

## Be A Noble Man In Whom Our Lord Jesus Delights

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In our recent emails as well as in this one, you'll notice that we are including several links to materials we have produced over the past 37 years. That's because many people around the world, and in the US especially since 2016, have asked to be added to our mailing list. More and more people are questioning the rudiments of their beliefs, and the Holy Spirit is leading them to what our Father has given us to share. Even if you've been with us for many years and have gone through these materials before, we ask you to consider this:

We encourage you to ask our Lord Jesus if this message, and our links, are from His Spirit for you at this time. And if they are meant for you, what does He want to *transform in you* regarding any unChrist-like attitudes or behavior? We share with you what the Holy Spirit gives us. So please ask the same Spirit for confirmation and application for your own life. Our obedience exists to support your obedience.

### Men, It Begins With You, Or It Should Have

Mike: In November 1986 I was having breakfast at our retreat center with a group of religious leaders. We'd previously given to each one a copy of *Family and Civilization*, Carle C. Zimmerman's insightful book about the times we were living in. Each one sadly agreed that our nation had already descended into the final stage of a society, the **Atomistic Stage**.

(Please see Appendix B of *Hebraic Home Fellowships Must Produce Godly Generations* for further insight into the symptoms of a society in its death throes.

<[https://restorationministries.org/download/prodgodlygen\\_entirefile.pdf](https://restorationministries.org/download/prodgodlygen_entirefile.pdf)>). And please make copies and discuss it with your family, faith family, and even your unbelieving friends.

I was only 40 years old then, yet they asked me to direct my personal focus and a major part of our retreat center ministry to raising up godly, mature men. I'd been meeting monthly with these leaders for over three years and had shared with them on several occasions the two significant points by which I evaluate other men:

1. For a married man, I evaluate the depth of my respect for him by his humility and his love for his wife that's demonstrated by the amount of twinkle I see in her eyes when she looks at him.
2. Whether he's married or single, I also measure my respect for a man by his willing obedience to my Lord Jesus. My watchword in this matter is, "A man after our Lord Jesus's own heart is a man who does our Father's will no matter how he feels about it."

For several decades now I have had the privilege of working with many men. From a human standpoint you could say that my "success rate" has been dismal in raising up mature men who are actively serving our Lord Jesus in obedient trust. My failure is with men who have learned far more Bible than they've ever put into practice. They're big

talkers about what they've read, and they sure feel good about themselves. But they don't take action based on its truth. Unless a man is resolutely determined to live with Jesus really being Lord of his life, the pursuit of the humility which our Lord requires of him in serving Him as well as in loving his wife as Jesus would remains unimportant to him.

On the up side are some truly noble men in our Lord's eyes among those I've disciplined. These men have willingly sacrificed themselves for the Person and the cause of Jesus Christ – and for their wives, their families and for everyone else Father brings to them. Do you know what a man of stature in the eyes of our Lord Jesus thinks of himself? It may surprise you:

**Instead of focusing on what he may consider to be any good qualities in himself, he is very aware of the dark or insufficient areas he sees within himself. He fully recognizes that he is no more than a pot of clay — but a pot holding the most precious expression of the Father's love as he reveals Jesus to the world, beginning in his home** (see 2Corinthians 4:7; 2Timothy 2:19-21).

Focusing on helping men mature in their relationship with my Lord has been a heart-burden for me ever since that breakfast with those religious leaders in 1986. And it's only grown more crucial in emphasis and being emotionally taxing for me since March 1994. Back then we were finishing our stay in Israel, already having had the Hebraic foundations revealed to us. At one point I perched quietly on the rock wall in front of a "church" building called *Dominus Flevit*, which commemorates where Jesus wept on the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem. First, I experienced my Father's deep sorrow as He spoke to me about the tragic consequences for children of divorce in the US. Then He told me that if older men were not raised up to take their biblical place in shepherding His children on His behalf, everything else He had given us over the past months would fail. (This warning resulted in us publishing our book, *Pastoring By Elders* <<https://restorationministries.org/download/pastoring-by-eldersr.pdf>>. No theologian or religious leader has refuted the authenticity of what we share in the book.)

So as we write this email there's a lot of emotion in both Sue and me. Immediate obedience on the part of men within Christianity is as much a vacuum today as the vacuum in outer space. This failure has had grievous consequences in individual lives as well as in faith communities and in society at large. Consider, for example, that divorce has produced such deep hurt and callousness in so many women and in the children of those fractured relationships. And the men of these broken covenants who claim to be Christians have grievously soiled the holy reputation of our Lord Jesus.

We've noted in previous writings that only about 1 out every 200 men we've encountered as we've shared the Hebraic foundations ever set aside their worldly pride and personal goals and ambitions for this singular goal: to develop by His grace *the humility, the love and the obedience* to be a noble man in our Lord's sight. And far fewer even consider this pursuit to hold any importance for their lives.

Our sorrow over this lamentable observation was again aroused recently when we read a column, "Pastor's Perspective," in our local newspaper:

"Today's Christian Church needs to have ongoing prayer for our nation, our leaders, and for ways to stand and engage in this world. Thank God for those believers who are engaging politically...for the sake of our children's generation, I pray that more will engage in the political arena. I also pray that it's not too late."

Is praying for our nation and its leaders biblical and a labor of love? Absolutely. But this man, like so many clergy today, focuses on *political involvement* to bring about change. In a recent email, *Avoid Spiritual Adultery As A Strange Bedfellow*, we warned Christians about making politics a prime concern. In this article the pastor points people to something "out there" — political involvement — that's of immediate concern. But how much more pertinent would be the call for each follower of Jesus to first look into the darkness of his or her own heart and repent. The "out there" focus of government providing for the needs of society also neglects the importance of each person discerning the will of our Father as to how He would have them be involved.

We realize that many in Christianity would respond positively in reading what this man wrote. This is especially true for those who have allowed their love to grow cold during these past four years. Yes, the Bible tells us to pray for our leaders. Yet our Lord's own words and the apostle Paul's summation of all of God's righteous commands stand as an accusation against a large majority of Christians in this nation today who have turned away from them: •"*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*" (Matthew 22:39). •"*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'*" (Galatians 5:14).

Our hearts ached in sadness as we read the clergyman's column because He was overlooking or even avoiding the one action that is missing in most of Christianity in this land – **repentance**. Its absence is a key reason why our society is near death. Rather than political solutions or the use of violent force, both believer and unbeliever need to hear this one requirement of our Father: **REPENT!** Turn away from all that violates the One True God and turn to the Father through His Son Jesus, living a life through His Spirit that transforms each person from the inside out. Only that drastic change of followers of Jesus *keeping His commands* and doing those things which we know from His Word are *pleasing to Him* will bring about the answers to prayer that we so desperately need. (See 1John 3:22.) Permit us to share what we would have written in the column if we were pastoring:

"I practice righteousness that's borne on repentance in my own life, my family's life, and my faith community. We do not begin a collective gathering without first having people kneel and discern through the Holy Spirit if anyone is holding onto unconfessed sin. Even our children find it meaningful to see their parents humble themselves, and many of the children scrutinize their own lives to discern if they spoke or acted in a way that was wrong, or if they had hurt someone else's feelings. Repentance and the righteousness in Christ of being forgiven myself as well as those I am responsible for is a MUST."

***“I cannot bear your worthless assemblies”*** (Isaiah 1:13).

Later that same day as we were on our prayer walk, we heard the Holy Spirit refer to self-serving, people-pleasing clergy in this nation as ***“twerps.”*** We’d heard the word twerp before and knew it was disparaging. Later at home we looked up some various meanings: **•a contemptible person, •a despicable fellow, •an arrogant and obnoxious person.** Think about what the Holy Spirit was revealing to us that day. It’s not just the definition of twerp. Far more so, our heavenly Father was revealing His heart in His critical appraisal of twerps in pulpits. These individuals were using their position of influence to placate people in their self-satisfied, lukewarm lives as they readily compromise with the world’s ways and values.

A crucial point for you to remember: One of the major differences we’ve been making known for over a quarter century is between biblically Hebraic life priorities and Hellenized/Romanized Christianity. Hebraic perspective demands that *the home be the basic building block for spiritual development and for living repentantly.* All other relationships and activities within the spiritual realm are supposed to support the home, not replace it. But by severing the Hebraic roots of following Jesus as Lord, the Hellenized/Romanized religious leaders demanded that all religious instruction and participation take place within a designated “church” building led by a religious “professional”. In sharp contrast, our Father NEVER called for a “church” building to be the primary place for spiritual development. Yet most of the energy and resources within congregations is used in keeping the religious system going, from salaries and building maintenance to activities and programs. This clergy-perpetuated practice has continued to play down the home and the role of parents, fathers especially, in the spiritual training of their household. In large measure, the Hellenized/Romanized religious system has succeeded in fulfilling **the goal of religious leaders to control and indoctrinate their captive audience of spectators.**

Over the decades in which we have been following our Lord Jesus, we’ve heard many Christians state, “My pastor preaches the Bible.” But we often cringe because we know all too well that the person preaching hasn’t put into practice what they’re expounding. Therefore their words ring empty to their hearers as “interesting” but not applicable to their daily lives. And unless you repent, changing your attitude or behavior because of what you heard, that information from the pulpit seems irrelevant. If you’re adding more Bible knowledge to your brain cells but not responding to the Spirit to turn from your old ways into Christ’s ways, you’re delighting the demons but disobeying and dishonoring our Lord Jesus.

No true shepherd of our Father’s children would ever consider controlling or indoctrinating His kids. But this unbiblical method has become entrenched and dominant in most parts of Christianity. That’s why so few men realize the tremendous responsibility, the due diligence, our Father requires of grandfathers and fathers. Men far more gladly pursue knowledge rather than develop the character qualities of humility and love-based sacrificial service.

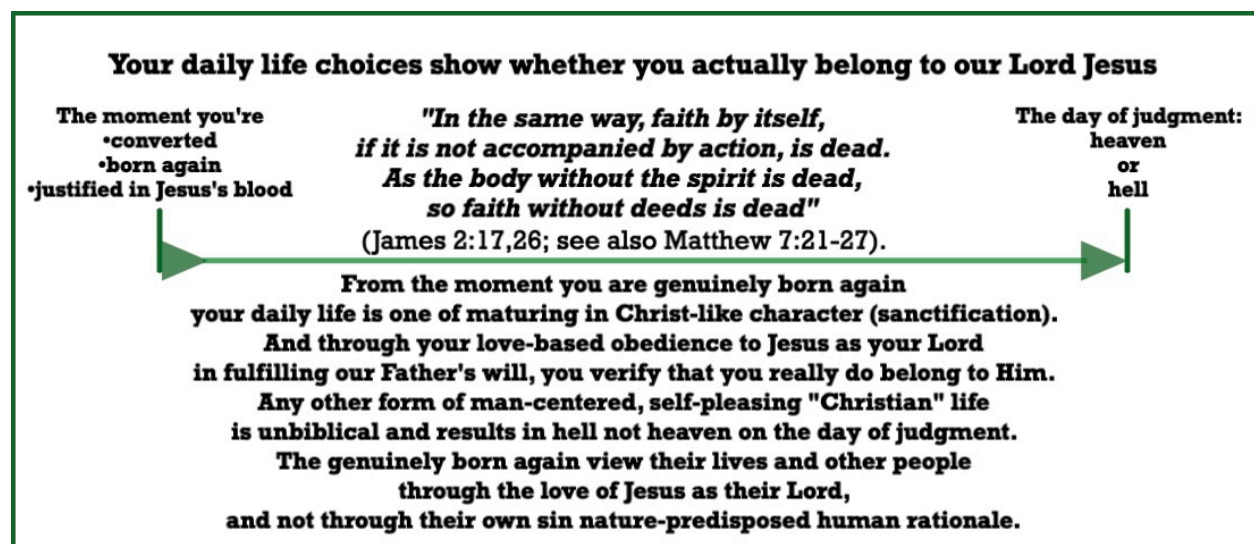
When we realized that our Father was as sickened by those who claim to represent Him in the pulpit as He was by the self-serving priests and false prophets during the days of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah, we were cut to our hearts. Since all the law is fulfilled in love for God and for one another, consider this warning that God gave Israel's neighbors, and we believe is meant for our land today:

*"Gather together, gather yourselves together, you shameful nation, before the decree takes effect and that day passes like windblown chaff, before the LORD'S fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of the LORD'S wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zephaniah 2:1-3; see also 3:1-4 for His evaluation of the "religious" in His precious city, Jerusalem).*

Which type of person are you: one who will experience His anger because you've made yourself in charge of your life rather than our Lord Jesus? Or, are you intentionally and earnestly seeking His righteousness and the humility to love in obedient trust?

Trusting in Jesus as your *Lord* is as contrasting from viewing Him just as a *Savior* as the day you were conceived versus the day your body dies. You could view the day you put your trust in His shed blood as payment for your sins and were born again like the day you were conceived. But His Lordship of you is authenticated in your daily obedience to His Father's will until the day you leave your body and experience your salvation when your name is declared aloud to the hosts of heaven.

If Jesus is Lord of your life, you can look back at each day from the perspective of the day of judgment. It's only through this vantage point that your life choices, as well as His purpose for other people He has you encounter during your life, can be understood through what our Lord Jesus demands of you each day. And it's from the perspective of the day of judgment and living each day with His criteria for being welcomed into heaven that enables you through His indwelling Spirit to sacrificially serve Him in the world.



Don't limit your view of Jesus solely as your Savior and blindly believe that you are "saved" because you recited a prayer and were told that you were saved. If your life hasn't changed from within, if you aren't being transformed bit by bit through the Spirit, if you have no daily evidence of His Spirit's presence in you, then beware. According to the truth of God's Book and His Spirit, you are far away from being accepted into heaven. Works certainly won't get you there. But works which are done out of grateful love in obedience to Father's will under the Lordship of Jesus will certainly assure you that you're on the right pathway in your spiritual journey, heading for eternal life.

Encouraging you to take the high road of the Spirit and not the low road of self-will and self-obsession,

Mike & Sue

P.S. We previously asked you to pray for our new friends, Ron and Nicki and their ongoing work in Ecuador. Our interaction with them when we park our van at their retreat center lifts our spirits because we're interacting with seniors who've laid their lives on the line to love and serve Jesus. They recently received good news that they believe they've obtained the land in Ecuador they needed for their ministry. Then the next day they received news that a key person on their board there has died of Covid. Please, remember them in your prayers as much as you lift us up in prayer. Thank you!