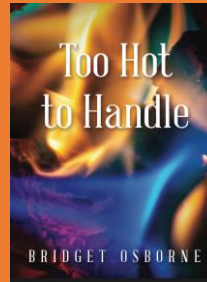




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**July 2024**

## **IS YOUR PERCEPTION BASED ON HOW OTHERS VIEW YOU?**

Dear Chosen One: The story in Luke Chapter 4:14-24, demonstrated how Jesus was rejected in His hometown by many people. The Bible says, “**Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.**” (vs. 14-15.)

When Jesus went back to His hometown, He went into the synagogue, and He was appointed to read the Scripture. This Scripture was actually a prophecy that was spoken by the prophet Isaiah and Jesus was going to fulfill that prophecy. The Scroll from the prophet Isaiah was given to Jesus and He started to read, “**The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.**” (Isaiah 61:1-2)

The Bible says any Word that goes out from God’s mouth will not return empty, but it will accomplish what He desires to achieve. (Isaiah 55:11). When the right time comes, that spoken word will manifest itself. That is why we have to be careful what we speak or prophesy over our children and others for the Bible also tells us that “**Death and life are in the power of the tongue.**” (Proverbs 18:21.) As soon as Jesus read the Scripture, that prophecy came alive and was fulfilled in view of all those who were in the synagogue.

Jesus knew His true identity in the Father; therefore, He rolled up the scroll and took His seat in His rightful

place. However, there was a problem. The Jews were offended, and they rejected Jesus after He sat in the chair that was set aside for the Messiah. Jesus *was* the Messiah *and* the Son of God, but they were looking for someone else.

When some people accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, they are going to face this same kind of rejection when they come in contact with their old friends. Those friends are still looking for that old person they once knew. Especially those incarcerated individuals who are returning home saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Some people even after hearing about your transformation and the things you are doing -- like witnessing and telling others about Jesus’ goodness and mercies—still may not believe. Although your character in Christ demonstrates that you are a new creation in Christ, without spiritual eyes, those individuals around you will not be able to accept this truth. Only spirit filled people will be able to recognize the wonderful changes while some will remain doubtful about your new identity.

This is the kind of rejection Jesus experienced. They were looking at the same Jesus who they knew—the one who grew up in Nazareth—but questioning His power and ability to heal the sick, open blind eyes, liberate the captives and raise the dead. I am sure some of them were saying “**who does He think He is coming back here doing all these miracles as if He is God.**” Oh yes! Jesus was God in the flesh and that was why He was able to do those things.

Unfortunately, God’s thoughts and ways of

doing things are baffling to our carnal minds. Jesus was God before He left His home to proclaim the Good News and He was still God when He returned home! John 1:1-2 says “**In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He [Jesus] was with God in the beginning.**” Yes! The Word was and is Jesus. He was in the beginning when God created the world.

Those religious people could not recognize Jesus because most of them were like the people in this era who are spiritually blind towards godly things/people. These people look and sound spiritual, but they are blinded to the TRUTH. Those people who were in the Temple when Jesus read the Scripture were faithful church goers but spiritually blind.

They missed the manifestation of prophecy because they perceived Jesus to be just like one of them. They knew Him as Mary and Joseph’s son. Therefore, He was not worth having their undivided attention. The world will not recognize you and some of your friends will not accept you when you are spiritually transformed, and *fire baptized*.

The Bible says, in 2 Corinthians 4:4 “**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of Christ.**” Satan will deprive the truth from being revealed to anyone.

If you are an unbeliever and you are reading this newsletter, don’t let the devil blind your mind from receiving truth. God can and will use various people to carry out His work. You may have known them previously, and they may even look the same now, but remember the Holy Spirit is within them, and God can use them to accomplish His will for your life. As Christians, when we go to preach the Gospel to unbelievers, some of them will **not accept** the Word of God because they are still looking at the vessel and not the content, which is the Powerful Word of God within us. It is a privilege to bring you the Good News. And right now, I want you to reflect on these four questions.

1. **How do you see yourself--unstable, unworthy, uneducated, prideful, arrogant, and self-**

**righteous? Or fearful, timid, and stupid?** If these tainted images are a part of your consciousness, then you need to make a withdrawal and dispose them in the trash right now!

You need to make some new deposits into your memory bank. Start repeating phrases such as: **I am confident in Christ Jesus. I am more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus. I am fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of Christ Jesus. I am strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. I am smart, beautiful and have the mind of Christ Jesus.** Now, don’t just make one deposit. Do as many as you wish and use every opportunity you get to repeat these words to fill your memory bank.

2. **Is your perception based on how others view you?** Some people’s perceptions about themselves are based upon what others told them. Stay true to yourself and keep God first place in all your affairs. Don’t make decisions about your life based on someone else’s opinion. Be a God pleaser not a people pleaser.

3. **Are you looking at yourself through the world’s lens?** If you are looking through the lens of the world then you need to re-examine your vision and change your lens. The Bible clearly tells us that we are in this world, but this world is not our home. People who are looking through the world’s lens usually start to mimic what the world is seeing. Take a good look at yourself in the mirror and remember you were born in the image and likeness of God—your Father.

4. **From whom does your validation come? People or God?** Don’t wait for people to validate your accomplishments. Oftentimes, the closest people around you overlook your successes and take what you are doing for granted. Some people cannot appreciate your hard work because they are too busy trying to compete or critique it. You are your biggest fan. When you successfully accomplished a task, it was because God has already validated it. Pat your shoulder and say “**Well done...**”