

Willful Disobedience

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of listening to and obeying God's word, and warns against the consequences of willful disobedience.

Duration: 32:15

Scripture: Psalm 115

Topics: "Disobedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins with a prayer, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to gather and worship God. The sermon focuses on the importance of believing in Jesus Christ and the consequences of not doing so. The speaker emphasizes that God's word stands true and that excuses for not believing will be insufficient when facing judgment. The sermon also highlights the need to forsake false gods and worship the true and living God.

Transcript

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Psalm 115. I'll read the first, the unnumbered verses. Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the reading the even-numbered verses as we stand to read the Word of God.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, where is now their God? Our God is in heaven. He has done whatsoever He has pleased.

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not. Eyes have they, but they see not.

They have ears, but they hear not. Noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not.

Feet have they, but they walk not. And neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them.

So is everyone that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord. He is their help and their shield.

O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord. He is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord, for He is their help and their shield.

The Lord hath been mindful of us. He will bless us. He will bless the house of Israel.

He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

You are blessed of the Lord, which made heaven and earth. The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath He given to the children of men. The dead praise not the Lord, and neither any that go down into silence.

But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord. Let's pray.

Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name. Bring glory, bring praise. And Lord, from this time forth and forever, may our lips be filled with praises for you.

Lord, we do praise you for this beautiful day in which we can gather together and worship you. Lord, we are so grateful for all that you have done and all that you are doing in our lives, in our church, and throughout the world where your word is going forth. Bless and guide us, Lord, as we seek to be obedient unto your commands, as we seek, Lord, to serve you in a way that is pleasing unto you.

Guide us, Lord, even today as we open the word. Lead us, Lord, in an understanding of the things that you have said and are seeking to say to us today. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. This morning, I'd like to draw your attention to the 46th, I mean, declares through the prophet, or actually here the people are declaring to the word of the Lord through the prophet, as for the word that you have spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen unto you. The city of Jerusalem is in ruins.

It's just a heap of rubble. The houses have been burned. The city is empty of inhabitants.

They have been defeated by the Babylonians. Thousands of them died in the battle. Other thousands were carried off as slaves to serve the Babylonians.

A small remnant that survived against the commandment of the Lord have made their way to Egypt, where they are now dwelling. Jeremiah has been a spokesman to the nation for some 40 years, but the people have not obeyed the word of the Lord that came to them through Jeremiah, and thus the calamity, the destruction that the nation has experienced. The people have not appreciated Jeremiah, though he has brought them God's truth, though he warned them in advance of every problem that they would face and of the consequences if they would not obey God.

Yet they hated him. They despised his sharing God's truth with them. They resented it.

They had imprisoned him. They had beaten him. They even threatened to put him to death.

But what he has said has come to pass, every word. Now, the people that are there in Egypt, Jeremiah gathers them together to speak to them, to speak to them the word of the Lord. And to me, the amazing thing is that God is still willing to speak to them, though they are not listening, and though they don't want to listen, still God is seeking to avert the great tragedy that's going to come upon them while they are in Egypt, unless they listen to what God is saying to them.

In verse three, the Lord tells them the reason why Jerusalem was destroyed. Their evils had provoked the wrath of God and the anger of God to come against them, for they had been burning incense and

worshiping other gods. Some of the gods that they were worshiping were the Queen of Heaven or Ashtoreth.

Ashtoreth was the female goddess of fertility. Her idols were little pornographic idols designed to arouse a person sexually. The people had basically become addicted to pornography.

Another god that they worshipped was Molech, the god of pleasure. And their sensual passions being aroused, there was a lot of prostitution, there was a lot of adultery and fornication, and the people were giving themselves over to just pleasure, living for pleasure. And they were burning incense unto Molech, the god of pleasure.

Now, the ultimate consequence of a society that is given over to passion and to pleasure, is you have many unwanted babies. And such was the case there in Israel. Many unwanted babies.

And so, because they did not have abortion clinics, they would carry their babies full term. But when they were born, they would build big bonfires. And the ladies would come and throw their little babies into the bonfires as a sacrifice unto the god Molech.

Throughout the Old Testament, you find God constantly speaking against the people because they caused their children to pass through the fires of Molech. He's referring to this practice of burning the babies in the bonfires there in the Valley of Gehenna in Jerusalem. Several years ago, I had the privilege of having lunch with the late Dr. Shiloh, who was in charge of the excavations there in Jerusalem of the city of Ophel, or the city of David.

They had concentrated the excavations on the ruins of Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian captivity. And as they were uncovering some of the houses and all from that particular period of history, he told me that in the normal household, they found hundreds, he said, of little idols. Idols that were made of Molech, or of Ashtoreth, or of Baal, or of Mammon.

He said, we found them by the hundreds. And thus, the archaeologists were proving what Jeremiah had said to the people that they were going to go into captivity because of the multitude of the gods that they were serving and burning incense to. Now that the word of God has come to pass and the nation has been destroyed, the remnant that has fled to Egypt for safety, they continue in the practice of burning incense to these gods and goddesses.

They would not listen to the pleadings of God through his servants. God said there in verse four, oh, do not do these abominable things. And I wonder how many times maybe God has said that to you.

Maybe when you are getting ready to put on an X-rated video or CD, God says, oh, do not do this abominable thing. Maybe when you are ready to go out on an illicit affair, God says, oh, do not do this abominable thing. Maybe when you're sitting at a bar and ready to take a drink, the Lord is saying to you, oh, do not do this abominable thing.

God is saying that to the people that have survived and are in Egypt. Do not do this abominable thing. Don't offer the incense to these gods of pleasure, gods of sex, gods of power, gods of knowledge.

Don't do this abominable thing. But they would not listen to God. Even worse, they were guilty of stoning the prophets that God sent to them, of beating them, of imprisoning them, of putting them to death, killing them with a sword.

It's very interesting how that people often want to close their ear to what God is saying. Years ago, when we had a group of fellows that were going up to West Los Angeles witnessing in the homosexual community, the homosexual community decided to retaliate against Calvary Chapel. Maybe some of you were here that Sunday when they were at the entrances to our parking lot.

They called themselves the Queer Nation, and they were yelling at people that were coming to church that Sunday and seeking to disrupt the services here. To me, the fascinating part of the whole movement against Calvary Chapel was their cry, leave us alone, leave us alone. And it reminded me of when Jesus would go into an area where there were people possessed by evil spirits.

Their cry was, leave us alone. What have we to do with you, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Leave us alone. It's the cry of hell.

Don't talk to me about God. Don't talk to me about the ways of God or the things of God. I don't want to hear it.

Leave me alone. Here they are in Egypt. They are not repenting of the things that caused the downfall of the nation, but they're continuing in the same sins that brought them to this place of ruin.

In verse 7, God asked them the question, why do you commit this great evil against your souls? Sin affects you. It's against you. It is destroying you.

And God's question is, why do you commit the great evil against your souls? He called upon them to look at the pitiful condition that they were in. Their whole families have been driven out of the land and the land is now desolate. And God said, this happened because you provoked me to wrath because of the works.

For you burned incense unto other gods. And even here in the land of Egypt where you have fled, you've become a curse, a reproach among the nations of the earth. And then he announces to them the things that brought this evil upon them.

He said, it's the wickedness of your wives and your own wickedness. The wicked things that your wives have done in Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. It was a public display of evil.

Now, women are different from men. I shouldn't have to say that, should I? But this stupid, you know, society today that tries to say we're all alike and, you know, there are differences and I thank God for those differences. Women are of much finer nature than men.

Far more sensitive. If it's cold, I might say, it's a little chilly in here, isn't it? My wife will say, I'm freezing to death. If I'm hungry, I might say, I think I'd like a bite to eat.

She'll say, I'm starving to death. The kids never liked to bring their papers from school to me where they got A's or stars. I'd say, oh, that's fine.

But oh, they'd bring them to mom. She would scream. She would get excited.

She would, you know, praise them and all. And it's just the finer temperament. And it's beautiful.

We guys were sort of live in a narrow course band. I mean, it's, you know, not very high, not very low, just sort of blah, you know, right here in the middle. Where women are so much more exciting and excitable.

But the negative part of that is that though they are capable of higher highs, they are also capable, it seems, of lower lows. And when a woman goes down, she can go down, it seems, into deeper depths. And here the women were more or less leading in this whole idolatrous thing that was happening in Jerusalem, in the streets, parading.

Sort of like the carnival down Rio de Janeiro, where the women there on the floats and so forth, as you've probably seen on some of the TV programs, the open display of sensuality and wickedness. And such was the case in Jerusalem years ago. The women worshipping this female goddess of sex, Ashtoreth, or also known as the Queen of Heaven.

And they're in the streets of Jerusalem, their parades, and their open kind of just immoral actions, publicly displaying these things. And God tells them that this is the reason why his judgments came upon them. But God is saying that further judgment is going to come upon them while they are in Egypt.

Because even this did not turn them away from their evil practices, but the very things they were doing in Jerusalem, they are now doing in Egypt. So that all that have fled to Egypt will be consumed and will fall in Egypt, God said. They'll be consumed with the sword and with famine, and they shall die from the least to the greatest.

Now the irony of all of this is that the people in their minds were blaming the fact that for a short time, when things were looking real bad, they decided that they would obey the word of God and they would not burn the incense to these other gods. And they then interpreted that the evil came upon them when they stopped worshipping the other gods. This is how they interpreted the situation.

You see, Satan is a deceiver. He is a liar. He is a master deceiver.

And he would cause them to believe the very opposite of what was true. That they're stopping the worship of the Queen of Heaven and Molech and all, that when they ceased burning the incense, that's when the Babylonians came and destroyed Jerusalem. And so they were so twisting the truth, as Satan is a master at twisting the truth.

So they twisted the truth. In verse 15, we read, then all of the men, which knew that their wives had been burning incense unto the other gods, and all of the women stood by. There was a great multitude, even all of the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt.

And there in Pathros, they answered Jeremiah saying, As far as the word that you have spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you. A deliberate, willful closing of their ears to the truth of God. This is willful disobedience unto God.

I see here the blindness and the irrationality of sin. Could they not see what sin had done to them? Could they not see the devastation that sin had brought upon the nation? How blind can a person be when they get caught in a web of sin? Their lives are being destroyed, and yet they can't seem to realize that they are going down and are almost out. Because sin has blinded their eyes to the truth.

The city of Jerusalem is destroyed and burned. They're fugitives in a foreign land. They've lost everything.

And yet, rather than listening to God, and even now God will still help them and spare them, they said, We won't listen to what you say to us in the name of the Lord. They are defying the word of God. The scripture warns us, Don't be deceived.

God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. And if you sow to the flesh, then of your flesh you are going to reap corruption.

They have been sowing to their flesh and now they are reaping the corruption. The hard thing is that they will not acknowledge the truth, but they declare their intentions of continuing to live after the flesh. And so God then announced the inevitable result of their choice.

Verse 27, God said that he would watch over them now for evil, not for good. Earlier, God said, I know my thoughts concerning you. They are good.

I desire to bring you to a good end. But now God says, My thoughts are now evil. They're not good.

The men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt will be consumed by the sword, by the famine, until there would not be any one of them left. Verse 30, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra, the king of Egypt, into the hand of his enemies, into the hand of those that seek his life, as I gave Zedekiah, the king of Judah, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life. And so the prophecy, Egypt will fall to Babylon.

Now what does history tell us? In the year 586, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army came against Egypt, and they conquered Egypt. The Pharaoh was slain, and all of those who had fled from Judah to Egypt for safety were slain. None of them left.

There's an interesting prophecy back in the previous chapter, chapter 43, verse 8. The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah in Tefpanhis, saying, Take great stones in your hand, hide them in the clay in the brick kiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house at Tefpanhis, in the sight of the men of Judah, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid, and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. Archaeology has discovered the site of the ancient city of Tefpanhis. It's about 10 miles west of the Suez Canal.

Sir Flanders Petrie, one of the archaeologists, discovered the ruins of a huge castle with a brick courtyard in front of it, a large brick courtyard. They removed some of the bricks and found some huge stones underneath, the very stones that Jeremiah placed there here in chapter 43, verse 8. And once again, the archaeologist Spade has confirmed the truth of the word of God. The prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled and evidence of that is there in Egypt today.

Over and over again, the word of God has proven to be true. You have no reason for not believing the word of God. You may have excuses why you say you don't believe the Bible, but you don't have any reasons.

Reason is against you. Here, all of the things that God said would happen did happen. Reason is against you.

Here, even today, the evidence of those stones that Jeremiah had placed there under the pavement, reason is against you. God's word stands today. You may offer excuses why you don't believe, but one day those excuses will be very lame when you are standing before God to be judged.

You may offer many excuses for not believing in Jesus Christ, but there's only one reason why you don't believe. And Jesus tells us the reason you don't believe. Jesus said that God did not send him into this

world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

And he who believed was not condemned. But he who didn't believe in Jesus was condemned already, seeing he didn't believe in the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, but men will not come to the light because they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

Jesus said that's the reason you won't come to him. You love darkness rather than light, because your deeds are evil. You are like these of the tribe of Judah that were in Egypt because of their sin and wickedness, and even still are rebelling against God and saying to Jeremiah, we are not going to pay any attention to what you tell us.

We're not going to listen to the word of the Lord that comes from you. That was unreasonable. They had offered their excuses.

Well, you know, when we quit worshiping these false gods is when we really saw the judgments and all. But the real reason is that they enjoyed the wickedness in which they were involved. They loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil.

So don't try to give me that, well, I just have a hard time because there are too many hypocrites in the church or some other stupid reason or excuse rather. It's not a reason. Bottom line, like the men of Judah, they were given over to their passions and to sin and didn't want to change.

And thus, they wouldn't listen. Bottom line. Father, help us that we will not fall in the same trap and be guilty of the same folly as the men and women of Judah.

Lord, again, we see how your word has been fulfilled. We see how your word is being fulfilled in the events of our day. And we realize that we are without excuse.

And so, Father, help us to use reason and to submit our lives to you, to forsake the evil of worshiping false gods, worshiping pleasure or power or sexual emotions. And may we worship you, the true and the living God who created us. And may we stand before you in awe, in wonder, and in reverence.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9031.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/willful-disobedience/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net