

The Commands of Yeshua ~ Part 3

"If you keep My commands, you will stay in My love - just as I have kept My Father's commands and stay in His love. I have said this to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy be complete."
(Yochanan 15:10-11)

In this post I want to begin digging into the actual commands of Yeshua. I've elected to use a similar categorization as presented in Tom Blackaby's "The Commands of Yeshua: What It Really Means to Follow Yeshua."

Approaching God ~ A

"Eternal life is this: to know You, the one true God, and Him whom You sent, Yeshua the Messiah." ~ Yochanan 17:3

Looking at Yeshua's life, we see that nothing was more important than His relationship to His Father. Yeshua wants us to have a healthy and vibrant relationship with His Father more than anything else. In fact, He wants us to have the same type of relationship with God that He has enjoyed with His Father from the beginning. If you read through chapters 15-17 of Yochanan's Besorah, you will see just how important this relationship between the Father, the Son, and you and me is to Yeshua. (See Yochanan 15:9; 16:27; 17:11, 18, 21-23, 26.)

The relationship we see Yeshua modeling for us with His Father is the same kind of relationship Yeshua wants to have with us and what Yeshua wants us to have with His Father. Of course, this is because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one with each other. As we relate to one, we relate to all. So as Yeshua, in human form, reveals to us the Father, who is Spirit, His commands regarding worship, relationship with God, and knowing God emanate from His passion for us to know God in all His glory.

In order for us to experience the fullness of who God is, however, we must meet certain requirements. It is important for us to remember that we are the creation; He is the Creator. We follow His expectations, meet His standards, and obey His instructions in order to know Him, serve Him, worship Him, and demonstrate our love for Him.

How does one approach God? Let's take a look at what Yeshua said about approaching God.

Repent

Ever since reading the Bible for the first time, I have always been fascinated by Yeshua's first public pronouncement as recorded in Matthew and Mark. Yeshua's first command calls for repentance. Both report that after His encounter with HaSatan during His forty-days in the wilderness following His baptism, He began to preach repentance. **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the good news!"** (Mark 1:15 ^{HSCB} emphasis added) **"From then on Yeshua began to preach, 'Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!'"** (Matthew 4:17)

This is significant in that often in today's Messianic circles a call for repentance seems to be glaringly absent. God's holiness and our sin are incompatible and antagonistic toward each other. We cannot expect to come to God on our own terms; we are only permitted into His presence on His terms, and His holiness rightfully requires repentance.

What does **repent** mean? The Greek word is *metanoeō* which means to turn around, change one's mind, relent, and in the theological sense involves "regret or sorrow, accompanied by a true change of heart toward God." ¹

¹ "A Word for the Day: Key Words from the New Testament" by J.D. "Doc" Watson.

True repentance brings us back in perfect relation with our Creator and allows us to begin again to experience the joy, peace, security, and contentment Yeshua intended for us. Repentance is a beautiful pathway we travel that leads us back to where we should have been all along. Without the ability to repent, we would face destruction and devastation and have no way of returning home again. Walking through repentance into the kingdom of God and becoming complete as God created us to be in Him is wonderful. Yeshua also understands our propensity to want our lives to be self-directed. Repenting acknowledges Yeshua as the One who is better suited and able to guide and direct our lives. Turning our ownership papers over to Yeshua is a humbling experience.

Yeshua said we are to **"repent and believe in the good news."** Feeling sorry for our sins and failures is not enough; we must take another step. We have to accept the good news of Yeshua's sacrificial death, bodily resurrection, and subsequent reign as true and effective for our own life. Salvation has always been clearly attached to placing one's faith in God and His eternal plan for mankind. We learned in our series on God's Grace that our salvation is a free gift from God by faith in Yeshua (see Ephesians 2:8).

None of the other commands of Yeshua really means all that much if you skip over this one. Our first love response in obedience to Yeshua is to repent; to reorient our lives to Yeshua, His truth, His ways, and His authority. Every other command builds on this first command to **"repent and believe."** Have you truly repented of your sins? Have you confessed them, repented of them, and turned away from them? Have you allowed Yeshua to have authority in your life? Have you examined your life from His perspective? If not, you may need to take some time to linger before the Lord just now and let His Ruach work in your heart and life (see Psalm 32:5; 51; 1 Yochanan 1:9).

Come as a Child ~ Why?

Yeshua said, **"Yes! I tell you that unless you change and become like little children, you won't even enter the Kingdom of Heaven!"** (Matthew 18:3) He also said, **"Let the children come to me, don't stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Yes! I tell you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it!"** (Mark 10:14-15)

Children are eager learners. Becoming like a child is to open our eyes again for the first time, to experience the newness of a spiritual kingdom that was around us all along, but we never saw it.

Children can accept things by faith that adults would otherwise struggle with.

Children are willing to give others the benefit of the doubt even when things don't always make sense.

Love is not complicated to a child and neither is God's love for us. We were created in love and God's love sent His own Son to die for us so that we could be made right with Him. We simply have to love Him back.

God is our Heavenly Father and He is looking for those who want to be His children and who will trust Him to be their Father.

God is not a simple God, but He asks us to come simply to Him. He asks us to trust Him, to believe in Him, to love Him, and to let Him guide us as a gracious, loving father guides a child. There is never a time when He does not want what is best for you, nor is there ever a time when His love is withheld from you. He wants you to learn to trust Him with the simple faith of a child. Where do you need to let go?

In my next post, we will continue to examine the actual commands of Yeshua in approaching God.