

"The Word "Must""

Choices are important, but have you considered that there are some things over which we have no choice. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring the use of the word "must" in Scripture.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We recognize God as the One who Created Us and the One to Whom we must one day give an account. For this reason, we're searching for the Lord's Way, so that we may please the Lord. Because He loved us, Jesus felt the necessity to give His life as a ransom for us to forgive our sins, and we should out of love feel the necessity to serve Him with all our hearts. He gave everything for us. Let's give everything for Him. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

People enjoy many choices, but they also face things that they "must" do in life. You must have a driver's license to drive a car legally, you must be at least 18 years old to vote legally, and you must have a passport to fly to Europe. "Must" describes a moral imperative, a requirement, or a necessity. "Must" removes our options. Many ignore what God requires of us morally and spiritually. The idea of "must" is out of step with our culture. People want the right to live as they please morally, but the word "must" won't allow choices.

Some things are "musts" if we're to please God. The God who made us has a right to rule in our lives. And we must remember, however, that every law of God was for our good according to Deuteronomy 10, verse 13. 1 John 5 and verse 3 says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome." Christianity isn't impossible; God helps us. And if you think it's unfair that God requires obedience, remember that even Jesus had some things that he must do. And so do we.

Now this is an important study on the word "must," and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at www.searchtv.org and on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Matthew 16:21 to 23, and explore what God says we must do to please Him.

Our scripture reading today comes from the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 16, verse 21 to 23, and here Jesus is opening the eyes of His followers, the disciples, about His upcoming death. "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.' But He turned and He said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You're a stumbling block to Me; for you're not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'" I pray that we will always set our mind on God's interest and not our own.

May the Lord bless us as we pray. "Heavenly Father, we're grateful for Jesus and what He was willing to do, to die in our stead so that we might have eternal life and the forgiveness of our sins. Help us to commit ourselves to You and to Your will always. In Jesus name, Amen."

The Lord Jesus came to this world for a purpose, and even though He was the Son of God, the Father required certain things that He must do. The Lord Jesus said in John 3:14 to 16, "And as Moses

lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." The Lord Jesus knew that one day He must be sacrificed on the cross. Matthew 16:21 says, "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day."

When Judas led the multitude of soldiers to Gethsemane to arrest Jesus, Peter pulled out a sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Jesus told him in Matthew 26:52 to 54, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" Jesus knew that He must bear the cross, even though He could save Himself.

During His lifetime, Jesus used His time wisely serving the Father in a multitude of ways. He taught God's word, He healed the sick and raised the dead, and He called people to repentance and righteousness. He didn't waste His life with things that don't matter. Jesus knew His time was limited. The Lord Jesus said in John 9 verse 4, "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work." Now notice the Lord uses the word "we," and that means you and me, along with Him must do the works during the day.

So what does the Scripture say that we Christians must do? Well first of all, we must come to Jesus as our Lord. There's no one else who can save you. Peter said in Acts 4 verse 12, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." I tell you, there is but one Lord and Savior. The Lord Jesus Himself said in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; and no one comes to the Father but through Me." Now Jesus urges in Matthew 7, verses 13 and 14, to "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." Now Jesus never taught that there are many roads to heaven. He taught us to travel the one, narrow road.

Second, if we are to please God, we must believe. Hebrews 11 and verse 6 says, "And without faith it's impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He's a rewarder of those who seek Him." The Lord Jesus certainly taught this. He said in John 3:17 and 18, "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; but he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now the Lord was clear when He told some unbelievers in John 8:23 to 24, that "You are from below; and I am from above. You're of this world; and I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am He you will die in your sins."

Third, the Lord reveals that all must repent of sin. In Luke 13 verses 1 to 3, you remember it says: "That on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And He answered and He said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'" Paul, also certainly pressed the necessity of repentance to the philosophers at Mars Hill. He said in Acts 17:30 to 31, that "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he's fixed

a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Yes, repentance is a must!

Sometimes Christians allow the sins they committed before they became Christians to linger in their lives. Others flirt with sin and never turn from their wicked ways. The inspired Scripture says in Romans 8:12 to 13, "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you're putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Fourth, the Lord Jesus said that we must be baptized. The Lord Jesus spoke with Nicodemus in John 3, verses 3 to 7. And Jesus said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Well Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he's old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be (must be) born again.'

Now no one can enter the kingdom of God unless that person has been born of water and the Spirit. This is a reference to baptism, and the early church fathers, Greek and Latin, understood this unanimously. The New Testament never speaks of a child of God who has not been baptized into Christ. When we're baptized into Christ, we become children of God, the Lord adds us to His church, and by faith we are saved from sin. You can see, then, why baptism is necessary.

Fifth, the Lord Jesus spoke of what worship must be. The Lord said in John 4:23 to 24, to the woman at the well in Samaria, "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." We should truly worship the Lord from our hearts out of love and reverence. Hebrews 12:28 to 29 says, "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and let us then offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire." You see, worship must go from the inside out and must be as done as God prescribes. We shouldn't think of worship as entertainment. Worship is what we do to please and to praise God.

Sixth, we must pay attention to God's teaching. Hebrews 2 verses 1 to 3 says, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we've heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" The book of Hebrews clearly teaches that we won't escape the wrath of God, if we're disobedient to God's word. God does pay attention to us, so we too must pay much closer attention to His word. Hebrews 12:25 says, "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven." God speaks seriously, and we must listen and obey Him.

Seventh, we must obey God rather than men. God is over all. And serving Him must be our first priority. You remember that the Sanhedrin Council told Peter and the apostles in Acts 5:28 to 29, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood on us." But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men." You see the challenge to serve men rather than God is always before us. We have laws that contradict the teaching of Scripture, and we have a culture that is no longer respectful of God. However, we must obey God first and always.

Number eight, we must help those who are weak. Luke wrote the words of Paul to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20 and verse 35, he says "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" We all have an obligation to serve the Lord by helping others who are in need. 1 Timothy 6, verses 18 and 19 reminds us that Christians "are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life."

Ninth, yeah ninth, we must be careful how we speak. 1 Peter 3:10 to 11 says, "For 'Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.'" Christians must consider how they talk to one another and how they speak to those who are outside the faith. God's people must not be given to complaining, and gossiping, lying, or slandering. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 12:36 to 37, "I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Tenth, we must face God on judgment day. 2 Corinthians 5, and verse 10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he's done, whether good or bad." Now this is an appointment that no one can refuse or ignore. You will be at the judgment throne of Christ, no matter what. If you have enjoyed the grace of God, served Him, and obeyed the Lord out of love and faith, you'll be blessed and you'll inherit a dwelling place with the Lord forever. But if you don't know the Lord, or you've rebelled against Him, you've ignored Him, never obeyed Him, or you've drifted away from Him, you won't be able to claim His promises.

Our God is a God of grace, offering us many opportunities to come to Him in faith and love. And one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father (Philippians 2 verses 10 and 11). Why not serve the Lord now in faith because we love Him?

Let's pray together. "Heavenly Father help us all to love you with all our heart and soul, and mind and strength. To serve You and to do Your will always, to care for others and love them. And Father we're grateful for Your church, and help us Heavenly Father to be devoted, nit inly to You, but also to all the people of God. In Jesus name, Amen."

When Jesus predicted that He had to go to Jerusalem and die, Peter objected. Well sometimes we're like Peter and prone to say, "God forbid it, Lord!" Some say, "God wants us to be happy." Yes, He does; but God doesn't want us happy in sin. He wants us to pursue righteousness and godliness, which brings about lasting joy and peace. When people refuse to follow the Lord's will, it ends badly. The happiness that they once had vanishes. Proverbs 23:31 to 32 says, "Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder."

When you follow the Lord, you find blessing. Galatians 6:7 to 8 says, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." Now eternal life is filled with lasting love, joy, peace, and blessings beyond our imagination. So turn to the Lord

The Lord Jesus said in John 3 and verse 7, that “You must be born again.” 1 Peter 1:22 says that we purify our souls by obeying the truth, and verse 23 says that truth is found in the imperishable seed of the word of God. Scripture teaches us to believe, to love, to repent of sin, to confess the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and to be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Galatians 3:26 to 27 says, “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Being baptized is an act of faith in the working of God.

We hope that today’s study about the word “must” has stirred you to follow Lord’s will. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord’s Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There’s also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. Now you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Please subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” And when you subscribe, be sure to like the programs you watch; this helps spread the program. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don’t worry, if you get a hold of us, we’re not asking for money, these are free. We’re here to help you draw close to God, we want you to know the Lord.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. You see, everybody needs a church family. And there’s probably a church of Christ near you. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.