

Requirements

Gader Peretz, David Zerubbabel, Nun, and Sho'er shared from what they are writing for the freepapers for the upcoming Billy Graham Crusade. This was the response...

When these articles come out, the parents can read them to their children during preparation time so they can understand the gospel. One of the things Haggai has seen in Reuben is that the parents haven't been teaching their children the gospel. They don't know the gospel. What if we don't spend time with our children during preparation hour? What if we don't love our wives? Are we going to enter the Kingdom? Of course not. They have to reap what they sow. There's no way of getting out of that. It's absolute. You reap what you sow. It's inevitable.

ha-êmeq — We have to restore the scriptures. Our Master Yahshua grew up in a time when all the people knew the scriptures, but somehow when He read them He thought, "This is so clear, so why aren't the people doing it?" They were not able to have the proper kind of thinking that joins two thoughts together. That's why it's good to have the Proverbs and even the fables that people used to teach their children, and then at the end they'd say, "The moral of the story is this..." When you heard about the tortoise and the hare, for example, it could seem like a really funny story in a certain way, and you might be really happy at the end that the turtle won, but that wouldn't be enough. You'd have to go one step further and make sure they understand the moral of the story. "Don't get proud and think that you're better than someone else, and you're going to make it because you're so fast, because if you do, you're going to lose." That reconnects something in a person's mind to see the consequences of an action.

People tend to read the scriptures the same way. They say, "Yes, I know that. I know all those scriptures..." So then, what? Silence. No connection. You can say, "You will know a tree by its fruit." And they will answer, "Yes, I know the scriptures." Ho, hum. And you say, "Then?"

It's normal for us that we would draw a conclusion. You should be able to tell what's really working in a person by the things he does in his life. It seems normal for us because we're being trained in the same way our Master was trained. We hear all those scriptures and we say, "It's so obvious!" But Christians react, "So, what are you trying to say, then? I know those scriptures, and I'm saved." Finished. Something is missing.

They don't consider, "Oh, yeah. That does mean that I have to overcome. That must mean there's something to be overcome, and there's something I might lose if I don't overcome. But I thought I got everything when I was saved..."

Probably most of them won't even give their attention long enough to actually come to the point of saying, "Ok, what are you trying to say?" They'll stop at the end of "The Tortoise and the Hare" and think, "Yeah, I know that story," and not even consider what it means.

So what's required? Is anything required? "You mean works salvation." Conversation finished. It's a cult. And they'll never take that step. They'll never become wise. But maybe a few will say, "Yeah, I've thought about that. It always bothered me..."

Deborah — I saw in what ha-êmeq shared about the tortoise and the hare that what's missing is the meshing of what's in our mind with the reality of what's in our heart. We've been so damaged by Christianity where "faith" is just a mental assent. We're trying to undo that and get to the heart of the matter. I grew up never knowing what was in my heart. I had no clue. Yet I was searching for something that would fill the hole in my soul.

And we were talking about turning your heart towards someone or something, and how it requires turning your body. I can't touch hearts with someone unless I turn and face him. Then there's a connection. We don't touch hearts with our children without physically turning toward them. Then begins the meshing, the ability to communicate the moral of the story, the depths of what is really in your heart.

I'm just so thankful for the heart of our Father because that's what is happening with us. We're coming to that place where we're physically doing something in response to what we hear. The most important thing we can do when we go on a tour of any kind is that we would come to the place with people where we can say, "What is the moral of the story? What is the point? What do you see that goes deeper than your mind?" We need to be able to re-present our Master in the way that He needs to be represented.

Netzak — What is the moral of the story that we've heard about our Master Yahshua? Why did He die for people? Was it so that you could keep on living the same way you were living before you ever heard about Him, but just be a "believer" now? We can ask people that, with understanding and compassion. We can ask them, "So why did our Master Yahshua do what He did?" We can explain to people that He wanted to do away with sin, that people would no longer be divided from God and divided from

one another, but that they could love each other. He came to undo the works of the evil one. I'm thankful that we can explain that to people. We can love them in that way.

ha-êmeq — The other day I was trying to find something on the Internet, and one of the first things that came up, which had nothing to do with what I was looking for, was a web site for “gay” Christians. They basically reason just the same way any other Christian reasons. “I love God, and I've accepted Jesus, and so what is the problem with all you people?”

How could any other Christian say anything to him at that point, because he's using the same argument they use to justify everything they do. He could never convince that person that he's doing anything wrong because they're both using the same reasoning. You can just change the topic: Christian punk rock, or Christian body piercing, or whatever. It's all the same. It's the epitome of perversity. There's no “connect” after the gospel anyway, so why not do that?

It's hard for me to grasp it. Their religion is not real. It's not re-linking them to God. Since they're disconnected, they can tolerate anything.

Keli — I think the same kind of reasoning can be at work in us to not think about “What if?” When Sho'er read Proverbs 3:32, “... His secret counsel is with the upright,” that is where the “What if?” gets answered. You go beyond just asking the question and you get the answer from our Father. We really have to teach our children the Proverbs. There are many, many places in the Proverbs that should cause that mechanism inside you to work. It actually stimulates that part of human beings to work, so that you have to consider, “What if I don't do this? What is going to be the outcome?”

But the favored religion has so dulled people that they don't ever go there. It's not politically correct to go there, because it exposes a whole bunch of other things that make life very inconvenient.

ha-êmeq — I was so pleased to hear Chets Barur bring Proverbs. We'd be right in the middle of this complicated situation and he'd have a proverb. He'd say it from memory, from when he was twelve years old, and he'd know exactly how to apply it in that situation. It's so much a part of his foundation. It would bring the whole situation to a close, because he brought the wisdom of the Proverbs, and it made everything clear.

Our Master used the Proverbs, too. He would always bring the wisdom of the Proverbs into the situation. A lot of the things our Master

said in the Gospels were actually from the Proverbs. He applied them in the parables and stories He told. He tried to get people to consider what was required of them, to get them across the gap.

Zahav — That series of commandments and requirements that David was reading was so compelling, and the questions afterward, “Well, what if I don’t do this?” It connects with what Gader was sharing about what distinguishes the Holy from other people.

What was so effective about Aesop’s Fables was that he didn’t leave anything to the imagination. He gave you a clear story, and carried it through to the very end, and then after that he even told you what the moral of the story was.

Man has a choice. Animals have to live by instinct, but man has the ability to make a choice, but so often he makes the choice to destroy himself. People try to educate you as to what will happen in the end, like in the science museum where they show you a model of what the human lung looks like after a lifetime of smoking, and what a healthy lung looks like, and it’s supposed to scare you enough to where you won’t want to smoke. But most of the time people don’t want to think that far ahead. They want to smoke, and they want to do it right now, and they don’t think about the consequences.

It’s the same way with our Father’s word. Christians don’t want to think it through to the end. But if we can do it like Aesop did, just put it in a simple form, with a conclusion and a moral... It says in John 15:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me.” So what happens if you don’t keep His commandments? It just gets glossed over. But if you can ask people to carry it out to the end, to what happens when He returns...

Our Father said sodomy is wrong, it’s an abomination, and what judgment will come to them. So what’s going to happen when a Christian sodomite stands in the judgment? Is God going to tell him, “Oh, I’m sorry I said that. I didn’t really mean it. You are saved by grace through faith, and it doesn’t matter if you’re a sodomite. Welcome into heaven.”

If anyone can tell you that to your face, I guess at that point you’re just casting your pearls before swine. But I know that if we can just put it clearly and simply, verse by verse, then anyone who is still sensitive in his conscience will understand that there are consequences. Our Master laid out His commandments, and we have to keep them. We have to think it all the way through to the end.

We know what's going to happen to our children if we don't teach them the Proverbs. In the moment-by-moment situations you can reason about not reading the Proverbs at any given time, but anyone who stops and considers, "What if?" it puts enough fear in them to make time to read the Proverbs to their children, and turn their hearts to them.

I'm not just here because I'm afraid to go to hell, but I'm here because I love our Master, and I know that I have to keep His commandments because there's going to come a day when He returns. It's not as simple as just doing your own thing and being "saved by grace through faith," but I've come to understand that I'm going to have to face Him and give an account. I think if people can be brought to that point by reading an article, then some of them are going to realize that they don't measure up to that litmus test.

Col 1:22-23 — Our Master wants to present us holy, totally sanctified and purified, blameless (we didn't hurt anyone), and above reproach in His sight when we come before Him. We have to be *made* that way. We're not going to automatically become that way when we come before Him, but we have to be made that way now.

That will happen IF you indeed continue in what — the doctrine? Faith, the persuasion to do our Father's will, to do what He wants us to do, to be obedient to Him. That's what faith is for. It's not "faith alone," but it's *obedient* faith. The only reason we *can* be obedient is through faith. "*If you indeed continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, not moved away from the hope of the good news which you heard...*" What if we don't do what verse 23 says? Well, we won't be presented holy, blameless, and above reproach. So that shows a *requirement*.

Pr 3:32 — In the KJV it just says *secret*, not *secret counsel*. In secret a man has counsel with his conscience. It speaks to him in secret. You don't know what someone is thinking, but you can see his actions. There's something going on right now in every man's conscience. It's in secret. No one knows but our Father. But maybe someone with a discerning spirit can tell. Our Master could. You can see someone doing good or evil, but it's a secret until his actions make it evident.

“As a man *thinks*, so he is.” However he thinks, that’s how he will be. You will see it become evident later on how he thinks right now. You may be able to discern to some degree the secret thoughts of a person in his eyes or in his countenance. You see whether he’s paying attention or being distracted. You can observe whether someone loves or not, whether he’s humble or not, whether he has joy or not, whether he has peace or not, whether he has patience or not, whether he has kindness and gentleness and self-control. That’s the witness of the secret inside, when it becomes obvious to all.

What’s going on right now in each one of us is a secret. No one knows but our Father what is going on in your heart. But as a man thinks, so he is. Just like all the people who left the Community — it became evident, because the way they were thinking, so they became. *Become* indicates a transition. It didn’t happen overnight, but gradually over time.

We can be open to all, not keeping secrets. How does someone have the glory of our Master? How do you know? By what they do and how they do it; what they say and how they say it. That’s how you know.

We’re supposed to outdo one another in love and good deeds, aren’t we? We’re in a competition. “I want to love more than you! I want to love you more than you love me!” There’s no law against love. We can outdo one another. What if we don’t strive to outdo one another? It’s one of the commands, isn’t it? What if we don’t obey His commands?

Zahav — It’s like Solomon said at the end of Ecclesiastes. He’d explored everything else there was to do, and he said, “The conclusion after everything else is this: fear God and keep His commandments. It applies to every person, because God will bring every act to judgment, whether it’s good or whether it’s evil.”

That’s right. Well, we’re going to use what you said as an article in our paper.

Pi-Shenayim ben Obadiah — If there are no requirements to the gospel, then you’re always going to look after the least that you can do, because you don’t want to do anything more. It could be the same with us. If I’m

not making sure I'm fulfilling the requirements, then I'm always going to justify myself by what someone else did, and think it's still good enough. It brings the temperature of the Body down. Then you do something worse and someone looks to you as his example, and pretty soon there are no requirements left.

That was really wonderful. It showed your secret thoughts. They became evident when you spoke.

Natan — I was thinking about Mt 24:14 where it says the end will come once there is a witness of the gospel, the good news — a demonstration. I'm thankful that's what we can give our lives to, that there would actually be something real that people could see. Because everything I've been hearing about Christianity, there's a lot of fantasy going on. "All I know is I'm going to heaven." It's a lot of people convincing themselves with this fantasy they're in that there's going to be something good after they've lived their life. The whole world is really fantasy — "We're going to heaven, and Santa Claus is going to leave presents, the Easter Bunny is going to leave eggs..." Everything is fantasy.

But it says the end will come only when there's a *real* demonstration of the Gospel. It's not an easy thing to be that witness. That's why it hasn't been done yet. It's going to take the faith Yônêq was talking about in Colossians. You can feel faith sometimes. It's like a powerful force that unites with our will that enables us to go through anything. There could be a great hardship in front of us, whatever it may be — like being sent to a place where the house is falling in, or a household where there are a lot of difficult dynamics. But when there's faith there, it unites with our will and we can go through it.

What came to me is that the faith we have wouldn't leave us, because once it leaves us, we're finished. That's what that "Amazing Grace" article is saying, about faith being persuasion. If we don't have faith and grace, we'll leave; we won't be a part of what our Father is doing. It's like the gas in the engine. You can have everything, but if you don't put gas in your tank, you're not going anywhere. That's the same with faith and grace. We have to receive faith and grace to actually go somewhere.

In Rev 18:2 it says she *became*... *Became* indicates transition. It happened over a period of time. We don't pray over a period of time, and what happens? If we forsake Him, He'll forsake us. He'll leave the center of our heart and be knocking for entrance.

We won't have fellowship with Him. He's with all those who are with Him. If we're with Him, He'll be with us. You say, "How come you're not with me?" Because of your attitude. That's what the Israelites said, "How come God is not with us out here in the wilderness?" Because you're not with Him. That's what the prophet said to Asa in 2 Chr 15:2. Our Father is with all those who are with Him. Isn't that wonderful?

Our Master knows who is with Him and who isn't (Mt 12:30). "You're either with Me or against Me." You're either building or tearing down, gathering or scattering. There's no neutral ground.

Baruch — If you think of building a house, you might have one who's building and another who's actually tearing things down and throwing them in the dumpster. But then you might have another one who's just leaning against the side of the house drinking maté. So you can think, "Well, he's not destroying. He's just idle." It may look like he's not destroying, but the reality is that we're engaged in a race, and in a race if you're not pushing forward at all moments, you really are destroying.

So if you only think, "Well, the house has got to get built sometime, but there's no hurry," then sitting down doesn't seem so destructive. But our goal isn't just "sometime" — it requires constant, active pressing forward, therefore there is no neutral ground.

Yadel — What we heard reminded me of the skit we had about personal conviction and proper ethics. Applying it to my own life, growing up in the Community — it's easy to grow up here and just be like a Christian. "Oh, I grew up here and this is what we do. I have no conviction whatsoever about why we do this, but this is what we do. It's our tradition..."

So when we were talking about the gospel and putting the Proverbs into our children, I was thinking how there's no way that I'm going to be able to put the gospel into my children if it's not formed in me. I really want my children to go beyond me. I want the Male Child to come about. But it's not going to if I don't even have conviction that I can put into my children. Then they're not going to have anything to put into their children.

In the skit at different times, they would stop and listen to their conscience, like it said in that proverb Sho'er read. Their conscience was sharp enough that they could stop and listen to it and then make a choice, right then and there. So many times it seems my conscience isn't sharp enough that I would even stop and listen when I'm supposed to make a

choice. I want to increase and be sharpened in that way. I want my children to surpass me, and I want the gospel to be formed in me and in them.

If each of us individually has personal conviction, then when the apostates try to come in, we're going to be able to discern what's right, and what's really from our Father. But if we're just living here because we grew up in the Community, then there's no way we're going to be able to stand, but we'll be docile when the evil one comes in.

Zakariah — I see the value and importance of contemplation — the time that it takes to ask the “What if?” The time that it takes to have that inner counsel to find what our Father's secret is. If I don't do that, drifting is inevitable.

The requirement is to love our Father, to love our Master. If someone stands at the judgment to give an account for his Christian life or his life of drifting in the Community, and there was no love, what can he expect? The insurance mentality has taken over in the world — “The insurance will take care of it.” But there's no love there. Lots of people sue their insurance companies, because they don't give them what they think should be coming to them. There's no humanity, no personal connection.

If the Christian's relationship to God, or our relationship to our Father, is just that everything's going to be fine in the end, that's the insurance mentality, that He owes us something, and if He doesn't give it, then we're going to accuse Him or defy Him. We're just demanding something of Him without any interest in what His will is. What does He want? Well, it doesn't matter what He wants. I've even heard some preachers say that they knew it was God's will that this certain thing should be done, but they said, “I don't care. I need this!” And they got what they asked for, even, but they didn't get the grace that was from Him. They got the “grace” that came from somewhere else.

If what's in my heart is not seeking His will, I may get what's in my heart, but I may get it from somewhere else, and that would be a terrible thing. So I really want to have my heart set right and listen to people who see and discern, and take the time it takes to consider what is going on. If I'm too busy to take stock of what's happening, that's the time that I'm going the wrong direction. Drifting is an unconscious process.

Hannan ben Keli — I've been studying about Augustine because of an assignment I was given to do an interview with him. What Augustine describes is like telling God the way He should be. Instead of trying to meet up to God's standards, he creates his own standards, which is just like the

church slipping and slipping. I asked Augustine how he could think that it's God's will to kill men. So he says, "God is with me. I was saved and now God is using me." He claims to be God on earth, pretty much. So there's no more standard. It's not outdoing one another in love and good deeds.

The more you compete, the more the standard goes up. If you're not competing, you just keep settling for your natural ways, which is sin. Then you start considering that it's God working through you, that He's with you. Instead of you being with Him where He is, He's with you where you are. We really need to compete in love and good deeds, becoming like Him instead of Him becoming like us. I want to be that way.

Yahannah bat Ehud — I was thinking about the turtle and the rabbit, in the context of what Yadel was saying. It's really easy for anyone to be a rabbit, but it's hard to be a turtle. Growing up in the Community, you can think just as Christians think, that they're saved and going to heaven no matter what they do.

As the saying goes, "Slow and steady wins the race." It's not the spurts of zeal, but it's the tenacity and courage and diligence to overcome every single day. I know that I'm such a rabbit. I think that I can make up for my lack of tenacity with spurts of zeal. But it takes what Jude wrote, "contending for the faith." I need to be totally desperate to get our Father's grace and not be proud like the rabbit and just take off for a day or something. I want to have conviction. It's not that we want to be slow like the turtle, but be like a rabbit with conviction, undaunted.

I know I can't do it in my own strength. I'm actually pretty strong and that's what makes me proud, and I don't want to be proud. But I know that what gets us there isn't our own will, but it's our will being surrendered to our Father's will. I don't want us to be just Christians. I don't want the first generation to bring the temperature of the Body down. I want us to get it, and carry it on, and run with it.

Ishah Ruth — I heard tonight that there are requirements. It really spoke to me. Christians think there are no requirements, but that He just died for them and so they can do whatever they want to do. There was no requirement for the rabbit anymore, because he already thought in his head that he was faster, that winning the race was a foregone conclusion. But it's foolish to think when we go into a race that there are no requirements in order to win the race. The reward we're going to receive from Him will be according to how we obey the requirements of discipleship. I want to be a wise virgin and realize that our Master Yahshua

requires something from us, that we would love Him with all of our heart, and all of our soul, and all of our strength.

Yael shel Natan — I was thinking about “What if?” People have to take the time to consider, “If I don’t do this, what is going to happen?” That seems to be a characteristic of one who will have eternal life in the next age, whether it’s those in the nations who consider that there is a God, so, “If I don’t listen to my conscience, then where am I going to go?” or whether it’s us, and we consider, “If I don’t obey His commandments, I’m not going to be with Him in His kingdom.” We’re going to go to discipline. There has to be something in our foundation that we would consider everything, and think about things, and ponder, and get our Father’s counsel. We have to be people who seek our Father, who seek His counsel and His wisdom. That’s how we’re going to be those who endure until the end. I’m thankful our Father is making it clear to us so that we can make it clear to those Christians. There are a lot of people who really want to know, but only if it’s clear in us will we be able to call those people out and have what they need.

Yohannah bat Obadiah — I was thankful to hear about requirements, too. I want to be sharp to stay on the right way, making good choices so I wouldn’t go off.

Amen!