

Being Ambassadors of Our Heavenly Father

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Many of us have seen the movie "It's a Wonderful Life". This is one of my favorite movies. It was filmed in 1946 and it starred Jimmy Stewart, Donna Reed and Lionel Barrymore. Jimmy Stewart starred as a struggling banker who never got to travel and never got to do the many things, he dreamed of doing in his life because he was always too busy selflessly serving the community through his bank. Through no fault of his own (actually through fraud by another bank), his bank was going to be foreclosed on, along with all his dreams. He was going to jump off a bridge and commit suicide when an angel stopped him and showed him how truly important he was to his family and to his community. The angel let Jimmy Stewart temporarily live in an alternative life scenario to show him what life in the community would have been like if he had never been born and had never lived. It was interesting and incredible to see just how many lives he had touched and changed for the good. Just one example was, that in this alternative life scenario, since he was never born, he was not there to save his brother from drowning when he was a child, so therefore, later in life, his brother was not alive where he would have saved hundreds of soldiers from being killed on a ship during World War II. The movie showed how devastated some of the lives of the people in the community were because he was not there to show them the kindness that only he had shown them through his bank. It showed just what a difference one life can make in the lives of hundreds if not thousands of people over a lifetime.

Do we sometimes feel that we don't make a difference in the world? That we don't affect others? That our actions, our character, our speech, and our attitudes don't really matter and don't affect others? We, as called-out ones of our Heavenly Father, are no one special in the world. We're not elected officials, we're not in the daily news, we're not considered by the world to be important people.

However, our Heavenly Father has invited us to be His called-out ones in the world today for a special purpose in this lifetime, a purpose we may not have explored before. We truly are no one special in and of ourselves, but our Heavenly Father has made us special through His relationship with us and for making us His representatives on earth. Because of that, our actions, our character, our speech, and our attitudes really do matter and can and do affect others either positively or negatively.

Today, brethren, in my sermon entitled:

Being Ambassadors of our Heavenly Father,

I want to explore the importance of being His proper ambassadors by being good examples in how we act, how we speak, how we think, and how we treat others. We will explore this subject in four points.

But first, let's define our terms. According to Mirriam-Webster's 2022 Dictionary, the word "Ambassador" is defined as:

An official envoy, a diplomatic agent of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government or sovereign as the resident representative of his or her own government or sovereign or appointed for a special diplomatic assignment.

An ambassador is the highest diplomat of a country sent by that country's leader to represent that country while residing in another country. The United States has ambassadors representing the government of the United States in most all other countries of the world. Ambassadors of the United States live and work in embassies in the capital cities of other countries such as London, England; Paris, France; Berlin, Germany; Moscow, Russia; Ottawa, Canada; Mexico City, Mexico; and now Jerusalem, Israel.

An ambassador is sent by the leader of the country and represents his or her country at the highest level in the foreign country where he or she resides. An ambassador is the official extension of the president or leader of the country that he represents and does the bidding of and follows the orders and commands of that president or highest official. He speaks the words given to him by the president or the leader of his country. An ambassador does not go "rogue" by saying his own words and expounding his own thoughts and opinions.

With that in mind, the first point in being an ambassador of our Heavenly Father is:

1) Jesus was an Ambassador of His Heavenly Father.

When Jesus was being questioned by Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem shortly before He was condemned to death by Pilate, Jesus spoke of this government that He represented.

John 18:36 *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. (KJV)*

So, Jesus represented the Kingdom of His Father that He had always been part of from eternity. It is the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus discussed 32 times in the book of Matthew, and it is the Kingdom of God 54 times in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Again, the words *Kingdom of God* in Greek are (*ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*) *he basileia tou theou* – the Kingdom of the God – the Kingdom of God Our Father.

While on earth, Jesus was an Ambassador of His Father. Just as an ambassador is a mouthpiece for and conveys the words of the president or leader of the country that he represents, Jesus represented His Father and said the words that His Father gave to Him.

In part of the prayer in John 17, that Jesus prayed with His disciples on His last night of His physical life, Jesus confirmed this.

John 17:8 *For I have given unto them the words which thou gave me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. (KJV)*

So, Jesus spoke the words that God Our Father gave to Him and showed that His Father had sent him as His emissary.

A few pages over to John 12, Jesus did the bidding of His Father.

John 12:49 *For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (KJV)*

So, Jesus, as the Ambassador of His Father who was sent by His Father and spoke whatever His Father commanded Him to speak, just as an ambassador today does for his government's leader.

In John 5, again Jesus did only what the Father did.

John 5:19 *Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. (KJV)*

As an Ambassador of His Father, Jesus did nothing of Himself, except what the Father gave Him to do. Let's continue in verse 36.

John 5:36 *But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. (KJV)*

Again, Jesus was an emissary of His Father. He was sent by the Father and represented the Father and did the works that His Father gave Him to do, just as an ambassador is sent by the country's leader and does the actions and words of that leader.

Jesus was so much like His Father as His representative that if you have seen Jesus, you have seen the Father.

John 14:8 *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (KJV)*

So, Jesus was so much like our Heavenly Father that He could say that if you have seen Him, you have seen the Father.

In short, Jesus truly was a perfect Ambassador of our Heavenly Father. He was sent by His Father, He spoke the words that His Father gave to Him, He represented His Father to the world. Jesus fulfilled all of the duties of an ambassador.

So, brethren, Jesus the Anointed One was an Ambassador of His Heavenly Father.

The second point in being an Ambassador of our Heavenly Father is:

2) We are ambassadors of our Heavenly Father on behalf of Jesus.

In 2 Corinthians 5, Paul states that we are ambassadors for Jesus the Anointed One. This is a well-known but misunderstood verse.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God [ὁ Θεός – ho theos – the God – God Our Father] did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (KJV)

First of all, verse 20 does not say that we are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. There is a specific way in Greek for Paul to have written that we are “ambassadors of Christ”. But he did not write that. In verse 20, the word for “for” in Greek is “ὑπὲρ” huper – Strong's #5228 when used with the genitive case means “on behalf of”. In verse 20, *Christ* is in the genitive case. So, verse 20 could be better translated as “we are ambassadors on behalf of the Anointed One”. The World English Bible translates verse 20 in this way.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *We are therefore ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God [ho theos – the God – God Our Father] were entreating by us. (WEB)*

GrammarBook.com states that *on behalf of* means “as the agent of”, “in the place of” or “on the part of”.

So, what the Apostle Paul is saying in verse 20 is that we are therefore ambassadors “on the part of” or “in the place” of the Anointed One, as though God Our Father was making His appeal to the world through us.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *We are therefore ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (NHEB)*

2 Corinthians 5:20 *We are Ambassadors therefore in the place of The Messiah, and as if he who is God requested of you by us in the place of The Messiah, we beseech you therefore: “Be reconciled to God. (ABPE)*

Jesus is no longer walking the earth as a physical man being an ambassador of His Father. That responsibility has been passed on to the called-out ones. So, verse 20 is

stating that we are ambassadors in place of the Anointed One as though God Our Father is now making His appeal to the world through us.

Are we ambassadors of our Heavenly Father just like Jesus was an ambassador of His Father? Being an ambassador is an important and heavy responsibility.

In Philippians 3, the Apostle Paul talks about our citizenship.

Philippians 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21) who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. (KJV)*

The Greek word for *citizenship* in verse 20 is *πολίτευμα políteuma* – Strong's 4175 meaning “form of government or citizenship”. Unfortunately, the King James Version translates this Greek word as *conversation*.

So, brethren, as ambassadors of our Heavenly Father, our true citizenship is in heaven. Again, ambassadors are not citizens of the countries to which they are sent, and we are being sent out into the world.

In Matthew 10 Jesus told His disciples that He was sending them forth to the world as sheep among the wolves.

Matthew 10:16 *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. 17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; 18) And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. (KJV)*

Again, Jesus was sending His disciples forth as emissaries of our Heavenly Father's Kingdom. But the world was going to mistreat and abuse those ambassadors.

After Jesus' resurrection on the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread, Jesus appeared to His disciples and He said something very profound.

John 20:19 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 20) And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. 21) Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. (KJV)*

Just as the Father sent Jesus forth to the world as His Ambassador, Jesus is sending us into the world in His stead as ambassadors.

We won't turn there, but in 2 Kings 2, we can read about a change in responsibilities from one prophet to another. Just like Elisha picked up the mantle that Elijah gave to him as Elijah ascended into the sky, Jesus gave us His mantle of being an ambassador of God Our Father when He became a Spirit Being once again and ascended to the Father.

Matthew 28 is a very well-known set of scriptures concerning the commission that Jesus gave His disciples after His resurrection. These verses are the last three verses in the Book of Matthew.

Matthew 28:18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

19) *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

20) *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)*

Again, Jesus' disciples were to go into all the world teaching the people in the world all of the things that Jesus had told them. Again, they were being sent into the world just like God Our Father had sent Jesus into the world, preaching and teaching the exact same message that Jesus had preached and taught during His physical life.

The Apostle Peter discusses the importance of our example in representing our Heavenly Father 1 Peter 2.

1 Peter 2:12 *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God [ὁ Θεὸς – ho theos – the God – God Our Father] on the day he visits us. (KJV)*

As ambassadors of our Heavenly Father, we represent Him. Our actions, our speech, our treatment of others represent Him. Peter is saying that our actions and deeds are to be righteous so that the world will glorify God Our Father when He comes because they will know that we had represented Him. We have been called out of this world to be an example, a light reflecting the image of our Heavenly Father and of His Son, Jesus the Anointed One.

Again, we begin with the example of Jesus. In talking in a heated debate with the Pharisees, Jesus stated that He was *the light of the world*.

John 8:12 *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (KJV)*

As being ambassadors of our Heavenly Father after the example of Jesus, we are to be lights of the world also. In Matthew 5, we will read the words of Jesus saying that we, as His disciples, are to be the light of the world, just like Jesus was the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14 *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*

15) Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house.

16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (KJV)

Again, our righteous example to the world, patterned after the way that Jesus lived His life and after the way that Jesus was an ambassador for His Father, was to be used not to glorify not Jesus but to glorify God Our Father. Again, our example is not for our glory, nor is it for the glory of Jesus; rather, our example is for the glory of our Heavenly Father.

Does our example and do our actions reflect God Our Father in our daily lives? What kind of example are we laying each day with our school mates, our teachers, our bosses, our subordinates, our fellow workers? Do we exhibit good works for others to see and take note of so that they will one day glorify our Heavenly Father?

Paul instructed the Romans on being a good example in the way they lived their everyday lives. The Roman Christians lived in a very pagan city, full of excesses, and full of immorality. They faced many trials every day, just as we do, living in today's immoral society. How can we live a good example? Paul instructed the Romans:

Romans 12:9 *Love [ἀγάπη – agape – Godly love] must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

10) Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

11) Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

12) Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

13) Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

15) Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

16) Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

17) Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

18) If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

19) Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

20) On the contrary: If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.

(NIV)

What kind of example are we laying in the way we treat our fellow brother in Christ? How do we resolve our differences? How easily do we make amends with one another? Do our actions and example mimic Jesus the Anointed One? Remember an ambassador is representing his government at all times. He is never really off-duty when he is in the foreign country to which he has been sent. Brethren, we are on duty

24/7. The Apostle Paul exhorted the called-out ones to show love to others in all that they did. We, as called-out ones today, need to do the very same thing.

Colossian 3:12 *Since God [ho theos – the God – God Our Father] chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.*

13) *Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.*

14) *Above all, clothe yourselves with love [ἀγάπη – agape – Godly love], which binds us all together in perfect harmony.*

15) *And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body, you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. (NLT)*

Are these the attributes that we leave as an example to others in our daily lives? Brethren, are we merciful to others? Are we kind to others? Are we humble in our approach to others? Are we forbearing to others with longsuffering? Are we showing true forgiveness in the way that we treat one another? Do we quickly forgive others, or do we bottle up the resentment of wrongs done against us and let the bitterness build up inside us? As we previously read in John 14, by Jesus' perfect life, He said that if we have seen Him, we have seen our Heavenly Father. Can that be said about us?

As ambassadors of our Heavenly Father, by the example that we set to others, can we say to others that if you see us, then you have seen our Heavenly Father? As ambassadors of our Heavenly Father to the world, do people in the world notice that we are indeed different? Do they notice that we act differently? React differently? Talk differently? Do our actions, our speech, our attitudes, and our demeanor showcase God Our Father and Jesus the Anointed One and the Kingdom? Or are we falling way short of properly representing the greatest government in all the universe and the greatest Sovereign and His Son?

The third point in being an ambassador of our Heavenly Father is:

3) Jesus left us a perfect example for us to follow in being our Father's ambassadors.

Brethren, how does our Heavenly Father expect us to fulfill our role as His ambassadors to the world? Did He transmit that knowledge to us by fiat? Did He provide us classes on how to be an effective ambassador? Did He print us out an ambassador's user's manual? Well, He actually did. That user's manual is the Bible, and the teacher is Jesus and His life on earth as recorded in the Bible. Jesus lived as a human man living a perfect life and leaving us a perfect example of being an ambassador of our Heavenly Father for us to follow. In 1 Peter 2, the Apostle Peter discusses the perfect example that Jesus left for us.

1 Peter 2:21 *For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.*

22) *He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone.*

23) *He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.*

24) *He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. (NLT)*

The Apostle Peter listed many important characteristics that Jesus showed as an example to us. Brethren, when we are insulted, do we retaliate? When someone cuts us off in traffic, do we say nice things to that person? Do we show love to others who treat us unfairly? Do we seek revenge on others who treat us wrongly?

The Apostle Paul also exhorted the Ephesian congregation to follow the example of Jesus and to imitate our Heavenly Father and His characteristics which were exhibited perfectly by His Son, Jesus.

Ephesians 5:1 *Imitate God [ho theos – the God – God Our Father], therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children.*

2) *Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. (NLT)*

The Greek word for *love* in verse 2 is *ἀγάπη agape* Strong's #26 meaning "the unselfish, divine love of our Heavenly Father and of Jesus, His Son".

So, Paul is exhorting us to imitate our Heavenly Father by following the example that Jesus left for us. We imitate our Heavenly Father by living a life filled with His Godly *agape* love, a love that only comes from God Our Father and His Son.

1 Corinthians 13 is commonly known as the love chapter of the Bible, and we will read about the main characteristic of being a disciple of Jesus and being an ambassador for our Heavenly Father. This characteristic is Godly *agape* love, and Jesus perfectly exhibited this Godly *agape* love during His ministry on the earth as an ambassador for His Father.

1 Corinthians 13:4 *Love [Godly agape love] is patient, love [Godly agape love] is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.*

5) *It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs.*

6) *Love [Godly agape love] takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth.*

7) *It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

8) *Love [Godly agape love] never fails.*

Continuing in verse 13)

13) *And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love [Godly agape love]. (NIV)*

During His life on the earth, Jesus was patient, kind, humble, never rude, never self-seeking. He was slow to anger and quick to forgive. He hated sin and rejoiced in the

truth. He endured until His death, and He became our propitiation for sin. Do we follow His example in our lives?

Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment on the last night of His physical life. And that commandment was centered on the Godly agape love that the Father and Jesus have for us and on the Godly agape love that They command us to have for others.

John 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

35) By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (KJV)

Jesus instructed His disciples and by extension He instructs us today to have Godly agape love for one another. It is the very sign that we are Jesus' disciples. It is the very sign that we are ambassadors of our Heavenly Father.

Again, our Heavenly Father did not expect us to be clueless in how to live our lives in a righteous and holy manner. Instead, He left us a primer book on how to be His ambassadors through the record of Jesus and through how Jesus lived His life.

If we are to be ambassadors of our Heavenly Father just like Jesus was during His physical life on earth, then we should be searching daily to continually be cognizant of how Jesus lived His life so that we are continually patterning our lives after His example.

The Apostle John exhorted the brethren toward the end of the first century to live their lives as Jesus did.

1 John 2:6 *Whoever claims to abide in Him [Jesus] must walk as Jesus walked. (BSB)*

Brethren, if we are claiming to be Jesus' disciples, if we are claiming to be ambassadors of our Heavenly Father, if we are claiming to be on our journey toward entrance into the Kingdom of our Father, we must be walking the walk that Jesus walked. The importance of following the example that Jesus left for us leads us to the fourth point of today's sermon. The fourth point in being an ambassador of our Heavenly Father is:

4) As ambassadors, we make powerful long-lasting impressions on people by our example.

A good example can bring about good consequences to others who are far away, people you may never even know. Conversely, a bad example can have a negative effect the same way.

Many years ago, a member told me a story about the good example of another member whom she didn't even know and how that good example affected her in a very positive way. Her story was this: About 20 years ago, she started a new job here in Houston in the month of July. As September and the Feast were approaching, there was a discussion in the office about this member being gone for over a week for the Feast. A

vice president of the firm was walking by and heard part of the conversation and stopped and asked her, "Do you mean the Feast of Tabernacles?" I think she must have dropped her jaw on the floor. I'm sure she was stunned. She replied, "Yes, the Feast of Tabernacles. How did you know about the Feast?"

The vice president told her that many years ago in Sacramento, California, he had wonderful neighbors who were members of the Worldwide Church of God. He was impressed with the way they lived their lives. He was impressed by their example.

Consequently, the vice president looked favorably upon the member here in Houston. She had no problem getting time off for the Feast and continued to work there for many, many years. She didn't know who the vice president's neighbors were. She never met them. She doesn't know their names. And they don't know even to this day what good effect that their example had in the life of another member in God's Church decades later. A good example is a gift that keeps on giving year after year, well into the future.

The member told me how thankful she was that the Church members who were neighbors to that vice president were good examples. She shudders to think what the downside could have been at her job if those Church members had been terrible neighbors, terrible examples, leaving distasteful and terrible memories and perceptions of the Church and of its members in the mind of the vice president. She shudders to think that she could have been just starting off in the company with the vice president of the company already in a bad frame of mind when it came to her leaving work to go to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Likewise, do we realize that our bad actions, our bad attitudes and our bad example can hinder others in their development, in their careers, and in their growth, maybe well into the future?

Brethren, what is your story? In your own life, how has someone's good example benefited you, maybe in unique way? Maybe the benefit was a direct result of another's actions; maybe it was an indirect result which helped pave the way for you to achieve something, or made something easier for you.

Conversely, and sadly, has another church member's bad example punished you? Hindered you? Embarrassed you? Our example is powerful. How do we wield and use the power that God has given to us? How do we use the opportunities that God opens up for us to exhibit good examples for others? Do we view being a good example as an act of service to others? What is the power of our example? Do we realize that our Heavenly Father can use our example to change others?

The Apostle Peter exhorts the wives in the Church to set good righteous examples.

1 Peter 3:1 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;*

2) While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. (KJV)

The Greek word for *conversation* is *ἀναστροφή anastrophé* Strong's #391 meaning "behavior". So, these two verses could be better translated as:

- 1 Peter 3:1** *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the behavior of the wives;*
2) *While they behold your chaste behavior coupled with fear.* (KJV)

So, the righteous example of wives can actually move their husbands to seek our Heavenly Father. In Philippians 2 the Apostle Paul exhorted the Philippians to set good examples for others to see and that we are to be bright lights shining in a very dark world.

- Philippians 2:12** *But now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,*
13) *for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*
14) *Do everything without grumbling or arguing,*
15) *so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky*
16) *as you hold firmly to the word of life.* (NIV)

Are we living clean, innocent lives without arguing and complaining. Are we above criticisms from others in our behavior? What are our actions each day? Are we showing love and kindness to others in the way that we treat people who are less fortunate than we are? This is a great measuring stick for determining if we have the character that our Heavenly Father wants to see in us.

In Matthew 25, we read a very famous part of scripture where Jesus addressed many examples of this measuring stick.

- Matthew 25:34** *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*
35) *For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat [you always had time to help me]: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink [I always left you feeling better than I was before]: I was a stranger, and ye took me in [you invited me into your home]:*
36) *Naked, and you clothed me [you looked after my needs]: I was sick, and ye visited me [you cared for me in my distress]: I was in prison, and ye came unto me [you helped me when I was less fortunate than you].*
37) *Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and fed you? or thirsty, and gave you drink?*
38) *When did we see you a stranger, and took you in? or naked, and clothed you?*
39) *Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and came unto you?*

40) And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch, as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (KJV)

Do we live our daily lives in this way? Will we be on Jesus' right hand in the future with the way we are living our lives today? Our example is important and it is so very powerful. Our example affects everyone around us. Our example can have far-reaching effects not limited by distance or by time. Our good example today can have a positive effect on someone far away even decades later. Being a good example is one of the reasons for our calling. And our Heavenly Father can and does use our good example to change the lives of others.

In today's sermon, we have explored being ambassadors of our Heavenly Father in four points. These points are:

- 1) Jesus was an Ambassador of His Heavenly Father. Jesus humbled Himself, gave up being an Elohim or Mighty One, and lived a perfect life as a fleshly man. During His lifetime on earth, Jesus was an ambassador of His Heavenly Father, who was sent by His Father, who spoke the words given to Him by His Father, and who represented His Father and His Father's Kingdom in all things. That is exactly the function of an ambassador. Brethren, do we acknowledge Jesus in that important role that He perfectly fulfilled?
- 2) We are ambassadors of our Heavenly Father on behalf of Jesus. When Jesus died and was resurrected, He ascended back to the right hand of His Father. He passed the mantle of ambassadorship of our Heavenly Father to us as His Father's called-out ones. We have been sent into the world to preach the good news of our Heavenly Father's Kingdom and to represent our Heavenly Father and His Kingdom to the world. Brethren, do we truly understand the honor and the significance of being ambassadors of the Most High God, God Almighty, our Heavenly Father, the greatest and most powerful Being in all the universe?
- 3) Jesus left us a perfect example for us to follow in being our Father's ambassadors. God Our Father did not leave us clueless on how to represent Him as proper ambassadors. The Bible is our manual, and the examples of Jesus' life provide us with the adequate instructions on being the ambassadors of our Heavenly Father that He wants us to be. Brethren, are we studying daily that incredible manual (the Bible) for how to be our Father's ambassador?
- 4) As ambassadors, we make powerful long-lasting impressions on people by our example. Brethren, we have the power to change people's lives through our example and through our utilization of our Heavenly Father's Holy Spirit. Our example can change the lives of our neighbors, friends, colleagues, students, teachers, family members, and fellow called-out ones. Brethren, are we taking advantage of the opportunities that God Our Father gives us each day to set a good example for others so that they can see and ultimately give praise to our Heavenly Father?

We have been given a responsibility to be shining lights in a very dark world. Are we living our lives in a Godly manner in our actions, speech, and attitudes that we show to others each day? Do people in the world see a difference in us? Or are we living our lives in such a manner that we do not stand out as different from the world? As ambassadors, we are on duty 24/7. We don't get to take vacation from being an ambassador of our Heavenly Father. We are on display every minute of every hour of every day of our lives. What do others see when they see us?

No matter who we are, we affect all the people around us in ways we just do not realize at this present time. Just like Jimmy Stewart's character in "It's a Wonderful Life", life would be very different for so many if we did not exist. The endless opportunities to positively affect so many people in the world are even increased with our calling by our Heavenly Father to be His ambassadors to the world.

Ambassadors are not citizens of the country to which they are sent to represent their home country and their leader. Even though ambassadors physically reside in a foreign nation, their loyalty, their commitment, their citizenship, and their responsibilities remain with their home country that they are representing. Even though we currently live in the world, our loyalty, our commitment, our citizenship, and our responsibilities lie in heaven with our Heavenly Father.

Brethren, are you being an effective, loyal, humble, committed and righteous ambassador of our Heavenly Father?