

April 23, 1991

No Self-Consciousness

What would it be like to have no self-consciousness? One of our children shared with someone that when the lights went out at a celebration they sang with all their heart because no one could see them. Are you a member of Messiah? If you are, what makes you one? 1 Corinthians 6:15-17. His Spirit makes you a member. Romans 8:9. If you don't have the Spirit you do not belong to Him.

Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit. It is the characteristic of a member of Messiah. Each member is in control of itself. The reason is that it is a member vitally connected to the head — abiding, experiencing the same impulse. Each member is receiving from the same source of life; it is communion. You can observe that a good shepherd is one who can sense if a sheep is vitally connected to the head. They see vital signs. You can observe the action and behavior of a person to detect if he is in communion with Messiah. His speech, his actions are in control because he is a member vitally connected to the head. The characteristic of a member of Messiah is self-control.

All actions are in control, every member is doing His will. The secret of doing His will is your will. Your will is either doing His will or not doing His will. Each member of Messiah is doing His will as each member of the members of Messiah is doing the will of the members of Messiah. Each finger is in the control of the head; there is cooperation among the members. This is self-control. (I'm a member; my finger is a member of me.)

Each member of Messiah who is vitally connected to Messiah has power over his own actions. (Such as in things like eating moderately slow and eating a moderate amount.) We want to stay in the boundaries where His love can reach us. Our Master worked in those boundaries; that's why He wasn't religious. Once you get over the boundaries, you can feel it. A roll around the belly is due to a lack of self control. Maybe it doesn't show on you but be sure of this, your sins will find you out. A man of good sense over his passions doesn't step over His boundaries. If you hurt yourself, you are going to find yourself hurting others.

Galatians 5:22-26. Self-control is observed easily in many ways. Even if one does not practice self-control in secret it will be known in the open one day. It will be known by the result or by facial and eye expressions. A good shepherd can tell when one is connected. Some people are good actors. Self-control is mentioned last among the fruits of the Spirit. You can tell if a person is exercising self-control by how much love they have. Do they have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity? That is how you can tell they have self-control. Faithfulness is to be full of faith and loyalty.

Bearing Fruit

If a person is without self-control all the other fruits are waning. Self-control is deliberately mentioned last for without it all the rest will be lacking. The fruit of the Spirit is obvious, like the fruit on a tree is. Fruits are obvious results of a branch being connected to the vine. If a person is not producing much fruit, he may not be a disciple at all. We have to die to self-centeredness, selfishness, self-glory and self-consciousness. A person who produces little fruit is not vitally connected to the vine (John 15:8).

We can do nothing without being vitally connected to Him. A disciple has self-control. We should be producing much fruit if the very Spirit of Messiah dwells in our heart. (Do you know people who obviously are not producing much fruit? What is the fruit we are to look for? *Love, fellowship* were some answers.) He brings the vine in our heart. If there is a fig tree in our heart, then figs come out of our mouth. Bearing fruit shows we know Him and are in communion with Him.

We should bear much fruit. If we bear a little fruit while being vitally connected to the vine it speaks little of the vine. It doesn't prove that you are a disciple of the vine. The true disciple's life is hidden in Messiah and has no self-consciousness. Self-consciousness keeps us from bearing much fruit. Our Master had to die to self-consciousness. We have to also. If we

don't die to self, we'll die. Self is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness holds us back like the sin of intimidation.

Being vitally connected to the vine the disciple produces the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is being conscious of the Spirit without being self-conscious. Just imagine no self-consciousness. Should we have to imagine it or should it be a reality? Without self-consciousness but with self-control and the other fruits you begin to love like Messiah loved without the hindrance of the flesh. Only when you have self-control will the other fruits, love, joy, peace, patience be obvious. Only then will you love like Messiah loved.

Messiah had to die to His own self-consciousness which is self-centeredness. He had to do this to pick up the cross and die to everything.

John 13:34,35. Is this impossible? Was He wrong to put it in there? Or does it come down to obedience and we will live if we do it? We have to do it — love as He loved — so that the world can see His love and know we are His disciples. This means death. Death is how we got into Messiah at baptism. Death is how we continue in Him, dying to self-consciousness and self-centeredness. The fruit will be obvious for all to see. The world will know we are His disciples because of our love. The fruit of his is unity.

Self-control flows from your relationship with Messiah. It flows like sap to the branch. Self-consciousness flows from your relationship with yourself, your flesh, death. Romans 8:6,12,13. Put your mind on yourself and you have self-consciousness. Put your mind on the Spirit and not on yourself. If your mind is on yourself you don't want to do anything, you're afraid. Self-consciousness proves you are in the flesh and headed for death. A shepherd sees this and goes to encourage and help them when he sees the obvious signs. He re-routes them.

You can't obey His word if you are self-conscious. You can only be ashamed of Him and His words, since the cross is not having its work in your life. Galatians 5:24 — *We have crucified the flesh with its passions and susceptibilities to sin and greed.* We're not susceptible any longer because we have a defense. The cross is not doing its work in you if you are susceptible.

Self-control flows from your communion with Messiah as His flowed from the Father and Spirit. Our self-control flows from the Spirit dwelling in us.

Ecclesiastes 9:18; Proverbs 16:32. Self-control over your own self is better than control over others. A man can be neither leader, husband, or father without control over his own life. Can you imagine a leader without self-control? Power over anyone else is meaningless unless he has control over his own appetites and passions. Proverbs 25:28.

Self-control is fruit of the Spirit. Without the Spirit you won't have the fruit. Matthew 7:19,20. Fruit is obvious. You can tell a tree by its fruit.

1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8. There is no spiritual leadership without this quality flowing out of his life. If he tries to control a city, his flesh will tear it down. He will be vulnerable to every suggestion of those who are also in the flesh. He would be defenseless and disgraced. We should say, "If I don't die daily, I will die, because death is always working" (Luke 9:23).

Weightiness

Proverbs 16:32. Although a person who practices patience and self-control receives far less attention and glory and acclaim than a warrior who takes a city, it accomplishes something far greater. If we practice self-control when no one else is around, we weigh heavily on our Master's scale. Our Master wants precious vessels, not earthen vessels. It is not how we are used, but who we are. Self-control makes us weigh far more in our Master's eyes so we can be used for far more valuable things.

Proverbs 25:28. Unless we ourselves weigh heavy, our works and words are cheap even if we take a city. The walls will soon be broken down and we will be defenseless and disgraced.

Matthew 22:12. The man without a wedding garment was disgraced. What he did in the dark revealed and betrayed his character before the angels. Out of the abundance of the inner man the mouth speaks — your speech betrays you. Sometimes it is embarrassing.

Embarrass: to make uncomfortably self-conscious; cause confusion and shame to; disconcert; abash.

Does what we say arouse an *Amen* from the spiritual brothers and sisters? If not, it is like praying without desire. (Unless it is His will we can't pray anyway.)

2 Timothy 2:19-21. The Lord knows those who are His. This is like Genesis 18:19. He knew Abraham. He knows His seed, they bear the sign of circumcision like Abraham. If the sign is to have any value it must be that those who bear it have the faith of Abraham. Yahweh knew Abraham as Yahshua knows His own today.

Let everyone who calls on His Name turn away from all evil. Lack of self-control goes into many areas. In a large house you will observe different vessels, some for special use and some not so special. But it is only how one cleanses himself from these things which cause a person to be special or not so special for His use. Things like little faith, the obvious use of your words.

2 Timothy 2:14-18. Verse 16 — worldly un-set-apart talk. Verse 15 — being able to rightly explain the word of truth. Verses 16 and 17 — avoiding profane chatter which spreads like gangrene — which severs a member of Messiah. Verse 20 — A man would ordinarily look at the *use* of utensils or vessels. But God looks at the worth or value of the vessel.

1 Corinthians 3:15. Each man's quality will be revealed. Wooden vessels and clay pots are used more but gold and silver are of more value. God looks for value, not use. He is looking for preciousness and costliness. Much talking and work is cheap unless you yourself weigh heavily. The work of an elder, deacon, or prophet may be cheap; it all depends on the value of the vessel. If you don't weigh heavily, your word will be cheap — lightly esteemed.

Gold or silver represents something divine. Wood and clay represents what is from man. Gold represents the nature of God; silver is what brings us back to God — the work of our Master. We must be in communion, judging ourselves rightly. Unless we have true self-control

the rest of the fruits won't be of the Spirit. They will be fleshly endeavors, trying to look and sound good. We have to judge our motives.

If we will only pray for what we desire with all of our heart, we will avoid a lot of pseudo-prayers. Don't pray or ask anything of the Father apart from the reality of the name of our Master.

1 Peter 4:10,11. We should be careful what we say all the time. We are to speak the very utterance of God. We are to serve with the strength God supplies. It would be better if we are working in the flesh (our own strength) to stop and quit the nonsense. If we told everyone this we would find out whether we had a spiritual community or not. We should only work by His strength. The nations serve in their own strength, but we're not in the nations.

1 Peter 4:17-19. When this judgment happened the first Edah was destroyed. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. Had they built on the foundation? They weren't building with gold or silver but with hay, wood and stubble.

We look more at what a person does than who he is. What if a person has official authority in the body, but not spiritual. You will obey them but you must pray for them. There is no river of life flowing out of them. We then become like Laodecia, in a place where we are neither hot nor cold. They were charged to get some gold. Sardis had a reputation for being alive but they were dead.

The one who has a river of life flowing out of him is under the anointing. He is supplying the spiritual needs of the sheep. Therefore they submit to him out of gratitude. It is wonderful to submit out of gratitude. It makes life better. But still we are to be obedient. We are thankful because they are supplying grace from their river of life. We submit to all in positions of authority to build character.

Crown of Thorns

James 1:12. What did our Master have to wear before He wore the crown of glory? He had to wear the crown of thorns. We wear the crown of thorns today so we can wear the crown

of glory later. Are we willing to accept it today? Our Master didn't reject His thorny crown then. Will we wear ours now? The thorny crown now is picking up your cross now. Without death there is no resurrection. Without death there is no resurrection. Without suffering, there is no glory. If we seek with all our hearts for the crown of glory in the future we won't get it if we don't wear the crown of thorns now.

What does death do that we must die daily? Death severs our relationship with self. We see how we would like to be. Who's the one you'd most like to be like? Our Master. Our Master severed His relationship with himself. We need to grow dead to selfishness, dead to self-consciousness.

Our will is designed for a specific purpose in us. We have to learn what the will is for. We have to die to ourself so we can be conformed to His image. We have to surrender our will to Him. When He knows we've surrendered our will to Him He is like a father when his son has surrendered himself to his father. They (the parents) help him, give him grace, etc. We have to go the path of self-denial, denying personal gain and glory. We have to totally submit to the circumstances He's ordained for us, for our growth.

Ephesians 2:10. We have to spend our lives doing the works ordained for us in advance.

(For comments on this teaching, see the end of the *Tongue* teaching.)