

The Four Priorities Chapter 5

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Facilitator Guide by Reclamation Church

Chapter 5: Our Response to God's Grace (Obedience)

Note: The timelines below are only a guide, as well as the questions to ask. Make this your own and go where the Holy Spirit leads you. Take your time and, when needed, break this chapter into several meetings.

Open
(10 min.)

Spend a few minutes each week catching up with one another, then share prayer requests.

Open with a brief prayer.

Recap
(2 min.)

Do: Briefly give a summary of your meeting last week.

- We discussed the benefits of the Spirit of God living in us. Which benefits do you remember? (convicts the world of sin, leads individuals to faith in Jesus, dwells within believers to seal their salvation, empowering, guiding, and sanctifying believers, bestows spiritual gifts, and transforms them into more Christ-like people by helping us have power over the sin in our lives)
- We talked about the struggle we still have in these bodies, and that is sin. How does the Spirit of God help believers deal with this problem? (The Spirit convicts us of sin, forgives us when we seek His forgiveness, reminds us of His word, which speaks against sin, and His Spirit wants to take control so that sin isn't in control.)

Ask: What questions do you have from last week?

Opening
(5 min.)

Say: The author opens with the prior week's illustration of a home with electric wires and the *response* to electronics now plugged into this power. In the same way, our response to God's grace *should* include obedience (chapter 5), prayer (chapter 6), worship (chapter 6), and sharing with others by giving (chapter 7).

Let's look at the first one, obedience.

**Obedience to
God's Word
(5-7 min.)**

Do: Read the small paragraph under Obedience to the Word of God.

Ask:

- Give examples of how the world tries to squeeze us into its mold.
- Give examples of how the Word of God goes against the ways of the world.

**What's the Big
Deal -
(20 min.)**

Say: In this section, the author talks about the authenticity of the Bible and its benefits on pages 46-47.

Ask:

- What surprised you about who God used to write the Bible?
- What does **Hebrews 4:12** have to say about the Word of God? (*it is alive and active; it exposes our thoughts and actions*)
- What benefits of the Word of God are listed on page 47? (*source of food, results in growth, develops godly characteristics within us, is a weapon, shield, and sword*)
- According to Psalm 119:9-16, what added benefit do you read? (*His Word helps us to stay pure and not sin by reading, reciting, and studying it.*)
- What did you discover about our enemy, Satan, his attacks, and *how* the Bible can be our weapon against him?

**Benefits of
Bible Study, pg.
48
(5 min)**

Say: The benefits of studying the Bible should lead us to have a transformed life. When *applying and doing* the truths of the Bible, *how* we live our lives should change all areas of our lives (at work, in all relationships, etc.)

The author mentions how to study at the bottom of page 49. A more in-depth description is on **pages 281-288**. (*Note: you might choose to set this aside for now and revisit later. However, if you teach the Inductive Bible Study methods at this point, it is recommended to walk through these steps together with assigning passages of Scripture. This could take several weeks.*)



RECLAMATION
— CHURCH —

**Obedience
Defined, pg. 50
(30 min)**

Say: This section discusses the importance of *obeying* God's Word, and there is a quote by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. "...only he who obeys believes."

- This statement can be confusing. Is it to say that if we do *not* obey what the Word of God says, then we are not *believers*?
- Or, *as believers*, do we have the *choice* to obey and be fruitful or not obey and not be fruitful?
- It's important to know that the word "believe" also means trust or place confidence in. (*Note to facilitator: I do not know the intent of Bonhoeffer's use of "only he who obeys believes." He might be implying that if you aren't obeying, you are not a believer...or he might be implying if you aren't obeying, you aren't trusting.*)

Let's dig into this.

Do: Together, read James 1:21-22.

Ask:

- What does the Word of God have the power to do? (*Save our souls; or in other words, preserve your soul, life, self.*)
- We might wonder, what does this mean: save our souls. Let's see if Matthew 7:24-27, Luke 6:46-49, and Romans 2:13 can give us more insight into this. (*Our lives won't be shipwrecked when troubles of many kinds come our way; obedience makes us right with God in our sanctification process and keeps us on the path of holiness.*)
- Back to James 1:21-22. What do you think is key to verse 22? (*be doers of the word*)
- Read James 2:20-26 – if we are *not* obeying the word of God, we can become *useless* in what God wants to produce within us.
- What is the danger of *not* obeying the Word found in verse 26? (*being like a dead corpse – nekros "unresponsive to life-giving influences (opportunities); inoperative to the things of God."* (biblehub))

Say: In summary, when believers obey God, the words of Christ, and the moving of the Holy Spirit, they become *actively involved* in the work of God and will be productive/fruitful. The Bible defines biblical obedience as more than just following rules; it's a heartfelt *submission* and active response to God's authority, motivated by love and trust, involving aligning your actions, thoughts, and desires with His Word, demonstrating faith in action. It's about doing what God says, not just hearing it, reflecting Jesus' own perfect obedience to the Father.



RECLAMATION
— C H U R C H —

**Why Obey –
Consequences
of disobedience
pgs. 50-53
(20 min.)**

Ask: What did you glean from this section?

(Obedience demonstrates our trust in God and our love for him. The author says at the beginning of the first paragraph on page 51, “as we obey God’s commandments, His activity in our lives changes us.” By abiding (to stay/remain) in Christ, believers are experiencing a nearness to Christ and receiving nourishment from Him (the vine). This nourishment is what we need in order to grow and reproduce.)

Ask: What are some consequences of disobedience? (Depending on what is being disobeyed, if it takes us into sin, it could involve the loss of a job, marriage, and relationships. It could lead to physical ailments. If we are in a role working for the things of God, it could lead to a loss in a role He has given us, loss of joy, and of course, a loss of bearing fruit and being productive for Christ, etc.)

Ask: If you have had consequences for disobeying God in the past, what main lesson did you learn from his discipline? (In Hebrews 12:6-11, we can see that God is good and he disciplines those he loves in order to bring us into holy living.)

Facilitator: You might consider delving into the Scriptures provided in 1 Samuel, if they are not familiar with the examples of Saul and David.

**Take Action
(30 min.)**

Read through and discuss the questions at the end of the chapter.

Next week, we’ll learn how to relate to God through prayer.

**Close
(5 min.)**

Homework: Read Chapter 6 (and referenced scriptures in the Bible) and come prepared with questions you might have from this chapter, as well as completing the end-of-chapter questions.

Schedule for the next meeting and close in prayer.