

How well do we actively RECEIVE?

The SUPPLY is great!

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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

Summary:

Your eternity could rest on learning this topic well. It is more blessed to give than receive, but we're also called to actively take hold of what our Father is sending us. Our Father is the greatest giver of all, but if we don't learn to receive Him and His gifts, including the gift of His Son, the gift of the Holy Spirit and the dozens of other gifts he showers on us, we're blocking His generosity and possibly even insulting Him. (Note: the last 3 minutes were cut off when my battery on the mic died. So please check the notes for the final page of what was cut off.) What are some of God's "gifts" he wants us to receive? Why do some of us refuse to receive? How do we learn to become better at receiving the things from God?

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Shalom, children of the Highest. Peace and grace be multiplied, be abounding to all of you, as Peter, Paul, John would begin their epistles. But how can peace and grace and blessings from the Almighty Abba we have be abounding in and to us – if we don't learn to receive first?

I hope today's topic will fascinate you as it did me when I felt inspired to study, think about, pray about and ponder one word – "RECEIVE". The weekend I am recording this is Pentecost weekend 2014. This was the time when Yeshua told his disciples they would "**RECEIVE power** when the Holy Spirit shall come upon you and you shall be witnesses of me" starting in Jerusalem (**Acts 1:8**). What love our God has to begin the message in the most guilty city: Jerusalem. They had just brutally executed His Son – and Abba says to start preaching the gospel there! Isn't that amazing?

Children love to receive gifts. (Describe Feast gifts). They haven't been corrupted yet by cynicism and the harsh realities of life. I think God wants us to be like children, receiving his gifts, like His kingdom as a child. We are God's children, after all.

On this Pentecost weekend, have you received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22)? You had the minister's hands laid on you after your water immersion (**Acts 8:15**), but did you receive the Holy Spirit? Paul asked the men in Ephesus if they had received the Spirit (**Acts 19:1-7**). In **Galatians 3:2 and 14**, we are told we receive it by FAITH, not by things we do. And yet we also know that Peter said in **Acts 5:32** that the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God. So we obey the call to repent first, believe, and in that faith we live a new life of obedience through Christ in us, who is the "author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him" (**Hebrews 5:9**). Be sure you have received the Spirit.

Isn't it true that we have all been taught that it's selfish to focus on receiving? We should be givers, we're told. We've heard a lot of sermons on it being "*more blessed to give than to receive*" (**Acts 20:35**). We feel good when we can give -- but if no one ever received, how would anyone be blessed?

So let's talk about receiving. I hope you'll see how important it is and start to receive more than ever.

The word "receive" in English Bibles comes from a variety of Greek words, but one of the most predominant words in Greek for "receive" is "*lambano*" – and it's quite active. It means to actively take, receive, seize hold of, and take up.

Some of you from Eastern Europe or who are over age **65 especially**, may find this topic hard because you don't like being the receiver, but prefer being the giver. But if we don't learn to receive the things of God, we'll end up missing out on so many blessings, and ultimately – maybe even salvation itself. SO much of what is spiritual comes to us as free gifts, so we have to learn to accept those.

I've known Russians and Finns and others for whom it was almost impossible to do things. You give them a gift, and they have to give you one back. You mow their lawn, and you have to leave with their cookies or eat some pie or something.

Abba, the Greatest GIVER

Can you receive? You see, here's where we're going with this: Who's **the greatest GIVER of all? It's our heavenly Abba – our Father.** EVERY good gift is from our Father.

James 1:17-18

"EVERY good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

HE's the one who called you to be among His firstfruits. HE's the one who sent His only Son to die for us and be resurrected for us. He's gotten a bad rap. He's pictured as a crotchety old "Father Time" figure who is surly and we have to plead for him to release any of his "goodies" to us. But that's a lie. Our Father is a WARM, wonderful Daddy who *loves* to shower down his blessings to us. He loves to! Are you recognizing his gifts? Are you actively receiving!?

But how do we honestly view our Father – all too often? Do we not feel he has to be "pressured" into releasing anything for us? Do we not feel we have to plead, cry, beg before He'll do anything?

BEING An ACTIVE RECEIVER

John 3:27 – "a man can receive NOTHING unless it is given him from Heaven" (John the immerse is saying, in context to the news Jesus – whom I will call Yeshua from now on – was doing and how many were coming to him.

The Greek word for "receive" here and many other places is **Strong's # 2983** – "**lambano**". It is in the ACTIVE voice – meaning the subject is the one doing or performing the action. It has a meaning of "ACTIVE LAY HOLD OF; aggressively accept what is being offered." It is usually translated as "receive, or take up, to take away".

There are various Greek words translated “receive”. But think of this now. How good of a “RECEIVER” are you?

- **In Football they have receivers too. Receiving is not passive.** Are you hearing that? It’s not passive. It’s a very active thing. A receiver in the game of football, for example, isn’t just “playing catch” with the quarterback, standing 20 feet apart from each other. No... he expends a great deal of effort in receiving the pass from the quarterback. There are defenders all around him trying to keep him from receiving what the quarterback wants him to receive! He has to sometimes lunge for the ball, jump over opponents, and keep FOCUSED on what’s coming.

OUR receiving the things of God, as you’ll see more and more is not passive activity either.

A football quarterback in American football might be *wanting* to throw lots of passes, but if there are no receivers open, no receivers looking for the ball, or the ball is not being caught – there will be no RECEPTIONS and no points on the board. God wants to send us more. But all too often He doesn’t see us *ready* to receive or even *trying* to “get open” and to be watching HIM so we can “catch his pass” (using American football for the analogy).

So the Greek word “*lambano*”, often translated “receive’ or “take up” has the definite connotation of actively seizing and hanging on to. And don’t let someone knock the ball away from you once you have it – if I can continue the analogy.

WHY we sometimes REFUSE to RECEIVE from God

What keeps us from receiving the things of God? ***Don’t find yourself REJECTING God’s gifts because of one of these reasons.*** (And I’m sure there are many more.)

- ***Being too proud to receive or don’t feel we even need any help.*** Some of you will have to work on this point. In ancient land now called Turkey, there was a big earthquake. The cities all around were destroyed, including the 7 churches of **Rev 2-3**. So the Roman empire helped rebuild the cities. But the city of **Laodicea** decided they were wealthy enough they didn’t need any help. That attitude came into the church – “I’m rich, I’m OK”. But Christ saw them as poor and wretched and blind to their need (see **Revelation 3:14-22**). Let’s be sure we’re not of the spirit of Laodicea saying we don’t NEED anything from anybody.
- **We feel too unworthy to receive** -- so we walk away from Abba who wants to reveal Himself to us and reveal His “agape” unconditional love to us.
- **Some are AFRAID to receive a gift for fear there are hidden strings attached.** “This sounds too good to be true” kind of feeling, and feeling “there’s a catch here somewhere.”
- **Many of us will be willing to receive someone’s gift – IF we’re allowed to either help pay for it or pay it back somehow.** But if someone wants to just give you a *gift*, and you insist on mowing their lawn for a month if you accept the gift, then it’s no longer a gracious gift. It’s wages earned, or a gift that’s been purchased. It’s something you’ve earned. That’s what Paul says in **Romans 4:4 and 11:6**. It’s now

wages, and no longer grace or a gift. And that's why we have so much trouble with "grace" or "gifts" *because we like to be in control* and we like to feel *we've* earned something. A gift is done outside of us – *but to us – and some people can't deal with that.*

- **Not even recognizing gifts are being offered.** For example, some people insist there is no "gift of righteousness" even though **Romans 5:17** and other places clearly speak of it. If you don't recognize something, or might be afraid of it, or not even know it's being offered -- how could we receive it?

Which of those 5 barriers apply most to you? Or you may find you have other reasons for not being willing to accept gifts – even a gift from the King of the Universe, from God Most High himself!

When someone goes all out to give us a gift, and we don't receive the gift, it is a real insult to the giver. (**Scene in Henry VIII docudrama** – when Anne Boleyn refuses to accept Henry VIII's gifts. He took it as a profound insult.)

So our Father wants to send some gifts your way, lots of them. He's super rich. He wants to bless you beyond your comprehension. If you are feeling like you're lacking – it's not HIS fault. Maybe *we* have to learn to be better RECEIVERS.

BEFORE WE Can BE great RECEIVERS....

Before we can learn to be great receivers, we have to humble ourselves (that's tough) and *acknowledge we need help from God.* That's all part of the process of repentance. Like Paul says in Romans 8:17, we come to know nothing good dwells in our flesh. Yeshua confirmed we can do nothing of ourselves (John 15:4-5). But if we abide and cling to Him, focus on Him and look to Him – we will bear much fruit, and it will be fruit of HIS righteousness (See Philippians 1:11), not our fruit. It's HIS life being lived in us and we follow His leading, and that causes us to change and grow.

Once we've humbled ourselves enough to proclaim we need help, then the next step is ASK for that help. In this case, it will be to ask for the Holy Spirit – or more of it. Yeshua was clear that Father loves to give us more of his spirit – if we would just ask (Luke 11:13).

ASK and you shall *receive.*

One of the earliest teachings of our Lord and Master was this: if you want to RECEIVE anything from our Father, ASK.

Matthew 7:7-8

"ASK, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

So I repeat: We don't receive, because we don't ask (also James 4:2). We don't find, because we're not seeking. We aren't having doors opened to us, because we're not knocking. Pause for a second and analyze. Are you really seeking, asking and knocking a lot? All of that has to do with learning to become good receivers of the things of God.

Later Yeshua says to ask in his name. He's given us the power to be **his "power of attorney"** – to speak for him, to act in his name. Are we realizing the magnitude of this?

Then, once we ask – the next step is to BELIEVE. Have faith – which is the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1). Without faith it is impossible to please Him. We must believe He IS. That's what YHVH means – He is what He is. Do you see Yeshua powerfully like that?

He knows our need before we ask. So I recommend the sermon I recently gave on "Praising God for answered prayer BEFORE we see the answer". Abba is not on our timetable. It was many, many years after Abraham was promised a son before He had one. So we can't be hasty to assume our Father "didn't answer" our prayers.

A good example of this aggressive asking and faith in action was blind Bartimaeus.

Mark 10:46-52

46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48 Then many warned him to be quiet; **but he cried out all the more**, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called.

Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."

50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

51 **So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"**

The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."

52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

Ask, and you shall receive. Ask many times. **Paul** asked 3x and was given an answer. In his case, "My grace is sufficient for you", so Paul learned a great truth: in our weakness HIS strength is what is evident. **Elijah** had to ask 7x before the drought ended. So ASK, and expect to receive, without doubting. Pray God help remove your unbelief too!

A whole sermon could be given on proper effectively asking, but let's move on.

Here are SOME OF ABBA'S GIFTS. ARE WE ACTIVELY RECEIVING THEM?

OUR FATHER LOVES TO GIVE. There are so many gifts he's constantly trying to gift us, if we would just receive. Here are SOME of our ABBA's GIFTS (there are so many)...

- **The gift of His SON**.... which we will discuss in far more detail later in this message. This gift also reveals **the gift of his LOVE**, which I will go into next week in the sermon about the Father's love.

- **The GIFT of forgiveness and remission of sins** – IF we believe. God leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4) and then we receive the gift of forgiveness. “...whosoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins”. (Acts 10:43). But have you really received it? It’s being offered to you – but have you taken hold of it? Or are there sins you’ve committed that you have never really *received* forgiveness for? Have you received our Father’s loving forgiveness for ALL your sins? ALL of them, even the really, really icky ones? RECEIVE that forgiveness, and move on in the JOY of His salvation. Some of us have a tough time with this. I do too.
- **Reconciliation with God** -- Romans 5:11, we have “great *joy in God, through* our Lord Jesus Christ, *through whom* we have NOW **received** reconciliation.” *Have you* received it? The ball was thrown to you... did you catch it? Can you let go of the past and feel reconciled?
- **The GIFT OF GOD’S ABUNDANT GRACE**. Oh, this is SO hard for spiritual “do-it-yourselfers” to accept. Are you a “spiritual do-it-yourselfer?” The word “*grace*” – “*charis*” in Greek – can mean a lot of things, including favor, pardon or even good will. In context sometimes it means unmerited favor, and in context it just sometimes means “favor” and is translated as such. But in terms of our SALVATION, the context has to always be that our favor with God has to do with the way HE is far more than having to do with the way WE are. Are we getting this?

Ephesians 2:8-10

“For **by grace** you have been saved **through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is **THE GIFT OF GOD, 9 not of works**, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

If God himself is giving us a gift, how insulting it would be to refuse it or minimize it. Don't minimize His grace. Father has more grace than there is sin, that’s why Paul says “where sin abounds, Grace SUPER abounds”. God’s grace is greater than any of our sins or all of humanity’s sins put together! That’s a lot of grace!

V. 8 – Our Father’s grace is a GIFT. “NOT of yourselves”, “not of works, lest anyone should boast”-v.9. ***But the fruit of that will be good works*** coming FROM that grace (as Paul explains in his own experience in 1 Cor. 15:9-10). Get the sequence right. First God gifts us with His calling and then He leads us by His goodness to repent (Romans 2:4) and we accept that. We are receiving His grace. THEN in the joy of His no-condemnation on us, we can confidently live a life of “go and sin no more” – the sequence given to the woman in John 8.

- **The Gift of HIS Righteousness.** This is SO hard for most believers to accept. Have you ever heard even a single sermon in your congregation focused just on this marvelous GIFT? Or are we insisting it’s not a gift. Do you insist that God’s righteousness is something we have to work for? This gift produces good works and righteousness, but it’s a gift as well. That’s what the scripture says! It’s also referred to as “the gift of righteousness by faith” (Heb 11:7).

Romans 5:17 “For if by one man’s offense (Adam) death reigned through the one, much more those who RECEIVE the abundance of grace and of **the GIFT of righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.”

The word “receive” there is in the PRESENT active tense, right now. We will reign in life eternal through Christ later, but the *gift* is present tense. It doesn’t say “shall receive”. No, it means receive it NOW; otherwise you’re messing with the verb tense in the original. ***It is true that the FULLNESS of it is seen at Christ’s return (2 Tim. 4:8), when we’re resurrected.*** Prior to that, we follow the lead of the Spirit, we fight the good fight, we keep the faith, we do strive to follow – but the glory is always His because it’s HIS perfection that will ultimately cover us, not our own. We just don’t have it and will never ourselves be perfect without that gift of His righteousness. It’s at the resurrection when our corruption puts on total incorruption as 1 Cor. 15:50-54 says. But we’re already now given a downpayment at least, of this perfect righteousness with the full payment given at our change, at the resurrection.

So **Romans 5:17** says there is a “GIFT of righteousness”. Now let’s continue – and ask yourself, are you willing to RECEIVE this, or are you insulting the great Giver and rejecting His awesome gift? If we have to work FOR it, then it’s wages, and no longer a gift (Romans 4:1-4; Romans 11:6).

Romans 5:18-21

“Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, **even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.** **19 For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.**”

20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Though this gift is offered to all (v.18), some won’t receive it, so it’s not all who will be made righteous; but many will (v. 19). But each in his own time. There’s a sequence and order to God’s calling, revealed by the holydays.

Each one will be called and converted in his own order and timing **as 1 Cor. 15:23** teaches us. *But we’re forgiven by His death for us, and saved by HIS perfect life* in the resurrection (**Romans 5:10**). We’re *not* saved by our good life, but saved by faith in HIS good life being lived once more in us. I focus on HIM.

We agree that we’re all under the death sentence right now because of Adam. Can we not agree that Yeshua has a far greater legacy and effect than Adam had? If one man could put us all under the death penalty, and we teach and accept that – can we not also accept that by *ONE MAN’S OBEDIENCE* and righteousness many are made righteous? We’ve just read it! Romans 5:19.

I am not a “spiritual evolutionist”. I do not believe that given enough time, I can work on myself and change myself into God’s perfection and perfect righteousness. NO sir, no ma’am. That’s spiritual evolution and God’s not into that.

There is ONE Creator – and HE is the sole creator of the NEW Creation, the New man, the new self. David prayed, during his repentance in PS 51, that God would “create in me a clean heart, O God...” He knew where the new heart comes from.

Adam did not help in his creation. Did you realize that? Neither will I have much to do with my *new* creation. You did not beget yourself when you were begotten as a flesh-and-blood being and you’re not going to be responsible for your new birth either. There were outside created forces working on you. The fetus grew in season. Neither will I birth my new spiritual self. The glory goes to the Creator and Father!

If you’re struggling with this, it’s the very reason I’m giving this message. We all want to have a part of our new creation. We all want to be part of the begetting and birthing. We’re the object of it all, yes – we have to be in the womb, we have to be absorbing the food and nutrients – but we’re not forming ourselves.

But we’d rather play a major role.

We’ll here’s something you and I can do: learn to play the role of receiver. It’s hard. It’s humbling. It’s having to acknowledge you need help. Are you Eastern Europeans and Finns hearing this? It’s humbling. But we have to learn to be receivers.

It takes an ACTIVE grasping of what is being offered. Grab it. Seize it. Then hang on to it for dear life and don’t let anyone knock it out of your hands. Don’t “fumble” the ball. Learn to be a great receiver of what our Quarterback Most High is throwing to us!

- **The gift of The HOLY SPIRIT**. Peter preached if we repent and are baptized, we “shall receive **the GIFT of the Holy Spirit**” (**Acts 2:38**). Have you actively taken hold of it? Have you believed you’ve been given it?

In Galatians 3:2, 14, Paul says we receive the Holy Spirit by faith. It’s a gift. I’ll speak much more about what the Holy Spirit gives us in an upcoming sermon. There’s just too much to say about it.

- **THE FRUIT of the SPIRIT (Gal. 5:22-25)**. Do you see the 9-fold single fruit as a unity, and receive it gladly (remember it says “the FRUIT of the spirit IS...”. It does NOT say “the FRUITS of the spirit are...”). I’ll speak much more about this in the sermon on the fruit of the spirit. It’s one fruit – with 9 parts. They come together. They fall together. The fruit of the spirit is not “the fruit of Philip” or whatever your name is. **It’s not your fruit. It’s the spirit’s fruit you and I get to display to His glory.** It’s not something we work up and strive for. We don’t “strive” to achieve the love of God. It’s a natural fruit that comes in its season. when we are firmly attached to the Vine and to the life giving light and water of the Holy Spirit. Yeshua was very clear about that in **John 15:4-5**. RECEIVE the fruit. Display it – to HIS glory. It’s HIS fruit, after all – Philippians 1:11.

- **The GIFTS of/ from the Holy Spirit** listed in 1 Cor 12 and Romans 12:6-13. This too, is worthy of a whole sermon. Apparently we've all been given gifts of the Spirit. Do you know what yours is? Perhaps we need a sermon on that too.
- **The GIFT of HIS WORD. The Bible. The Scriptures.**

We have the Scriptures on our smart phones, Ipads, computers – in various translations, the original Greek and Hebrew, Bible helps, concordances, etc. etc. What tools that the early apostles would have loved to have had. It's a great gift. Are we receiving and using and valuing it all?

How would Abba describe the way you receive His word? Do we even crack it open every day? The Jerusalem audience to Peter's sermon on Pentecost are said to be those who "GLADLY RECEIVED the word and were baptized" (Acts 2:41). We are to be like the Bereans who searched the scriptures DAILY (Acts 17:11). We are to be the "good ground" in the parable of the Sower, who took the seed, cherished it, and **understood** the word – and produced fruit. (**Luke 8:18-23**).

This was what the Manna pictures, as Yeshua says in John 6. DO we receive it – and gather it each morning?

- **Even the garments that we are to put on as the Bride of Christ are GIVEN to us.** We don't provide our own "wedding dress". A rich king putting on the wedding for his son always provided the garments, not just for the bride and for the son, but also for the guests at the wedding. That's one reason the King was furious when someone showed up at his son's wedding dressed in their favorite faded blue jeans and apparently had rejected the gifted garments that were customary (see **Matthew 22:1-10**).

Notice what it says in **Revelation 19:7-9**, it says we are glad for the marriage of the LAMB has come, the bride has made herself ready, then in Revelation 19:8 were told, "and to her it **was granted** to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

As we've been seeing in scripture, we are to be covered by HIS righteousness, HIS holiness, as we don't have holiness on our own, even as Peter said in **Acts 3:12**. Our holiness and goodness comes from him living in us, and then we perform righteous acts as EVIDENCE and FRUIT of His presence in us.

If there are no righteous acts in our lives after accepting Christ, if there are no good works, no obedience and we're not overcoming --- then we simply have not been converted, have not received Christ, and do not know him (1 John 2:3-6). I hope I'm being very clear. This has always been my teaching. Some misrepresent me to be soft on sin, which I absolutely am not -- because I preach faith in the righteousness and holiness of our Savior which he covers us with. We will all still stumble sometimes, we will still fall into sin – but it's no longer our direction. It's not our WALK. It's not the WAY we live anymore. When we sin – and we all still do -- we repent again – and get back up and back into walking with God.

But my point for this sermon is that even the wedding garments, representing righteousness, are GRANTED TO us (**Rev. 19:8**). Read **Isaiah 61:10-11**. HE provides righteousness and clothes us with His salvation (Yeshua). Both Rev 19 and Isaiah 61 are after the resurrection. That's when the perfection – without spot or wrinkle – are realized. Are you going to **receive your covering**, or are you going to try to provide your own – and thereby insult our holy Father who is putting on the wedding of the Lamb?

SO MANY gifts we take for granted! A Facebook question, “If tomorrow, God took away everything you didn't thank him for today, what would you be losing tomorrow?” Your spouse? Your kids? Your grandchildren? Your home? Your car? Your clothes? What? How about your salvation? Do we thank him for that? I could go on and on and on, right?

Don't forget, **Yehowah (YHVH) says that ancient Israel “limited the Holy One of Israel”** from doing all the things he wanted to do for them (**Psalm 78:41**). Yeshua wept over Jerusalem and cried out, “How often I would have put you under my wings like a mother hen does her chicks, but you were not willing” (**Matthew 23:37**).

I simply don't have the time to list the many things Abba says He is giving us. There are dozens and dozens more.

- For example, “I bestow upon you a KINGDOM” (Luke 22:29). Do you accept it? Kinda like what Moses said in **Deut 1:19-32, quoting God** —“I give you this promised Land; now go up and possess it! (Deut 1:21)! “Seize it! BE BOLD about receiving this kingdom, this land, this future, I'm offering you” – Abba says to us. He is also described as a loving father carrying his son thru the wilderness – Deut 1:31 – and now it was time to RECEIVE the land.

Now let's look at the greatest gift of all from Abba. And I'm going to challenge you to search your heart if you REALLY, really have received this greatest gift and BELIEVE the gift.

HAVE YOU REALLY RECEIVED YESHUA, THE MESSIAH (Jesus Christ)?

Let's start with John 1. This leads up to the greatest receiving you can receive. I suspect too many of us give lip service to this but have not really received Him.

This is not copying him but receiving HIM. This is not just us trying to be like Him, but letting HIM be himself – GOD – in us.

John 1:1-3 makes it very clear that the one we know as Jesus Christ (Yeshua) was the one who breathed out the universe! He spoke and it was done. V. 4 says IN HIM” is life. HE is our Life and our light. DO we understand that? Grasp that? This same One called “the Word” became FLESH, came as a human being, born of a Jewish virgin, as the Bible foretold in Isaiah 7. This is the Yeshua I preach about and love. He is the active Creator. What a great Being this one who became Jesus/Yeshua was and is. He breathed out galaxies by the billion!

John 1:14

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:10-13

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 **He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

And though MOST of you hearing or reading this will say you *have* received Christ, I wonder if you really understand what that means? Do you really BELIEVE in Yeshua? Do you really **TRUST Him** to save you? Do you really look to *him* and focus on him to strengthen you? Or do you panic and fret and stew as you look to yourself to change and grow – but see little overcoming actually happening? Change your focus! Look to Messiah. HE will live in you if you receive him and trust him.

John 3:16-18

For God so loved the world that **He GAVE** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did NOT send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 "**He who believes in Him is not condemned;** but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

I've just read our Father's *greatest gift* He wants you to have. **But you have to receive Yeshua – John 1:12. We have to receive this gift and cherish this gift if we want to be children of God.** I know "receiving Christ" and "believing in Christ" is a lot more than just professing his name. I know that. But START with that, at least. And then TRUST Him to do what He does so well: TO SAVE you and me.

DO you profess His name? DO you openly claim to be a follower of the Christ?

Have you clearly SAID out loud, in your own words in the most sincere of prayers you've ever given, that you have come to see you NEED a Savior, you NEED his saving grace, you NEED his life to cover you, you need HIS righteousness, you need HIM.... and you want to **RECEIVE** his forgiveness, receive and ACCEPT HIS joy, receive his LIFE, receive *HIM*...

Have you ever said all that in clear terms? I believe for some of us that is actually very, very hard to say... that we need ANYTHING, let alone that we need the PERSON of Yeshua to SAVE us, to help us, to lead and teach us! You might claim you BELIEVE all that – but have you *said those words*?

Romans 10:5-13

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the MOUTH confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, **for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.** 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

We know God in his love calls us, leads us to repent, and at that time we have to profess our belief in him and receive him as our savior. This is where salvation *starts*. Yeshua *becomes our life* and he says Yeshua is the author **and finisher** of our faith (Heb 12:2). WE have to receive that truth and TRUST Him to finish what He started.

AS Yeshua lives in us by His spirit, He will walk the same way He did the first time: obediently. We are saved by grace through faith in Yeshua, and then the fruit of that is that we live like Yeshua lived as PROOF of our salvation. If we don't live obediently, we are phony and our salvation is not real. (Read 1 John 2:3-6). He is the author of our eternal salvation – to all who OBEY him (Hebrews 5:9).

Getting the sequence right

But after repentance, believing in him comes first. Do you remember what Yeshua told the sorrowful adulteress of John 8 – “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more”. Most of us would say “Go and sin no more, and then I won't condemn you.” But it is in the glorious love of our father and Savior, when we recognize we are not condemned now ---that we can have the CONFIDENCE IN HIM, to go and sin no more (at least as a way of life.) His “Neither do I condemn you” gives us joy and hope as never before.

- We accept his gift of his LOVE. That's a whole sermon.
- We accept His gift of adopting us as HIS CHILDREN into His very family. I have whole sermons on that too.
- And now we accept the LIFE of Yeshua – HIS life – for our life. We ask Him to come inside of us and live in us. We ask him to change us, clean us up and BE our life. As Paul says in Colossians 3:3-4 Christ is now our life.

As we focus on who and what HE is, and what HE is doing, and follow His lead in our lives, we start CHANGING. Our hearts change. Our desires change. Sins aren't as prevalent in our lives. It's being done by the power of Christ in us as HE lives anew in us. *The evidence of our salvation by grace is that we are now changing, doing good works.*

We don't do good works to be saved; we do good works BECAUSE of salvation.

Well, the whole Bible is clear! **TRULY receiving our Savior CHANGES us. If we're not changing, we probably did not really receive Him!** I get that. I preach that. But I also am preaching to all in range of my voice, do take the time to apply Romans 10 also. SAY the words, believe in your heart, and then in faith, let HIS life change you, and He will, with joy.

RECEIVING him requires us to walk with him, following His lead, letting HIS life shine in us. We are children of God only if we have the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9, 14) and follow its lead in

our lives. I don't preach a cheap grace, folks. Grace is not cheap. It took the life of Messiah. And if receive this valuable gift, we will cherish it, protect it, and showcase it. God's greatest gift: He gave up His eternal companion, who became His Beloved Son – for YOU. He must love you an awful lot.

Colossians 2:6-7

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” (also see 1 John 5:11-13).

Yeshua came to reveal the Father! That's a whole subject by itself. But my point is this: if we ACCEPT Yeshua, we also are accepting the Father! Hallelujah

1 John 2:23

“Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

AND GOD IN TURN RECEIVES US

Matthew 11:27-30

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. **28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Notice the context of all the majestic Luke 15 parables. Yeshua was being criticized for receiving Sinners. Thank GOD he receives sinners, because that means He receives me and you as well.

Luke 15:1-3

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man **receives sinners** and eats with them." 3 So He spoke this parable to them, saying..."

Then follows all the awesome parables of Luke 15: the lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son – and the pleasure in our Father's heart when the lost are found and RECEIVED with great joy.

John 6:35-40

35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37 **All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.** 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 **And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."**

So once we realize WE are received by Abba, we are to receive one another also.

Romans 15:7

“Therefore receive one another, *just as Christ also received us*, to the glory of God.”

Wow. The Messiah received you and me. Took hold of me and you. Accepted you and me.

Romans 14:3-4

Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; **for God has received him.** 4 Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.”

God loves his children. If you are a child of God, he loves you and receives you. When I have **my grandsons** come over, it just makes my heart SING when they come tumbling out of their van and come running to our front door, hands outstretched as they holler loudly, “Poppy, Nan, ..Poppy”! And we receive them, joyfully.

Now I understand that in terms of grandchildren. But how does that work with a thrice-holy Father and when I come to him? Well, I'm in Christ, the Beloved son of God. And if I accept Yeshua, and He has accepted me, then I come to our Father THROUGH Jesus. That concept is ALL THROUGH the New covenant. We are accepted “in the Beloved”. Wow. *And besides, my heavenly Abba is a DEAR father whom I KNOW loves to hear from each of his children.*

Ephesians 1:3-6

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing* in the heavenly places **in Christ**, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 **to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.**

Romans 8:11-17

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors — not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; **but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not **receive the spirit of bondage again to fear**, but you **received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit **that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs** — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Galatians 4:6-7

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” 7 **Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**

AN HEIR OF GOD! Of course, he's our loving Daddy –ABBA – NOW. WOW, WOW!

IN the New Covenant, when we leave God decisively, and move to a life of sin again as the direction of our lives, yes – that means we will be terribly punished and condemned. We are doomed if we persist in that life, like a pig going back to its mire and a dog back to his vomit. (Please read carefully **2 Peter 2:18-22**).

But also in the New Covenant, if we STUMBLE and sin in our walk with God, are we now condemned? Do we fear God leaves us and no longer loves us? That's what some of you think. Now, as a child of God, even when you FALL and stumble now, HE DOES NOT KICK US OUT. Yeshua said at the Last Supper that He now calls us His friends. Proverbs 17:17 says that a friend loves forever.

[The recording stops here... but please read these remaining notes.]

We do NOT leave the love of God when we stumble in sin in the new covenant, any more than you would quit loving your children when or if they get into trouble. God deals with it. There will be issues and consequences, but his love endures forever.

There is now NO condemnation to those in Christ who walk according to the Spirit (**Romans 8:1**). A walk is our DIRECTION in life. A stumble ALONG the way does not mean we have changed our WALK, our DIRECTION.

- So if we stumble, He picks us up.
- If we sin, he stands as our Advocate and defense attorney (1 John 2:1).
- If we go astray, our Savior comes searching for us, as searches for sheep gone astray (Luke 15 parables).
- He is SO HAPPY when we repent and come home to him again that he throws a PARTY, as the parable of the Prodigal son in Luke 15 teaches. That father didn't quit loving his son in all the son's problems! No. He was thrilled to see him again. This is the true ABBA, our dearest father, of the new covenant.

In the Old Covenant, sins separated people from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). But even then, think of how long YHVH would wait, sending prophets, being patient – before He would “spank”. And as the nation would repent, YHVH heard from heaven. Even in the Old Covenant.

Now in the New Covenant, as God's child, *nothing separates you from His love* – that's what the end of Romans 8:35-39 says, unless we make a conscious decision to reject him permanently and go back as a pig to the mire. But Christ died for us while we were sinners – and when we still sin – he stands up for us to be our defense Atty. He makes intercession for you and me. Halleluyah. Praise you Yeshua. Thank GOD that I can know my Best Friend – Yeshua – is demonstrating the true “Friend who loves at all times” (Prov 17:17). As His friend, we do what he commands us. He is my Beloved. I am His, He is mine. (Song of Solomon 6:3). We are committed to each other – and someday by God's grace we'll be one in marriage. And as children of the Highest, when we stumble he is there to carry us, lift us back up, and restore us. That's that Father I see and know.

RECEIVE that awesome love.

Romans 8:31-39

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also **freely give us all things**? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's

elect? It is God who justifies. **34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.**

35 WHO shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Brethren, RECEIVE that love. Receive that relationship.

There's so much more to be said about this topic... but time has run out on the cd. Sometime read Romans 11:29.

And when it's all said and done, you will RECEIVE the crown of righteousness that is laid up in store for you and for all who love his appearing (2 Tim. 4:8)

Our Abba is the greatest GIVER of all. He can't give – if we won't receive it. Be LOOKING for his gifts, his love, his help, His salvation, His power, His mercy... ALL of it.

Pray you learn to receive.

Closing prayer –

Until next time, this is Philip hoping we all get better at thankfully and graciously accepting and receiving everything our Father wants us to have.