

Galatians 1:15-18

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

Did you notice in today's verses that when God called Paul to preach the gospel, he did not go and seek the advice of others?

† *I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me.*

No he didn't, but rather he sought the Lord patiently for three years for direction (*Then after three years*).

Now before we go any further, let me encourage you that it is wise and biblical to seek Christian counsel on spiritual and even life matters, so please don't misinterpret what I am saying here. Also note there is a difference between counsel and advice.

But with that in mind. Think about this. Maybe GOD has called you to _____ (you fill in the blank). And it was clear and specific instructions from the Lord. Would you do it, or would you go seek others for their advice? Think about that, if God has clearly told you to do something, why do you need to ask man? Isn't God's instructions enough? If you tell someone and they tell you not to do it, who are you going to listen to, the Lord or man?

But the way we should approach what the Lord has called us to do, is to be like Paul, and wait on the Lord. Seek Him in prayer and in His word for guidance, even if it is for a few years, months, or days. You may even consider fasting while you do this so your flesh will not give you false information or direction. Then after we do this, we can and should tell our close brothers and sisters in the Lord, not seeking their advice, but so that they can pray for us and even encourage us in the calling the Lord has placed upon our life.

Once again the importance here is if the Lord has told you something, then no matter what others say, we must be obedient to the Lord and what He says, not man. And if you are unsure, ask the Lord to make it plain and simple for you to understand and that you want to be in His will, and He will answer you.

† **Luke 11:13** *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

Think once again of Saul (before he became Paul), who had a thriving ministry, (so to speak) with the religious leaders in Jerusalem. What if after the Lord called Saul, he went back to those

same religious leaders and sought their advice or counsel? They would have not encouraged him in what God had called him to do, but rather would have discouraged him, and with that discouragement, two thirds of the New Testament would not have been written by Paul.

Then there are others who hear clearly from the Lord to do, or even not to do something, yet they don't want to hear what the Lord has to say, but rather they want to follow their own fleshly desires. So what do they do? They seek the advice of others, not that they really want Godly counsel, but rather they will keep asking until they find someone who will tell them what they want to hear, and if they can't get that from their Christian brothers or sister, then they will seek the world's advice to get what they want, rather than what God has told them to do, or not to do.

God has called us all to do, and at times not to do, and when He does, let's seek Him in prayer and His word before we seek the counsel of man. If God wants to use man to speak to you, He will bring the right Christian man or woman to speak His word to you. But when God does speak to us, let's be obedient to His calling and direction in life. Then He (GOD) will receive the glory, and not man.

- † **1 Samuel 15:22 (NLT2)** *But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.*
- † **Galatians 5:16 (MSG)** *My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness.*
- † **Psalms 1:1-2** *Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.*
- † **Proverbs 19:21** *There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the LORD'S counsel--that will stand.*