

God at Work in Revival

by Tim Grissom

Living according to God's values and practicing total obedience brings peace, fulfillment, and protection from the consequences of sin.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 15:22, Proverbs 3:5, John 14:15, Romans 6:16, Ephesians 6:1, Colossians 3:20, Hebrews 13:17, James 1:22, 1 Peter 1:14, 1 John 5:3

Topics: "Total Obedience", "Revival"

Description

Tim Grissom shares the powerful testimony of businessman Richard Magnussen, who learned valuable lessons in God's school of obedience. Through experiences that were sometimes pleasant and sometimes painful, Richard discovered that 'God's way works!' He was taken to Total Obedience School by God, where he learned the importance of honesty in business practices, repentance, and making amends. Richard also realized the significance of balancing work and family life, and how obedience impacts interpersonal relationships, emphasizing the need for total obedience to walk closely with God.

Transcript

A businessman reflects on the lessons he has learned in God's school of obedience.

"God's way works!" This simple but profound truth summarizes what Richard Magnussen emphatically believes. It is a lesson he has been learning by experiences that have sometimes been pleasant and sometimes painful.

In 1984 Richard was the president of a growing Canada-based furniture manufacturing company. He was also a husband and father and served as a deacon in his church. According to Richard, he recalls nothing "off-side" about his life at the time. He wasn't aware of any major struggles at home, in the company, at church, or even in his private life. But God would soon take him to Total Obedience School.

Richard's pastor asked the deacons to pray with him about possibly inviting a Life Action crusade team to their church. He emphasized that this would be a revival crusade in which the messages would deal directly with the life of the church and the hearts of individual believers. Richard was neutral. He wasn't convinced of the need, but neither could he oppose the idea of helping the church grow in godliness. He agreed to support the crusade and to do his part in preparing for it.

Prior to the crusade, Richard could have been accurately described as a kind man. He was happy in his marriage and loving to his children. He was respected in the church and in the community. But God always looks deeper than man does, and when He began to search Richard's heart, He revealed things that fell short of His glory. One specific issue involved some of Richard's business practices.

In the furniture industry it is common practice to duplicate, as nearly as possible, the successful designs of other companies. Richard had recently done this twice without thinking anything about it. Now, however, under the scrutiny of Scripture and the Holy Spirit, he saw this practice as God saw it--dishonest. Even though it was accepted and expected, Richard could no longer excuse the practice of stealing competitors' designs.

After confessing this sin to God, Richard knew that the next step of repentance was to call the two men whose designs he had copied. He would ask their forgiveness and commit to paying financial restitution to their companies. He calculated how much he would owe each man for royalties and back interest, then placed the first call.

The first man appreciated the call but declined any financial reimbursement. His outlook was the same as Richard's used to be: "Forget about it. Everybody does it; it's really no big deal."

The second man verbalized forgiveness and appreciation for Richard's change of heart. He also declined financial reimbursement but suggested that Richard's company donate the amount (\$18,000) to a charity of their choice.

The management staff of his company became aware of the steps Richard was taking to conduct his business more honestly. But to Richard these were more than improved business ethics; they were matters vital to his walking with God in total obedience.

There were changes to be made at home as well. Richard began to see that he was working far too many hours and that his family was suffering for it. He had not been giving his wife and children the time and attention they needed. He had been a good provider but an absent husband and father. "I began to see that God could take care of our needs and our business. I didn't need to be at the office all the time," recalls Richard. He cut back on his work hours and began to invest that time in his home life instead.

Richard also began to see that obedience, or the lack thereof, has a profound effect on interpersonal relationships. This is a lesson he has had to learn and relearn several times. "First and foremost," Richard states, "God wants our relationship with Him to be right. Before we ever try to give or do anything for God, His primary concern is for us to be right with Him. That requires total obedience. And when we are right with God, other relationships become what they need to be." (This is a truth Richard has endeavored to implant in his children's hearts and minds and, is one he hopes they observe as long as they live.)

To illustrate the point, Richard recalls a painful memory. "I observed a situation where a pastor and another gentleman in his church were in sharp disagreement with one another. Each had the chance to humble himself and seek reconciliation, but neither would budge from his opinion. Both refused to deal with the matter properly and biblically. The conflict only grew worse and other people got involved. Today, both men, as well as some of the people who were affected by their discord, are still suffering from a situation that I believe could have been corrected early on."

But even though Richard has encountered many lessons about obedience and the price of disobedience, he admits to occasional setbacks in his own resolve. Like so many things in our walk with God, obedience requires a daily, if not moment-by-moment, surrender.

About six years after the incident involving the copied furniture designs, Richard's accountant came to him with a dilemma. The government had neglected to charge tax on a duty transfer --an oversight that put the company ahead by \$20,000. The accountant wanted to know what he should do about it. Richard's reply, which he now regrets, was "Let me think about it overnight and get back to you in the morning."

"I called the guy to my office first thing the next morning and apologized for not doing the right thing immediately," recalls Richard. "We owed the money and there should never have been any question whether or not we would pay. There really wasn't anything to think or pray about. The right thing to do had been obvious all along."

Richard's company conducts business in the international marketplace, including Canada, the U.S., Mexico, and other countries. International business can be a hotbed of corruption and dishonesty, but Richard sees his commitment to obey God as a protection against the temptation of under-the-table transactions. "When the choice between right and wrong is obvious, there's no decision to make. I have to do the right thing."

"I'm not perfect, by any means," Richard readily admits, "but I do love the Lord and I want to please Him. Earlier in my life I was too concerned with how I appeared to others. If a problem in my life was pointed out to me, I'd deal with branches, leaves, and fruits. But when God began to deal with me about total obedience, He got to the root of the matter.

"God's way works! The way I see it, even if we didn't get eternity, obeying God and living according to His values protects us. We could avoid so many struggles and hurts. It's definitely the best way to live."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tim-grissom/god-at-work-in-revival/>

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