

Young Disciples 1 — The Cross

Dear Young Disciples,

I have been hearing certain things which make me believe that you are caught up in a sort of delusion and you don't know who you really are, as if you did not really know what you are doing in the church, and what is going on. Whether you realize it or not, I would like to spend some time with you to explain some essential things which you may have missed in your training. It may be possible that your teachers and parents have not really explained to you the situation that you are in and what your calling is. First of all, let me say that when you first were convicted in your heart by the Holy Spirit, you realized you were a sinner, lost, without hope of ever changing yourself, and you cried out for Salvation (Yahshua), and were baptized into the Messiah by the Holy Spirit — now you are sealed with Him. You have received the Holy Spirit and have Eternal Life. Your sins have been forgiven (Eph 1:7-23; 2:12).

And since you now are saved and have the witness of this wonderful and glorious life within you, you desire with all your heart to be loyal and faithful to Him who has saved you (Rom 8:16; Jn 15:26-27). If this is not the case, then you are not saved at all and you have no witness of the indwelling Spirit, and are still lost and are still in need of salvation. This means that if you were to die now you would be cast into the Lake of Fire forever and ever (Rev 20:15), because your name is not recorded in the Book of Life. This is why some of you still love the world and do not have a love for Yahshua that you could honestly express from your heart (1 Jn 2:15; Jms 4:4).

There is only one Salvation. I hope we are all experiencing the same one and no unreal, mystical salvation just of the mind.

The only true Salvation there is is the one where the Man, Salvation, gains entrance into you to transform you from within.

The Cross

Has anyone ever shared with you about the cross? The cross must become a living reality within your heart. When Yahshua told about his own death to his disciples, he told them also that they were called to the same death (Lk 12:50; Mk 10:38; Jn 12:24). The grain of wheat must die to bear fruit and that to seek to save life is to lose it, while to surrender it is to gain life.

Paul the Apostle taught the same as Yahshua concerning the cross, the *message of death* (the daily giving up of our will) in which every disciple is to follow his Savior and Master. Gal 2:20 tells us that we also must be crucified with Messiah. In 2 Cor 4, Paul says that he always bore in his body the dying of Messiah. In Rom 6:1-11, the disciple is baptized into Messiah's death — the giving up of our own life. In Phil 2:5-11, we are summoned to the mind of Messiah (the giving up of our former life of sin), which mind is only had in utter self-renunciation (2 Cor 5:15). If we do not have the mind of Messiah, the church as a whole will go off to destruction. The elders and deacons, above all people, must have the mind of Messiah in the church (especially being good listeners; Solomon had a *hearing heart*). In Phil 3:10, Paul told how he yearned to *know* Messiah in the fellowship of his sufferings, conformed to his death. All people who have the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9) have this same yearning and desire. The Holy Spirit causes us to yearn and desire Messiah. This is how one can know for sure that he has received the Holy Spirit, for this is his work in us (receive a love for the truth — 2 Ths 2:10-14).

In Col 2:20, all who have passed out of death and into life love *all* the brothers and sisters with all their hearts (1 Jn 3:15). This is how you know whether you have actually died with Messiah or not. Maybe you are just pretending to love the brethren and really want to leave the church. You know by this that you don't really love the brothers and sisters in the church. You love the world instead. And if you love the world, you know that the love of the Father is not in you yet. 1 John 2:15 — Once you have received the Holy Spirit, you have the love of the Father in you. Jn 14:21-24 — Have they, the Father and the Son, made their home in you? *Don't pretend!*

These scriptures are not just isolated proof texts, but they are the heart of Yahweh's word and the New Testament.

The cross is Yahweh's gift and also His demand. Messiah died for us and in Messiah we are crucified that we may be delivered from the false way of Adam to the true way of Messiah — the way of the cross. 1 Pet 2:21,25 — He is the Healer, the Shepherd, the Overseer of us whom He saves. He personally rescues us, heals and delivers us. He comes and gets us and takes us home by way of the cross.

1 Pet 2:21 holds out no hope that you or any man can through his own power follow that example. Rather, it calls man to man's one part — that of faith. Faith is hearing Yahweh and obeying Him. Faith is trust and faith is receiving. It is openness of heart and life to Him that He might come into us to live and to save.

By faith man receives into his person and life Yahshua, who alone can bring about the death of the old you, of the old man, and in its place create the new you in the new man, in whom the cross becomes a way of life. Paul wrote of being crucified with Messiah. He never boasted that he slew the old man in himself or that he crucified himself. Rather, this crucifixion of the old man in him he attributed to Messiah Yahshua. There is salvation only in the cross, but the cross is encountered only in the person of Yahshua, who in the man of faith is a personal and transforming presence.

We are saved by a Savior, redeemed by a Redeemer — from first to last, Salvation is personal. Messiah saves us, and by His power we can follow Messiah as a disciple. Do we have His power? And why not, if we don't? Messiah saves us in His work of deliverance. He does something for us; but more than that, He does something *in* us (2 Ths 2:13-14; Rom 8:9-18; 1 Cor 1:18).

A disciple is not one who is *whipped* to carry his cross; he is one who accepts it because he knows death leads to life (2 Cor 4:10).