

Why God's Plan for the Lost Requires Your Obedience

When I first sensed the call to Russia 27 years ago, I wasn't sure if I could say no fast enough. I wasn't thinking about the millions of lost souls I was putting myself above; I just knew I was nervous about giving up my own plan and agenda to participate in God's plan for a country I'd never even visited.

Thankfully, I did put my uncertainty aside, and now, after almost 30 years, I have seen incredible fruit from my decision to be obedient to God's call on my life, even though at the time it was made reluctantly. At the time there were only 61 churches in that country, and today, there are thousands.

I had no idea what would result from my hesitant yes that day so many years ago, but I have learned through experience that God always has a plan that far surpasses what we can imagine. All it takes to see His plan come to pass in our lives and on the earth is obedient action—even when that action is taken with trepidation.

Even though the concept is nothing new in my life, my Holy Spirit-inspired word for 2019 is "obedience," radical obedience. It continues to come up in my own life, and the Holy Spirit continues to bring it to the forefront of my mind when I prepare to teach, preach or write. I believe *obedience* is a word for the whole body of Christ in this season. God has called every one of us to yield to His word and His Spirit. When we do, the impact will be greater than anything we can ask or imagine.

Nonetheless, many times when we hear the word "obedience," the phrase "I don't want to do that" follow right behind it. Why? Because we only want to obey when it's something that we

desired to do in the first place.

Obedience implies following the will and plan of someone else. It requires surrender. When we choose to obey God, it requires faith to believe that the outcome will be greater if we follow Him than if we pursue our own plan.

Almost 8 billion people occupy this earth, all with different needs, complicated decisions and a unique path in front of them, and often, being obedient to the Holy Spirit means doing something for one (or more) of them before serving yourself. Your decision to be obedient to God's Spirit will always affect you positively in the long run, but it may first change the entire trajectory of another person's life. You are His hands and feet in this world, and your obedience to His Word and Spirit is a crucial part of God's plan for reaching the lost.

So, read the Word, take note of what instructions have been given to believers and recognize how Jesus interacted with the lost. Pray, allow the Spirit a moment to speak to you and give you a supernatural word of direction. Confess your concerns to Him. Listen for His response. And enjoy your time with Him. You cannot know God's desires for your life without spending time with Him, and without a relationship with Him, your obedience will always be reluctant.

Will you boldly say yes to being a witness for and servant of Christ? When you say no to yourself and yes to an extraordinary partnership with the Holy Spirit, He will surprise you every time.

You're beautiful. I see Jesus in you.

Have a great week!

Mikel French *has challenged spiritual awakening all across America, where many celebrations extended into multiple weeks, and has conducted celebrations in France, Sweden, Russia,*

Romania, Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, Germany, South Africa, Malawi, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Haiti, Japan, Singapore, India and Thailand. He conducted an outreach celebration in Manila, Philippines, reaching 200,000 teenagers with the Book of Hope. Through the generous support of partners, he has presented the message of Jesus Christ to millions of people in the nation of Russia through televised citywide soul-winning celebrations. Mikel considers it an honor to assist in conducting the annual pastor's conference, where thousands of pastors from Russia's 11 time zones come for training, teaching and equipping. Mikel and his wife, Marsha, reside in Tulsa, Oklahoma.