

8/29/2026
Nugget

THE GENUINE'S LIFE EVIDENCES OUR LORD JESUS

Your Value-Based Relationships Mean The Most! (Part 1)

A Holy Spirit-guided/empowered way of life is promised in the New Covenant.



For the best spiritual benefit, please prayerfully discuss this Nugget with those with you on your faith pilgrimage.

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In our previous Nugget we discussed how your **value-based relationships** are established through your **intentionality** — that you mutually cherish the specialness of the relationship! We can't emphasize enough how vital it is if you're *genuinely* born again to have value-based relationships with each other. Why? Because young and old alike, our society is on the attack in its increasingly caustic treatment of each other. Two verses from God's Word explicitly describe the perilous time in which we live:

• *"When the righteous triumph, there is great rejoicing, but when the wicked rise to power, men hide themselves"* (Proverbs 28:12).

• *"Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But the [genuine] who endures to the end will be saved"* (Matthew 24:12).

Have you ever reflected on what it requires to *endure to the end*? To be *genuine*, you aren't given an option to hide out in society! It will require the *value-based mutual support* among the *genuine* to both endure *and* continue to serve as our Lord's redemptive ambassadors.



Weigh in your own heart some things we've observed. Shortly after we came back to the US from Israel in 1994, we began to recognize that relationships even among many of the *genuine* were **"flat."** In other words, specialness in relationships was dwindling rapidly. Key contributors to the proliferation of flat relationships have been **social media** and **texting**, both of which make impersonal contact easy. Rampant SELF-obsession dominates our culture especially through Humanism's powerful influence: ***"I only want things in my life that make ME happy! And if you don't let me have MY way, I'll delete you from my life!"***

We also observed that the core motivation of many people even among the *genuine* was to pursue the world's ways to achieve happiness and earthly security. But by that choice they were repudiating the warnings in God's Word: ***"Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God"*** (James 4:4; see also 1John 2:15-17). Even the use of "friend", which previously meant wholehearted devotion of one person to another, was being watered down through social media. And the specialness of saying "I love you" was losing its heartfelt expression.

Please reflect on this: If you're *genuine*, then your use of "friend" must have the deeper value-based meaning which aligns with the heartfelt definition that's given by our Lord Jesus: ***"No one has greater love than this, than a person who lays down his life for his friends"*** (John 15:13).

The news media today cater to this nation's pursuit of self-gratification and wishful speculation by spending more time heralding celebrities than they do on reporting about everyday people who sacrifice themselves on behalf of others. Even using the word "hero" has been flattened to refer to entertainers who do a kind act which cost them little personally and certainly didn't put them in harm's way. Contributing to a "GoFundMe" request has become social media's way of enabling people to feel good about themselves without inconvenience or self-sacrifice. (GoFundMe is an American for-profit, crowd funding platform for people to raise money for life events ranging from celebrations and graduations to catastrophic circumstances such as accidents, illnesses and disasters)

“Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4).

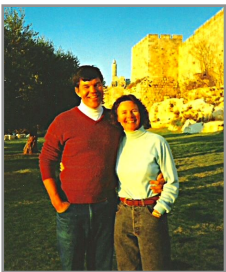
In **value based relationships** you're setting aside your focus solely on your own self-interests in order to manifest the love and compassion of our Lord Jesus to the other person. You're impassioned about uplifting their dignity as God's command becomes a living reality for you: ***“Encourage one another and build one another up”*** (1Thessalonians 5:11). Because you're concerned for their dignity as being special, you never want them to feel slighted by you. For instance, you don't want them to feel that they're being taken for granted. (This is especially true regarding our Father and our Lord Jesus, and your spouse if you're married.) Unintended slights do create deeper hurt feelings in value-based relationships than in other types of relationships.

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).

A marriage may indeed go on *without* heartfelt reflection. But we can assure you that it will never grow in the depth of sacrificial love that our Lord Jesus wants you to experience *unless* you do reflect. Before we received the Hebraic foundations in 1994 and the relational priorities at their core, we weren't committed to the value-based qualities we needed in our marriage. Even after 24 years together we'd allowed ourselves to almost lose this precious covenant relationship.

Mike: Both of us had spent many years ministering to others, but we neglected to reflect sufficiently on the needs of each other. With our marriage in tatters, our Father sent us to Israel in 1993 to stay with our friends Bert and Exie. Bert was about 10 years older than I, a man I deeply respected and a dear friend before he'd emigrated with his family to Israel several years earlier.

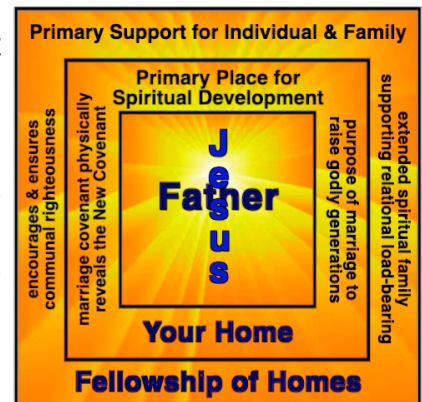
For the first three weeks we lived with them, Bert would take me for an evening walk and ask the same question: ***“Why can't you love Sue?”*** Initially I'd answer by giving excuses and blaming Sue. But then one night during our walk Bert got through to me. I realized how ***I*** had contributed to our marriage's near-demise because I hadn't been asking our Lord Jesus for His love to flow through me for Sue.



I began to ask our Lord Jesus for *His love* for Sue. This daily prayer began to produce a different 'Mike' who was now loving her. It took Sue two more months to realize that the change in me was real. And on our 24th wedding anniversary Bert redid our marriage vows. (When we married in 1970 we weren't *genuinely* born again. But on our 24th anniversary it felt like we were truly married for the first time!)

Here's an important awareness if you're in ministry. The seminary we'd previously attended emphasized that ministry was the highest priority a Christian could have — and we completely bought into that unbiblical perspective. Prioritizing ministry over marriage is one of the most destructive influences that the anti-Semitic “Church Fathers” adopted from the Greek philosopher Plato's **cosmic dualism**. Cosmic dualism compartmentalizes life into the *spiritual realm* that's declared “good”, and the *physical world* that's considered “evil.” Why does this errant distinction matter for you today? Because it presumes that anything pertaining to the physical world, like having a “secular” job, is tarnished and “less than”. But anything that's focused on the spiritual realm, like “full-time ministry”, is very very good.

Relational Priorities Of The Hebraic Foundations



These value-based relationships require your whole-hearted reflection for them to flourish in your life.

❖ In sharp contrast with dualism, we learned from the biblical Hebraic foundations that the *spiritual and physical realms are in continuity*. Neither is higher than the other—because God has a part and a purpose for both. Remember, “holiness” isn’t defined by a specific occupation. Rather, holiness is being set apart in Christ to do Father’s will. We wish we’d known this 24 years earlier! We also learned that the *marriage covenant* is closely connected to the *New Covenant* which our Lord Jesus made possible. (If you’d like to know more about these two covenants that revolutionized our spiritual life and marriage, read: [Our Heavenly Father’s Two Paramount Covenants](#)).

You Must Surrender Your Old Self To Be A Fruit-Bearing Branch On The ‘Vine’

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

In the Hebraic foundations, our heavenly Father is restoring a dynamic way of life through your relationship with our Lord Jesus. It’s an abiding heart relationship, not at all like the *static religion base* of the nominal Christian. Specific relational qualities within the Hebraic foundations are better understood in light of Jesus being the **True Vine** and the *genuine* being the “**branches**.” (We encourage you to reflect on your own Vine/branch relationship as you read John 15:1-17.) The sap which flows from the Vine through the branches is the **Holy Spirit**. And keep in mind that our Father is pruning away your old self so that in *love-based obedience* you flourish as our Lord’s ambassador. In other words, your old self must die so you can be transformed and allow our Lord Jesus to live through you (see 2Corinthians 3:17,18).



In establishing and remaining committed to a value-based relationship, your ongoing heartfelt reflection is absolutely indispensable for love to flourish. For instance, when you sincerely reflect, you’re able to discern anything that matters more to you than the depth of commitment that our Father and our Lord Jesus deserve. His Word commands, “*You shall have no other gods before Me*” (Exodus 20:3; also Deuteronomy 5:7) He is telling you to closely scrutinize what you may be cherishing more than you value Him. This fervency is underscored in Deuteronomy 6:5: “**You shall love the LORD your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your might**”—truth that’s reinforced by our Lord Jesus in Matthew 22:37.

Do you recall Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s celebrated poem, “*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways*”? The poem continues with her listing her reflections of **why** she loves. We encourage you to instill her question in your heart concerning our Lord and our heavenly Father: “**Why do I love Thee? Let me reflect on these ways.**”

The value-based relationship which the *genuinely* born again have with our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus is enhanced as you reflect on why you love this glorious Father and His wondrous Son. Do you acutely perceive your own innate sinful depravity and what our Lord Jesus accomplished for you on the cross, and our Father’s willingness to forgive your sins? If you’re dull to feeling a profound sense of encompassing gratefulness, then cry out for the Holy Spirit to help you as the psalmist implored with humility, “*Restore to me the joy of Your salvation...*” (Psalms 51:12).

Think about this even regarding other *genuine* in Christ who are special to you. Can you explain **why** a value-based relationship you currently have is so special to you? Will your explanation reflect your specific feelings of specialness toward that individual?



Both Testaments are a great source in guiding your **why** reflections. There are many facets in your relationship with the Godhead that not only necessitate your reflection **why**, but also your personal responsibilities in representing your heartfelt feelings through obedient trust. Take our Lord at His word: *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments”* (John 14:15; see also Deuteronomy 11:1; Luke 6:46-49). You find in Mark 10:17-22 the account of the rich young man who was reflecting on what he must do to inherit eternal life. But when he asked Jesus this question, he didn’t expect that our Lord would single out what had mattered most to him, his wealth—the very thing he was unwilling to die to. (This is a clear warning to you as a *genuine* that our Lord wants all that’s in your life!)

Being securely attached to our Lord with heartfelt intensity is prized by our Lord. That’s why He uses the parables of the hidden treasure and the greatly valued pearl: so that *you* will cling to Him above all else in your life.

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:44-46).

Fervent grateful love, especially your heartfelt appreciation for our Father and our Lord Jesus, is a powerful motivator for your life choices of obedient trust. In our January 1997 newsletter Orthodoxy vs Orthopraxy we cite this: The Hebrew word for love, *ahav* [ah-hahv] is a love that’s filled with desire, a passionate encompassing love. Appearing 250 times in the Older Testament, *ahav* denotes powerful devotion, a desire to possess or be in the presence of the one who is loved. This is the love that God wanted from His chosen people. The meaning of the Hebrew letters of *ahav* is “a window into the Father’s heart.” *Ahav* is that special impassioned love that’s lodged deeply within you and fans your desire to please our Father and Lord Jesus.

Nothing on earth compares with bringing glory to our heavenly Father while doing His will under the rule of our Lord Jesus through His indwelling Spirit.

A Value-based Relationship With One Or A Few Doesn’t Mean You’re Rejecting Others

Within the biblical Hebraic foundations we discovered a unique facet about the value-based relationships which our Lord Jesus had among the twelve apostles. You’ve read that our Lord specifically took Peter, James and John with Him on special occasions, such as when He healed a little girl (Mark 5:37), on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:2), and in the garden of Gethsemane to pray with Him (Mark 14:33). Although our Lord did enjoy a special relationship with Peter, James and John, this didn’t mean He was rejecting the other apostles. And if you’re genuine, having specialness with one or a few doesn’t mean you’re rejecting others in your relational sphere. Indeed, the Bible reveals to the *genuinely* born again that they comprise the family of our heavenly Father and are brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus.

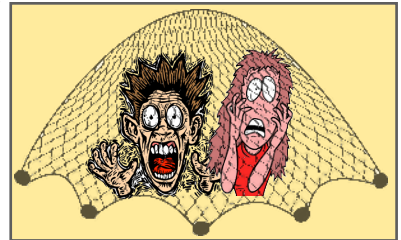
- *“...you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by Whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’”* (Romans 8:15).
- *“Because you are His sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba! Father!’”* (Galatians 4:6).
- *“Stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, ‘Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother’”* (Matthew 12:49,50).

The *genuinely* born again are adopted into a new family structure with a divine Father and glorious Brother. If you're *genuine*, have you ever reflected on what this means *to you*? First, in you becoming a beloved member of the family of our Father and our Lord Jesus, you've been adopted into a ***love-grounded, obedience-based life***. And as God's Word makes abundantly clear, this adoption means you are responsible to fulfill Father's specific will for you through His indwelling Holy Spirit. You're accountable to live the same obedience-based life by Father's grace that our Lord Jesus lived—because His Spirit is abiding within you! You're also responsible to *die to your old self* and to *keep being transformed* by the Holy Spirit into Christ's character qualities throughout your life journey (see 2Corinthians 3:17,18).

FYI: If you're *genuine* and are living in obedience-based trust and grateful love as the family of our Lord Jesus, then you have most likely encountered the same misunderstanding that we've experienced with a number of our unbelieving biological family. When we purposed to live obedience-based out of loving trust in our glorious Lord, some of our relatives thought we were rejecting them. In our obedience to do our Father's will, we joyfully interacted with His children who have the indwelling Holy Spirit with the specialness they deserve, the specialness of being our brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus. This special close relationship with our family in Christ seemed to add to the feeling of some of our relatives that we were rejecting them. But this was far from the truth.

(It's important to note that a number of our family are nominal Christians. Mike's Mom was particularly distressed by our decision to live in obedient trust in our Lord Jesus and do our Father's specific will for our lives. But several years before she died, she became part of our Father's family and was a dear praying sister on our behalf as a staunch ally of our ministry.)

Do you remember this cautionary warning, "*Fear of man will prove to be a snare*" (Proverbs 29:25)? ***If*** you have unbelieving relatives, whether parents, siblings, children, or even close friends, keep in mind this vital insight concerning them not understanding your new family commitment in Christ and your obedience-based life as you walk in the steps of your Lord and Savior:



"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world but the Spirit Who is from God, so that we might understand the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we speak in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. He is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1Corinthians 2:12-14).

When you talk to an unbeliever about your trusting obedience to the Lord you love, it's impossible for them to truly understand because they aren't indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And if you fear losing the relationship(s) you have with them rather than obeying the Holy Spirit's guidance, then you're sinning in letting that fear of loss take precedence over obeying the Spirit. You've created your own snare. When you're obedient to Father's will as was our Lord Jesus, you're not rejecting friends or relatives. But far too many *genuine* who *could have brought* our heavenly Father glory by doing His will because they obeyed the Holy Spirit's guidance *didn't*. In their reluctance, fear, and disobedience, they set their own course instead of following His.

If you're *genuine* but you are tempted to fear that you'll lose a particular relationship if you obey God's will for you, then you need to recall the truth in these old spirituals and *apply it*:

***"Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."
"Though none go with me, still I will follow; No turning back, no turning back..."***