

"What is God requiring of me in this season?"

Not:

- What are others doing?
- Why did they leave?
- What is wrong with the church?
- What should the pastor do?

But:

- "Lord, what are You saying to me?"
- Theme: Stay Focused on Your Assignment

Illustration: Peter and John

After Jesus restored Peter, Peter immediately looked at John. John 21:21-22 (NIV)

"When Peter saw him, he asked, 'Lord, what about him?'

Jesus answered, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.'"

Notice Jesus did not explain John's future.

He simply said: "**You follow me.**"

- Many believers lose peace because they become more concerned about John's assignment than their own.
- When churches experience turmoil, people often become experts on everybody else's responsibility while neglecting their own.

Principle #1: God Holds Me Responsible for Me

Romans 14:12 (NIV) *"So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God."*

Not an account for:

- the pastor
- the elders
- the worship team
- the people who left
- We will give an account for ourselves.

Practical Illustration

Imagine you're on an airplane. The flight attendant always says:

"Put your oxygen mask on first."

Why?

Because if you pass out trying to help everybody else, you cannot help anyone.

Spiritually, many believers spend their energy trying to fix everyone around them while neglecting their own prayer life, faith, obedience, and growth.

Principle #2: Turmoil Reveals Hearts

Luke 8:14 (NIV) *"The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature."*

- Pressure doesn't create character.
- Pressure reveals character.

The storm reveals:

- faith or fear
- commitment or convenience
- trust or anxiety

Biblical Illustration: Israel in the Wilderness

Every difficulty became an opportunity to complain.

Numbers 14:2 (NIV) *"All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron..."*

They spent more time discussing their problems than God's promises.

As a result, they wandered for forty years.

- The problem was not the wilderness.
- The problem was their focus.

Principle #3: Guard Your Mouth

Philippians 2:14-15 (NIV) *"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.'"*

- Complaining magnifies problems.
- Faith magnifies God.

Practical Illustration

- A magnifying glass does not change the object.
- It only makes it appear larger.
- Complaining makes problems appear larger.
- Praise makes God appear larger.

Principle #4: Be a Builder, Not a Critic

Nehemiah 4:6 (NIV) *"So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart."*

- Every person had a section of wall.
- They were not assigned the entire city. Just their section.
- The enemy wanted them distracted.
- The builders stayed focused.

Practical Application

The question is:

"What wall has God assigned you to build?"

- Prayer?
- Serving?
- Encouraging?
- Giving?
- Discipling?
- Worship?

When everyone builds their section, the whole wall rises.

Principle #5: Unity Is a Choice

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NIV) *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

Notice Paul did not say:

"Create unity."

He said:

"Keep unity."

- Unity already exists in Christ. We must protect it.

Illustration: The Orchestra

An orchestra may have:

- violins
- trumpets
- drums
- flutes
- Each sound is different.
- If every musician spent rehearsal criticizing another instrument, there would be no music.
- Beauty comes when each person plays their part.
- The church is not called to uniformity. It is called to harmony.

Principle #6: God Often Shakes Before He Builds

Hebrews 12:27 (NIV) *"The removal of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain."*

Sometimes God allows shaking because He is establishing something stronger.

- The shaking is not always destruction.
- Often it is preparation, as an excavator.

Biblical Illustrations

- Noah's generation was shaken before a new beginning.
- Gideon's army was reduced before victory.

- David's kingdom endured years of turmoil before stability.
- The early church experienced persecution before explosive growth.
- God frequently subtracts before He multiplies.

Questions Every Believer Should Ask

Instead of: "*What is everybody else doing?*"

Ask:

- Am I walking closely with Jesus?
- Am I praying for my church?
- Am I contributing to peace or division?
- Am I speaking faith or fear?
- Am I fulfilling my assignment?
- What can I build instead of criticize?
- How can I strengthen someone today?

When Peter focused on John, Jesus said:

"You must follow me." That is the answer for every church in every season.

When people leave: *You follow me.*

When leadership changes: *You follow me.*

When things are uncertain: *You follow me.*

When emotions are high: *You follow me.*

- The future of the church is not determined by who leaves, who stays, who complains, or who criticizes.
- The future is shaped by believers who quietly and faithfully keep following Jesus regardless of the circumstances.
- And often, those believers become the very people through whom God brings healing, stability, and revival.