and is not really concerned when a professed Christian does not obey every point in the Bible as God has commanded. Often the cry is heard, “It doesn’t matter which day you keep holy” – It doesn’t matter which church you belong to”; or “you don’t have to follow the Bible exactly, it was written for simple minded people thousands of years ago”. But as we read the Word of God closely, we will notice that God IS particular – He DOES require obedience, even in smaller matters. He expects explicit obedience at His command. To obey does not qualify us for salvation – salvation is a free gift, and is ours when we accept it, but if we disobey God’s will this is sin, and unconfessed sin will disqualify us of receiving the eternal reward. Therefore, obedience is a fruit of the born-again Christian. Disobedience is rebellion against God, be it great or small.

Genesis 2:16,17      And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the DAY THAT YOU EAT OF IT YOU SHALL SURELY DIE.”

It seemed such a small thing to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. After all, was there really anything wrong in eating a piece of fruit? No. But it was the principle behind this issue that mattered; not just the act of eating fruit. The principle was obedience. It was a simple test of God to prove the integrity of Adam and Eve. One simple act of disobedience to God opened the floodgates of sin and woe upon this world. It was only a little thing, yet God revealed in this failure of our first parents that he WAS particular. He meant exactly what He said.

1 Timothy 2:14      And ADAM WAS NOT DECEIVED, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Even though Eve was deceived, she was nevertheless guilty. Her act was inexcusable, for she had chosen to believe Satan speaking through the serpent, rather than God. Adam’s sin was perhaps worse, because of the fact that he was not deceived, yet he deliberately chose disobedience to the command of God. He was prepared to share his wife’s fate because of his deep love for her. Little did the first pair realize to what devastating results their disobedience would lead.



When Eve took the fruit, it was her death sentence!

Genesis 4:3-5      And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. AND THE LORD RESPECTED ABEL AND HIS OFFERING, BUT HE DID NOT RESPECT CAIN AND HIS OFFERING. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Human reasoning would tell us that Cain gave God a very good offering – the best of the fruits of his garden. But God would not accept his offering. First of all it was not what God had asked for –

God was particular. And second, the offering was a symbol of the forgiveness of sin, and without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness. The blood of the lamb pointed to the shed blood of Jesus, and the finest of fruits could not be used to symbolize such a grand event. As humans we do not always see as God sees, therefore our only safety is to obey God implicitly without question. It is always safe to follow God's instructions, but not our own judgment, without God's guidance.

Hebrews 9:22      And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and **WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD THERE IS NO REMISSION.**

Cain was trying to buy God's favour by good works, but forgiveness is only possible through the blood.

Genesis 7:23      So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. **ONLY NOAH AND THOSE WHO WERE WITH HIM IN THE ARK REMAINED ALIVE.**



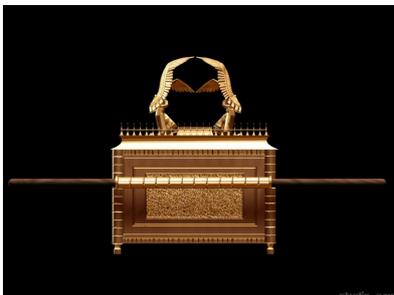
Cain and Abel offering their sacrifices.

Out of the multitudes of people who lived in Noah's day only 8 were saved. Why were all the others lost? Because God was particular – HE expected obedience. Those who obeyed the simple command to enter into the ark for safety were saved. The disobedient perished.

Numbers 4:15      And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry *them*; but **THEY SHALL NOT TOUCH ANY HOLY THING, LEST THEY DIE.** These *are* the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.

God had made himself quite clear about touching any of the holy items in the sanctuary. What would happen if one disobeyed and touched a holy thing?

2 Samuel 6:3,6,7      So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which *was* on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, **UZZAH PUT OUT HIS HAND TO THE ARK OF GOD AND TOOK HOLD OF IT, FOR THE OXEN STUMBLER.** Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and **GOD STRUCK HIM THERE FOR HIS ERROR;** and he died there by the ark of God.



Only the priests were to touch the sanctuary furniture.

From a human point of view Uzzah could be justified, for after all, he only took hold of the ark to prevent it falling from the cart. But again, God is particular, and He expected obedience. God had also given instruction that the ark should be carried on poles, not on a cart. If the first point had been obeyed, Uzzah would never have needed to touch the ark. Disobedience to the command of God caused the death of Uzzah.

Isaiah 58:13

If you TURN AWAY YOUR FOOT FROM THE SABBATH, *from* doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking *your own* words.

There are some who trample underfoot God’s holy Sabbath day. “It doesn’t matter which day you keep, as long as you keep one day in seven” they say. What does the commandment say? “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”. God has commanded that we remember the Sabbath and not any other day. He further says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath.” No other day is said to be the Sabbath. Will we obey or not? Will we say that it doesn’t matter? Is God particular or not? Disobedience to this command, to those who are enlightened, will ultimately result in the same fate as Adam and Eve, the people who did not go into Noah’s ark, or Uzzah.



Those who rejected God by refusing to enter the ark, perished in the flood.

Ezekiel 22:26

Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; THEY HAVE NOT DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN THE HOLY AND UNHOLY, nor have they made known *the difference* between the unclean and the clean; and they HAVE HIDDEN THEIR EYES FROM MY SABBATHS, so that I am profaned among them.

God is greatly displeased when men fail to recognize the difference between the holy and profane. Here in this text is explained the corruption of the priesthood, demonstrated in their failing to recognize the difference between the holy and common. Notice also their failure to see the difference between common days and sabbath days.

Leviticus 10:1,2,10

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and OFFERED PROFANE FIRE BEFORE THE LORD, WHICH HE HAD NOT COMMANDED THEM. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD....That YOU MAY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN HOLY AND UNHOLY, and between unclean and clean,

Nahab and Abihu, under the influence of strong drink (see verse 9) failed to recognize the difference between the holy and unholy, and as a result lost their lives. Once again God is telling us that He means what He says.

### READ 1 KINGS 13:8-26

1 Kings 13:21,22,24,26



A lion tore and killed the prophet that disobeyed God’s word.

...and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘BECAUSE YOU HAVE DISOBEYED THE WORD OF THE LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which *the LORD* said to you, “Eat no bread and drink no water,” your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.’ ” When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. Now

when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard *it*, he said, “It *is* THE MAN OF GOD WHO WAS DISOBEDIENT TO THE WORD OF THE LORD. THEREFORE THE LORD HAS DELIVERED HIM TO THE LION, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him.”

Here was a prophet who had done a mighty work for God in rebuking Jeroboam for his sin. However, God had given very plain directions and instructions on which road to take and how to conduct himself on the journey. We may say that it wasn't really his fault because, after all, the old prophet had lied to him and thus he was deceived. But he still had a choice of believing God or the prophet. He could have easily consulted God if there was any doubt in his mind, but instead he blundered on in his own way and was guilty of disobedience to God's specific command. His disobedience cost him his life. God says, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Man says “It doesn't matter which day you keep.” Who shall we obey, God or man?

### READ ACTS 5:1-11

Acts 5:1-5

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to LIE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND KEEP BACK *PART* OF THE PRICE OF THE LAND FOR YOURSELF? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” THEN ANANIAS, HEARING THESE WORDS, FELL DOWN AND BREATHED HIS LAST. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.



Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and paid with their lives.

In New Testament times God requires the same kind of obedience as in Old Testament times. This couple had promised God the full price of the land, but when they received such a large amount, they decided to keep some for themselves, keeping it a secret. But secrets cannot be kept from God, thus they were exposed. They didn't have to sell it in the first place, God would not force them, but under conviction they agreed. It was the will of God that they give the whole price to His work for God had blessed the sale. They disobeyed by keeping for themselves what now belonged to God. In the New Testament God is still particular.

Matthew 7:13,14

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because NARROW *IS* THE GATE AND DIFFICULT *IS* THE WAY WHICH LEADS TO LIFE, and there are few who find it.

The way to eternal life is a narrow path. It is God's will that we follow this path implicitly and not deviate. To keep on the narrow way means to obey God's every word. So few find the right way, not because God has made it obscure, but because people are not willing to take God seriously enough to follow His instructions exactly. They choose their own way because it suits them better, but only God's way is right. Man's ways lead to spiritual disaster.

*Lesson 41 – Is God Particular?*

Luke 9:23

Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him DENY HIMSELF, and take up his cross daily, and FOLLOW ME.”

Jesus wants us to put self-will aside and do His will. He wants us to place His word above our inclinations.

Why is God so particular? He wants us to prepare for eternal life, and He knows that if we follow our own way we will be lost. The only way to the kingdom is on the narrow and difficult way. Jesus is the door to this path, made possible through Calvary. While ever we trust in Him, and do His will, we are safe and we will gain eternal life at last. God is particular. Let us determine to be particular and never deviate from the path of righteousness.



God loves us dearly but we must take Him seriously that He knows best.

## **Review Sheet – Is God Particular?**

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ASSIGNMENT: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. What was the outcome when Adam and Eve were not particular in obeying God's command concerning the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Genesis 3  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why didn't God accept Cain's offering of fine fruits? Genesis 4:3-5; Hebrews 9:22  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why were so many lost at the time of Noah's flood? Genesis 7:23  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did Uzzah lose his life? Numbers 4:15; 2 Samuel 6  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is God particular about the keeping of the Sabbath? Explain. Isaiah 58:13  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is God particular in making a difference between the holy and the common? Explain. Ezekiel 22:26  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What happened to Nadab and Abihu because they disobeyed God's instructions? Leviticus 10:1,2,10  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
8. What happened to the disobedient prophet? 1 Kings 13  
Why do you think God was so particular that the prophet obey every detail?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What was the tragic end of Ananias and Sapphira? Acts 5:1-5. Why was God so particular?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Does Jesus expect His followers to follow a particular pathway? Matthew 7:13,14  
Because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
11. What does Jesus expect of those who follow him? Luke 9:23  
Let him \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.
12. Why is God so particular that we follow His way explicitly?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan to be particular in your Christian living?      YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_