

The Yeshua Creed

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Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family, so welcome home.

Alright, Shabbat Shalom everybody. As we enter into 2020, I felt it might be a good time to review the Yeshua Creed, a term coined by author and Christian scholar Scott McKnight in his book, *The Jesus Creed*. The creed that ultimately summed up the heart of everything Yeshua wanted to pour into the world. The creed that his followers would live and die by. The creed that would go on to fuel so many decisions and sacrifices and moments that changed history moving forward. And that creed is found in Mark chapter 12, verse 28.

The Greatest Commandment

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all of the commandments, which is the most important?" The most important one, Yeshua answered, is this: "Hear, O Israel. The Lord your God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord with all your heart, your soul, your mind, and your strength." And before the man can even respond—before he can even say, "Oh yeah, I know this one"—the second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There's no commands greater than this. That's it.

This was the creed that, as Yeshua followers, we are to meditate on daily and act out daily.

The scriptures have a commandment, you're familiar with it—for the Israelites to wear some strings at the four corners of their garments. You guys are familiar, right? From Numbers—when they left Egypt. It's interesting because the style of clothing they had really wasn't like it is today. It was essentially...

Actually, I have a little history nerd-out moment. Do I still have it? Here we go.

So this is a painting, a funerary painting from an Egyptian book called the Book of Gates. Really creepy book, but regardless... To the Egyptians, these were the four known cultures of the world. And if you look at the second one from the right, you'll see a man with a kind of towel wrapped around his waist, sporting the shirtless look, and he has these tassels hanging from the four corners. Everybody see it? And instantly we're like, "Oh, we know that's an Israelite. That's an Israelite because God commanded the Israelites to wear tassels at the four." No, this is just a general Mesopotamian citizen.

Wearing strings and tassels at the four corners of your garment was something that was done throughout pretty much all the nations back then, before Israel came out of Egypt. It represented an elite status—something a little bit higher than the rest. It represented that you were something special if you had these nice tassels hanging from you.

And so, of course, what does God say to all of the Israelites who were slaves when they came out of Egypt? No more. No more. Every one of you will have the tassels with the blue expensive thread in it. All of you will be equals and you will be lifted up just a little bit. No longer slaves, but you are citizens of the grandest kingdom of all, which is mine.

And what was the function of these tassels, at least in the Bible? So that you would look at them and remember the commandments of God.

Living the Creed Daily

And so, essentially, what Yeshua is saying here with this tassel... And I know that we talk about this a lot, and we're like, "Well, yeah, we know this, Matt. We've been over this. The whole Torah hangs on these two things." But do we really live it out?

The way that we speak to our wife or our husband—is our decision to respond to them in a certain way one that honors God or shows love to them? Is the way that we treat our children a decision that, as Yeshua followers, fits in those two categories? The way we treat the stranger we bump into in the store, the way we treat the stranger who waited until the last minute to merge in front of us on the interstate—do we actually live out the words of Yeshua, or do we

just memorize them, know the commentary, find them, and know how to talk about them when it comes to the Torah?

Or do we actually live out the creed of Yeshua?

The decisions I make when I have the opportunity to sin, to steal, to destroy—it is in those moments that we are meant to be reminded of the Yeshua Creed. This is the portal through which the kingdom of God is revealed in the world around us. And it carries so much more weight than most of us probably give it, myself included.

So we're entering a new year, leaving 2019 behind. Have you lived this past year demonstrating your love for God and for your neighbors?

The Shema in Jewish Tradition

See, we're familiar with what Yeshua says here. He's quoting a part of the Torah called the Shema. Many of us are familiar. It mainly consists of verses starting in [Deuteronomy 6](#), 4, but a couple of others are tacked on to it.

This section of scripture was very much considered to be the creed of Judaism in the first century. It still is today. It's something that children are taught first and foremost. It's recited every single morning and every single night. And it's considered a blessing if these are the last words that come from your mouth before you pass away.

And here in the gospel accounts, Yeshua acknowledges its importance. The Shema—the Hebrew word meaning "to hear"—emphasizes how the verse begins: "Hear, O Israel." It expresses what is the most important for spiritual formation: that Yahweh alone is Israel's God, and Israel is chosen by God, and Israel is to love God with their heart, their soul, and strength.

The Shema outlines a Torah lifestyle of spiritual formation. In this section of Scripture, we have commands to memorize, recite, instruct, and write out the Torah. Wear the tzitziot so you don't forget the Torah. Remind yourself of the Torah. And there's promise in the Torah attached to living life according to the Shema. Anyone who lives by them—the Israelites who live by the words of the Shema—will be blessed beyond imagination; that is the promise of Scripture.

So one could say that the creed of Judaism is this: You love God by living out the Torah.

Yeshua's Transformation

So where does Yeshua stand in a world of Judaism that affirms the Shema—loving God by living out the Torah? Where does he really come into play? Is he talking about something new?

As a good Jewish man, Yeshua would have recited the Shema devotionally each day. Later in his life, he encounters an expert of the law who asks him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" For a Judean, this man's question is the ultimate question about spiritual formation. What can I focus most on? He's asking for the spiritual center of his religion. And he thinks Yeshua might know. Yeshua does know.

Yeshua gives the man an answer by reciting the Shema. But he doesn't let it stand alone. He adds to it. He says, "But wait, there's more. There's something else that's also really important." And in doing so, he transforms a creed to shape a new spiritual center for his followers.

In his creed, he takes the Shema and he adds something to it. What was it? To love your neighbor as yourself, right? It's [Leviticus 18](#), 19. He's taking another commandment from the Torah: "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord."

Yeshua takes the Shema and he amends it with love, expanding our devotion to God as devotion to the world around us—to the people around us. This is more than a command when Yeshua speaks it. It's a confession of who we are and who our king is.

Luke's Version of the Story

In Luke's version of these events at the end of Luke chapter 10, it's recorded a little bit differently, but it hits where it hurts. This scribe, or teacher of the law, comes and asks Yeshua what he must do to gain eternal life. And unlike Mark's recording of the event, Yeshua responds with, "Well, you tell me. You tell me what's written in the Torah."

So this teacher of the law says, "Well, to love the Lord God with all your heart, your soul, your strength, and your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."

So in Luke's recollection of this event, this scribe or teacher of the law already knows about the Yeshua creed. He knows about this and he tells Yeshua. Yeshua then gives him a little attaboy. He says, "Ah, good job. You've answered correctly. You'll be all right if you do these things."

But then Luke writes that this man wanted to justify himself. This is a very interesting verse there. He wanted to justify who he wanted to be and what code of ethics he followed.

Who Is My Neighbor?

So he asks Yeshua another question. Who is my neighbor? Who is my neighbor? And this is how Yeshua responds. In reply, Jesus said, A priest happened to come down the same road when he saw the man and he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place, saw the man pass by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was. And when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. Yeshua turns to the man and he says, So, Everybody's heard this story before, right? We're very, very familiar.

The Ancient Hatred

The backstory, though, is quite interesting. So the backstory of this story is Samaritans hated Judeans, and Judeans hated Samaritans. They didn't like each other very much at all. You might as well have viewed them like they viewed each other as terrorists towards their own culture. It was that bad. The Judeans, or the Jews for short, kept the Torah very, very strict their own way. But the Samaritans were considered like these half-breed people mixed between Jews and other nations, if you will, all the way back to kings. They had a Torah, but it was different than the ones that the Jews kept. It was different. They said that the sacred mountain was up in northern Israel, Mount Gerizim, not Mount Moriah where the temple was. They didn't worship there. That's not correct.

Not only did they attack one another, fighting and killing. Check out what Josephus writes. So Josephus, a first-century historian, recorded what happened one Passover in a conflict between the Samaritans and the Judeans. Here we go. Now, about 9 CE, when Judea was administered by Coponius, who was sent out by Quirinius, the Roman governor of Syria, these things occurred. During the celebration of Feast of Unleavened Bread, which we call Passover, in a custom of the priest, the gates of the temple in Jerusalem were left open after midnight. Okay? So they went into the temple area and they scattered human remains. A toe over here, toss a femur over there, throw a rib over there, tossing them out like candy in the temple. Desecrating the temple during the highest holy season of the year. This was like radical Islam of the first century. These guys were not friends. They were enemies. Very much so.

The Irony of the Story

But here in the story Yeshua tells, the teachers of the Torah—the priests and the Levites—refused to help a man left for dead. Not very Torah-like, huh? But who helps? The one person you didn't want to help in the story. The one person you don't want to love. The one person you don't want to see grace from. Like the Ninevites in the story of Jonah. Like the Amalekites in the story of Israel. Like the sons of Haman in the story of Esther. Here in Yeshua's story, the Samaritans stop, sacrifice their time, their energy, and their money for their enemy.

And then Yeshua turns to the expert of the law and he says, So, which one was your neighbor in the story? And the guy couldn't even say it. Did you notice that? He can't even say it. He's like the one that had mercy. Yeshua then responds. Here's the kicker. Many messages I do are really just conversations to myself, so bear with me. Yeshua then responds, go and do likewise. What? Go and do what likewise? Go and be the good Samaritan. Go and be the one that shows radical, unexpected love.

Who Is Really Your Neighbor?

See, what this student of the law was asking when he said, who is my neighbor? What he was really asking is, listen, who's in and who's out? He wanted to justify himself. What do you mean justify? He wanted to justify the way he was currently living. Who's in? Who's out? Who's clean? Who's unclean? He's asking what classification system to use. Who is to be loved and who is not to be loved?

And so here is the audacity of the Yeshua story. Yeshua's creed, the quote that he has, comes from [Leviticus 19:18](#). Love your neighbor as yourself. And we're like, yeah, love your neighbor as yourself. But did you see what happened right before it? Do you see what the verse says? Here's what the Torah says. Here's what the verse that Yeshua is quoting actually says.

Do not seek revenge and bear a grudge against one of the strangers outside of your nation. Do not seek revenge and bear a grudge against those people who you're not related to or have no relation to. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your own people. Love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Guys, the text, from a very blunt, face value look, tells us exactly who our neighbor is. It's one of your people. A fellow Israelite is the initial context. I wonder. I wonder if this is what the teacher of the Torah wanted to justify. Yeah.

Beyond the Boundaries

Here the text of the Torah states that your neighbor is a fellow Israelite, but the creed of Yeshua goes beyond the letter of the Torah. Don't use the Torah to justify hatred towards another person. Don't use the Torah as a way to build walls around the kingdom of God.

Yeshua says no, the Torah was meant to go beyond the walls of Zion. That's what the prophets say. It will break forth into the world, surround it, and engulf it. The mission that was given to mankind was to be fruitful and multiply images of God and images of God's reign and images of God's kingdom all over the earth. That's the same thing that happened in the Great Commission. Go out and multiply. It's carrying on the same mission that's given in [Genesis 1](#).

And here Yeshua is reading [Leviticus 19:18](#). Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against another one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. Here Yeshua is redefining this as the Samaritan. The outsider. The one that you hate. The enemy. The unclean one. The traitor. The sinner. They are one of your people. Love them like the Samaritan loved in the story.

Gosh, it's so hard. That's so not what I want to do in my daily religious life. What I really want is to wake up, say to myself, "Yeah, I'm praying today," and focus all my energy on who God is to me and who I am to God. And I don't really want to look at anyone else in the world. I want to focus on my devotion to loving God. And that's not the complete plan from what Yeshua says his followers are to do.

If you're looking only this way and not looking around you, you're not fulfilling the Yeshua creed. We want to feel superior to others. It's who we are when we seek identity. We like to be better than someone else. We want to make ourselves seem just a little bit more holy, higher in a class system that we create. It makes us feel proud when we can redefine our own identity above others. And we do it many times without even realizing it.

What happens when we take the Yeshua approach? When we lower ourselves and lift others up? Lifting up those the world says don't belong above us.

Two Philosophies

About 200 years before Yeshua, there was another Jesus—Jesus Ben Sirach, or Yeshua Ben Sirach, as he was known. He wrote a book that is in the Apocrypha of Wisdom. It's a wisdom writing. And here's what he says. I think I have it here. Yeah, so here's a quote. And this was something that was well known in Judaism during the first century. Let's see what this Jesus says. Jesus Ben Sirach or Yeshua Ben Sirach.

If you do good, know to whom you do it. Give to the devout, but do not help a sinner. Do good to the humble, but do not give to the ungodly. Hold back their bread and do not give it to them. For by means of it, they might subdue you. What that means is if you give to someone, they might keep coming back and you don't want that. Then you will receive twice as much evil for all the good you have done to them. It's just not worth it to help out ungodly sinning people. For the Most High also hates sinners and will inflict punishment on the ungodly. Give to the one who is good, but do not help a sinner.

Here you have Yeshua the Christ, Yeshua the King, Yeshua the Messiah versus Yeshua ben Sirach. Two philosophies. Man, this is so much easier to take this one over here.

Here Yeshua is making clear his view and the scope of what he deems as Torah lived out. He's pitting two views of Torah against each other. Are you keeping a love for the Torah, or are you keeping a Torah of love? That's essentially what Yeshua is putting out there. Jesus isn't against the Torah. He's presenting it as something that can actually change the world. And it can. Something the Bible up to this point shows Israel failed to do.

Eyes Straight Ahead

The priest and the Levite in the story were looking straight ahead, keeping their eyes on Torah. If it's a priest, I can't mess with him dying. He might be dead already. Then I'm on my way to go work. If I touch him, I'm unclean for a week. I got to do the whole ashes of the red heifer. That's drawing someone else away from their work. I'm causing inconvenience. Then I got to find someone to be my backup. And this is just not worth it. I don't need to be messing with this guy over here. I'm devoted to God and his temple. And I'm doing this.

The Levite comes along, the teacher of the law. I'm also heading that way. I got some stuff I need to do around the temple too. I ain't messing with this guy. Because I'm devoted to God.

Looking Beyond Yourself

I'm loving God—what Yeshua is criticizing is that they didn't spare the time to look to their side, to see their neighbor in need. They were too busy looking this way. It's good to be focused on God and your relationship with God. It's good to look forward with a commitment to your relationship with God. Yeshua stops you, though, by saying you can't fully embrace what you are looking at there unless you look over here and over here as well. Can't be done. If one of these is unbalanced, then you'll never reach either one in your potential as someone who wants to show love to God in the kingdom of God.

Don't forget to look to your side on your walk. Don't forget to look at the world around you that you were sent to make an impact on for the sake of God's kingdom. Else you'll be just like the priest and the Levite in the story—on their way to do the good work to God and serve God.

The Sacred Practice of Table Fellowship

In first century Judaism, table fellowship was something that was so sacred. It was a big deal. It's where brotherhood gathered together, and not those who were outside the brotherhood. They didn't come to the table. We don't eat with them. Who you ate with defined who you chose to represent, who you chose to be in covenant with.

Yeshua chose to use the table, this place where covenants are ratified as well as being a place where wars are made—he used the table as the center to create a new type of society. This is the place that Yeshua chose to reveal the Yeshua creed in action. Can you imagine how shocking this was? As an observant Jew, you wouldn't eat with someone that was deemed impure, unclean. Someone didn't wash their hands? Nope, I can't even sit at the same table with them. Can't do that.

Breaking the Rules of Purity

Matthew highlights this exact thing happening in Matthew chapter 15. Yeshua replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? When your tradition goes before engulfing the world with the Torah of love, when your love of Torah in this story gets in the way of engulfing the world with the Torah of love, you break the mission and the command of God for the sake of your tradition." That's the choice being made.

Wisdom Justified by Deeds

Here's something I found really neat. [Matthew 11](#), verse 19 says Yeshua is speaking about his experience when he chose to open up the table, the sacred place within first century Judaism as a place where you dine in the presence of God's goodness, mercy, and grace and forgiveness. And here's what he says: "Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds." Or some of your translations of the Greek will say, "wisdom is justified by her children."

Wisdom in the Hebrew Bible is personified as this woman wisdom, this lady wisdom. And he's saying, well, I guess we'll see what blossoms from these things. So Yeshua spends his time looking to his side when he's in his earthly ministry, and the result—fulfilling his movement

forward in loving God—is what happens. And he invites outsiders to come to the table with him, and he wants to share a meal with them.

The Accusation of Glutton and Drunkard

And the onlookers, everyone looking at him—what is he doing? Tax collectors or traders? Sinners? Why is he eating with them? What do they call him? A glutton and a drunkard. It's a pretty petty insult. That's all he could be if he eats with people like that, right?

Do you know why they called him that specifically? So there's a Bible trivia moment here. There's only one other place where this phrase appears in the Old Testament. And that's in [Deuteronomy 21](#), starting at verse 18: "If someone has a stubborn or rebellious son..." That's the phrase that they were referring to Yeshua as. This phrase is a legal phrase against a rebellious member of society. He's not respecting the order of society, the hierarchy. He's doing it wrong. He's disrupting the way we've always done things.

The Pattern of Resistance

Again, the story of the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, is how the things that have always been done didn't work. All they did was land Israel in Babylon, in exile away from God. Yeshua takes the social norm that says, "If you're unclean, go take a bath and then come eat with me." Yeshua takes that and says, "You're unclean, come eat with me. I'll make you clean." Instead of his table regarding purity, his table creates purity. The table of Yeshua doesn't push away. It creates a place of grace. Come dine with me.

The Disciples' Struggle

We see even his closest disciples struggle with this concept. In Galatians chapter 2, Paul calls out Peter because when no one's looking, he's hanging out and chilling and eating and dining and breaking bread with a bunch of Gentiles, unclean people. But when his Jewish brethren come into town, he pushes away and walks away. No one can see me. And Paul just lays it on him: Hypocrite, what are you doing?

Zacchaeus: From Outsider to Son of Abraham

It was Yeshua that found Zacchaeus up in a tree. Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a chief tax collector. You know what that means? Chief tax collector. He was a chief trader to his own people. He was an outsider with his people—absolutely an outsider.

So how tax collectors work, from my understanding, is they're paid on commission they determine. So they're coming out the door: you need to pay your taxes. You missed it? It's going to be double now, and you get to scoop some off the top. You guys remember that wonderful Disney cartoon called Robin Hood? Wasn't that just a great childhood? Remember the sheriff of Nottingham—the big wolf-looking guy—and he'd shake little kids upside down to get their money out of their... Yeah, this was Zacchaeus! Shaking little kids to get the money. This was who he was to his people. Not the guy you want to invite into your house. Not the guy you want to visit in his own house, right?

Yeshua finds him up in a tree and then Yeshua invites himself over for dinner. "Hey, let's go to your house and eat some wheat thins. Come on, let's hang out." And it was here that Yeshua brings forth a sacred love in action, the kind that Yeshua teaches through his Yeshua creed. The love of God. Yeshua creates a place where Zacchaeus can dine in God's presence and it is transforming. Pure repentance takes place as a result.

Zacchaeus stands tall and then he commits to giving up half of all he has and giving it to the poor. And then you know what? "All these people I have wronged, I'll pay them back fourfold." Yeshua's response, Luke chapter 19, verse 9: "Jesus said unto him, today salvation has come to this house. Because this man too is a son of Abraham. For the son of man came to seek and save the lost."

So the man is a son of Abraham. Why is that pointed out here? He's not an outsider anymore. Imagine all the people like, "What are you doing in his house?" and him walking out. He belongs at your table now too.

The Woman with the Alabaster Jar

How about when Yeshua hijacks the Pharisees' dinner party, the table that he's invited to? Luke chapter 7, verse 36: "When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went into the Pharisees' house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life—what is that a euphemism for?—learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisees' house. So she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. And she stood behind him at his feet, weeping. And she began to weep."

Jesus answered him. Total savage move. Can you imagine? Thinking to yourself, like, "What?" And he looks up as if he was audible the whole time. "Simon, I have something to tell you." "All right, tell me, teacher," he said. "Two people owed money to a certain money lender. One owed him 100 denarii and the other 50. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he

forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You judged correctly," Yeshua said.

Then he turned towards the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman from the time I entered has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

Then other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Yeshua said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Sacred love that forgives, offers grace, and transforms. That's the love that Yeshua has shown us, right? Was that that good oil? You can eat it too? It was very expensive. What money did she use to buy that expensive jar of oil? The result of her sin is what she laid at the feet of Yeshua because that's all she had.

Transformed by Sacred Love

When we're brave enough to accept our past and bold enough to leave it at his feet, we can only walk away transformed, forgiven, and forever impacted by the sacred love that only God gives.

Scott McKnight, the author of the book *The Jesus Creed*—great book, highly recommend it—he states this: "When I comprehend one, who I really am before God, a love-violating sinner; two, how faithful and gracious God is to his sacred commitment of love for me; and three, how incredibly good God is to open the floodgates of that love to me—when I comprehend this, I anoint his feet with oil and wipe dry his feet of grace."

What Does That Mean?

What does that mean for me? What does that mean for you? Well, this has to do with you walking out the kingdom message. The gospel revolved around the kingdom of God making itself known in the lives of those who find themselves far from God. Malkuthu Shemayim, the kingdom of heaven.

When you ask another believer nowadays, generally speaking, about entering the kingdom... What's it mean to enter the kingdom? Most of the time you get a response that has something to do with going through some pearly gates and some clouds. Maybe you have some harps

playing by some undressed people flying around. Streets of gold, depending on who you ask, all you can eat buffet, big houses, whatever. This great place that happens after you die. Generally, that's what you hear. The kingdom, that's the concept. It's this great place that happens after you die, or it's the millennial reign, or something like that.

The kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, was Yeshua's favorite reference for his mission to describe what he was doing. The gospel, according to Matthew, sums up Yeshua's entire mission with this one verse in [Matthew 4](#), verse 23. It says, Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel, the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

The Yeshua Creed

Underneath Yeshua's radical active presence made manifest on earth was the Yeshua Creed. It's what he did. He went throughout the cities proclaiming the kingdom of God and showing the kingdom of God now.

In prayer form, this is the Lord's Prayer. Love God, love others, your kingdom come, your will be done. It's a creed and it's a prayer that isn't supposed to be foreign. It's supposed to cast yourselves forward as the willing agent. I will love God, I will love others. God, use me so that your kingdom comes and is made manifest. Use me today that your will is done.

We always think like the Lord's prayer is for God to use other people for his kingdom. God, I sure hope your will is done today and someone else does it. I mean, don't we pray like that? God, may your kingdom come. Just look up at the sky waiting for it to fall out. Yes. That's how we pray. We don't want to be used as an actual ambassador. We don't want to be a soldier of Christ. But you're called a soldier of Christ.

In [2 Timothy 2.3](#), you're called a soldier. You're called a member, an enlisted member of the army that is conquering. And it's conquering in a way that is totally foreign to how the world sees it should be—through love. You're called an emissary, an ambassador of Christ in [2 Corinthians 5.20](#). Why? Because your job as a follower of Yeshua of Nazareth is to actually do something that represents Yeshua. Actually do something.

Walking Out Your Mandate

Knowing a lot about the Bible is great. I love the Bible. It's really cool. Really cool book. It's a library. Ancient text. Hebrew's pretty cool. Greek is pretty cool too. History. I love some history.

We spoke about a ton of that cool stuff in the message of what the Bible is not a couple months ago. And the Bible code. Nerdy, geeky, cool stuff. You could spend all day learning it all and still fail to walk out your mandate as a follower of Yeshua. It's very easy to do. Just ignore it. Just don't look to your side.

Your calling is to live a life that follows Yeshua. A life actually showing the world what the love of God looks and feels like. A life being the hands and feet of Yeshua, displayed in a life committed to living out the Yeshua Creed.

A Society Gathered Around a Table

Yeshua seemed to understand that kingdom meant an actual society. Sometimes when we talk about entering the kingdom of God, we always have this—just because of who we are and where we are in time and culture—we picture just us embracing God. Like, yeah, I've entered the kingdom of God and I've embraced him and it's just me and God.

A kingdom is kind of like a whole group of people, isn't it? It's a society that comes together in allegiance to a king. He came to gather a group of individuals that form collectively to live out the Yeshua Creed on earth. [Luke 17](#), 20 says this, which he reigns over. Worship team, you guys can come up. This creates a society that lives by the Yeshua creed when we walk it out daily, focused on loving God and loving people, neighbors, others.

This does not produce a culture where individuals run off, claiming that they're close to God, only to separate themselves from the rest of the world that they were made to impact. I'm the remnant. Any remnant of people in the Bible were called to increase their pursuit back to God.

No, this creates a society that gathers around a table and it breaks bread and implements the Yeshua Creed in their daily lives with every breath and every point of energy that they expend.

Where Are You At?

So here at the end of this year, starting a new cycle, a new year, where are you at? Are you gathered around the table? Are you committed to love? Maybe you find yourself struggling just like the scribe, just like the Torah teacher, just like some of the disciples. Maybe you find yourself so focused on loving God by loving his Torah, but never looking to the side to see what the Torah of love actually looks like in action.

This is the calling of a follower of Yeshua, the King. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with

all your strength." And the second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." This is how we actually change the world.

Pray for what your father wants. Pray for what others need. And when you're done praying, get up and live out the Jesus Creed that he left. That was the message that formed the basis for his entire ministry on earth.

Closing: An Invitation to Gather

So please stand. We're going to conclude services the same way that we came in, and that's through worship. If you need prayer today, we have a prayer team on each side of the room. Guys, take advantage of that. Take advantage of someone being willing to stand beside you and lift you up.

Alvina Malkeinu, our father, our king, father, we thank you for this time together. We thank you for your word. Father, we thank you for your kingdom and this invitation to be a part of it, but not only to be a part of it, but to be an ambassador of it to the world, that you would give us courage and strength and wisdom, discipline, boldness—to stand firm in our own life, to accept forgiveness, to live out forgiveness, and to invite others to the table. We thank you, Father, for your grace and your mercy, for we have been forgiven much. Allow your love to pour out through us in all things. In Yeshua's name we pray, amen.

I'm Matthew Vander Ailes, pastor of Founded in Truth Fellowship, and we hope you enjoyed this message and that it was a blessing to you and your family. Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our site and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and your relationship with Yeshua. If you would like to donate to Founded in Truth Ministries and be a part of this ministry's continued impact, you can do so through our website. Thank you for joining us and we pray that you experience the peace and the joy of God's holy Sabbath. Shabbat Shalom.

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