

148 - Remember who you are and Whom you represent

I'm going to invite you to write this question down and keep it in front of you as we study tonight. Here it is: ***“How does the Lord look when people see and hear me, especially the ones closest to me whom I should be loving the most?”***

When I was about 12 or 13 years old, and my parents allowed me to go out with groups of friends, and even later, when I left the house on a Friday or Saturday night, my Dad told me, “Remember who you are and whom you represent.” Now, I know that my dad was talking about my mother and him; it was all about how others would think of them based on what they saw me do or heard me say, or even based on the people with whom I associated. My dad especially was quite visible in the community, and his repeated caution put the fear of God in me until I realized that his concern was more for his appearance, his reputation, and even his credibility in the community, at work and in church, than it was for my benefit.

We might criticize such a preoccupation with protecting someone's “reputation,” but I found myself using my dad's words in a couple of email recently, and it reminded me that my mom and dad's efforts, no matter what their shortcomings may have been, were aimed ultimately at my good.

So it is with our Father and with Yeshua, in that we represent them both on the Earth. Every aspect of our lives bears witness to people and to the celestials about their appearance, their reputation, and even their credibility.

Every figure in the scriptures, from Adam on, represented the Father on the Earth. Through the scriptures, they still do! Yeshua is the most shining representative of all. From the time He arrived until His last breath, He represented the goodness and faithfulness of God flawlessly.

John 14:9 - “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

Now look with me at the context of that statement by Yeshua. He's been up the mount of transfiguration, so He knows what's coming, and He's been

telling the disciples what to expect. Time is short; Yeshua can hear the clock ticking, and He's trying to get these guys ready for what's about to happen:

John 14:1-11

1 "Let not your heart be disturbed. Believe in God, and believe in Me.

Stop right there with me: Yeshua is telling the guys what to do -- or what not to do in this case: "**Let not your heart be disturbed.**" -- and then He tells them how to do it: "**Believe in God, and believe in Me.**" We're looking at a classic "if-then" passage of scripture: Believing in the Father AND the Son will enable you to achieve and sustain a glad heart; that is, one that is not disturbed. Let's simplify it even more: **faith protects and comforts our hearts.** This is The Messiah speaking; I'm just expanding, clarifying and simplifying it. To me, these two sentences, like so much of what Yeshua said -- bless Him -- sum up the entire evangel.

John 14:1-4

1 "Let not your heart be disturbed. Believe in God, and believe in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many abodes; yet if not I would have told you, for I am going to make ready a place for you.

3 And if I **should** be going and making ready a place for you, I am coming **again** and I will be taking you along to **Myself**, that where I am, you also may be.

4 And where I am going you are aware, and of the way you are aware."

"I've been telling you where I'm going, and I've been telling you what's going to happen to show you how I'm going to get there!" In light of what Yeshua just said, what happens next is amazing, and it helps us understand **John 2:24-25:**

Yet Yeshua Himself did not entrust Himself to them, because of His knowing all men,

25 for He had no need that anyone should be testifying concerning mankind, for He knew what was in mankind.

John 14:5

5 Thomas is saying to Him, "Lord, we are not aware whither Thou art going, and how can we be aware of the way?"

Thomas is probably not the only one who is clueless here; he's just the only one who admits to it. Now, EVERYTHING that follows is the epitome of Yeshua representing the Father's character: His love, His faithfulness and kindness, His grace and mercy; and His patience with foolish men and women, who can't get out of their own way enough to recognize what is being demonstrated to them, and that the One Who is doing the demonstrating has been commissioned, sent forth with specific orders, by the Father, for the good of all mankind.

Watch the exchange between Yeshua and those closest to Him; the ones Whom the Father gave Him to watch over, to train up in the way they should go, as the Proverb says. As we go through this, ask yourself, *"How do I treat those whom the Father has given me? Am I this careful, this gracious and kind, this patient and willing to put myself out on their behalf?"* Here's the most important question to answer as we continue: *"If I were the only representative of the Father to the person sitting with me right now, or the person whom I spoke to today, would they recognize Him? Am I so transparent a disciple -- a follower -- of the Messiah, that when anyone sees or hears me speak, they see the Father and they hear His words with His heart for His child today?"*

John 14:6-7

6 Jesus is saying to him, "I am **the Way** and **the Truth** and **the Life**. No one is coming to the Father **except** through Me.

7 If you had **known** Me, you would have known **My Father** also. And **henceforth** you **know** Him **and** have **seen** Him."

Yeshua is very clear, very measured, very complete, isn't He? He doesn't beat anyone up; He doesn't roll His eyes and sigh with disdain; He doesn't make anyone feel small, even though He certainly could. After all, these guys have been with Him for more than three years and have seen everything He's done so far. Without coming right out and saying it, He tells the disciples, *"I'm it -- I'm the One and except through me, there is NO path to the Father. You would have already known this IF you had known me for real. But, never mind, from now on you DO know Him and you've seen Him. OK? Got it?"* Well, no, not really.

John 14:8-11

8 Philip is saying to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficing us."

9 Jesus is saying to him, "So much time I am with you, and you do not know Me, Philip! He who has seen Me has seen the Father, and how are you saying, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 Are you not believing that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The declarations which I am speaking to you I am not speaking from Myself. Now the Father, remaining in Me, He is doing His works.

11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me; yet if not, believe Me because of the works themselves."

I became aware of a phenomenon as I prepared our study for tonight: Barbara and I have witnessed it and we've remarked to one another about how astonishing it is to see. The people with whom we have walked the closest and who have had the toughest time climbing out from under their stuff to come into what the Father has called them, are those who have had to come out of a religious system that oppressed them to such an extent that they have either tried to oppress others -- albeit passive-aggressively -- or have struggled to throw off their oppressors and live in victory. The good news is that two we know have escaped the grips of the religious system that bound them and are walking today in the way, the truth and the life of Yeshua. They are representing Him well -- not they are perfect; they know they aren't -- not that they have already obtained the prize; they know they haven't; but they are well on their way.

The other side of one person's struggle to break free of the religious spirit -- a spirit of sa-tan, of pure opposition to the very nature, purpose, and declarations of the Father -- is another person whom we witnessed transform from a war-wearied refugee, to a rapidly maturing daughter of God, who left His house in Lantana yesterday full of faith, confidence, excitement, and victory. The best part was that she **knew** she was graduating, and the Father completed process in about 30 days.

What's the difference between a process that took 30 days versus 6 months? It's the same as the difference between 12 men, who even after more than 3 years did not recognize what Mary of Magdalene knew almost as soon as she met Yeshua. She was only oppressed by a demon, and her delivery was swift and final. She never looked back. The 12, on the other hand were oppressed by the anti-Christ -- anti-Messiah -- religious system that shrouded their minds, their hearts, and polluted their spirits. It took Yeshua's resurrection, ascension, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit to free them. Even then, they struggled with the trappings of the religion they could never seem to fully leave behind them. Mary was free from the first day she met the Lord. Paul, too, transformed instantly upon meeting the risen Lord. He tried to call to His brethren left behind in Judaism, but He never returned to the oppression they were under, and poured out His life for the sake of the evangel of the Messiah, the evangel of God, and for the sake of the ecclesia of God; if by any means to deliver us all who followed Him from the desperate constraints of a religious system named after the One Who ordered no such religion, but Who came to show the way to the Father; the truth of His sovereignty and His unfathomable love; to remove all cause for estrangement from the Father and provide the means of conciliation to Him; and to make the way clear for the Father to win all creation to Himself and accomplish His will, stated through the Apostle Paul, to save all mankind.

Yeshua knew Who He was and Whom he represented, and He did it perfectly. Paul knew who he was, before AND after the Lord called Him and then trained Him privately. Paul also knew whom he represented. Before He died, he could say this

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have contended the *ideal* contest. I have finished my career. I have *kept* the faith.

8 Furthermore, there is reserved for me the wreath of righteousness, which the Lord, the just Judge, will be paying to me in that day; yet not to me only, but also to all who *love* His advent.

When I first met Barbara, something was very different about her. I did not know then what it was. Of course, I now know that it was the Way, the Truth, and the Life that was in her and was coming out of her. It's the Messiah , working in and through her Who touches lives -- to the extent that they are willing to be touched and therefore transformed -- Whose broken bodies He heals, Whose wounded hearts He comforts, Whose spirits and captive lives He saves, delivers and sets free.

Barbara will never say this about herself, but I can say it about her: when I saw Barbara, I saw the Lord -- I saw the Father. I didn't know it then, but I do today. Others are walking with us today who know it, and they are becoming those about whom the same may also be said. They know who they are and Whom they represent.

So, let me return to the question I posed when we began tonight: ***“How does the Lord look when people see and hear me, especially the ones closest to me whom I should be loving the most?”***

Let's add to this discussion what love looks like -- the kind of Love Yeshua demonstrated in front of those to Whom He was sent, and to us Who can bear witness to His life more than 20 centuries later. Paul wrote about this love, and we looked at it just last week; nevertheless, we cannot examine it too often or too closely:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is **patient**, is **kind**. Love is **not jealous**. Love is **not bragging**, is **not puffed up**,

5 is **not indecent**, is **not self-seeking**, is **not incensed**, is **not taking account of evil**,

6 is **not rejoicing in injustice**, yet is **rejoicing together with the truth**,

7 is **forgoing all**, is **believing all**, is **expecting all**, is **enduring all**.

8 Love is **never lapsing**

Love is seven things: Patient; kind; rejoicing together with the truth; forgoing, believing, expecting and enduring ALL.

Love is NOT 10 things: jealous, bragging, puffed up, indecent, self-seeking, incensed, taking account of evil, rejoicing in injustice, or lapsing.

Practically everyone in the world knows **John 3:16** by heart:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The CLNT reads a bit different:

For thus God loves the world [in other words, this is HOW the Father loves us all], so that He gives His only-begotten Son, that everyone who is believing in Him should not be perishing, but may be having life eonian.

17 For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him.

There's a great statement of the Father's intention to save all mankind!

18 He [or she] who is believing in Him is not being judged; yet he [or she] who is not believing has been judged already, for he [or she] has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. [Watch out! Now it get's ugly!]

19 Now this is the judging: that the light has come into the world, and men [and women] love the darkness rather than the light, for their acts were wicked.

20 For everyone who is committing bad things is hating the light and is not coming to the light, lest his [or her] acts may be exposed.

21 Now he [or she] who is doing the truth is coming to the light that his [or her] acts may be made manifest, for they have been wrought in God.

How can we tell when people today -- maybe even those we know, love and serve -- ***“love the darkness rather than the light,”*** as the scripture says in John 3:19? The answer follows the comma in the same sentence: ***“for their acts were wicked.”***

If this seems way too elementary, ask yourself, do I know what “**the darkness**” means? I’m asking this because Barbara and I have seen too many people who purport to love the Lord Yeshua, who is “**the Light,**” but whose actions and words don’t match their confessions (and only the Father knows their thoughts and their hearts). They may not be engaged in outright, obvious evil, but they fall short in the fruits of the spirit in some area - I know, because I’ve been guilty of it myself! Paul struggled with it too, as we’ve seen many times before. There isn’t a man or woman who ever lived, except Yeshua, who does not face **the darkness** in themselves somewhere, sometime.

Let me make this plain and simple: “**The darkness**” is **sa-tan** -- it is adversarial opposition to the Father’s words, His character, His nature, His purpose, and His Son Yeshua’s example.

We can spot the darkness because in **John 3:19**, the scripture says, “**for their acts are wicked.**” Great, so as long as we know what wicked means, we’ll know what darkness looks like, right? In Greek, the word wicked means, literally, “*misery-gushed.*” The word is defined in Thayer’s lexicon, as, “*full of labours, annoyances, hardships; pressed and harassed by labours; bringing toils, annoyances, perils; of a bad nature or condition; in a physical sense: diseased or blind; in an ethical sense: evil [or] bad.*”

So, back to **John 3:19**

Now this is the judging: that the light has come into the world, and men [and women] love the darkness rather than the light [they love sa-tan rather than Yeshua], **for their acts were wicked.** [Their acts were “full of labours, annoyances, and hardships; they brought toils, annoyances, and perils; they acted out of a bad nature or condition, as if they were diseased or blind].

Not a pretty description, is it? **John 3:20** makes it plain: “**For everyone who is committing bad things is hating the light** [doesn’t that suggest, at least, that they are loving the darkness? Now, The next part is *really* important] **and is not coming to the light, lest his [or her] acts may be exposed.**”

We're looking right at what Barbara calls, the sneaky devil. If we are at any time engaged in wicked acts -- therefore loving the darkness and are, therefore by definition, **sa-tan**, we will find ourselves in some form of hiding, trying to avoid being exposed. We won't talk about whatever it is we're in trouble over; we'll put on a calm face for others, because, truth be told, we're ashamed of where we are or of what we're doing, and we don't want to suffer the humiliation of being exposed. It's Adam and Eve all over again, hiding from God in the garden of Eden!

I can talk like this, you understand, because I am intimately familiar with the sneaky devil and you may be too when you get honest to God, own your wickedness, and repent -- change your mind -- because, I promise you -- never mind me; the word of God through Yeshua the Messiah promises -- everything hidden will come to light.

Luke 12:2-3

Now nothing is covered up which shall not be revealed, and hidden which shall not be known,
3 because whatever you say in the darkness shall be heard in the light, and what you speak in the ear in the storerooms shall be heralded on the housetops.

Plus, let's not forget **Psalm 139:1-12**

O Yahweh, You have investigated me and are knowing me; 2 You Yourself know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought from afar; 3 My path and my pallet You have measured off, And for all my ways You have made provision. 4 For though there be no declaration on my tongue, Behold, O Yahweh, You know it all. 5 Back and front, You have besieged me, And You set Your palm up on me. 6 Marvelous is such knowledge far beyond me; It is impregnable; I cannot reach to it. 7 Whither could I go from Your spirit, And whither could I run away from Your presence? 8 If I should climb to the heavens, You are there, And should I make my berth in the unseen, behold, You are there. 9 Should I wear the wings of dawn, Should I

indeed tabernacle in the hindmost sea, 10 Even there Your hand, it would guide me, And Your right hand would hold me. 11 If I said, Surely darkness, it snuffed me up, And night is belted about me, 12 Even darkness, it is not darkening to You, And the night, as the day, is giving light; as Darkness is as light.

Back to my original question tonight: **“How does the Lord look when people see and hear me, especially the ones closest to me whom I should be loving the most?”** Remember the other questions I posed a little later?

“How do I treat those whom the Father has given me? Am I as careful as Yeshua was with them, as gracious and kind as He is with me? Am I as patient and willing to put myself out on behalf of maybe even my own family member?” “If I were the only representative of the Father to the person sitting with me right now, or the person whom I spoke to today, would they recognize Him? Am I so transparent a disciple -- a follower -- of the Messiah, that when the person closest to me sees me or hears me speak, he or she sees the Father and hears His words with His heart for His child today?”

How many times have we marveled at Yeshua, Who knew that Judas would betray Him and that his actions would lead to crucifixion, and yet He washed Judas’ feet along with the other disciples. Would you or I do that?

Ephesians 5:1 “Become, then, imitators of God, as beloved children.”

8 for you were once darkness, yet now you are light in the Lord.

9 As children of light be walking (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

10 testing what is well pleasing to the Lord.

11 And be not joint participants in the unfruitful acts of darkness, yet rather be exposing them also,

12 for it is a shame even to speak of the hidden things occurring, done by them.

13 Now all that which is being exposed, by the light is made manifest, for everything which is making manifest is light.

...

15 Be observing accurately, then, brethren, how you are walking, not as unwise, but as wise,
16 reclaiming the era, for the days are wicked.
17 Therefore do not become imprudent, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
18 And be not drunk with wine, in which is profligacy, but be filled full with spirit,
19 speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing music in your hearts to the Lord,
20 giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord, Yeshua the Messiah,
21 to our God and Father, being subject to one another in the fear of the Messiah.

Matthew 25:40

“Verily, I am saying to you, In as much as you do it to one of these, the least of My brethren, you do it to Me.”

Ephesians 4:1

I am entreating you, then, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to **walk worthily of the calling with which you were called**,
2 with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,
3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of peace:
4 one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling;
5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
6 one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

14 For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died. [You and I are no better than anyone else and if we act like we are, we are mocking God, we are opposing His word, and we are therefore **sa-tan**].

15 And He died for the sake of all that those who are living should by no

means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes. [We'd best get over ourselves and live to Him -- it is all about Him, after all. The fact that we get to play a role in fulfilling His purpose -- in being part of the Complement of the One completing the all in all...well, that's pure grace in action for sure!]

16 So that we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to flesh. [We ought to see in others what God sees: someone Yeshua died for and someone who is the Father's son or daughter even if he or she doesn't know it yet. It's Ok either way, but we ought to know that He knows better than we how well we're doing, and it's all going to come into the light, now or later. Now is better; now is private; at the Dais of the Messiah, I doubt that it's a private audience. The vision I have is a vast stadium, every seat is full, and the playing field is too, with all those who will give account to Him in that Day.] Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer.

17 So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new! [How's your new looking? How's mine? Does it look like the Father has done a good work in you or are you faking it in some areas?]

18 Yet the all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ [Who has, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation,

19 how that God was in the Messiah, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation. [The Father, through His lamb, Yeshua the Messiah, ended all cause for our estrangement from Him, because In the Messiah, we will live beyond the reach of the death we all fear, that we all hate, and that every human being in his or her right mind fights to delay.]

20 For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, "Be conciliated to God!"

21 For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him. [Can we get over ourselves and our petty concerns to recognize that we are

ambassadors for the Messiah, as of the Father, calling out, for the Messiah's sake, Be conciliated to the Father!"

Chapter 6

1 Now, working together, we are also entreating you not to receive the grace of God for naught. [If we are walking worthily, in the light, as children of the light, imitating the Father, as beloved children, we will demonstrate the righteousness of the Father – we will vindicate His character and validate His purpose – before people and before the celestials.]

I sought the Lord about why this word tonight. What He showed me was that all the scripture study in the world -- and we've covered a lot of ground over 22 months -- may not change a heart, may not bring a soul to repentance -- to a genuine and lasting change of mind. "Only Jesus can change a heart," Barbara told me that President George W. Bush said. I know what Yeshua did for me and what the Father has accomplished in the last five years, since He met me in my office late one night and said, "**Say yes to this, 'cause it's not coming around again.**" I have no time to waste, and no place to hide, even if I wanted to. I would suggest that the truth is, none of us does. The Father's purpose is paramount, and He will accomplish it, with or without us...and I pray it is with us.