

"The Musts of Christianity"

The word "must" is often found in Scripture. That concept means there are things necessary for us to do. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to examine the word "must" as it's used in Scripture. Stay with us.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Will. The Lord God speaks to us today through His written word. The Bible says in John 3:35 to 36 that, "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." Faith alone is insufficient to maintain a right relationship with God. The doctrine of faith alone is not found in Scripture; obedience to God is also necessary. It's a must. The phrase "does not obey" in verse 36 is not the same word as the one that means one does not believe. It translates a word that means one is not persuaded and so will not comply with God's will. When a person will not obey, he faces the wrath of God and cannot have eternal life. This is how important God's teaching is, and why we teach it with love. We want everyone to obey the Lord. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to hear from you and we hope you'll join us each week.

The word "must" is out of step with most people today. Our culture is more inclined to make up their own faith or religion. Many select what commands they wish to obey rather than follow the teaching revealed in the Bible. Most people want choices, and the word "must" means they have no choice. "Must" is a verb that describes an obligation, a requirement, or a moral necessity. "Must" removes every other option. If we want to please God and have eternal life, there are some things we must do. Now, this really isn't strange, because even Jesus had some things that he must do. My friend, so do you.

Today we're studying about the things that we must do and offering a free printed copy. If you 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 stream this program on our website www.searchtv.org and on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Mark 10:42 to 45, and examine the "musts" of Christianity.

The reading today comes from the gospel according to Mark chapter 10 verses 42 to 45. And discuss a situation where some of the apostles thought that they were a little better than others and they began to be indignant toward one another. Thinking who was the greatest. And Jesus calls the apostles to Himself. And it says that:

"Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, 'You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.'"

Yes Jesus came to serve and to give Himself and that was a must. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have loved us enough to send Your son to die for us. Helps us to love You enough to serve You and to do Your will always. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

We generally think God has nothing that He must do, but God's holiness and love for mankind define who God really is. God's love and holiness led Him to send Jesus into this world. Love cannot exist without obligation and commitment. So, Jesus knew He must do His Father's will. 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." While on earth Jesus lived within time constraints, and so must we. We must now do God's will.

Jesus knew He had to die on the cross; and He prophesied His death and resurrection. Matthew 16:21 to 23 says, "From that time Jesus Christ 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. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'" Though Peter didn't want Him to die, Jesus knew that He must die in order to fulfill God's plan of redemption.

When the crowd came to the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus and bring Him to try Him, you remember Matthew 26:51 to 54 records what happened, "And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?'" The Lord Jesus knew that He must die in order to fulfill the eternal plan of God. He could have stopped it, but it was necessary for Him to fulfill the Scriptures.

Jesus was fully obedient to the Father, even when the Father demanded everything from Him. Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane. And Jesus told them in Matthew 26:38, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." I can only imagine the pain that He felt then. The Lord Jesus fell on his face on the ground. And Luke 22 and verse 44 says, "And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground." But the persistent prayer of Jesus found in Matthew 26:42 was, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done."

Now this example of Jesus is vital to us. Hebrews 5:7 to 9 says that, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." The Father heard His prayer. Many think the prayer of Jesus was to remove the cup, and that is certainly what on one level He wanted. But the ultimate prayer of Jesus was "your will be done," and God heard that prayer. Jesus was perfect in His obedience to the Father, and His obedience opened the way for us. He became the source of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. And we must believe, but we must also obey!

Some say well, "You don't have to do anything to be saved. God has done it all." Now, I realize that we're saved by grace through faith; and the Scripture clearly says salvation is a gift in Romans 6 and verse 23 and Ephesians 2:8 to 9. But we must also realize that gifts often have conditions or obligations to fulfill. Meeting conditions does not earn the gift, but conditions obligate. For instance, in John chapter nine Jesus healed a blind man by anointing the man's eyes with some mud that He made with his saliva. Jesus told the man, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So according to

verse seven he went and he washed and came back seeing. The Lord Jesus gave that man his sight. Now, no one would suggest that by washing in the pool the man healed himself or earned something so precious as his sight; but he had to meet the condition of washing before he enjoyed the healing! The blind man didn't argue with Jesus; he simply went to the pool and washed.

So while we're saved by grace, God's grace is conditional. The Scriptures plainly teach there are things that we must do to please God; they're not optional. First, we must come to Jesus. Acts 4 and verse 12 says, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." If one is to be saved he must come to Jesus; no one else can save him. The Lord Jesus said in John 12:26 that, "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him." Yes we must follow Jesus.

Second, we must believe in God. Hebrews 11 verse 6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." Faith in God means believing what He says and that He will keep His promises. It is absurd to claim we believe in God, if we are unwilling to believe what He teaches. In a conversation with the Jews about whether Jesus was from God and the Son of God, you remember the Lord Jesus said in John 8:24, "I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins." Faith in Christ means believing He is the Christ, the Son of God, and the Lord of all. Believing in Him means taking what He teaches seriously. The Lord must be heartbroken that some people are Christians in name only. That they profess to believe in Christ but follow the ways of man.

Third, we must repent of our sins. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 13:3 that "unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Now repentance is not an option for anyone who wishes to live with God. Romans 6 and verse 11 describes what repentance does. Paul said, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." Repentance means stopping our sinful ways and living for God. Romans 8:12 to 13 makes it even more clear. Paul said, "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 are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." To live with God, we must repent.

Fourth, we must be baptized. In John 3, Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. And the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:5 to 7, "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 born again.'" Now this birth of water and the Spirit refers to baptism, just as every early Christian testified. One must be baptized in order to enter God's kingdom. When Saul of Tarsus was blinded on the road to Damascus, the Lord Jesus Himself told Saul in Acts 9 verse 6, "get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." Well, Saul entered the city. He prayed and fasted for three days; yet he was not saved. Eventually Ananias came to Saul. Told him in Acts 22:16, "Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." Now God didn't wash away Saul's sins until he was baptized into Christ. And we must be baptized.

Fifth, we must worship in spirit and in truth. The Lord Jesus said in John 4:23 to 24, "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." Now many have confused worship with various forms of entertainment. But true worship differs from pretense or man-made worship. Jesus defines that difference with two things. Is

their worship genuinely from the spirit or heart? And is their worship authentically what God teaches in His Word? If it differs, it isn't true worship. According to Matthew 15:8 to 9, there he told the Pharisees that if their practices come from the traditions of men, that their worship is in vain. Hmm.

Sixth, we must pay close attention to God's teaching. Hebrews 2:1 to 3 says, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have 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?" Some think God ought to be satisfied with whatever we offer to Him, but the Scriptures demand that we pay attention and keep His commandments carefully. We must not add to the word of God or subtract from God's teaching. We have no right to rewrite God's teaching to suit ourselves or to satisfy the whims of our culture.

Seventh, we must obey God first. When the apostles appeared before the Sanhedrin the council, the high priest said Acts 5:28, "We gave you strict orders (that is speaking to the apostles) not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." Well in verse 29 Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men." I tell ya we must stand up for our God and our faith above all else. We must never suppose that God is content to be only one voice among many. I tell ya God is God, and He demands to be obeyed.

Eighth, we must help the weak. Paul said in Acts 20 and verse 35, "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.'" Christians must stand ready to help those who are in need, to provide what they can for those who cannot provide for themselves. Christians are to give of themselves, just as Christ gave to us.

Well why does all this matter? Because there's one more "must." 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says this, "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 has done, whether good or bad." On judgment day, and you'll be there; you cannot escape this appointment. On judgement day the Lord will judge righteously, saving His followers and condemning those who don't believe or those who won't obey Him. Now you and I must appear before Him. And my question is will you be ready to face God? Are you right with God?

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father help us to take Your word seriously. To know the things that we must do in order to please You. Because we love You and we know that Your grace is for those who are obedient. Father bless us and help us everyday to love You more and more. In Jesus name, Amen.

The Lord tells the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. Five wisely prepared, and the other five foolishly were unprepared to greet the master at the wedding feast. Matthew 25:7 to 11 says, "Then all those virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the prudent answered, saying, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' But he answered and said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

While Jesus offers His gift of salvation to everyone, sadly not everyone is prepared to meet the Master when He comes again. And just as the virgins needed oil, so we must not wait until the Lord

comes to get right with God. We don't know the day nor the hour when the Lord will return, so we must be prepared at all times.

Have you met the conditions God demands in order to enjoy His grace? Do you believe? Have you repented? Have you confessed Jesus as the Christ? Have you been baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins? Have you remained watchful and ready to meet Him? Please don't waste another day unprepared. Get right with God today. Accept His offer of grace by doing what He commands. You'll never regret doing what is right, but you'll always regret being unprepared.

We hope that today's study of the word "must" has stirred your heart to obey the Lord. We offer 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.

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And show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. And if you can attend worship, don't neglect it. Come to church. Worship the Lord. 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. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So we ask that you keep searching God's Word with us. Tell a friend that you're watching In Search of the Lord's Way and encourage them watch it also. We want everyone to know about this program and be watching. As always we to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.