

Blackbird Judgment

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:7-8

I had a dream last night in which I had to judge various things using only the view of a blackbird sitting on a power line. The dream made no sense, but it left quite an impact on me. I woke up wondering...what if a bird's-eye view was the only criteria available to judge me? Would my actions show me to be loving or selfish?

I'm not sure I like the answer. What about you? If you were to be judged only by your actions, what would the result be?*

Our actions show the truth of what is really in our hearts. It's easy to tell someone that we love them, but the blackbird perspective is the true test. What do our actions show? Are we kind to them and patient with them? Do we sacrifice of ourselves to give them what they need? Do we forgive them and not hold grudges? Do we protect their hearts with honest and gentle words?

And, as if it isn't difficult enough to consider whether or not we really demonstrate love to the people we like, we have to consider everyone else too! God's pretty clear on this: we're not just supposed to love the people we like; we are supposed to love everyone.

Ouch. That's hard.

But that is our call as Christians – to love others. Not just with words, but with deeds and actions.

The great thing is that we don't have to do this on our own. God will help us. The love we need comes from Him and flows through us to others. As you go through your week, think about the Blackbird Test. What are your actions revealing about your heart? Are they caring and respectful. Do they honor those around you? And when you find yourself failing, pause... pray... and then start over, focusing on letting God's love flow through you to others.

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**The truth is that we are all judged by our actions, and those actions, being less than right all the time, condemn us to spending eternity away from God. God is righteous. Because we are not right, we cannot live with Him. God's righteousness requires Him to always do the right thing. Punishing sin is the right thing. He is REQUIRED to punish sin. Because we are sinners, we must pay the penalty, which is the blood of death.*

So, judgment by our actions leads us to death, which is an eternity away from the presence of God, also known as Hell. In His love, God gave His son to die in our place. Jesus was without sin so He did not need to pay the penalty. His blood is therefore available to us. His blood, if we accept it, is the payment for our sin and even removes our sin from us.

The only way we can be saved from the judgment of our actions and be in the presence of God, also known as Heaven, is to know and accept that Jesus died for us. If you know and accept that, you will not be condemned for your sin and sent away when you die and meet your Maker. Instead, you will be ushered into His presence and rewarded.

When you die, you WILL meet your Maker. Do you know for certain that He will not reject you from His presence?