



# Shiloh Messenger

November 2017

## *Relationships: How We Treat Others, Pt.2*

A simple test we can apply to ourselves to tell whether we are walking in step with our identity as believers or in the mindset of the flesh is to examine whether we are responding or reacting. The difference between the two is very simple: when I respond, I choose what I do; when I react, you choose what I do. This is certainly the way that God relates to us. No amount of our own sin forces God to lose control of Himself with us. He is never offended or manipulated by us: He always responds out of who He is to the situation at hand. There are so many pictures of this in the Scriptures where we can see how Jesus does relationship. One clear picture happens when Jesus reassures Peter of His calling after the resurrection: *When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to them, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" and he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep." John 21:15-17*

Jesus is making sure that Peter has not lost his sense of calling. Jesus called Peter specifically to minister to His church (Matthew 16:18), but a lot has happened since then, most recently Peter betraying Jesus three times before He was crucified.

Imagine yourself in this situation. You've spent three years of your life pouring everything you have into a group of people, and Peter most of all since he'll be the leader. You've sacrificed, modeled, taught, prayed and just about everything else together. At the end of everything, the one who you've invested in the most turns his back on you and explicitly denies he knows you three times while you go through the most excruciating experience of your life. In fact, not only did Jesus know Peter would do this, he heard him do it.

Would you be hurt? Would you be offended? Would you feel betrayed? I'm fairly certain I would. The next time I saw Peter, I'd have a difficult time trusting him and opening up to him. But that's not Jesus' response. What does Jesus do? His main concern is with Peter. He wants to make sure that Peter hasn't lost his sense of calling or who he is. He reassures Peter that he hasn't disqualified himself. Jesus doesn't even address Peter's mistake! There is no mention of the fact that Peter missed the mark on that one (of course, he already knew that). No, Jesus' full attention seems to be on restoring Peter. The situation has not provoked anything in Him because there is no weakness or lack of identity. In no way can Peter's denial make Jesus lose a sense of who He is.

Another amazing example of this happens shortly before the crucifixion. The Jews have just asked Pilate to crucify Jesus. At this request, Pilate privately questions Jesus: *When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to Him, "You will not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You and authority to crucify You?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over Me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered Me over to you has the greater sin." John 19:8-11*

Pilate, in an effort to figure out who Jesus is, threatens Him. In essence, Pilate is saying, "Jesus, I can kill You. You better answer my questions here!" That's pretty intense because that's exactly what's at stake. Pilate is trying to manipulate Jesus and force His hand. What does Jesus do? He refuses to be manipulated and simply observes that Pilate's own authority is being manipulated by Satan. Amazing Jesus isn't living for Himself, so He can't be manipulated. Manipulation always threatens pain for you if you don't do what the other person wants. That will always work if you're living for yourself. But if you aren't living for yourself, your concern isn't for your own pain; it's for the well-being of others. Like Jesus modeled, we need to learn to respond, not react. We always have the choice to control ourselves; there is no situation that forces us to become reactive. My feelings are my responsibility. You can't cause feelings in me—only provide opportunities for me to feel any specific way. My view of the situation is what determines what feelings will arise in any given situation. Anytime that our feelings are out of proportion with the stimulus, we have become reactive. Why have we become reactive? Because we feel our needs are being threatened. This happens because we aren't established in our own identity. We choose to become reactive when we let ourselves act when we're in that state. When we do that, we allow the devil to control our behavior and force us to act like he does through orchestrating the situation around us. Don't do that! No situation forces you to react. Take responsibility for yourself and center yourself in your identity before you act.

This practice has been key in my life. The instant I realize I've slipped into that reactive state, I try to remove myself from whatever situation I'm in and reconnect with God by The Holy Spirit. When you connect with God, you center yourself in who you are and reposition yourself in a position of strength. Only after I've positioned myself in that place of strength do I re-engage with the situation and try to move forward.

***"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13***

## **Update: New Dorm to House More Men**

Over the past couple of years we have had a waiting list for potential students. With a waiting list comes consequences. Many men have to wait for 90 days & we often lose them after that period. We do have a referral list of other ministries, but most of them insist upon being put on our waiting list. They tell us it is our success in ministry to others they know or it is them visiting our website that they choose to wait. The Lord spoke to me last year and told me He wanted another Dorm built. We complied and began construction last fall. We now have a 45 by 75 Ft. exterior building, that needs completion on the inside. This includes, Ceiling Tile & grid, 2 five ton Air Conditioning Units, & Stained Concrete flooring.

The approximate cost remaining for completing the Dormitory is \$7,120.00. We ask that you pray about what The Lord would have you do to help us in restoring His most valuable and precious asset, "People." With your financial gift, it will make possible for us to quickly complete the Dormitory project, so we can mentor more broken men, for The Glory of Christ!!!!

Thank you again, to everyone who co-labors with us in reconciling men with God, so restoration can begin.

We love you,

Rocky & Debbie Fondren

(Shiloh Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 charitable organization. All financial gifts are tax deductible at the end of the year)

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## **Graduates Testimony**

Hello, my name is Dustin Duncan. I am 38 years old, and I am originally from Arlington, TX. However, I spent most of the last 10 years in Washington State. I grew up in a Christian home with awesome parents in a nice neighborhood. As a child, I experienced a lot of mental torment. I had been diagnosed with mental disorders, given medication, and I experienced rejection and traumatic events. This led to me becoming very angry and I started to rebel. By the time I was 14 years old, I started smoking cigarettes, and which led to alcohol, pills, and hallucinogenic drugs. Facing death at the age of 19, I cried out to the Lord for help, and He heard my cry and saved me. Unfortunately though, a year later, I ended up relapsing again, but this time the torment was too much for me to handle. Filled with debilitating fear and paranoia, God led me through the doors of Shiloh. The moment I stepped onto the property I was delivered from my addictions. I learned to receive and give God's love, forgive myself and others, and learned social skills to help me minister to others. I hope to help others come to know the Lord by my testimony and see many people set free from oppression and mental problems. I also desire to see those who are backslidden who think there is no way back to God, to be set free! Jesus did it for me, He will do it for them also. God is no respecter of persons. I thank God for Shiloh and have no words to express what God has done for me through this ministry. Finally, I thank Shiloh Ministries and its supporters for doing what you are doing, because it is moving mountains in men's lives! I am happy to report that I am currently at YWAM Tyler pursuing a life as a missionary.



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### **Contact Us At:**

**Shiloh Ministries,**

**PO Box 10226,**

**Liberty, TX 77575**

**Phone#936.334.8616,**

**Fax:936.334.0061**

**E-mail: [shilohmin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shilohmin@sbcglobal.net)**

**Visit us on the web for information  
about us & to give financially on line  
at: [www.shilohmensministries.com](http://www.shilohmensministries.com)**

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**Rocky & Debbie Fondren  
Founders & Sr. Leaders, Shiloh Ministries**