

"If" is said to be the biggest word in the English language. So small, yet so big in potential. Yeshua said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15, the theme verse for Asia Pacific Messianic Fellowship.

Which reminds me of the songs we sang in church long ago about loving Jesus, the primary one being, "Oh, How I Love Jesus." The chorus repeats "Oh, How I love Jesus" three times, and ends with "Because He first loved me!" You can probably sing it in your memory, as I can. Wonderful truth from 1 John 4:19. The four verses add some more wonderful truths of what Jesus does for His own.

Everyone appreciates an expression of love, and I am sure that God does also. But words go only so far. Deeds are necessary to back up the words. The Missouri State slogan, "Show me!" agrees well with Scripture. Yeshua goes further in John 14:21, "He that has My commandments and is keeping them, it is that one who loves Me; and the one that loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I shall love him and will reveal Myself to him." Genuine love is reciprocal, with God and with our fellow man. Yeshua's response is overwhelming in that He will reveal Himself to those who show their love for Him by learning, guarding, and obeying His commandments.

What commandments would Yeshua be referring to? He said the first and greatest was to love God with all one's heart, mind, soul, and strength! Ponder the dimensions of that one! The second is to love one's neighbor as himself. He gave the parable of the Good Samaritan to clarify who one's neighbor might be. When asked more specifically, Yeshua referred to the 10 Commandments.

Yeshua also upgraded or expanded into new quality some of these commandments, like John 13:34-35. The first part was standard, "I am giving a new commandment to you, that you should love one another." Nothing really new in that, but then the new quality comes in, "according as I loved you, you should also love one another." The Good Samaritan spent time and money to show his love, his commitment (agapao) to the commandment, while Yeshua will give His life for His agapao!

Since it was not a sure thing that the Disciples would really keep His commandments (or for you and me, either), the text begins John

14:15 with the Greek εαν (ean),¹ a conditional particle, **if**, with the subjunctive mood, which means "a probable future condition" but not assured. A better translation with the verb is, "If you might be loving me." Don't just be talking about it, but show it, if you really mean it! The other

"If You Love Me..."

By Roger Walkwitz

Greek word for "if" is εἰ (ei), also a conditional particle but with the indicative mood, which means reality and can also be translated "since." This is not the "if" that Yeshua uses, because He seems to be putting a questioning challenge to them that words alone will not do. He is not sure about their commitment to Him.

We as Messianics say we are committed to the two Great Commandments as well as all 10 of the 10 Commandments, and the details that add to them in the Torah and the Gospels. We say we are focused on Yeshua and want to follow the same Torah lifestyle that He did. As with His Disciples, He is looking for evidence, the evidence that He asks for, not any evidence that we might put forward.

All of the above is before the crucifixion and resurrection. After the resurrection and the 40 days of further teaching and interaction, Yeshua does not use any "ifs" in His Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, but flat-out commands them to "make disciples" wherever they might go in the days and years ahead. It seems that a leap of maturity has occurred, that Yeshua is now confident of their agapao-commitment, of their keeping of His commandments, since making disciples included teaching their disciples everything that He had taught them...quite a curriculum! Are we prepared, or are we preparing, to do the same?

"If you might be loving Me, keep, guard, put into action My command to make disciples." Multiplication by discipling in the past is the only way that Truth has come down to us. Let us not fail to "keep the ball rolling" for the present and next generations, to know the Foundational Truth that we have learned since getting back to all 66 Books of the Bible. Discipling a new Believer on Torah Truth in the first place will save him a lot of unlearning that most of us have had to do. In addition, let's train up our children in The Way they should go and hopefully they will not depart from it. t

¹ Yeshua, of course, spoke to His talmidim (disciples) in Hebrew and/or Aramaic.