

# Relinquishing Control: When God Doesn't Obey

Tim Russo M.A.



God is in the process of conforming you to the image of Christ! - Rom. 8:29

We are designed to worship God; we are equipped to be His servants; we are called to follow His lead.

**Psalm 23:1-6** - *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.*

We are at our best when we function according to God's design.

We bring our old way of thinking into our relationship with the Lord.

## Prayer:

Prayer is meant to be a means of relationship with God. We bear our hearts to Him. We roll our cares upon Him. We find comfort and strength in His presence. We intercede for others.

- When prayer is a vehicle to inform God of what He should do;
- When prayer sounds more like worrying and fretting than faith;
- When we become frustrated with God because He didn't answer or respond the way we expected;
- We must face a sad reality:
- We want to be in control.
- We want to be God.

## Understanding Our Humanity (without Christ)

Scripture paints our condition without Christ as a grim reality:

**Romans 3:10-12** - *As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

- We are basically selfish
- We evaluate things through the lens of how it will benefit us
- Our Immature view of God is one of a benefactor
- We seek our will, not God's
- We do not know how to pray - Rom. 8:26
- We do what is right in our own eyes, void of the righteousness of God - Jud. 17:6

## We are in a New Culture (In Christ)

Culture = Expectations

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**Matthew 11:7-10** - *As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 10 For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'*

**Martha (Luke 10:38-42)** - *Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."*

*41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." (NKJV)*

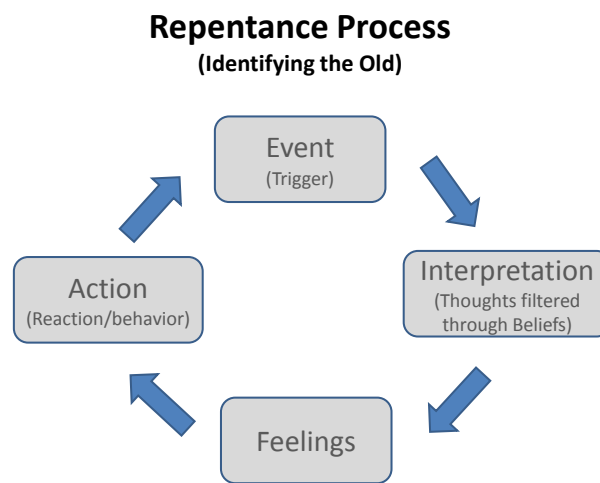
- Martha is *distracted* - by serving.
- She has an incorrect view of God: *Lord, do you not care?* - (Incorrect view of God)
- She is self-focused: *my sister has left me to serve alone*
- She wants to be in charge: *tell her to help me*

The results of these characteristics: She is worried and troubled.

## What if - So What Principle

**Psalm 37:3-8** - *Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. 6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret-it only causes harm.*

## Obstacles to Delighting, Resting, and Waiting



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The Transformation Process involves three phases (Eph. 4:20-24).

- 1) The old must be put off (this implies an awareness)
- 2) Your mind must be renewed (to the Truth)
- 3) The new must be put on

- Repentance is turning around—making an about-face.
- What would repentance look like?
- Identify our error when we are frustrated with God:
- Mental Habits must be addressed.
- By definition, a habit is unconscious behavior. To change a habit, the unconscious must again become conscious.

