

## 2 - What is the “Right Way”?

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### Preview

In upcoming articles, we will start by looking at the following topics which take us right back to the Old Testament. Not everyone is comfortable navigating the Old Testament for things that connect to our relationship with the Lord under the New Covenant. Paul indicates the following:

15:4 For whatever was written beforehand was written for our instruction, in order that through patient endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we may have hope.

*Romans 15:4 (LEB)*

We will be looking closely at Exodus 15-17 at a very formative phase of the development of God’s relationship with His people as a guide for better understanding the “Right Way”

- Exodus 15 – Celebration after Salvation & Baptism, Healing of Bitterness, and Strengthening for the Future
- Exodus 16 – “Eating” Healthy Nourishment for Growth
- Exodus 17 – “Drinking” for Refreshment
- Exodus 17 (2nd half) – The Attack & Defeat of the Enemy
- Testimony & Practical Application – Some thoughts based on key passages God used in my life to help me with learning the “Right Way” (and, yes, I am still learning...)

To help you, the reader, who might prefer reading the New Testament consider the following. Most of Paul’s teaching in Romans about “sanctification” comes directly from these three chapters in Exodus. He pulls from other areas of the Old Testament, but these three chapters are the core foundation for the subject of “sanctification”. It is important to remember that sanctification is not a one time process in our lives. It has multiple “scopes” of application. It does apply to our entire life, but it also applies in smaller cycles related to specific areas of our life. It happens at different times and different ways for different people. Without trying to over analyze it, just remember that this process of healing, strengthening, eating healthy nourishment, drinking for refreshment and experiencing the defeat of the enemy that is pictured in the Old Testament is applicable throughout our lives at various times in various ways.

I do not believe there is anything new in my writing. It is all already written. For those who are more mature, I hope these writings will serve as a reminder of things you already know. For those who are growing, I hope these writings will help you to know that these passages and their New Testament equivalents are core fundamentals for your process of healthy spiritual development.

### Introduction

I don’t believe I am able to cover this topic comprehensively, so I am just focusing on what the Lord has shown me. So, God brought me to this section of Chronicles and I realized that it was a story of David doing something for God in a way that wasn’t quite right, but then being corrected and then doing it the “Right Way”. This brought me to a question for our time. I asked God, “what is the Right Way?”. I believe it was the next morning after I arrived at my question that I woke up and the Lord brought Exodus 15 to my mind. It was the answer to my question.

So, I will be traveling with the children of Israel from Exodus 15 to Exodus 17 for this series of

articles. It may seem unusual to go to the Old Testament for this topic, but I believe there is a wealth of insight to be gained from these chapters. I also believe that this portion of scripture is the foundation for this subject of the “Right Way”.

All of these articles will focus on relating to God in the manner that He wants. Said in a New Testament way, *we want to learn how to relate to our Head (Jesus Christ) as the Bride (the Body of Christ) in a way that honors and respects Him*. This is true worship.

There are many ways to satisfy our own view of our relationship with the Lord without actually pleasing Him. I encourage you to consider four things to help set the stage for this series of posts.

1. The Lord Does Not Demand We Have a Good Relationship
2. We Have to Choose to Set our Mind on Him and Trust Him Fully
3. Our Role is to Submit and Respect (i.e. Fear) the Lord
4. Our Ability is Limited to Carry Out this Instruction, – So, How Do We Do it?

## 1. The Lord Does Not Demand We Have a Good Relationship

13:5a *love does not insist on its own way*

*1 Cor 13:5a (LEB)*

11:29 Take my yoke on you and learn from me, **for I am gentle and humble in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls.

*Matthew 11:29 (LEB)*

These two passages imply something extremely important. You can walk with God in a way that does not please Him and you may not even know it. You may be blind to your actual condition while thinking you are doing what God wants (Revelation 3:14-22).

3:17 Because **you are saying**, “I am rich, and have become rich, and I have need of nothing,”**and you do not know** that you are wretched and pitiable and poor and blind and naked

*Revelation 3:17 (LEB)*

God does not demand our love or service. He requests it through Jesus Christ with a gentle and humble heart. If our environment and our lives are not setup to focus on Him we can completely miss Him and be unaware that we have done so. Being saved at one point in our lives is not enough. We do not lose our salvation, but do we want to remain infants or do we want to go through all the developmental phases of the spiritual life to become a mature adult in full measure who is useful in God’s kingdom?

## 2. We Have to Choose to Set Our Mind on Him and Trust Him Fully

This is our choice. We have to make a conscious choice to set our mind on the Lord and the things of the Lord.

2:18 Let no one condemn (*i.e. disqualify*) you, taking pleasure in humility and the worship of angels, going into detail *about the things* which he has seen, **inflated without cause by his fleshly mind**, 19 **and not holding fast to the head**, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by the ligaments and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

*Colossians 2:18-19 (LEB)*

4:15 But speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow into him with reference to all things, who is the head, Christ**, 16 from whom the whole body, joined together and held together by every supporting ligament, according to the working by measure of each single part, the growth of the body makes for the building up of itself in love.

*Ephesians 4:15–16 (LEB)*

This means we need to decide to pursue with diligence and endurance to get to the “Right Way”. We must move away from a fleshly approach and towards an approach of setting our mind on the Lord (proper spiritual approach) and focusing on Christ (our Head).

8:6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to **set the mind on the Spirit** is life and peace.

*Romans 8:6 (ESV)*

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not lean toward your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will straighten your paths.

*Proverbs 3:5–6 (LEB)*

### **3. Our Role is to Submit and Respect (i.e. Fear) the Lord**

This isn't as hard as it seems, but it isn't “easy” either. In fact, it is very hard at times because the cross of Christ must be applied to our lives if we are to mature in the Lord. Jesus refers to this process in a parable while speaking with the chief priests, the scribes and the elders in Jerusalem.

17 But he looked intently at them *and* said, “What then is this that is written: ‘The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the cornerstone.’ 18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces”

*Luke 20:17–18a (LEB)*

If we submit to Him, He will break us like a potter can break a pot He has made. This isn't fun or easy, but it is necessary to become a useful believer and worshiper of the Lord. Once broken, the story is not over. God forms us in a new way and we become a better version of ourselves according to His design for us. In summary, Christ is formed in us through this process. We do not become another person, but we are changed.

As members of the Bride of Christ, we all (men and women alike) receive the same scriptural instruction as wives in our relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. The instruction to wives in the Bible match with the key teachings of Jesus to the disciples.

5:21 being subject to one another out of reverence for Christ 22 —wives to their own husbands as to the Lord, 23 because *the* husband is *the* head of the wife, as also Christ *is* *the* head of the church (he himself *being* *the* Savior of the body). 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, thus also wives *should be subject* to their husbands in everything.

*Ephesians 5:21–24 (LEB)*

... and the wife must respect her husband.

*Ephesians 5:33b (LEB)*

*Note: The Greek word (Strong's 5399) for “respect” is fear. It is the same word used to describe the “fear of the Lord”.*

This means that Jesus Christ is taking responsibility to sanctify us. This is what makes it “less hard”.

We don't have to figure out our spiritual growth or take control of it. We have to submit and follow. We have to do this in a proper respect (aka fear) of the Lord.

There will be times this is not fun, but I assure you it is worth it. You also know you need it. Everyone knows they need help and they need to go through a process of formation with the Lord. The process starts through your submission.

#### 4. Our Ability is Limited ... So, How Do We Do It?

Many times we are able to express some of the principles or concepts of various aspects of Scripture, but knowing about something does not enable us to do it. We have to have the ability to do something. There is a simple fact we should consider from the beginning. We are pretty much incapable of walking in just about everything we find in Scripture. There are some who are stronger and more capable. Also, most of us can do some portion of what read in Scripture. Then there are those like me. I recognized early on in my christian walk how incapable I was to do what I saw in the Bible. This isn't a hopeless statement. It is a key to entering into a true spiritual walk with the Lord. I can give a true witness born out over the past 30 years that includes both significant successes and significant failures that it is possible with Jesus Christ in you. Rather than fooling myself and trying to do things in my own strength, I turned to God and asked for help. This was my key to entering into a maturing spiritual walk with the Lord. Even having done this, I have had many times where I walked incorrectly. I do not punish myself for these failures. If I need to be punished, then I give God permission to discipline me for my highest benefit. Instead, I get up each new day, turn, face forward and go again. Trying to remember each time to invite the Lord into my day and asking Him to help each step of the way. Remember this prayer, "help me".

My mother taught it to me and it is one of the best prayers I've ever known. Consider applying this prayer to everything you read in the Word of God even if you think you can do what is described. Also consider applying this prayer to your Scripture reading, "God, what is that?". You can look at commentaries, ask others, etc. but I highly recommend you ask God himself. In time, He will start to answer some of your questions.

We know the apostle Paul was extremely gifted and capable. He applied his gifts with tremendous zeal. This is how he was both a) the biggest persecutor of the believers before salvation and b) the biggest proponent of the gospel after he met Jesus Christ. He was incredibly capable. Listen to what he says about his abilities.

1 And I, *when I* came to you, brothers, did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2 **For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.** 3 And I came to you in weakness and in fear and with much trembling, 4 and my speech and my preaching *were* not with the persuasiveness of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and power, 5 in order that your faith would not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

*1 Corinthians 2:1–5 (LEB)*

Even with all of his gifting and ability, Paul narrowed everything down to Christ and Him crucified. He wasn't talking about just knowledge here. He was referring to his (Paul's) relationship with Christ and his relationship to the cross of Christ. He was talking about the very substance of the person of Christ in his life. There is a spiritual reality here that cannot easily be expressed in writing. In fact, I won't try to do it. I can only share that the true, spiritual walk changes your being through your relationship with Christ.

Without trying to explain it further, I will use Jesus' words to convey what I now know.

This item is listed fourth, but it is one of the most important. For any lacking you have there is one

solution. It is a full and complete solution. It is 100% reliable.

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

*John 14:6 (LEB)*

Jesus is the means (way). Jesus has all the solutions (truth). Jesus has the substance of what is needed to do it all (life). Nothing is missing In Him. Before you start trying to walk the "Right Way" ask for Him and His help to be "In Him". After you start having some success walking the "Right Way" ask for Him and His help to be "in Him". After many years of successes and failures, ask for Him and His help to be "In Him".

5 "I am the vine; you *are* the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit, for apart from me you are not able to do anything. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and dries up, and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

*John 15:5–6 (LEB)*

When Jesus says, "the one who remains in me and I in him", I believe He means the one who stays in an ongoing fellowship and abiding relationship with Jesus. In this type of relationship you are capable of everything I am sharing in these articles. You will be useful to God. When you operate outside of this relationship you become less useful in the Kingdom of God even though you may be doing "christian" things which others might even perceive as good.

The bottom line is that no one is capable of doing this throughout their lives except Jesus Christ. You will have times that you "remain in Him" and many times that you walk alone (or apart) from Him. As you grow spiritually, you will experience many cycles of success and failure. This is a simple fact which only needs one support. As humans, we develop the same way. Many successes, many failures. It's called learning and maturing. It is part of the creation that testifies to us and helps us to understand how spiritual growth works.

## **Prayer**

Dear Lord, I need your help in to walk with you the "Right Way". I know you do not demand or force me to relate to you the right way. You request it and you have given me your son, Jesus Christ, as my supply to do these things. Lord help me to set and keep my mind on you and the things of your kingdom. I need help with keeping my attention on you. I am submitting myself to you and placing myself (my life) fully (100%) in your hands and asking you to help me each day to continue to walk with you how you want me to do so. I do not know how to keep doing this each and every day, but I am asking for your help. I know your way is better. I know I need your help each day. I also know I do not understand what it really means to respect (i.e. fear) you properly. I do not want to have bad experiences, but a right way of relating to you is more important to me. Please help me to change my attitude to match what is best for my relationship to you. I give you permission to do what you need to do in me to become a productive christian. Please help me and please remind me to ask for your help in the days ahead.

# Appendix

## Summary of What Jesus Teaches

Looking at the things that Jesus repeatedly and/or consistently says to the disciples and others we can see the following things... I can see myself in each of these things. I see myself adhering to the things Jesus says at various moments in my life and I see myself operating in the things that are opposite of what Jesus Says.

Jesus Says	The Opposite	Verses
<b>Follow Me / Hear and Obey</b>	Deafness	Matthew 10:38-39
	Self-Centeredness	Matthew 11:28-30
	Your Way	
<b>Deny Yourself / Take Up Your Cross</b>	Selfishness	Luke 9:23-24
	Covetousness	Matthew 10:38-39
	Idolatry	1 Peter 3:13-17 Mark 5:35-36
<b>Don't Be Afraid / Don't Be Anxious</b>	Fear (Spirit Of)	Mark 5:35-36
	Anxiety	Luke 12:4-7
	Depression	Luke 12:22-34
		2 Timothy 1:7
		Hebrews 13:6
<b>See and Believe / Have Faith</b>	Blindness	Mark 5:35-36
	Unbelief	Mark 11:22-25
	Hard Heartedness	2 Timothy 1:7
		Hebrews 13:6
		1 Peter 3:13-17
<b>Forgive as you are Forgiven</b>	Bitterness	1 John 4:18
	Begrudgement	Matthew 18:21-35
	Unforgiveness	Mark 11:22-25

## Two Greatest Commandments

The underpinnings of all of these items are expressed in the two greatest commandments.

22:37 And he said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the greatest and first commandment.

22:39 And the second *is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.”

*Matthew 22:37–40 (LEB)*

## The Lord's Prayer

In addition, here is Jesus' recommended approach to addressing God. Do not look at this prayer for its wrote form of words, but go past the wrote form to the spirit of this prayer.

I believe we should perceive both the practical and spiritual aspects of each portion of this prayer.

So, when it says, "Give us this day our daily bread", I believe this is our physical food for each day and our spiritual food in the form of the Word of God being served to us by God from heaven.

Our Father who is in heaven, may your name be treated as holy. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors. Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

*Matthew 6:9-13 (LEB)*