

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 1

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## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART ONE

#### WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

#### THE RULE OF GOD

#### KINGDOM OF GOD—KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

#### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM

"KINGDOM"—what a magical ring that word plays upon the ear, yet when it comes to the subject of the Kingdom of God there seems to be no end to the carnal-minded reasonings of man as to what it is, where it is, and how it will come to pass. If you were to ask several average professed Christians what the Kingdom of God is, you would receive a variety of answers. There are a great many ideas, opinions, interpretations, conceptions and mix-conceptions among believers as to what constitutes the Kingdom of God. Vast multitudes of people believe that any minute Jesus will appear in the sky and whisk away (rapture) those who are saved and take them to heaven to enjoy the Kingdom of God. They teach that the Kingdom of God is heaven and that it has no relationship with the earth. For these the "end time" means the cataclysmic end of the universe, the destruction of the earth by fire, the sending of all unbelievers and wicked people to eternal damnation in hell, and the establishing of an eternal order of bliss for the saved in some far-off heaven somewhere.

Others teach that the Kingdom of God is purely earthly and that it will be a political and social structure enforced on earth for a thousand years at the return of Jesus Christ with His saints to rule and reign. This theory has been popularized by the Schofield Bible. To these the Kingdom of God is the restored kingdom of Israel fulfilling the Davidic covenant. Jesus offered this kingdom to the Jews, but they refused; therefore Christ withdrew His offer and postponed it until a future time when they would accept Him as their King. When that day comes, they say, Jesus will come back and set His feet upon the Mount of Olives. His saints with Him, He will come to the eastern gate of Jerusalem. Having been sealed up for centuries, this gate will be opened for Him to pass through into the city. He will then set up His headquarters in a building, sit on a throne, and be crowned King. His Kingdom will then be established. People from all nations will journey to Jerusalem to see Jesus—in person—and to worship Him in a millennial temple there. From Jerusalem the Kingdom will expand to rule over all nations. The nations will quit fighting—will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and there will follow a thousand years of unparalleled peace, blessing, prosperity, and righteousness.

A variation of the above plan involves the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic nations of earth as descendants of the "lost" ten tribes of Israel—the northern kingdom of Israel carried away into captivity. There is some evidence<sup>1</sup> that these tribes have become the modern nations of Britain, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, north-western Europe, etc. According to this concept Christ comes back to reign over these great Israel nations rather than the Jews—and the capital city of the restored Israel Kingdom will be London, England, where the throne of David is now located. This Kingdom will be earthly, political, judiciary and military.

Still another teaching is that the Church (organized Christianity) is the Kingdom of God. The covenantal promises God made with Abraham and David have been transferred to and fulfilled spiritually in the Church. The Church is thus the New Israel in the earth. This theory prevailed during the Middle Ages (also called the Dark Ages) when the supreme head of the Church (the Pope), complete with a crown, a throne, a government and an army, ruled the nations of Europe for a thousand years as the Kingdom of God on earth. Unfortunately, this period, instead of being the most enlightening, progressive, prosperous, righteous and glorious epoch in history was in fact the darkest, most illiterate and ignorant, superstitious and backward, of earth's generations! Some among us even today believe that the Kingdom will come as a result of Christians becoming politically active, taking over the existing political institutions, getting elected to office, and ruling the earth through the power of politics. This is exactly what happened when the Roman Emperor Constantine began mixing Christianity with carnal government, which gave rise to the Papacy, and the temporal powers of government

were seized by the so-called Church. The result was not earth's "golden age," "Utopia," or "Jubilee," but the now infamous "Dark Ages" ruled over by the kingdom of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT.

## WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

The Bible speaks of a number of kingdoms. The first world empire—the Chaldean Empire often called "Babylon"—was a kingdom. God inspired the prophet Daniel to say to its king, Nebuchadnezzar, **"...the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory" (Dan. 2:37)**. Then there was the kingdom of Israel—the family descended from Israel, which became one of earth's nations or governments. Nearly all kingdoms involve an ethnic entity (racial group) and their government. The kingdom of Israel under Solomon was a type of the Kingdom of God. **Therefore the Kingdom of God is dual: (1) A GOVERNMENT. A government—or kingdom—is composed of four things: (a) a KING, ruling over (b) people, subjects, or citizens within (c) a definite jurisdiction of territory, with (d) laws and a system of administering them. (2) A FAMILY. As with all kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel was a family of the children of Israel. In respect to the Kingdom of God, it comprises the Family of God—a family into which man may be born, which shall be formed into a RULING or GOVERNING family that shall have jurisdiction over all nations, that is, the whole earth, and, later, the entire universe!**

As Bill Britton once wrote: "What a marvelous mystery! What a glorious destiny! This new nation of holy people is God's Kingdom. This Kingdom has a King of kings. And there are kings and priests. There are overcomers who rule and reign with Him. There is a bride and Bridegroom. There is a first-fruits, a harvest, and a great gleanings. There are 30 fold, 60 fold, and 100 fold in that great harvest. There are 144,000 who follow the Lamb wheresoever He goes, and there is an un-numbered multitude standing triumphantly before the throne. There is a Holy City and a Temple. There is a marriage supper attended by Bridegroom, bride, guests, servants, and even intruders. What else could there be in this Kingdom? More by far than our minds could comprehend. Get ready. Be there!"

The dictionary defines "kingdom" as "a government or country headed by a king or queen; a monarchical state; a realm or domain." The word "kingdom" is made up of the noun "king", and the suffix "dom". "Dom" is a noun-forming suffix to express rank, position, or domain. For example, a dukedom is the domain over which a duke has authority or exercises rule, and in the abstract the rank of a duke. In like manner a kingdom is the domain and the people within that domain over which a king exercises authority and rule. It is the "king's domain". "Kingdom" is thus a contraction of "king's domain". The term, Kingdom of God, can mean no other than the domain over which God exercises rule as King. It is God's declared purpose therefore that His people, His holy nation, His peculiar treasure, should be the domain over which He would rule as King, and ultimately all the earth and all things and every creature. The Lord's greatest dominion at this time is in the lives of His elect and chosen ones. We are now becoming ruled and governed by the Lord totally and absolutely. He has extended the dominion of His Kingdom to our hearts and lives, and now the Lord will rule us with complete and undisputed dominion. And He will continue to rule and reign in our lives until every enemy within us is made subject to Him. This is the present truth of the Kingdom of God!

God has a plan, a wonderful Kingdom program for this earth and every person on this earth. You might be surprised to discover how many people go through life—some of them even go to church and speak in tongues—but never truly realize that God has a plan and purpose for them and for the ages. Friends, things are not just "happening" with God. He didn't fling this earth out in space and then sit back and say, "Whatever will be, will be." God has a plan and He works all things after the counsel of His own will. God is sovereign and nothing shall thwart His plan. once you begin to see yourself as a vital part of that plan and purpose, that what He has planned and purposed for your life will not be defeated or stopped, you will then begin to walk forth in victory and in life. But, precious friend of mine, let me assure you that this won't come just because you give mental assent to it and make a positive confession—this comes only as we bring our lives into conformity with God's priorities. We need to understand what God's priorities are and then flow with those priorities. The Lord's people are dabbling around with so many non-essentials, playing little church games, majoring in minors! The real purpose for which God sent Jesus into the world was to ESTABLISH ON THE EARTH HIS KINGDOM! And His ultimate purpose is that the kingdoms of this world shall experientially become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ. That is the plan of the ages. The prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, and which vast

multitudes unheedingly repeat by rote, says, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done..." Where? "On earth as it is in heaven."

The all-wise and omnipotent Creator planted within man's very nature a tendency to form into tribes, clans, colonies and nations with some kind of government, having a patriarch, chief, or king. Every kingdom requires a king. You cannot have a kingdom without a king. Neither can you have a king without a kingdom. The king must have a sphere over which he rules with absolute authority. If you don't believe that ask Constantine 11, exiled king of Greece, who for a time lived in Italy and now lives in London. He is no king— he doesn't have a kingdom. He is out of a job. A true king must have a kingdom.

For people living today, living under democratic governments in the western world and in the twentieth century, the word "kingdom" is not at all a natural term- to use. We know a lot about governments and politics, but very little about a kingdom. In Bible days, however, this was not the case. Most nations were then ruled by a king. The king was not elected by the people and he ruled with absolute authority—the king's word was law. Today, when our elected officials are held more accountable for their actions, I'm not sure we can begin to appreciate the absolute power of an ancient monarch. A thousand years ago, when a king spoke, people trembled. Subjects didn't say, "I'll, ah...take that into consideration, your majesty." What they replied was, "Yes, your majesty!" The closest modern equivalent I can think of would be a decision handed down by the United States Supreme Court. You wouldn't argue with it, you would just accept it. And yet, that doesn't even come close. In the New Testament just a word from king Herod was enough to slaughter all the male children in Bethlehem two years old and younger. A king like Herod might be hated, but because of his position and power he was still treated with great respect.

Today there are few kings left in the world, and those that still bear the name actually wield very little power. They are kings by title only. The kingdoms of today are a rather hybrid form, that is, a figurehead as a king, yet the kingdom is ruled by some kind of assembly or parliament. They are constitutional monarchs and present to us a picture far different from the king in ancient times. The idea of doing obeisance before someone and being obedient to his every wish and command is foreign to us if not even repulsive. The very thought of not being in control of their own lives has not even entered very many men's minds. We in this country are used to "freedom" and any "kings" that come along may have some difficulty asserting their influence over us. Alas! That is the very reason so many Christians today have found no entrance into the Kingdom of God! They want God's grace and His blessings, but are submitted to His authority very little.

We have now come to the most sublime of all truths. Our hearts should bow in holy reverence and rejoice that the heavens are opened and that the mind of Christ is coming to dwell in men. We should be glad with joy unspeakable and full of glory that the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven are being unveiled within our very hearts. The light of the Holy Spirit's wisdom and revelation is shed with its quickening and illuminating rays upon our understanding, dispelling the mists, dividing the light from the darkness, that all the elect sons of God may find an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God in this great Day. May the blessed spirit of truth make very real to all who read these lines that the phrase "the Kingdom of God" is only a manner of speaking. That is why Jesus never said, "The Kingdom of God is such and such," but always, "the Kingdom of God is like such and such." He explained the Kingdom in terms of parables and metaphors. There is actually no such entity as the Kingdom. It is not a kind of visible structure or outward establishment that God sets up. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!" It is rather God Himself exerting His rightful power to actually rule by His Spirit over all people, to bring them consciously under His control, to subdue them to His purposes. and direct them by His will. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom as "coming," He does not mean some "thing" or some "age" or something else, which is to appear or begin. He speaks of God Himself making His rule effective in the hearts and affairs of men. May God help us to see the great and eternal truth that when we speak of the Kingdom of God we are talking about something that has no existence at all apart from GOD HIMSELF. Just as we speak of the grace of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the wisdom of God, the righteousness of God, or the power of God, we deceive ourselves if we think of them as having some tangible existence apart from God Himself. They are merely verbal ways of describing God Himself as He acts and manifests out of His state of being. So the Kingdom of God is a way of speaking of God Himself as He moves in power and glory and goodness and wisdom and righteousness to influence and rule in the hearts and activities of men!

## THE RULE OF GOD

It is significant to note that the phrases "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven" are not to be found in the Old Testament. They are strictly New Testament terms beginning with John the Baptist and Jesus. When Jesus came He did not preach a message called grace, or salvation, or justification, or sanctification, or regeneration, or even the Church. Could there be any more glorious message than the one that fell from His lips as He began His sonship ministry declaring, "The KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!" From that time forward the great teaching of the Lord centered in the truth of THE KINGDOM. His gospel was the gospel (good news) of the Kingdom of God. He only lightly touched on the other subjects which today are considered the great doctrines of the Church and then only as they related to the Kingdom. All of these things are included within the Kingdom, but the Kingdom is none of them. The Kingdom is THE RULE OF GOD. It is the DOMINION OF GOD. That is exactly what it is. And Jesus came with just that message—the revelation of the RULE OF GOD within the hearts of men, and through men, over the earth, yea, over the whole vast universe! First He must reign completely in our lives. The Kingdom of God is God in Christ in the saints governing the creation of God. The rule of God begins in the hearts of His elect.

Jesus, after His resurrection, asked Peter three times if he loved Him. He then said to him: "When you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and Another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." Commenting on these words, the Holy Spirit adds: **"This Jesus said to show by what death Peter was to glorify God" (Jn. 21:18-19)**. The expressions when you were young and when you are old speak of two distinct periods in Peter's life. They indicate His walk before and after entering the Kingdom. The reference to his past (when Peter was young) and to his future (when he would be old) is not a reference to age but to spiritual immaturity and maturity. Emphasis in the first statement is on the pronoun you ("you girded yourself, you walked where you would"). During this period, Peter's walk with the Lord was a walk, which centered on self—on where he wanted to go and what he wanted to do for the Lord. How impetuous was he in his desires! But the day would come when Peter, subject to Jesus as his King, would allow the Lord to do with him as He willed.

The words another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go succinctly describe the walk of the Kingdom. The another here refers to the Lord. The walk of the Kingdom is far from easy and unlike anything we have experienced in the past. Whereas the Lord tolerated and even overlooked the many inconsistencies in our walk when we were young (immature), He now subjects us to a discipline of fire until His image is formed in us (Mal. 3:2-3). Every part of our being—spirit, soul, and body—must come under His dominion. All our strongholds will be exposed and reduced to ashes, and every thought made captive to the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:3-5). In the Kingdom we come to know God as an all-consuming fire— not to destroy but to purge and sanctify us (Heb. 12:29). "Who among us," asks the prophet Isaiah, "can dwell with the devouring fire?" The answer: **"He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who despises the gains of oppressions, who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil, he will dwell on the heights...his bread will be given him, his water will be sure. Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will behold a land (the Kingdom) that stretches afar" (Isa. 33:14-17)**.

The epistle to the Hebrews was written to those who were following on to know the Lord. In the twelfth chapter the writer informs his readers that God wanted to wean them from their babyhood walk in God and that which appealed to their physical senses in order to introduce them to that which was real and lasting—the Kingdom. To experience the Kingdom, they would have to forsake the elementary principles which the whole church world glories in today, and go on to perfection. Jesus as King would become the living reality of their lives. But for this to happen, their earth and heavens first had to be shaken. That the earth in us (our humanity) must be shaken before we can enter into the Kingdom is a truth very few would deny. But that our heavens (religious experiences, concepts, understandings, ministries, activities) must also be shaken before we can receive the Kingdom is another matter. To realize all that God has for us as His sons in the walk of the Kingdom, our earth and heavens must give way to a new order—to a new earth and heaven. Not a new earth of mountains and valleys and streams and trees; not a new heavens of galaxies, solar systems, suns, planets and moons; but a NEW HUMANITY AND NEW SPIRITUAL DIMENSION. Only then can we know what the Kingdom really is and how to walk in it and minister it to creation. All religious activity apart from the realm of the Kingdom is nought

but hay, wood, and stubble. It makes very impressive edifices, but it is not the Kingdom of God, and will disappear forever in the all-consuming fire of God.

## **KINGDOM OF GOD— KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

There are many strange ideas around about the difference between the terms "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven". It has been taught that the Kingdom of God is spiritual and heavenly, whereas the Kingdom of Heaven is temporal and earthly, and that the two cannot be mixed. Actually, if there were any truth in that, it still sounds backwards! Some say that the Kingdom of God is an eternal kingdom of God over all and that the Kingdom of Heaven is an earthly and temporal program, some future divine dynasty to be established on earth, and that it is of special significance only to the Jews, who, still awaiting their Messiah, will see His righteous government in control of the world, and in their hands, during the Millennium. Others assume that the Kingdom of Heaven means a kingdom in heaven, so they are waiting to die so they can go to their kingdom in heaven where they intend to spend eternity strumming harps and dancing up and down the streets of gold.

Ignorant men have long tried to make a distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, as though they were two separate kingdoms. They often explain that the Kingdom of Heaven embraces the "Church age" and the Kingdom of God will be set up during the "Millennium". The simple truth is that the two terms are used interchangeably in numerous places in scripture. To cite only a few of several examples, when Matthew recorded the Sermon on the Mount he quoted Jesus as saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. " But when Luke recorded the same saying of Jesus he said, "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God." Again, Matthew quoted the Lord, **"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the law and the prophets prophesied until John"** (Mat. 11:12-13). Luke says, **"The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it"** (Lk. 16:16). In these two passages the messenger spoken of in both cases is John. His message was said to begin where the law and the prophets left off. His message was announcing a kingdom. In one passage that kingdom is called the Kingdom of God, while in the other it is called the Kingdom of Heaven. The time was the same, the man was the same, the message was the same, and the kingdom was the same in both cases.

Our Lord's instructions upon sending out the twelve were, according to Matthew, **"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand"** (Mat. 10:7). **According to Luke, "He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick"** (Luke 9:2). Certainly Jesus did not preach two conflicting messages at the same time! Certainly He was not announcing two separate and distinct kingdoms and declaring them both to be at hand! These, and many other passages, show the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are one and the same. Yet — there is a difference! God does not have TWO KINGDOMS—He has only ONE. There is not one Kingdom of God and another Kingdom of Heaven. There is only one Kingdom. However each of these two terms is not without its special significance. For, you see, heaven is a REALM and God is a PERSON. The Kingdom has its origin in the REALM OF HEAVEN, and in the PERSON OF GOD. The term "Kingdom of Heaven" denotes, on the one hand, from whence (from what place, location, realm or dimension) the Kingdom proceeds, while the term "Kingdom of God" reveals, on the other hand, from whom (from what person or being) the Kingdom originates. When we consider these two items, place and person, it immediately follows that as to REALM the Kingdom is out of the heavenlies, but as to PERSON the Kingdom comes from God. It is called the Kingdom OF God because it is from and by God. He is the Instigator and Head of the Kingdom. It is called the Kingdom OF Heaven because it has its inception in heaven—the invisible realm of Spirit.

The prophet Daniel brings the two together when by inspiration he says, "And in the days of these kings shall the GOD (person) of HEAVEN (place, realm) set up A KINGDOM, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44). Jesus then brings the two together when He says to Pilate, **"MY (person) kingdom is not of THIS WORLD (place, realm): for if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now MY (person) kingdom is not from HENCE (place, realm)"** (Jn. 18:36). Through their relationship we understand there cannot be a Kingdom of Heaven without the presence of God. On the other hand, where the presence of God is, there is a manifestation of Heaven's Life.

Ah, then, this Kingdom of God may also be called the Kingdom of Heaven! To call, then, the Kingdom of God the Kingdom of Heaven is to ascribe to the Kingdom of God every heavenly and spiritual perfection. The Kingdom of God is, for example, heavenly in its origin—that origin is the bosom of the eternal Father. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its purpose—that purpose is to restore creation to its original glory. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its king—that king is the Son of the Highest, Head and body. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its subjects—those subjects are the children of God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its nature—that nature is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its entrance—that gateway is not by birth of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but by birth of God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its laws—those laws are not ordinances, rules, or regulations—they are spiritual principles. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its method—that method is not by might, nor by power, nor by the enticing words of man's wisdom, but by the Spirit of the living God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its prerogatives—those prerogatives are for the sons of God to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a kingdom of priests after the order of Melchizedek, saviours on mount Zion. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its privileges—those privileges are to be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to the inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. In brief, the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Heaven—it is the Kingdom of Heaven because it is the kingdom or dominion of the GOD OF HEAVEN!

## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM

What holy assurance stirs within as the Spirit of God floods our souls with the divine understanding of truth so sublime as this: **"For BY HIM were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created BY HIM and FOR HIM: and He is before all things, and BY HIM all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17).** Your whole outlook on life will change from one of fear and dread to one of blessed assurance and confidence with the entrance of the understanding that ALL THINGS are vassals of His power, His dominion, and His control, and ALL THINGS are in His hands. Nothing exists without His consent. None acts without His orders or prospers without His blessing. In His omnipotent hands the nations of the earth in all their vaunted might and power are but dust upon the scales. You will not spend sleepless nights worrying about the Chinese, or the Russians, or the terrorists when your heart rests assured that God has ordained all these things for His purpose and He is in control of them all as well as your life and mine.

Oh, the unfathomableness of the wisdom and power of our God! How can mortal minds even begin to comprehend it? He is the omnipotent and omniscient Source of everything. He speaks and atoms come into existence. He utters His voice and light shines into the darkness. He commands and billions of galaxies appear. He breathes and life begins to flow. By the manipulation of His fingers He sets the stars in their courses and with the span of His hand He measures the heavens. He sets bars and boundaries for the oceans. He says to them, "Thus far and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stopped." They may beat upon the shore and run up the beaches, but they have to fall back into the boundaries God set for them. **"Praise ye Him, all ye His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise ye Him, all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree that shall not pass. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling His word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above earth and heaven" (Ps. 148:2-13).**

Oh, my soul, what words are these! All things on earth and throughout the unbounded heavens are under His command. The whole creation, like a great machine, every part working in precise coordination with each other, all fulfilling the purpose they were designed to do. Even fire and hail, the snow and vapors, and the stormy wind fulfilling His word. Everything obeying the will of the Almighty. All accomplishing their designed purpose in the great scheme of creation. Listen in reverence to these divine words, **"A man's heart deviseth his way, but the LORD directeth his steps" (Prov. 16:9). "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as**

**the rivers of waters He turneth it whithersoever He wills" (Prov. 21: 1). "The steps of a man are ordered of the LORD, and He delighteth in his way" (Ps. 37:23).**

The Lord whom we worship controls the hearts of all kings, presidents, prime ministers and rulers whether they realize it or not; God it is who is ordaining their paths and directing their ways. He turns their heart in the direction He wants them to go. He raised up Pharaoh for a purpose, and it was the Lord Himself who kept hardening his heart (Ex. 7:3,13). Now I, like many who read these lines, was raised up with the mentality that somehow the devil got the whole thing and that the earth belongs to "the prince of the power of the air" and "the god of this world." No, it doesn't! The word of the prophet is wonderfully true, **"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1)**. God owns it all and He gives it to whom He wills. He has the right to appoint stewards over creation based on His purpose and their faithfulness, regardless of moral, religious, or other considerations.

Let's look at three people in the scripture whom God raised up to rule the earth. Isaiah talks about Cyrus, the Persian king whom God put in charge of the earth (Isa. 44:24 to 45:7). God called Cyrus "My shepherd." That's astounding, to think that God would raise up a heathen king to accomplish His purposes in the earth. **But the Lord says, "I will raise up Cyrus, My shepherd, and he is to rule over the whole thing by My divine appointment."** In **Daniel 4:28-37**, we discover that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, ruled by God's divine appointment. If we think of the Kingdom of God as a democracy, we are falling short in our thinking. There's only one vote—and it's God's. He says, **"I'm going to appoint you, Nebuchadnezzar, and you're going to be the king and you're going to rule and you're going to fulfill all my will, and I'll establish you in all the earth. And I'll give you wisdom and power and might and majesty."** He promised it to him and it happened. Then when Nebuchadnezzar started thinking that he had done it himself, God said, "I'll take it from you."

God took the kingdom from Nebuchadnezzar by causing him to lose his mind for a season. He went insane and lived in the wilderness, ate grass like a cow, had long hair all over his body, and his fingernails grew like bird claws. At the end of this humbling experience, Nebuchadnezzar repented and blessed the God of heaven as the only source of all kingdoms and powers and confessed that God was fully able to "humble those who walk in pride." If we look again in Daniel, we find that Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's son, had the same problem with pride that his father did, and so God also smote him in an instant and took away his kingdom.

Almighty God raises up kings, and casts them down at will. He drowns the mighty Pharaoh in the depths of the sea, and puts His hand on a little shepherd boy tending the sheep and makes him the greatest king the world has ever known. He tells us what is going to happen on the morrow, and casts the shadow of events that will happen in the years and ages to come. He can do all this because He planned it all, created it all, and controls it all; and it will all work out the way He has planned. In spite of men, angels, or demons His purpose is always fulfilled. He is the eternal King and the only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords! What a mighty God we serve! If the God we worship were less than this, we would be in trouble. We serve a God who is guiding us, our loved ones, our president, the governors of our states, the kings and princes and rulers and even our enemies unto the ends of the earth. His mighty hands are in all things and the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. In due time all will see the fullness of all this.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that the will of God is sovereign. It is done in the long run everywhere and always. His thoughts are carried out; His laws are enforced; His purposes are accomplished. Man may delay them, defy them, deny them, set himself up with utmost strength against them; but he can no more resist and defeat them than he can push back the ocean tide. The world moves on in the course that He has marked for it. Not in a straight line—the wickedness and perversity of men may push it back a little with His permission; they drag it to the right and left of the true direction; but it returns again and pursues its resistless course until the goal of the Almighty is reached. As Nebuchadnezzar said long ago, "He doeth His will among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

Nations and kings and the great ones of the earth are like clay in the hands of the potter. "He girds them though they have not known Him." He uses their very folly as an instrument of His wisdom. He makes their wrath to praise Him, and the remainder of that wrath cloth He restrain. The greatest crimes that have ever been committed have been wonderfully used by Him to further His truth and justice in the world. The crucifixion

of Christ made Christ the world's Savior. The slaying of the saints prepared the way for the triumph of the early Church. The burning of the English martyrs made England Protestant. The atrocities of the Spaniards led to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon race on the American Continent. Out of the hugest evil God's foreseeing mind works good, and the march towards the perfect day goes on in spite of the craft and strength of devils and men.

If it were not for this we should lose all faith in God, and all hope for the future of His world, if we did not believe that in the end God is always victorious, and that man's haughty ambitions, evil designs, and fickle passions are over-ridden and thrown aside by His unerring power. The world is not a battlefield in which the results depend upon human combatants alone, or a huge game of chess in which statesmen, rulers, soldiers, thinkers, the press, chance and accident, and the forces of goodness and the forces of hell have the winning and the losing moves. God is over all and in the midst of all. He has the last, decisive word in every dispute, the final and winning move in every game. Through all the ill-doings and stupidities of men His unceasing purpose runs. And there is only one will that always gets done. It is the mighty will of Him who is the sole Master of the world, God in Christ Jesus.

In all our lives that same will is done. It is done in every saint's life, in every life of faith and obedience, in the joy and strength and peace of those who trust in God. It is done in every foul, unclean, intemperate, and godless life, in the misery and unrest and hell, which follow the heels of sin. You cannot escape God's will or overturn it. It holds you in love or grips you in suffering. He is the Lord of our lives, and if we will not take the way of His dear children, then we have to take the hard way of transgressors, and that also is of His appointment. The will of God, whether infinitely gracious or terribly severe, is done on every one at last. And what we are to pray for is not God's sovereignty—that is beyond our praying—but something much more beautiful, that HIS KINGDOM MAY COME. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven." That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! What I want to point out to you is the difference between the sovereignty of God and the kingdom of God. The Kingdom is something beyond God's sovereignty, higher than God's sovereignty, more glorious than God's sovereignty. We must never confuse the two.

The scriptures speak of the Kingdom of God as "everlasting" on one hand, and as having a definite historical beginning, progress and termination on the other hand. When we allow the Holy Spirit of Truth to teach us, we see that the Kingdom over which God rules has two distinct aspects: the everlasting and the limited, the universal and the local, the general and the specific. There are passages of scripture that clearly declare that God has always possessed absolute sovereignty over all creation and that He rules as King over all. God is ruler over heaven and earth. He is the supreme Governor of the universe. If Creator, then surely He is the Owner and Possessor of all realms. By inherent, incontestable right, He is sovereign Lord. There is but one will in the universe and that will is the will of God. "The Lord reigneth" is declared again and again. He is King over all principalities and powers. **"For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Ps. 95:3). "The Lord is King for ever and ever..." (Ps. 10:16). "The Lord sitteth King for ever" (Ps. 29: 10). "Thine, O Lord, Is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" (I Chron. 29:11-12).**

**"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men" (Dan. 4: 17).**

God's sovereignty is exercised over both heaven and earth. There have been many occasions when His sovereignty has been manifested through His direct intervention in the affairs of kings, rulers, and nations. He has often demonstrated His sovereignty through mighty miracles and judgments, proving that He is Lord. One such instance is seen in His dealing with Pharaoh, as we have mentioned. The seat of God's government is His throne. The throne of the Most High is the highest thing in all of God's universe. There is nothing higher. It is a throne of consummate power and majesty and glory. From that throne God rules over all creatures and things. And yet, strange as it may seem, shocking as it may sound, THIS IS NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

The Kingdom of God is not the sovereignty of God as such; God is always and everywhere the sovereign God. If His sovereignty were His Kingdom there would be no need to pray, "Thy Kingdom come." Jesus would never have said that it is necessary to be "born again" in order to "enter" into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is beyond sovereignty and only the Kingdom ultimately satisfies the heart of the Father. The Kingdom is what He is after through His sovereignty. The Kingdom is the sovereignty of God in action to overcome all resistance and bring willing submission of every creature. Sovereignty is God ruling over men. The Kingdom is man submitting to God. In sovereignty God enforces His will upon men even when they are not aware of it. In the Kingdom God is calling and wooing man until God and man become one. Sovereignty is God above man ruling and overruling. The Kingdom is God and man in union. In sovereignty there is only one will—God's. In the Kingdom God's will and man's will are united.

The Kingdom is not the reign of God as such, for God is ultimately reigning as the King eternal and the King of the universe at all times. The Kingdom is, rather, the gracious action of the sovereign God of heaven by which His reign is recognized and revered and entered into by those men whom God had previously permitted to walk in their own sense of "self-hood." The Kingdom is the gathering together of all things into one in Christ. The Kingdom is reconciliation. The Kingdom is the restitution of all things. The Kingdom is salvation. The Kingdom is regeneration and transformation. The Kingdom is every man presented perfect in Christ Jesus. The Kingdom is God All-in-all.

In the nineteenth century, Karl Marx went off to university, where he renounced his faith in God in favor of atheism. He defied God and seduced arrogant minds and ignorant masses. Marx gathered his armies and weapons like a dark cloud over man's highest hopes. Marx and his hearers shook their fists at history, revelation, and divine will. But we have seen, are seeing, and shall yet see that Jesus Christ is Lord of the opposition—"Bye-Bye Marx!" Jesus Christ is Lord of all! But some are persuaded that the collapse of communism in Russia and eastern Europe heralds the dawn of the new age of the Kingdom of God. After decades of Godless tyranny both the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall fell and the captive nations were set free. The world looks with wonder on these astonishing events as a historic turning point in the world political structure—Someone in supreme authority raised His hand and actually rolled back the vast and icy seas of communism. Great news! A real cause to celebrate! New-found freedom is always a cause to celebrate, and any undermining of godless systems is surely a reason to be glad.

Now the light of the gospel of Christ can more easily penetrate the darkness of those great lands. The Lord revealed to me in a dream in 1983 that He would soon liberate Russia from the yoke of communism and that this liberty would be followed by a massive "religious revival" which in turn would ultimately be followed by a mighty move of the Spirit of God. I have witnessed these events take place with the exception of the final one. How we praise God for what He is doing! What a day to behold the wonders of our Lord! But—is this a manifestation of the KINGDOM OF GOD? I think not! It is rather an action of God's sovereignty. Just as "law" is a facet of the government of the United States, yet the government is something vastly more than "law," so is the Kingdom of God an aspect of God's sovereignty, yet God's sovereign acts are not the Kingdom of God. God sovereignly moved to bring down atheistic communism, but this did not bring the Kingdom of God to Russia nor to the world. Everything that happens is controlled by His sovereignty. But the Kingdom of God is something infinitely greater, grander, and more glorious than the sovereign act of God to destroy a corrupt system of government. Many such governments and tyrannies have fallen throughout history. God Himself brought them down. But casting a devil out of a man does not make him a saint. After the devil is cast out he must then be quickened by the Spirit of God and made alive unto God. In like manner, eradicating communism out of Russia brings no one into the Kingdom of God. Except the Russian people be born again, born of God, born of the Spirit, they can neither "see" nor "enter" into the Kingdom of God. That is the realm beyond sovereignty.

The Kingdom of God is more narrow in scope than the region over which God rules as Sovereign. At all times and in all circumstances God has dominion. He is Lord of ALL. Even evil men and vile deeds in their worst expressions are under His sway and scepter. Satan is the servant of God as an adversary to challenge us so that we may grow stronger in the Lord. Yet wicked men have not entered into the Kingdom of God. Neither has Satan, though he does God's bidding, been translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. All men are subject to God's sovereignty, but when we come to the Kingdom the scriptures speak of a "calling" to the Kingdom of

God, of "entering" into it, of its being "shut" or of people being "cast out" from it, of its being "sought," "given," "possessed," "received," and "inherited."

The Kingdom of God is limited to that domain where God's saving power has defeated all opposition, broken down every wall, transformed all that is contrary of God's nature, mind, and will, and has brought men into willing submission to His authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the Kingdom of God. Where hearts are changed, where sin and error and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where the will and ways of God are raised up as reality and life in a people, where the mind of Christ rules out of union with God— there the Kingdom of God has come and is advancing. In the Kingdom it is no longer God ruling over you by sovereignty, but the life, mind, heart, nature, power, wisdom, knowledge, and will of God entering into you, becoming your very own reality.

The Kingdom of God is the power to transform. Its citizens are a holy people. Its kings and priests are all righteous, wise, mighty through God. Its territory is one of light and beauty and glory. In the days of Christ's earthly sojourn, as He was choosing the first men for His Kingdom, He selected men of passions and faults like yours and mine; but He manifested the power to change them! He found Matthew the tax collector — mercenary, commercial, selling his birthright for cash and commission, metallic, his god more a Roman coin than the God of Israel. Yet Christ changed him, and forsaking all, Matthew marched to the drumbeat of the Kingdom of God. Then James, selfish, introverted, hedonistic, wanting the right hand at the throne of Christ, finally finds that the glory of life lies in works of faith, mercy, goodness, righteousness and the power of God. Christ finds John, a man irascible and of bad disposition, "Boanerges—a son of thunder," but when Jesus is done with him he becomes the great apostle of love and reconciliation. He finds Thomas, ever stumbling over his mind, intellectually slow to believe; but he finally cries, "My Lord and my God" and marches to a great kingliness of spirit. He calls Simon Peter, impulsive, bragging, making great boasts but bogging down in the face of the taunting of the crowd; but finally Peter is willing to be crucified head downward for his Lord. Before their change they were subject to God's sovereignty, but after their change they were one with God in nature, power and purpose. That is the reality of the Kingdom of God! It is the experiencing of God Himself BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY! This is the kingly life. When you and I step into Christ we become a part of a great imperial, majestic program to make Christ King of kings and Lord of lords. Alexander the great, Caesar, Hannibal, Napoleon and Hitler never dreamed of the breath-taking consummation of power that Christ prophesied for Himself and those who are one in Him when He uttered the sublime words: "MY KINGDOM".

According to the good pleasure of His will, and to the praise of His glory, the purpose of God from eternity focused on the Kingdom. A Kingdom not of this world, a Kingdom not of men blindly ruled and over-ruled by the unobserved sovereignty of an unknown God, but a reign in the hearts of willing and loyal subjects. The story is told of a king who was famous for his abhorrence of waste—so it was quite surprising when he came into the room where his aides were assembled carrying a breathtakingly beautiful pearl in his hands. Showing it to the first of his aides, he asked, "What do you think this pearl is worth?" "Oh, many trunks full of gold, your majesty," he replied. The king said, "Smash it." "It would be an insult to the king to destroy such a beautiful pearl," replied the aide. The king turned to a second man and showed him the pearl. "How much do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked. "One cannot put a price tag on such a beautiful pearl as this," replied the second man. "Smash it," said the king. "Such senseless destruction is unthinkable," replied the second aide. The king turned to a third man. He was a humble laborer who, in return for a kindness he had shown the king, had been invited to live in the palace. "What do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked the man. "More than all the gold I have ever seen in my entire life," he replied. "Smash it," said the king. Without a moment's hesitation, this man took the pearl to where there were two large rocks and in an instant, reduced the pearl to a thimbleful of useless dust. "The man is mad," cried the others in the room. Holding up his hand to quiet the murmurs, the laborer said: "Which is of greater value; a beautiful pearl or obedience to the king's command?"

The Kingdom of God that I am proclaiming today is composed of that company of elect sons of God who have aligned themselves with God; who listen to His voice, who put on His mind, who obey His commands, who walk in His nature, who do His will and carry out His divine purpose in the heavens and on the earth. They are the loyal subjects of His Kingdom and ever do His bidding. Their King is the Lord God Almighty and He is their Father. They obey without question; for it is their nature to do only and always those things that please the

Father. They are the true citizens of the Kingdom of God. They are first under His rule and authority, but they are ambassadors of that divine Kingdom. They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. They are destined to share His glory and sit with Him upon His throne. They are the members of the government of God and the Kingdom of Heaven is expressed through them and the power and the glory of the Kingdom is being committed into their hands for the age and the ages to come.

This is the Kingdom Jesus came and announced, taught, personified, demonstrated and brought into reality among men. Are all Christians in the Kingdom of God? Perhaps you have heard someone say, "All Christians have Jesus as Savior, but not all have Him as Lord." A young boy might put it this way: "I am the son of my father, but I don't want him to tell me what to do." The Kingdom of God in its simplest definition means that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD! He must be Lord in us, and He must be Lord through us. This is the mark of sonship. This is the power of the Kingdom.

Such is what God planned in a new creation species of men redeemed and transformed into the image and likeness of God. Such is what God has purposed to bring all men into in His due time. Such a glorious climax to the Father's plans, which has now been made known unto God's elect by the Spirit, has not always been revealed to the sons of men. Righteous men and prophets received glimmering hints, but it was not given to them to know. Mighty angels were curious, but they too had to wait until the fullness of time (I Pet. 1:10-12). Little by little, however, God had dropped hints of a wondrous Kingdom to come. Dim at first, then becoming brighter and clearer, was the lamp of prophecy. As a candle in a dark place is helpful, so was the prophet's testimony about Jesus and the Kingdom, which inspired hope until the Day dawned and the Day Star arose within our hearts.

One glorious day the firstborn Son of the living God walked among men and announced, **"The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1: 15)**. The new reign of God had come to the birth. The call went forth throughout all the earth in the power of the Spirit for men to become willing subjects to the Kingdom of God. First twelve, then seventy, then vast multitudes responded to the call. On the day of Pentecost alone about three thousand precious souls, quickened by the Holy Spirit with eyes to see and ears to hear answered the call and were gathered into the reign of God. No longer did devout men wait for the Kingdom, but they were in it, and they ate and drank in the Kingdom of Heaven. Let God be praised! for His rule in ransomed hearts had begun. Everywhere men and women were translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of Heaven. Even in lonely exile on the isle of Patmos, John the disciple could exult that he was a brother and companion to the saints "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 2 THE REALM OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART TWO

#### THE LAWS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN FROM REALM TO REALM THE KINGDOM OF "HEAVEN"

There are many strange ideas around about the difference between the terms "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven". Carnal-minded men have long tried to make a distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, as though they were two separate kingdoms. Our Lord's instructions upon sending out the twelve were, according to Matthew, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 10:7). According to Luke' "He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Lk. 9:2). Certainly Jesus did not preach two conflicting messages at the same time! Surely He was not announcing two separate and distinct kingdoms and declaring them both to be at hand! These, and many other passages, show the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are one and the same. Yet—there is a difference! For, you see, heaven is a REALM and God is a PERSON. The Kingdom has its origin in the REALM OF HEAVEN, and in the PERSON OF GOD. The term "Kingdom of Heaven" denotes from whence (from what place, location, realm or dimension) the Kingdom proceeds, whereas the term "Kingdom of God" reveals from whom (from what person or being) the Kingdom originates. When we consider these two items, place and person, it immediately follows that as to REALM the Kingdom is out of the heavenlies, but as to PERSON the Kingdom comes from God. It is called the Kingdom OF God because it is from and by God. He is the Instigator and Head of the Kingdom. It is called the Kingdom OF Heaven because it has its inception in heaven—the invisible realm of Spirit.

In this message we shall consider the meaning, magnitude and magnificence of the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. The gospel of the Kingdom is not the good news that we shall go to some far-off heaven somewhere and live forever in an external paradise. As extraordinarily marvelous as that would be, God has something for us far, far better than this! Going to a place called heaven is not what Jesus had in mind when He proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven. The religious tradition concerning "going to heaven" is so strong that it distorts people's ability to perceive and understand what is written in the Word of God. When we emphasize the concept of going to heaven to live forever, the gospel of the Kingdom becomes incoherent. Preachers are always making the foolish statement, "Except a man be born again he cannot get to heaven." THAT'S NOT WHAT JESUS SAID! It is an absurd perversion of the word of our Lord. Jesus wasn't talking about going anywhere—He plainly said that unless a man is born again by the Spirit of God he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

Oh! Why do men play with the Word of God? Why do they twist, change, mix-quote, mix-represent, and distort the good news of the Kingdom? Is it not the incredible darkness of the carnal mind and the ignorant foolishness of religion? I tell you today that the gospel of the Kingdom of God has absolutely nothing to do with dying and going to heaven—it has everything to do with the rule of God coming into this earth. Redemption is not a change of location—it is a transformation of the state of being. The Father's desire is not that we leave the world behind someday to "fly away" to our mansion in the sky. His desire is for us to leave the world behind right now and press forward each day deeper and deeper into the depths of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

I once read the story about Thomas Huxley. He was a devoted disciple of Darwin, the famous biologist, teacher, and author. Huxley staunchly defended the theory of evolution. An avowed humanist, he was bold and convincing as he traveled widely giving his lectures, which were a series of blistering attacks on Christianity, and especially what he called, "The alleged resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth." One day, having finished a series of public assaults against Biblical truth, Huxley was in a hurry to catch his train to the next city. He took one of Dublin's famous horse drawn taxis and settled back with his eyes closed to rest himself for a few

minutes. He assumed the driver had been told the destination by the hotel doorman, so all he said as he got in the cab was, "Hurry, I'm almost late. Drive as fast as you can." The horses lurched forward and galloped across Dublin at break-neck speed. After they had gone some distance Huxley glanced out of the window only to realize that they were going west, away from the morning sun, not toward it. They were not headed toward the train station but were actually getting farther and farther away from it. The scholar leaned forward and shouted to the driver, "Do you know where you're going?" Without looking back or slacking the pace the driver yelled a classic line. It was not meant to be humorous, nor is it when you think about the truth it contains. "No, your Honor," the driver shouted back, "but I'm going as fast as I can!"

That story is more than a story. It is the graphic illustration of the whole church world today. All think they are on their way to heaven and they are going just as fast as they can to get there. Great speed, much commotion, a rapid pace—but a journey to nowhere! They have eternal life, all right, and they are headed somewhere, but not where they think. The planet with the golden streets, the mansions, the harps, the white night gowns, the fluttering wings—all the visible, external things their hopes are fastened upon DO NOT EXIST. And they are traveling at break-neck speed in the wrong direction—away from all the glorious and eternal reality those things represent!

One of the beautiful symbolisms given us in the book of Revelation is the Holy City "**coming down from God out of heaven**" (Rev. 21:2). When John said that this city comes down from God out of heaven, he wasn't talking about coming down past Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. He meant not that it would settle down over the Mount of Olives or any other geographical location. In the Bible a city represents a government, and the "holy" city is a righteous government. It is not a man-made government. It doesn't have a "Democratic," "Republican," "Reform," "Labor," or "Conservative" party. It emanates from God, out of the celestial or spiritual realm, and is established on earth through a heavenly people. May the blessed spirit of revelation grant us the clarity to see that this city shall never rule until it has in all truth become the "holy" city. prepared, adorned, and "made ready." She comes down from heaven. Her origin is divine, her nature, her character, is heavenly—"out of heaven from God." One is reminded of the scripture, "**As IS the heavenly, such are they also THAT ARE heavenly...we shall also bear the image of the heavenly**" (I Cor. 15:48-49).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:2-5). My beloved, John saw the city descending down from God to earth. He did not see us going out into space somewhere. God is going to perfect His elect right here upon earth with a divine life that comes out of God from heaven, and they are going to reign upon the earth. "Suddenly there came from heaven the sound of a rushing mighty wind...and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men! And He shall dwell with them! God is coming to dwell with mankind. That is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Yet millions of Christians vainly imagine that they are going to a city up in the sky to live there with Jesus forever and ever. Multitudes believe that somehow they will escape "The Great Tribulation" by being "raptured," snatched up to heaven. The testimony of scripture is just the opposite of man's childish superstitions. God has always come to man. In the sacred mists of long ago Eden the Lord God came down and walked and talked with Adam. In another place we find that the Lord appeared on the plains of Mamre and walked and talked with our father Abraham. God came down on Mount Sinai in flaming fire and smoke before the face of the whole, assembled nation of Israel, and gave them His law. God instructed Moses to build the tabernacle in the wilderness so that He could have a dwelling place in the midst of our Israelite forefathers. Long centuries later the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John. 1:14). John saw the city descending from God, and it is descending from God. With every message of God that is preached, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every person that is born from above, thus becoming a citizen of that city, it is coming down to earth. With every person who receives the anointing of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every member of God's elect who grows up another step into perfection, into the image and likeness of the Holy One, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every

revelation that comes to us from the Spirit of God and that takes us onward into the perfect fulfillment of God's great plan and purpose in our lives, the Holy City is descending to earth. As the principles of the Kingdom of God—righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—are established in our lives, the Holy City is coming down from God out of heaven. When the nature and character of our heavenly Father are formed in us, and His precious mind rules our hearts, the Holy City is descending to earth. With every victory over sin and sickness, over limitation, darkness and death, the Holy City is descending to earth. Beloved, it will continue descending with the development of the body of Christ into its full stature. It will descend and descend until the prayer that Jesus taught for sons is fulfilled: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

In an article some time ago Terry and Tykie Crisp wrote, "Why is it that this Great City is coming DOWN OUT of heaven? It's because of the burdened appeal of creation! Beloved, there is coming a GLORIOUS CHURCH in these last days, a church which has been caught up to the highest heaven, to the very throne of God...but who, because of the spirit of sonship in their hearts, will not be able to ignore the groaning of the prisoners! They will come down from the heavenlies in High Priestly attire, bearing their gem-studded breastplate, which is the burden of mankind upon their hearts...with deliverance, with power, and with authority, to set the captives free! Imagine, if you will, a church so virtuous and bright that the nations of the world will walk in the light thereof, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor to it, submitting themselves to her authority, and seeking wisdom from her mouth!" —end quote.

This great city, the heavenly Jerusalem that started coming down on the day of Pentecost, shall continue to come down from God out of heaven. That is, it shall continue to descend from out of the divine consciousness and life of the Lord into the receptivity and consciousness and experience of His people on earth. It shall persist until all that dwell upon the earth shall walk in its light and enter in through its gates. Then shall the whole earth be filled with the glory and the knowledge of the Lord. Even now the new heavens—THE NEW MIND AND SPIRIT—are descending into our hearts, our nature, creating within us a new earth for the tabernacling of God. Every thing that God sends down out of heaven is infinitely good and glorious. Two thousand years ago He sent Jesus as His best gift, and all the world has been blessed by that gift. When He brings heaven down to us we know that He is bringing His best. Every good and ever perfect gift cometh down from above. A king once gave a diamond to one of his friends, and the friend said, "Sire, this is too great a gift for me to receive." But the king answered, "It is not too great a gift for a king to give." In like manner, if the full manifestation of the life and glory of God in you, His elect, seems beyond what you deserve or are capable of, remember! it is NOT TOO MUCH FOR GOD TO GIVE AND DO!

According to the beloved John everything on earth IS going to be transformed. He speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. He speaks of all things made new. At present heaven and earth are quite separate states of existence, but in the new City of God which John beheld in spirit they are no longer two, but one. It is my conviction that the veil between seen and unseen is a very flimsy one, and that this seemingly solid matter that forms our prison-house is not so very solid after all. Probably it is nothing more than our own thought exercised upon a very limited plane, a darkened perception. It is quite conceivable that we might wake up, as it were, from a sleep, and realize that there never has been a material and a spiritual, but that we have all the time been living at the very center of reality, only we did not know it. If men were only endowed sufficiently with the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and ready for the change, the veil between heaven and earth would be taken away, the heavens would be opened, and the two would be seen as one, as it was with the servant of Elisha that day in Dothan when he saw the armies of heaven upon the mountains of Israel. This is what John means by the city coming down; it is heaven taking possession of earth and absorbing it into itself. That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

The world is to be won for God; there is to be a transformed society of men on earth; in the end earth will become heaven. Death will be abolished, and sin and sorrow will flee away. When John used the language of Isaiah about the city needing no light of the sun he meant it in even a grander way. Henceforth God in Christ is to be the light of every man's life, all the nations are to walk in that light and love and brotherhood be all in all. But he makes a bold stroke at this point by departing from the Old Testament dream of the Jerusalem Temple. He says that God Himself will be the Temple, and men shall worship Him in spirit and in truth. Looking back, as it were, upon the desecration and destruction which had fallen upon the temple that was formerly the pride and the glory of Israel, he says in effect: Well, let it go! At the best it was only a beautiful symbol for a still more

beautiful reality. Nothing is lost by the ruin of that which was built by hands. God Himself is our Temple—God in Christ! We need no other. The whole earth is full of His glory, and in Him we live and move and have our being. By destroying the outward it throws us back upon the inward; it removes the local and temporary to fix our gaze upon the universal and eternal.

Some of us surely have noticed the beautifully significant picture of God's purposes given us in those glorious and divine events that transpired at Sinai, the mountain of God, when Moses and the children of Israel came face to face with God there. Until this moment encounters between Yahweh and men had always taken place on an individual basis. But now there was a dramatic change—the private and individual revelation is transformed into a public and corporate one. An entire nation, from sage to servant, witnesses Mount Sinai engulfed in smoke, God descending in fire, the mountain quaking to the rising crescendo of the shofar (ram's horn), and the Voice giving the law—the Constitution of God's chosen nation on earth.

A magnificent event, yet in the midst of this cosmic marriage, something else of strange and great significance is taking place. The whole story is found in Exodus, chapter nineteen. **First, "God descended on Mount Sinai, and God called Moses to the mountain peak" (Ex. 19:20).** Once Moses begins to ascend, **God tells him to "go back down" (Ex. 19:21)** and warn the people not to cross the boundary. Moses replies that they "cannot climb Mount Sinai. You already warned them to set a barrier around the foot of the mountain and not to cross it, for whoever touches the mountain will die." Again, God says to Moses, **"Go down. You can then come back up along with Aaron. But the priests and the rest of the people must not violate the boundary" (Ex. 19:24).** As soon as Moses descends, God begins the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God..."

Why was this momentous occasion marked by so many directions, instructions, warnings? Had God forgotten that He had already commanded Moses to tell the people not to approach the mountain? Why must Moses point out to God what God certainly knows? This scene is not merely a logistical account of where everyone—God, Moses, Aaron, the priests and the nation—were positioned on that historic occasion. It depicts a divine tension between the idea of "ascending" and "descending." Moses seemed to think that the highest spiritual experience is achieved by turning one's back on the world, forsaking wife, children, friends, job, responsibilities, recreation, and all the mundane things of life, and ascending into a high plane in the Spirit alone. But God is saying that His way of merging and becoming one with creation, has an altogether different focus. The task of sonship is not to escape the world and ascend into the heights of God in some mystical experience, but to bring God down, to redeem the world, change humanity, and transform creation, to suffuse spirituality into every aspect of its existence. Before Moses ever "ascended" into the glory of God, God first "descended" on Mount Sinai before the faces of all the people. Then further, He sent down His law—His nature—into their midst. Had Moses merely gone up the mountain—had God not also descended—the laws he brought down would have been more suited for the mountain peaks and the seekers who climb them in search for God. But at Sinai the entire nation saw the almighty Yahweh descend into the world of His creation. And that very day the Lord said, "Ye shall be unto me an holy nation, and a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS. Ah, when God and man meet and are brought into union, there is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!"

Do you want to know where the glory of God can be found? God came down in Christ Jesus and tabernacled among mankind and men beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now God has descended again in the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. The Kingdom OF Heaven is not the Kingdom IN Heaven. The prayer Jesus taught us to pray is not, "Come, take us away up to heaven to live with You," but "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." It is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and in earth. No man can ascend into the world of God until first God descends into his world. The descending and ascending bring glorious UNION between God and man. It is there that we know oneness with Him and receive His law, His government in our hearts!

## THE KINGDOM OF "HEAVEN"

The Kingdom of Heaven is the Kingdom of, or out of heaven. There is perhaps no subject in the Bible about which there is such shallow thinking, such dullness of understanding, and so many distorted notions, as the subject of heaven. Where is heaven? What is heaven? Is it a place? Is it a planet? Is it a galaxy? Is it beyond the stars? Is it a condition of life? Is it a different dimension of living? If our very Father is in heaven, then we

ought to know something about heaven, for it is the source of our life, the realm of our origin. We know this because the Father who begat us dwells in heaven; therefore we are out of heaven and from heaven. If He is our Father and heaven is His natural environment, His habitat, we should understand what that realm is really like.

By saying God is in heaven, Jesus does not mean to localize or locate God. He is not telling us of a place where God is and where God lives apart from any other place in the universe. If that were the case then there would be no God anywhere outside of that place called heaven. Those who think of heaven as a place, usually think of Him as being very distant. Somehow we have gotten the idea that heaven is a long way off. This error has crept into many songs sung by the church world. In the Pentecostal Church where I was raised as a boy two of the favorite songs were "When We All Get

To Heaven" and "Won't It Be Wonderful There." Another with which many who read these lines will be familiar says, "I here is a happy land, far, far, away." And even in that popular hymn, "The old Rugged Cross," we sing, "He will call me some day to that home far away..." How did we get that conception? Certainly not from Jesus or the apostles! When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, He said, **"No man hath ascended up into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn. 3:13)**. That is, Jesus claimed that while He was sitting and talking with this rabbi, He Himself was actually in heaven. This means, of course, that heaven is here and now.

The easiest way to understand heaven is to realize that it is where God lives. The question follows: Where is God? Is He on a planet thirteen trillion light years beyond the farthest star? Or, is He everywhere, omnipresent? The Psalmist David posed this intriguing question: **"Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thine hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me" (Ps. 139:7-10)**. Is there some point out in the universe where you can draw a line and say, "God comes to this point. Beyond here God does not exist. If you cross this line you will leave the presence of God." Ah, the scriptures testify that God is before all things, all things were made by Him, He upholds all things, He fills all things, and He is greater than all things.

It is abundantly clear that wherever there are things, there you will find God. Is there any place where there are no things? If there is, man has never found it. There is no scientific evidence that such a place exists. As far as man can see with his telescopes, including the new and most powerful Hubble telescope, there is no end to the universe. Man is unable to find the outer perimeter of the cosmos. The galaxies and the swirling nebulae stretch out into infinity. Since God both created all things in Himself, and fills all things with Himself, it is an absolute certainty that to find the end of creation would be to discover the limit of God. God is infinite, unlimited, boundless, unending and inexhaustible. The creation is coextensive with the Creator, therefore, there is no end to the cosmos for there is no end to God. Certainly that answers the question of the Psalmist, "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"

Will you agree with me that everything everywhere is made up of things that are visible and things that are invisible? And is it not true that visible things never remain the same but are always changing, and that invisible things always remain the same and never change? "The things which are seen are TEMPORAL," says the Lord, "and the things which are not seen are ETERNAL." This is the wisdom of God in a mystery. But it should be clear that the realm of the unseen is the realm of the INVISIBLE GOD! That which you cannot see is called Creator, origin, Source, Cause. That which you can see is called creation, effect, form, matter, things. The wonderful attribute of omnipresence is one of the foremost parts of God's glory. God's omnipresence—that is to say, God's presence everywhere and wholly everywhere—is rooted in the fact that He upholds all things and fills all things and is higher than all heavens. That is the testimony of scripture. God's presence is with all His creatures of all kinds, and in all places of His dominion. Give strength, then, to your understanding, and give wings to your imagination, and give holy fear to your heart, as we try to enter upon those great matters—"which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man...but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." When you try to do it, you cannot limit the presence of God to any one place on earth, or in heaven: no, nor to all places on earth and in heaven, taken together. Place, precinct, locality, situation—when you attempt it, you soon find how absolutely impossible it is to limit and restrict God in that

way. Heaven and earth, time and eternity, all worship their Maker in these adoring words, and say: "Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain Thee: how much less this house which we have builded." And then, if anything could add to the awe and the wonder of all that, it would be this other all-transcending truth—that He who is everywhere is also wholly everywhere. Now that the almighty Father is wholly, and is continually, with every one of us in all the completeness, and in all the totality, of His Godhead—what an absolutely staggering thought is that!

In the early 1600's the Christian mystic, Jacob Boehme, wrote: "If you want to know about Heaven and what Heaven is and where it is, you do not need to cast your thoughts many thousands of miles off, for that place, that heaven thousands of miles away, is not your Heaven. The true Heaven is not a created place but an uncreated place, and it is not found in a particular place but everywhere, even in the very place where you are standing and going. For when your spirit within you is able to penetrate inward through and beyond your own flesh and life, and is able to catch hold of the innermost moving of God, then you are clearly in Heaven. Moreover, if your eyes were but opened, you should see God everywhere in His Heaven, for Heaven is found everywhere. For instance, when Stephen saw Heaven open and the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, his spirit did not suddenly transport itself into outer space, but rather Stephen's spirit had moved inward, within, into the innermost place where Heaven is found everywhere, for God fills all things. So you must realize that this world with all of its physical properties is in union with the vast vistas of the heavenly spaces above the earth. There is only one Heart, one Being, one Will, one God, All in all." I know that these words seem to be incredible but they are truth. I point you today, dear child of God, to another world, spiritual in content, which lies beyond the immediate grasp of the physical senses. It is a world that exists within and beyond our physical existence, with its own structure, modes of behavior, patterns of communications, knowledge, wisdom and power. It sees without being seen. This spiritual realm bears the same relation to the sensible world as the Creator does to the creation, as the spirit does to the body. This realm is heaven. Heaven is not a place, not a geographical or astral location—it is a sphere or realm of reality. It is a dimension of life. It is a level of God-consciousness. It is the invisible realm of Spirit that transcends this gross material realm. It is as omnipresent as God is omnipresent. It is co-existent and co-extensive with the physical universe, but on a different level of reality and being. It is the dimension of spirit reality, of being where God is all that He is. Heaven is also the realm in which God is revealed by the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God is known by the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God can be touched in the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God can be experienced in the Spirit. Heaven is everywhere. Heaven is closer to you than the air that you breathe, closer even than the blood that courses through your veins.

Let all who read these lines clearly understand that God's heaven is not the inexhaustible universe of stars and suns and planets and swirling nebulae. Heaven has nothing whatever to do with the time-space continuum or matter in any form. The true heaven is beyond it all, above it all, before it all, yet in it all. Heaven is that high and holy and invisible realm of SPIRIT, the pure and divine and eternal and incorruptible realm of GOD HIMSELF, which existed before ever a star or a planet appeared. Heaven, therefore, can only be entered BY THAT WHICH IS SPIRIT. Is that not why Jesus spoke of heavenly things to Nicodemus and said, "Except a man be born again, except a man be born from above, except a man be born of the Spirit, he can neither see nor enter into the Kingdom of God."

Let every man know for a certainty that carnal eyes cannot pierce the invisible realm of Spirit. The Russian astronauts returned from space and said, "We have been up there, we have looked around, we didn't find or see God." of course not! Natural minds know nothing of that realm, for we perceive only those physical things recognizable by the physical senses. Natural ears are unable to hear that which is spoken in the realm of the spirit, for spirit vibrates on a frequency higher than and superior to the low vibrations of matter. Heaven is all around us, in us, through us, but we must be raised out of our natural consciousness in order to touch it. But the dimension of heaven is ten thousand times ten thousand MORE REAL than this gross material realm to which our mortal form has been subjected.

Heaven is our Father's native realm, and the realm in which the sons of God shouted for joy in that blessed day when they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Heaven is our Father's natural environment. It is His home and habitat. Heaven is heaven by virtue of the fact that His presence, nature, power, wisdom and glory make it such. If God dwells in me, then heaven is within me, for He is my Father "in

heaven." When teaching His disciples that magnificent prayer called The Lord's Prayer, Jesus was not thinking of a distant Being in some remote area of the universe. He was referring to one whose existence was the very essence of His life. What was true of Jesus Christ as He lived in Palestine twenty centuries ago, is equally true of all sons and daughters of God today. Our Father is in heaven and also in our hearts. The word "also," however, is superfluous—GOD IS OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN IN OUR HEARTS! That is the truth of the matter. To know this is to know a new and deeper dimension to life. To know the presence and person of God our Father within is to experience heaven in the here and now, to be in heaven. But even more than that, we will cede our lives now as the residence and habitation of the Most High. We will know ourselves to be the home of our heavenly Father, the base of His operation, just as Jesus did. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works" (Jn. 14:1 O). The Father who dwelled in Jesus is the Father in heaven. Thus, we and heaven are one. To say that God is in heaven and also in my heart, and to then separate between the two, is to entirely miss the mark. Once God's DOMINION has been established by the Spirit in any human heart, the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven is accomplished in that life. Heaven rules there! That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. And the Kingdom of Heaven, my beloved, is at hand!

## FROM REALM TO REALM

The only life you know is the life that you have lived, and it's the world to which you are accustomed. But there are worlds within worlds. Oh, sure, we have only one Earth. But in that one Earth are many countries and many different terrains, climates, cultures, languages, religions, and kinds of people. If you go into just one apartment building, how many different worlds are there within that building? There are drug worlds. There are child and spousal abuse worlds. There are suicidal worlds. But there are also believing worlds, righteous worlds, and loving worlds.

On a late night some years ago I turned on the television. Johnny Carson was chitchatting with a "show-biz" guest. Suddenly the thought flashed through my mind, Who else, pray tell, but a "show-biz" person could Johnny interview? Who else was of any importance or interest to the viewing public? Johnny, I realized, must have only IMPORTANT people—CELEBRITIES—on the show. Show business is his world, and he could not be expected to "descend to a lower level." An actor or entertainer is in THE ONLY world that counts! All others are beneath him. Show business people have their own journals and publications, just like other worlds. They speak their own language, have their own terminology, totally incomprehensible to an outsider. They are all knowledgeable about their own world and its personalities, though they may or may not know much or anything outside their all-important world. The same is true, of course, of all other fields—the sciences, medicine, the arts, car racers, body-builders, investors and thousands of other "worlds." I began to think about how many different worlds exist within this world on the planet Earth. And even smaller sub-worlds within those worlds. We speak of the Free World in contrast to the Communist World, the World of Islam, the Third World and many others.

I want to tell you about another world very close to you which some who read these lines may never have even visited, let alone lived in it. It is my world. It's a beautiful world! It's a wonderful world! It's a vibrant world! It's a victorious world! It's a glorious world! IT'S THE WORLD OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ON EARTH. Natural minds discern the natural. Spiritual minds discern the things of the Spirit. Natural minds cannot discern the things of the Spirit because they each belong to distinctly different realms. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). For natural minds to comprehend the spiritual is equally as impossible as for a creature of the animal kingdom to comprehend things human.

By instinct, beavers build dams. But all these dams follow the same pattern. The beaver cannot think out some new, different pattern and make some new and different thing. Ants may form anthills; gophers, snakes and rodents dig holes; birds build nests. But they always follow the same pattern. There is no originality, no thinking and designing of a new idea, no new construction. The beavers' dams, the ants' hills, the gophers', snakes' and rodents' holes, the birds' nests are all made purely by instinct. A test was made with weaver birds. For five successive generations, weaver birds were kept in a place with no nest-building material available to them.

The fifth generation had never seen a nest. But when nest-building materials were made accessible, that fifth generation immediately made nests just like weaver birds have always made nests.

Humans are of a higher order than beavers. Beavers may see men, and may observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. Just because a beaver can build a wonderful dam of logs, branches, stones and mud in the creek, you would never give him a contract to build a hydro-electric dam of concrete and steel on a mighty river. You may take the beaver to the river and let him observe how men build dams of concrete and steel, yet the beaver has no comprehension of what it sees. It discerns only things pertaining to its own realm. It has positively no understanding of the ways of man, or of the meaning of his movements, or words, or habits. Likewise, heavenly beings are of a higher order than are mere humans. They belong to a higher realm, another world. There is no common ground of knowledge. Therefore natural men are totally incapable of comprehending that which pertains to that higher order. And so—until men are quickened by God's Spirit, until they are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit, and made alive to the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven, and are translated into it, it is impossible for them to have any understanding, either of God, or His ways, or of His realm.

Jesus is the example par excellence of a man living and walking in the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. He came to earth and walked among men in their realm, but at the same time He walked in the Kingdom of Heaven realm. He was a spiritual and heavenly man who walked among men. He had dominion over them. They planted their smartest lawyers and most learned theologians in the crowd and tried to trip Jesus up—He made fools of them. They tried to throw Him over a cliff and destroy Him—He just walked through their midst and went His way. Never man spoke as this heavenly man spoke. Never man lived as this man lived. Never man did the mighty works that He did. He lived on earth, but He came from a higher world and lived by the laws of that higher world. And He made that heavenly world available to you and me. That is what Jesus was talking about when He went about preaching the Kingdom of God and declaring, **"The time is fulfilled; and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand: repent and believe the good news!" (Mk. 1:15).**

The Kingdom life we have received is given from heaven, and is heavenly. It is a life that reaches heaven. Once we obtain this life, we have fellowship with heaven and are joined to heaven. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our life-style is heavenly. Our thoughts and desires are heavenly, and we dwell in heaven. Although according to outward conditions we still live on earth, yet according to the inner life we are in heaven. We are a heavenly people, the heavenly man. The situation is just like the Lord's during His time on earth. He said that though He "descended out of heaven," He was still "in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). He walked in the conscious awareness of both realms, but His reality was in heaven. He was the embodiment and personification of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Mature sonship is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven in manifestation.

The following words by T. Austin-Sparks are so very pertinent to our present thought. "There were these things about Jesus, so that when you met Him on the surface, face to face, as a man, it was just impossible to feel that you had met everything, that that was all. There are some people whom you meet—and that is all. You meet them, pass the time of day or have a few words with them, and then you part, and that is all. They came and they went, and there was no more to it than that. It was never so with the Lord Jesus. If you had met Him, you would have immediately met something more than the ordinary, but you would also be left with the consciousness—That is not all; there is something very much more there than I have seen or touched. He implies a vast amount more than I have been able to recognize or grasp. That Man has a lot more behind Him than is on the face of things. He did not put all His goods in the shop window, so to speak: you were conscious of something there of a vast and profound fullness and depth, and that left a mighty impress.

"There was behind Christ another world of resources that He could draw upon, an extra world of knowledge that was available to Him, an extra world of relationships, heavenly relationships: with the Father, yes, and with other intelligences, celestial intelligences. What a big world He had behind Him to draw upon in this life down here, in its vicissitudes, its difficulties, its trials, its adversities, when He was alone and no one could help Him. Even those who would want to seek to help Him could not, for they could not minister out of that other world. He was alone here. Without the resources of this world, He had another world to draw upon, a wonderful other world of resource.

"Oh, how much more real that must be to all sons of God in our consciousness! Here I have come to the end of my resources, here I am right up in a corner, here I am, not knowing, so far as this world is concerned, which way to turn; but I have another world to draw upon, a very real world, and that other world can come right into my situation. And it is just as we are living out from heaven, out from our extra, our plus, world, that things will partake of the character of the eternal, and that into this life will come the imperishable, the incorruptible. God is always seeking to have it like that. That is why He allows the problems and the impasses, to teach the sons of God that this is not all. There is another world of resource, all so infinitely in advance of what is seen.

"Looking at the Lord Jesus, speaking as men speak, we could say that that Man was governed by different standards, by different conceptions, by different ideas, from anything in this world. He did not act just as people usually act here. His conduct was different from the usual conduct of people, from the established and accepted order of things, of how it is done, and how people think it ought to be done. No—He did not belong to that realm at all. He could not be involved in this world's system of ideas and procedure and conduct at all. He would just not allow Himself to be roped into that order. He had another world with an altogether different set of conceptions, and He acted according to them and was governed by them, and that made Him so strange amongst us. The Lord Jesus was a foreigner to this set-up, this whole order of things. He belonged to another world, and He had that other world's conceptions. There was a great difference about Him. They just could not keep Him in, they just could not make Him conform, they just could not understand Him at all!

"It was those very heavenly standards and conceptions and ideas that were the incorruptible things. This world's ways of going on—what do they lead to? They lead to corruption. At their fullest, highest, greatest, they lead to corruption. Never, never was that more apparent than in our own day. The whole world is sinking into an infernal morass of corruption. But His ideas did not work out that way. You and I—we have come to know something of the Lord, something of the Lord's standards, the Lord's ways, the Lord's conception of heavenly things, and we know quite well that this is not corruption, this is LIFE AND INCORRUPTION. We are rejoicing because we have come to know the Lord; but what have we come to know? Something from outside of this world altogether, something different.

"The Holy Spirit coming down from heaven has not come just to make us successful in this world, not just to prosper our carnal ventures here, not to be used by us to realize the thing in which we are interested and to further those plans of ours. He has not come down from heaven for anything like that. He has come down to reconstitute us as heavenly people and bring heaven into man's world. That is His whole work, the reconstituting of our whole being according to heaven's ideas. That is what He is getting at in His work in our lives, His dealings with us, His ways with us. He is after getting us to turn everything to heavenly account, to make us according to heaven's pattern. He is after the incorruptible" —end quote.

## **THE LAWS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

The unseen world of the Kingdom of Heaven is available to men on earth today by faith. Let me give yet another illustration. Radio is a method of sending out sounds for long distances by the use of electricity. The radio waves are sent out from a tower. The waves travel out in all directions and they are everywhere. That is why you can travel down the highway at 80 miles an hour and clearly pick up the signal at all times. But—you must have a receiver! A radio receiver is usually called a radio set or just a radio. one of its parts is the antenna. The radio waves in the air strike the antenna and are carried into the set. of course, the air is full of radio waves broadcast by different stations. The place where you sit as you read these lines is literally filled with radio waves. Music, voices, and noises of various kinds are all around you, passing through the walls, and even your body. Do you feel them? Can you hear them? Do you see them? No—but they are there, they are all there, co-extensive with every visible thing, occupying the very same space! Yet each wave exists in a different "world" entirely. They are on different frequencies. Therefore they don't interfere with each other, they don't mix and become all scrambled up. They are not in the same world.

That is what I mean by a "realm" or "dimension." It is like a frequency. It can occupy the same space and yet be another world altogether. That's how God can be in heaven and in the room where you are sitting and in your heart at the same time. He is simply on a different frequency, in a different dimension or realm, but occupying the same space. Heaven has nothing to do with a "place," either here or beyond the stars. Heaven

is a REALM OF REALITY, a DIMENSION OF LIFE. It is as omnipresent as God is omnipresent, as omnipresent as the universe is omnipresent—it is where He dwells.

In order to hear the radio sounds that are in the air you must turn on your receiver. But you want to select only one of these wave lengths. For that purpose the receiver has a tuner. As you turn the dial, at each position a different frequency will flow into the condenser and then be translated into sound heard by your ear. The radio waves exist as it were in a different "dimension" than the things you naturally see, feel and hear; but they are right there, nevertheless, and can be heard if you are able to "tune in" to them. In like manner, the Kingdom of Heaven is all around you and right within you IF ONLY YOU CAN TUNE IN To IT! That is what Jesus meant when He said repeatedly, "He that hath an ear, let him hear!" The spiritual ear is the "tuner" of the New Creation Man!

The definition "three dimensional" is used to express a law of physics which mathematically proves the length, height and depth of the universe. All physical things have these three dimensions of height, length and depth—a bead, a book, a house, a mountain, a planet, a star, or a universe. And yet—the three are ONE! If you have an ice-cube, the height of the cube occupies the same space as its depth or its length. They are not three separate "places" within the cube, but three "dimensions" or realities occupying the same space.

A book called Flatland, by Dr. Abbott, attempts to show how there is above us and about us other powers which we little realize. In that very clever, small volume, Dr. Abbott uses a keen analogy. He tells of "Flatland" where there was neither up nor down. Everything moved in two dimensions only. Various geometrical forms of matter, as triangles, squares, octagons, points, and lines represented the soldiers, wives, politicians, and various groups of personalities in that flat land. The author appeals that if someone from another dimension world were to reach into the kitchen of Flatland and lift out a cook stove it would be an unexplainable catastrophe to the people of two dimensions—length and breadth. They could not look up or down, and so the removal of the stove would be a mystery too deep for their limited lives. Now, suppose the same power would put the cook stove back in answer to their prayers. That would be a profound "miracle" to them. But to the person of the higher dimension it would be very simple and not miraculous at all!

Since God exists in a world of other dimensions, then heaven is closer than religionists would like to think! It is all around us, yet we have no way of knowing it unless we are able to "tune in" to its frequency. And it operates upon laws that pertain to that other world, laws, which the carnal mind can never comprehend, but laws just as true and precise as the laws of the physical world. When God operates in our world by those higher laws we call it a "miracle," but in that world it is natural. What to God is normal and elementary is to man mysterious, miraculous and inexplicable. The ability to move into another dimension and back again in spirit, soul, and body, was demonstrated by Jesus when He moved in and out of closed rooms without having to use a door, and when He moved through crowds without being seen. All of His signs, wonders and miracles were but acts performed according to the spiritual laws of the spiritual world. To one living in that world there is nothing "miraculous" about it—it is normal! The Kingdom of Heaven is a miracle realm: for it is the dwelling place and operation sphere of the Lord God Almighty. It is how and where He works. It is a super-natural realm, that is, above and beyond what to us is natural. The supernatural element pertains to all He does. Therefore, when He wants something done without the supernatural in it, He employs someone of the carnal, natural plane to do it! We should not have to try and convince anyone that there is a spirit dimension and there is a matter dimension. The inspired apostle states it this way: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The Kingdom of Heaven refers to a vast realm of spiritual reality. All spiritual reality emanates from this one realm of the Kingdom of the Spirit, even before Jesus opened this realm to all men. As one has written: "What do we find in the Bible? A continuous record of happenings that we call supernatural, which cannot be fitted into our interpretations of normal cause and effect. Abraham and Sarah have a child when respectively an hundred, and ninety years old; Joseph accurately foretells through dreams; Moses brings plagues on Egypt, crosses the Red Sea on dry land, gets water from a rock and daily manna; Joshua crosses the Jordan, and brings down the walls of Jericho, and stops the sun for a day; Elijah stops and then brings the rain; Elisha makes an axe head swim; Daniel spends a night among hungry lions; the three young men walk in the fiery furnace and come out without even the smell of smoke on them. Jesus was continually doing things beyond natural explanation, bringing calm in a storm, walking on water and thus counteracting gravity, feeding five thousand with five loaves, healing all kinds of diseases, and raising the

dead. Paul and the apostles saw prison doors open, chains fall off, the dead raised up. Do we not recognize that here are happenings which are products of another dimension, the spirit dimension, and altogether beyond the scope of human thinking and action?"

No law of nature can be broken, but any law may be superseded by a higher law. Lower laws may always be overruled by higher laws. Such overruling occurs when we walk in the spiritual order of the Kingdom of Heaven. So-called miracles are not really miracles at all, any more than the airplane that defies the law of gravity and flies through the sky is a miracle. It is simply that the law of aero-dynamics supersedes and transcends the law of gravity. Miracles are simply VERY NATURAL ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO A HIGHER LAW. When one is sick and the illness has not responded to medical treatment, if we then minister out of the power of the Kingdom of Heaven and the person is healed, no natural law has been violated. A new and higher law has been demonstrated - the law of the Kingdom. Jesus came and demonstrated this realm in an unprecedented measure and proclaimed its accessibility to all men. The manifested sons of God shall manifest out of this Kingdom Realm to bring deliverance to all creation. We have experienced its power and its glory by measure, but the day of fullness is wonderfully nigh at hand and the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God. That is the Word of the Lord to this generation. The Day is dawning!

Scattered among earth's billions is a special species of people. They are in the world but not of it. These have known from the beginning that they were different. They have gone through the motions, tried to be a good Christian, held every office in the church and tried to live the way they were told. But in the midst of all the effort to belong, there has always been something that kept this people from blending in with the majority. There has been an emptiness and a knowing deep inside that this was not the reason they were here. There has always been something that separated them from all the external forms of religion they have passed through. This, precious friend of mine, is the day of RECOGNITION! This is your day of knowing and understanding where you came from and where you have been in order to arrive where you are right now, and where you are going. Something deep within has cried out, "I didn't come into this world just to get saved from hell." Deep has called unto deep and you knew you were born for a purpose. You knew that you were here by divine appointment. You knew there was something greater, more glorious, and transcendental in God. You knew you were born to unveil God's great plan, will, purpose, wisdom, nature, power and glory in the earth!

While writing this message a sermon tape arrived in the mail from Bob Torango in Dickson, Tennessee. It was precious to hear that he was speaking of these same realities. At one point he said, "Moses had to wake up to who he was. Moses thought he was Pharaoh's son. He thought he was an Egyptian. He had no idea that his mother had put him in an ark and floated him down the river. He had no idea who he was until he met up with his kindred. In that experience he found his true citizenship. He discovered that he was nothing more than a resident of Egypt. God revealed to him that he was a free-born Hebrew. He was not a Hebrew by pledge—he had been birthed into that reality. And today the Spirit of God makes clear to God's elect that we are not of that Jerusalem that is below, but we are citizens of that Jerusalem that is above, which is the mother of us all. God is reintroducing us to who we really are. Instead of so many titles He is awakening us to what kind of blood-life flows through our veins. It is not the life of man, but the very life of God that is invested in us. And armed with this knowledge we are becoming less and less identified with the outer man and more and more identified with the inner man.

"I have a friend in Oklahoma who has a Green Card. I never knew that Chris wasn't an American. He acts like an American, he talks like an American, he looks like an American. He doesn't speak Slavic or any other language. He speaks perfect English. And yet—I just found out that my friend isn't an American. He's still a citizen of England. He has a Green Card. Amazing! To think that someone I have been around so long isn't even a citizen of our country. You know, there are a lot of people in the world like that. There are a lot of people praising, singing, clapping, worshipping, paying tithes, working; they have ministries, they are blessing people, but they haven't yet become citizens of the HEAVENLY KINGDOM. The churches are filled with people who don't know what country they belong to. They are expecting a deposed, exiled King to come back from outer space and rescue them. They are waiting to be evacuated from planet Earth. But for those of us who are citizens of the Kingdom of God, OUR KING IS IN ZION—and we are the Zion of the Holy one of Israel (Isaiah. 60:14)" —end quote.

From the time when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God first shouted for joy, rhythm and rapture have rolled upward and onward through all the boundless and endless spiritual universe as the sweet expression of the mind and will of almighty God. This spiritual universe, this Kingdom of Heaven, is the home and heritage of every son of God. He belongs to it, and it belongs to him. He is in it, and it is in him. He holds himself in harmony with it, and it fills his spirit with its songs. He apprehends its truth, enjoys its beauties, expresses its love, utilizes its power and partakes of its holiness. There is no place in it where he may not feel at home—no place where he has not a right to be; for it has been the Father's good pleasure to give him the Kingdom. His life is not measured by years, but by its possibilities and expansiveness. Divinity and eternity are born within him. This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 3**  
**THE REALM OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART THREE**

**THE CONNECTING LINK**  
**THE KINGDOM FAMILY OF GOD**  
**THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

When you look at a map of the world you find parcels of land with names such as Canada, United States, Russia, China, England, Africa, etc. These are the names of geographical territories. Here in El Paso we live only a few miles from the Mexican border and sometimes I drive down there to take friends who want to experience Mexico, or to shop or get dental work done. When I cross the border I am driving on soil that is called Mexico. When I return and cross the border again, I am back in a country called the United States of America. These are the names of these land masses. But when you listen to the news and hear that the United States has sold a million bushels of wheat to Russia, that Japan has sold a million automobiles to America, that Russia and the United States are working on an arms limitation deal, that Europe is sending peace-keeping forces to Bosnia—what are we hearing? The newscaster isn't talking about land, the soil that bears those names. He is talking about the people who live in these various lands. It is the citizens of Russia, Japan, the United States and Europe that he is speaking of. Not the places, but the people. The people that live in the places. The people are identified by the realm or territory where they live. In just the same way, when the scripture refers to "heaven" and "earth," it is not referring to places as such, but the beings who inhabit them. When the scriptures say, "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad," what is going to rejoice? Is it stars, suns, planets, and moons; is it hills, rocks, trees, valleys, and rivers? Of course not. It is the inhabitants of those realms who are to rejoice and be glad.

In the opening chapters of the Bible the Garden of Eden reveals the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. It is not the Kingdom IN Heaven—it is the Kingdom OF Heaven, the Kingdom that originates in and out of a heavenly realm. our prayer is that the Kingdom will come, so that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. God is now creating a new reality on earth, a people that is heavenly but that walks on earth. They bring heaven down within themselves to earth. They have no desire to leave earth to "go" to heaven. They are not looking for either a rapture or death. They are the city that comes down from God out of heaven. "Behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

This new reality is formed in the elect of God in this hour and shall spread over all creation. God is creating something new. A new history is beginning. A new world is coming to earth. The earth shall be filled with the glory of God. God is raising up the life of Christ in a people and through the sons of God He is putting a seed into the earth. We are now the light of men and the light of the world. We are now the salt of the earth. We are the new seed for the new age. God's purpose in raising up Christ in us is that through us the generations of mankind may be lifted out of the curse of sin and death, toward the revelation of eternal life and glory. Why else did Jesus heal the sick and raise the dead? Why did He exalt the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed? Why did He touch, with miracle power, the hopeless and possessed? Surely not in order to tell them that they would be blessed after death in some far-off heaven somewhere! He brought the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God to men great and small right here on the earth because the Kingdom of God was at hand! He brought heaven to earth. That is the homeland we seek. There is no other to be sought, for the tabernacle of God is with men. Strange, is it not, how all the churches on earth teach just the opposite! They teach that the tabernacle of man is with God—in heaven. But the goal of all God's redemptive effort is that finally He will be a God whom men will see on earth, a God who will make earth to be one with heaven, where Jesus is Lord over all men and they, in Him, will live in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some years ago Gene Edwards ministered a word of revelation of powerful import. I have shared this once before, but feel to share it again because of its special relevance to this subject of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In the following paragraphs I will unfold as faithfully as I can the concepts he set forth. In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did an incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched—entering into union with one another. The realm where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before—not heavenly and not earthly—the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time, space, or natural law. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything on this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.

Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there—just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm. He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being. That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being.

All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a "breath of life"—the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's "breath of life" is not air—it is the Spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding—intelligence and wisdom! only the light that God IS was more glorious than this exquisite creature—man in God's image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can't peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm—no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God's image. There is no "god" in any other creature that can awaken them to spiritual, heavenly realities. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by any thing or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm. He is at home with who he is and who they are. He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth. He is the only creature that has ever been, is now, or ever shall be, that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

Consider with me, my beloved, What is the natural habitat of man? He is spirit—his natural habitat is the heavens! He is dust—his natural habitat is the earth! Both? No! Neither? Yes! Neither. And yet, in some strange, mystical way—both. This glorious creature God created—where is his "home"? Ah— God prepared the place for man as soon as He created man. He created a place that corresponds to man's true state for man to inhabit. The earth, contrary to all that you may have been taught, is not the natural habitat of man. And neither are the heavens the natural habitat of man! The Garden—and only the Garden —and no place but the Garden is your natural habitat. That's where you belong—that is your true world, your homeland, your motherland—that unique realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The Garden was not heaven, neither was it earth. It was a realm where God could walk, and where man could

walk and talk with God. It was the dimension of the spiritual body—spirit and body heaven and earth, visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial, blended into one. The greatest of the glories of heaven was in that Garden—the tree of life was there. And that was man's habitat. It was not merely where man was—it was what he was.

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God—which City we are (Rev. 21:9-11; Isa. 60:2,14). **"And I saw the New Jerusalem...having the glory of God: and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded their fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 21: 10- 11 ; 22: 1 -S ).**

How do you suppose the tree of life was transferred from the Garden of God to the City of God? The simple truth is—it wasn't! The Garden still exists. The Garden is in the City. The Garden IS the City. In this City two realms interface once more—the new heavens and the new earth—not two separate entities, but that place where heaven and earth are joined, the Land of the Interface! This is where righteousness dwells—the new mind and the new body. That is your world, my beloved. You and I belong to an interface. We are an interface. We are part heavenly and part earthly; part spiritual and part physical; part visible and part invisible. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place of union with God in the interface where heaven and earth overlap. We are a colony from the heavenlies inhabiting the earthlies. We belong to neither and we belong to both. We are of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are in the Lord Jesus Christ, the HEAVENLY MAN. He, more than any other man, is an interface of these two realms. He is the second man, the last Adam. He embodies and reveals within Himself the true purpose of God in man.

Only in Christ can one understand the true nature of all things. He is of both these realms and He is in both of these realms. He is in both and He is in neither. It is a great and deep and glorious mystery. oh, the wonder of it! He is a MAN seated in the higher than all heavens! We who have been born of water and of the spirit are of His species. We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, life of His life. We belong to His realm. We walk with Him today in the Garden of God, in the City of God, in the LAND OF THE INTERFACE, for it is the only place where we can comfortably move in both realms. And yet it is not both realms—nor is it either realm—it is a combination, the union of the two, an entirely NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! That's what you are! You are spirit and you are body. You are God and you are man. You are divine and you are human. That is our destiny—to be both in union in one! That is our habitat. And redemption progressively brings us into our inheritance in this blessed Land of the Interface. The salvation of the soul, the redemption of the body, will complete the work. Let us press on, saints of God! The full splendor and bountifulness of this precious Land lies just before us! As the crab lives in two elements—water and land—so the New Creation Man lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens!

## **THE CONNECTING LINK**

God has a great purpose in creation. He made the heavens and the earth. He made the world for Himself as a field wherein to unveil Himself and make visible what He is, in all the perfection, wisdom and truth of His Being. Creation has an origin and a purpose, and this origin and purpose were determined by the wisdom and pleasure of the omnipotent Creator. The world around us has a meaning. It is not a world such as materialistic science supposes, which came from nowhere in particular, has no particular aim and nobody knows where it is going, nor what the end shall be. Against that we set this divine declaration, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Creation came from God, it goes back to God. He reigns over it, and it will fulfill His purpose, which is altogether, and absolutely a glorious purpose. It will bring to God a revenue of praise and glory and adoration as no other device could do. Therefore it has a meaning. It is the field of the development

and display of God's wisdom, power and glory, a means by which He makes Himself known and understood, a means by which too, not only is God known, but a supreme joy and eternal blessedness will be achieved. This is the secret without which creation cannot be understood.

God's purpose in man transcends by far the beauty and glory of creation. The unfolding pattern of God in creating man has never changed. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so God created man in His own image..." In this text the fall is shown not to be man's normal state. Man today, like Adam, may be far from God, yet in his heart, as in the scriptures, a witness will be heard, saying that this distance is through self-will. He may live in sin and sorrow; but deep in his conscience he knows that such a life is in opposition to the will and purpose of his Creator. Therefore the man in God's image is shown before the fall—to confirm the voice that speaks to every human heart, and declare that though all men walk as Adam, sin and death are not a part of God's eternal order, but a mere temporary arrangement in the working out of God's great plan. Man's proper place is seen IN CHRIST, the last Adam, prefigured by the first Adam before he fell. Adam, in the image and glory of God, ruling all the works of God's hands, is the type of man in Christ, as God ordains him.

A king in Europe, a kindly monarch, went to visit a school. Children were being taught concerning the various kingdoms into which nature and man were divided. The king wished to ask the children some questions. A sweet little girl stood forth, and the king said, "Now, my dear, tell me what these are," holding objects in his hand. She said, "A flower, a bird, a beast." "Tell me to what kingdom the flower belongs." "To the vegetable kingdom, sire," said the child. "Tell me," said the monarch, "to what kingdom do these animals belong?" holding up various animals. "To the animal kingdom, sire." "Tell me, my dear," said the king, "to what kingdom do I belong?" Now, I think if she had said he belonged, for the most part, to the animal kingdom, she would not have been far wrong; but the little one had great reverence for her king, although he had so often failed to recognize the Kingdom to which he belonged. The little, blushing maid did not like to say that he belonged to the vegetable or the animal kingdom, but "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise." The little one, with her eyes full of tears, for she had heard the littering of the laughter which was running through the school at her embarrassment, looked up into the face of the king. "Now, tell me, dear," he said, "to what kingdom do I belong?" "You belong to the Kingdom of God, sire." And the king bowed his head, for the arrow had gone to his heart. He said, "My dear, pray that I shall be worthy of that Kingdom, the Kingdom of God."

The answer of the child is the answer, which I give you. Do you desire to teach the child that which will enable it to triumph over the lusts and passions of a mere animal nature? Train the child from the beginning to know that he or she belongs to the Kingdom of God. Teach them that they are the offspring of the Father of spirits, and that first and greatest of all is the spiritual nature which they have, and not the physical or psychical nature. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Teach them that sex, station, and race are nothing in that Kingdom of God. Teach them that "there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all ONE MAN IN CHRIST JESUS." Teach them to seek for that New Creation which God's Spirit alone can impart, that they may be worthy of that Kingdom, and that they may have the Love which rules in that Kingdom from its divine center to its utmost circumference, and which crushes lust and sin and death beneath its feet.

By such stature, nobility and rulership committed to Adam we get some idea of what sort of beings we are. one might be so impressed with the majesty of the silent, speechless mountain that lifts its white peak high above the clouds as to worship in silence at its altar—so suggestive is it of the Infinite. But what is a mountain, or a star for that matter, or billions of galaxies of stars and suns and planets and moons as compared with a man? They think not, they speak not, neither do they feel or hope or love or plan or build or have a duty or a destiny. Man is God's image and likeness! It is interesting to note that the almighty Creator fashioned and formed everything of nature throughout all the unbounded heavens and unto the depths of the earth and then, after completing and ordaining all, He gave us the true estimate of man's greatness and purpose when He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have dominion." Man is therefore not only the most important creature on the earth, but the most important creature anywhere in the universe. Can we not see by this that Adam stood in the midst of the vast creation as the REVELATION OF GOD to it all.

In the image of God and with dominion over all the works of God's hands man was the connecting link between the invisible God and the visible creation. Both heavenly and earthly, spiritual and natural, visible and invisible, dwelling in the Land of the Interface between the two worlds, Adam was the expression, representation and revelation of the invisible God to the visible creation. He was God's priest and God's king. As a kingly priest, with one hand he reached forth, taking hold of God with his spiritual nature, while with the other hand he reached out, taking hold of creation in his earthly form; and under his glorious dominion he brought the two together in himself into union. What a priesthood! What a kingship!

Adam was God's special gift to the entire creation, from the highest heaven to the lowest hell. He came not from the brute ancestry, nor from the muck of some primordial sea, nor from the mire of the jungle, but from the hand and spirit and breath of the divine Creator. Time will not allow us to dwell on the glories of man in God's image, but Adam was perfect, pure, and powerful. He was without spot or stain, taint or tarnish, pure in character, perfect in holiness, powerful in personality. He was the embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge. He was able to do on the morn of creation what no sage, scientist, or naturalist could do today. He found himself surrounded from the beginning with vast kingdoms of living things—fish, birds, animals. These were brought to him and at the command of God he gave them names. In the typology of scripture a name denotes a nature. Make no mistake about it, my friend, Adam did something greater far than merely classifying all the creatures which God had created in the world. When he "named" these creatures the wonderful truth is that he "natured" them—that is, he spoke creatively into them the nature that his mind of wisdom and knowledge conceived. Sovereignty and authority rested like a crown of glory upon the head of Adam the magnificent. He was made the Lord over all the creation of God to rule and reign as the visible expression of the invisible Creator. In him God was to be seen and known and touched by every thing everywhere.

We are never told how long Adam lived in that wonderful Garden where the glory of God was revealed through him in dominion and blessing to creation, but that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image and likeness of God was but a dim figure of the day when a whole company of sons in God's image would reign in splendor over all things in all realms throughout all worlds and all things in heaven and in earth would be gathered together into union with God in His life and purpose. our Lord Jesus Christ is the first and Head of this glorious company, and as typified and shadowed by the first man Adam, He is the connecting link between God and creation—in spirit from God, in body from creation—the revelation of the invisible Father to the visible worlds. From the Land of the Interface He is the Word made flesh, dwelling amongst us, full of grace and truth.

The Kingdom of Heaven opens to us all the power, resources, and abilities of the heavens and puts at our disposal everything God has and is. BUT THERE MUST BE A MEANS OF EXPRESSION. There must be a means by which God can translate heavenly things into a language that the world can understand. The Spirit of God may be everywhere and moving everywhere but human, natural eyes cannot see the things of the Spirit. There is no way they can "tune in" to that world. But the world can see the moving of the Spirit IN US! The world sees a moving of the Spirit in men living upon this earth and the body of Christ is used to express, manifest, reveal and interpret God to the world.

God is now perfecting His sons in wisdom, holiness, knowledge, grace and power and God will set this Man before His creation and say, "Here is my image and my likeness. In this one is my dominion and my authority." It will be as though God is saying to His creation that it is not necessary for them to see the Creator, for they will see this Man He has made. Was it not this very truth that Jesus spoke to His disciples one day and said, "Have I been so long time with you and you do not know me? He that has seen me has seen the Father." So it will be with all the holy sons of God.

The word "Christ" simply means ANOINTED. When the Spirit of God came into the world and descended upon Jesus, He then became JESUS, THE CHRIST. He was a human, God man. He was a God, human man. He was the forerunner of the ultimate man that God is bringing into the universe as the revelation of Himself. This highest and ultimate of God's creation will reign throughout the ages first from pole to pole, then from world to world, and finally from galaxy to galaxy, throughout all the unbounded heavens. There is one thing the Holy Spirit would impress deeply upon our hearts today—if we are not walking in the place that God has for us, then GOD IS BEING SEPARATED FROM HIS CREATION. He is not then glorified as He should be before all

worlds and all heavens, for God is to be GLORIFIED IN US. Not apart from us, but IN US. oh, the mystery of it! It will be God's glorious New Creation filling all the earth and sky with the manifestation of Himself—the great Man that God brings forth. God and man, ONE CREATURE, to be praised and honored and glorified through all ages and unto the ages of the ages.

## **THE KINGDOM FAMILY OF GOD**

The Bible is a book of faith and hope. It looks, not backward or downward, but forward and upward. Its face is ever set toward the Dawn. It always points us toward the best that is yet to come — the completion, maturity, fullness, consummation. In its first pages we read of the heaven blest Eden; of a time when mankind was free from pain, sorrow and evil, because man was free from sin. While man walked in his primitive state of innocence his home was a Garden —the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He reigned splendidly over all realms from the lowest to the highest, symbolized in the dominion given him over the lowest realm of the fish of the sea, the higher realm of the beasts of the earth, and the highest realm of all, the birds of the heavens. These are but word-pictures of a dominion more powerful and extensive than mortal minds can comprehend. God was his familiar Friend and intimate Father. But we read on a page or two and a change comes over the order of things. Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, disappears, becoming but a history recorded, a faint memory beyond the pall that hangs dreadfully over the mind of man. Joy, peace, glory, power, holiness and life vanish, and leave in their wake sorrow, discord, weakness, shame and death. When man sinned pain, limitation, frustration and death entered the world, man's heavens grew black with clouds; God no longer communed with him in the spirit of the Day, and he was driven out of the Garden, at the gates of which the cherubim were posted with swords of flame that pointed every way, as if to say, "No return, no return."

Then Jesus came! The message He gave was the Kingdom of God. It was the center and circumference of all He taught and did. After four tragic millenniums the gates of Eden suddenly swung open and the Kingdom of Heaven was seen again on earth. A man in God's image and likeness stepped forth out of that long-closed Land of the Interface and the glory and power and nature of God was seen upon Him. He came with a gospel—the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. He lived and moved in the realm of sonship full and complete. He lived and moved in the realm of the Kingdom which He came to proclaim and which for three years or more He demonstrated before men. He began His public ministry with preaching the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news." on His first circuit through Galilee, He taught in their synagogues, and preached the good news of the Kingdom, Himself saying, "I must preach the good tidings of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent." on His second circuit through Galilee, He went about through cities and villages, preaching, healing, and bringing the good tidings of the Kingdom of God. on His third circuit through Galilee, He went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, healing the sick, casting out devils, raising the dead, and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. When He was near Bethsaida, and saw the great multitudes who were as sheep having no shepherd, He had compassion on them, and ministered to their needs, and spake to them of the Kingdom of God. Even when He presented Himself alive following His crucifixion, by many proofs, He appeared to His apostles during forty days, speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Creation once more beheld God in the form of man.

Eden is God's picture of His plan for man. Eden is the proto-type of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This Kingdom plan was fully represented in the Garden of Eden. All four necessary elements of the Kingdom of God were there in Eden. Eden was the land, Adam and Eve were the people, the Lord was the King, and the Lord's command about the eating of the trees of the Garden was the law. God's own ideal for man was not a kingdom as we conceive of it, but a family. All the world was to be a Garden of Eden. God and man were to live together in sweetest, most intimate fellowship. The family is God's ideal for us. Israel was a family—the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were the trihal families of Israel. The family became a kingdom, but it was a family-kingdom. Joseph was given the birthright, Judah was given the scepter, unto Levi was committed the priesthood, and each tribe had its part.

Adam was the son of God, and Eve was his daughter-wife, with their home in a Garden, and God Himself a Father-Mother in the midst. Its atmosphere was love; its music the rhythm of their wills with His. Sweeter music never filled human ear. When the work of redemption is fully accomplished, and every bit of darkness and

discord destroyed, we know again the glories of Eden—the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Then the ideal of the Father's heart is realized. The Garden becomes a City, but it is a Garden-City, all the sweet simplicity of the nature-life of the Garden, and all the authority and glory of the City, are joined in that wondrous Garden-City and City-Garden. God's elect are now citizens in that glorious City. We are a family of sons gathered into Christ Jesus. We see His face in the spirit, His likeness is upon our countenances, for His name is written in our foreheads. our light is the glory of His presence, His life giving Spirit the water that flows through our street and waters our tree. our atmosphere is love; and the music of wills made one in Him pervades our land.

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is the eternal union of heaven and earth. The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place in heaven or upon the earth. It is the blending, merging, intersecting of heaven and earth. The spiritual realm provides the government, the righteousness, the wisdom and knowledge, the peace and joy, the love, the wonder, the eternal significance, and the glory of the Kingdom. The people and things of earth are the outward forms and visible expression of the inward reality of the Kingdom.

## **THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**

It will help us in our understanding of what it means to live in the Kingdom of Heaven, to look at the order of life in the realm of nature. I am indebted to Henry Drummond's wonderful out-of-print book *NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD* for a number of the thoughts shared in the following paragraphs.

Every day in the year more than 300,000 babies are born in the world. All have tiny faces and usually the same number of ears, fingers, arms, legs and toes. All are little humans, quite alike in size, and with the same needs for food, love, protection and learning. Each also has his or her own special features. Each is like every other baby and unlike any other baby born on that day, or on any other day in history. Now, if these same 300,000 people were to meet on their twenty-fifth birthday, their specialness would be even more obvious than at birth. Some would be very tall, some very short, and the rest would be somewhere in between. They would vary from very fat to very thin. Skin colors would be yellow, brown, white, reddish, black, and all kinds in between. Equally different would be the many types of personalities, mental abilities, talents, and ways of living in these 300,000 people. All were born on the same day and at the time were similar in many ways. All breathed alike, ate alike, and cried alike. But within twenty-five years, each had grown up into an individual who is like other human beings, but who is also very different from other humans. Some would like Mexican food, others American food, and others Chinese food. Some would speak English, others French, and others Russian. Some would worship God, some would be atheists, and others would revere ancestral spirits. They would dress differently, think and act differently.

There are two strong forces in nature, which influence human life and determine what a person will be. These two forces are **HEREDITY** and **ENVIRONMENT**. Neither one alone is sufficient to mold a full and useful human life. Heredity is a word used to mean the way in which certain characteristics are passed from parents to children, generation after generation. Because of heredity, each baby is born with human characteristics that make him distinctly human. Environment is a word used to stand for all the conditions and influences from without which become a part of a person's life and affect his development. Included in a person's Heredity is the color of his or her skin, hair, and eyes, physical stature, facial characteristics, temperament, and many other physiological and biological features. Included in a person's Environment are the food he eats, the liquids he drinks, the air he breathes, the place he lives, the home he is brought up in, the values he is taught, the diseases he may have, and the ideas, people, and education he is exposed to. Thus it can be seen that Environment is altogether as important a factor in what a person will be as is Heredity. Perhaps even more so! It needs to be very clear in our minds that the nature of man is received through Heredity, but the sustenance, development, and conditioning of that nature depends entirely upon the Environment. For instance, a child may be born with an aptitude for music. Because of his Environment that talent may lie undeveloped, or he may become a rock star or a violinist in a symphony orchestra. Environment makes all the difference! The first and primary purpose of our Environment is to sustain life. The Environment is that in which we live, and move, and have our being. Without it we would neither live, nor move, nor have any being. Within every living organism is contained the principle and the power of life; but in the Environment is the power to sustain and develop that life, the conditions of life. Every living thing normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, water and food. When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and

when we further bear in mind that the food supply is contributed by the Environment, we shall realize at once the importance of the meaning and the truth that without Environment there can be no life!

Almost three-quarters of the human body is water. Other important substances in the body are calcium, phosphorus, and carbon. These substances are called "elements"—they are among the hundred basic substances of which every thing in the visible universe is made! Your physical body is composed of some of the same elements as is the world around you, and only by being in harmony with that world, only by intermingling what it is with what you are do you have life. For example, through the secret pores of your skin two pounds of water are evaporated daily from every healthy adult. The water has to be replaced. And from where does it come? From the Environment! Meanwhile you are breathing, taking in air you can use and sending out air you cannot use. From the air you breathe in, your lungs take oxygen. You must have it to live. Matters not how much life you have in you, or if royal blood is flowing through your veins, you must assimilate your Environment to live! Heredity is not enough. The Environment is really AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. We and it must be one. We and it are one. Life depends upon that UNION—the organism united with its Environment. An organism in itself is but a part; its Environment is its complement. Alone, cut off from its Environment, it is not. Alone, cut off from my Environment, I am not. Without food, I am not. Without air, I am not. Without water, I am not. Without love and protection and communication, I am not. I continue as I receive. My Environment may change me, but first it has to sustain me. Its secret transforming power is directly molding body and mind and is sustaining the very life itself.

This is a great truth in the physical world. It is but a wonderful picture of the greater realities in the SPIRITUAL WORLD! This is a truth of so great importance in the spiritual world that we shall not misspend our time in pursuing it. In the spiritual world he will be among the enlightened and wise who understands this one great truth: Without Environment there can be no life! I speak of course of the Spiritual Environment of the Spiritual Realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. What does this amount to in the Spiritual World of God and His sons? Is it not simply the grand and glorious truth spoken by the first-born of the New Creation when He said: **"Without ME ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5)**. Through the mighty work of regeneration we have been birthed into the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven as SPIRITUAL ORGANISMS, spirit beings, begotten of God, the off-spring of our heavenly Father. There has been awakened within us a new principle and power of life—God's very own divine life, the life of heaven.

But let every man consider this that I now propose: even in this, our New Creation Life, we require a SECOND FACTOR, a something in which to live and move and have our being—an ENVIRONMENT! The Kingdom of Heaven has an Environment. The Spiritual World has an Environment. The whole universe is a type and shadow of this glorious truth. Every star has its gravity. Every planet has its Environment. Every living organism has its Environment. Without the Environment of the Spiritual World we cannot live divinely as sons of God or move or have any spiritual being. Without the Spiritual Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven the life of sonship within us is like the body without air, the fish without water, the eagle without its nest.

The great Pattern Son, Jesus, walked in the full and enlightened consciousness of the interrelationship between organism and Environment. He did not live independent of that Spiritual Environment which surrounds and envelops the sons of God. Jesus declared, **"Believe me that I AM IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME" (Jn. 14:11)**. It was not only the Father IN THE SON (heredity), it was also the Son IN THE FATHER (environment). The Father was the center and circumference of Jesus' life. That blessed Christ also prayed for the younger sons who were to afterward follow in His steps, saying, **"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou has given me, that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me (heredity), and I IN THEE (environment), that they also may be one IN US (environment)" (Jn. 17:1 1,21)**. Christ knew that as a son He was the organism and His Father was the Environment. The Father was that IN WHICH THE SON LIVED AND MOVED AND HAD HIS BEING. Although He was the Son of the Father, He could in no way live independent from the Father. And what is the Environment of the sons of God today? It is God in Christ. God in Christ, and we in Him, is our Environment in which we live and move and have our being!

Multiplied thousands of God's precious saints have been lifted into new and wonderful realms of understanding and experience as the great truth of "Christ in you" has exploded within their quickened hearts. But I declare to

you today that altogether as magnificent is the marvelous fact of OUR BEING IN CHRIST. To know "Christ in you" is to know the reality of your inward spiritual life, but to discover yourself as being "in Christ" is to apprehend the fact of Christ as your Environment, your sphere of existence, the realm of your new life and being. This Environment is a world that surrounds you and also separates you from whatever is outside of it. This Environment is so strong that it not only sustains but it also protects whatever is within it from all that is without, even as our atmosphere on earth protects us from the deadly rays in space. And again, it supplies, to whomsoever is within it, whatever it contains, as our atmosphere supplies all that is needed for our physical life. The Father of glory is most truly AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. He is Himself the Environment of the Spiritual World of His sons. We live by the Father! By translation into the Kingdom of the Son we have been raised up into a new and altogether different Environment in the heavenlies, of which Jesus spoke when He said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. ABIDE IN MY LOVE, EVEN AS I ABIDE IN MY FATHER'S LOVE" (Jn. IS:9-10). In the light of Christ's union with the Father, our union with Him becomes clear. His life in the Father is the law of our life in Him.

Our present thought is a very simple one. We seek to show the boundless range and omnipotent power of the atmosphere of this wonderful Kingdom of Heaven. God's Spirit is bringing a truth of highest importance before us, compelling us to give heed that the spirit of revelation may unfold its marvels to our believing hearts. There is a deep design. Paul wrote that if any man be in Christ he is a NEW CREATION. Not only is he himself new, but he now lives in a new world, on a new "planet," as it were, in an entirely new order of things. The things, the Environment of the old creation have passed away and ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. Every created thing has its Environment. Every created organism, on earth or in any other world, has to live and move and have its being in its particular Environment. The eagle is not afraid that when he flies in the sky he will have too little wind currents. Imagine a fish crying, "Cast me not into the water, lest I drown!" Imagine a sunflower refusing to turn toward the sun lest it get a sunburn. The Environment of the New Creation is the Father in the Son. Ah, precious child of God, you can no more live and grow up into the image and likeness of God apart from daily and constant and intimate and vital union with the Father than a fish can live without water. Jesus forcefully expressed it thus: "Abide IN ME...he that ABIDETH IN ME ...the same bringeth forth much fruit. If ye ABIDE IN ME...ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn. 15:4-7). The organisms is composed of the very same elements as its Environment, but it cannot live in separation from its Environment! The two must be one. The one must live by the other. We have been made partakers of the divine nature, but that fact will never bring us to mature sonship. We must live by the Father, in blessed fellowship, participation, and union with Him!

The most common error in the lives of many of the Lord's people is the attempt to live without assimilating Christ as their Environment, failing to make Him the absolute center of their existence, the sphere of their life. Friends, family, job, amusement, home, hobbies, worldly pursuits—all too often these are the Environment by which we live. No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, DWELLETH IN ME...as the Father hath sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (Jn. 6:S6-S7). As the natural man must have sustenance from his Environment, so the spiritual man. The spiritual man must come to know how to live by his Environment.

After he has gotten life you must give him food. Now, what food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or with creeds, or with commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with programs, or with experiences? No; there is a rarer luxury than all these—so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich, that they who have will never live on any other fare again. It is this: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4). Nothing can satisfy the son's appetite but this—he hungers for the bread that cometh down from heaven. Nothing else will fill him. Nothing else will satisfy him. Everyone knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. It has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. They are but sugar-water. It has pleasures, and amusements, and excitement, and works; but there is no food there for the immortal craving of the spirit. It has worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly events, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate.

The church world is hungry, too. Starving, in fact. oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has impressive rituals, and stirring programs, and moving ceremonies, and

splendid ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and incense, and temples, and cathedrals, and priests, and preachers, and creeds, and organization, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved "in the work," and committed "to the work," and "giving to the work." They do and do but in all this something other than CHRIST has become the central factor. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the program, or the ministry, or the experience, or the method, or the personality or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate and millions of Christians are drunk with them and in their inebriated hilarity think they know the living Christ.

There is no SUBSTANCE in them! The divine ingredients of the celestial atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven are missing. Sons of God cannot live in that Environment. So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No possibility of starving or suffering malnutrition on this fare.

It is eternal food for the sons of God to live upon. And notice—sons live on every word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. That is how the Greek expresses it. Is it not dreadfully true that the vast majority of Christians are living on words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God? They live on a by-gone revelation, a word spoken to another people at another time, a historical creed that which God spoke through St. Augustine, or through Luther, or through Calvin, or through Spurgeon, or through Whitfield, or through Finney, or through the Pentecostal pioneers, or through the Latter Rain prophets! It is stale bread, spoiled meat, stagnant water and a dead word. It is a word that God spoke, but not the word that the Spirit is speaking. It is a word that in some ancient day proceeded out of the mouth of God, but not the word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying unto the churches." It is yesterday's manna, and it has bred worms and stinks. It is truth, but not present truth. But the living bread of the living Christ in His living revelation to His elect sons in this day is meat that the world knows not of, meat that endures unto eternal life. In springtime it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

How graphically Douglas Wilson illustrates our relationship with this Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven in one of his booklets. He wrote, "Can we imagine such a thing as this? A child is born into the world that has no hearing, no sight, no sense of smell, or taste, or feeling, and it cannot speak. Many children are born with one or more of these disabilities and there is a possibility that children could be born without any of these five senses, or the ability to speak. It is of such a one we are now thinking. It cannot see, or hear, or feel, or smell, or taste or speak.

"IS THERE ANY POSSIBLE HUMAN WAY TO REACH SUCH A CHILD LIVING IN SUCH A BODY? It is living in a world filled with normal human beings. It has the same life in it that is in the others. But it cannot communicate with those beings in any way. It cannot see what is around it, neither hear. It has no sense of feeling, and therefore would not know when it was touched. It has no sense of smell, nor of taste, and has no communication with the outside world or appreciation of anything in it. This child would have no means of learning from that world around it. It would only know that by some means unknown to itself it is surviving in its own little world. It has no conception of what mankind is. There is no way by which it can express itself to the surrounding world. What a horrible condition! But please know this. There are literally multitudes of God's people who occupy that very condition spiritually.

"It is these five senses and our ability to speak that give meaning and value to our existence in this world. It is possible to get along without one or two, perhaps three of these senses, but such a person is terribly handicapped. But to have none of the senses nor the ability to speak, would put such a person into complete isolation. There is no known means by which such a person could be communicated with. It would be a world alone.

"Let us suppose that the child grows, reaching at least a partial maturity. Then one day, by a miracle, it receives sight. We have no way of knowing what the emotions in such a person would be, upon its reception of sight. Suddenly out of a world of darkness, the sight would reveal the beings and all the proportions of the world about it. A WHOLE NEW WORLD WOULD SUDDENLY COME INTO EXISTENCE FOR THAT

PERSON. Such a world would never have been dreamed of. There had been no means of even suspecting such a world. It would be confusing, bewildering, frightening. The mind of such a person would have had no way of conceiving anything that the eyes now see. YET THIS WORLD HAD BEEN THERE DURING THE WHOLE LIFE OF THAT INDIVIDUAL. This person had been right in the middle of it all the time. It was not a new world, but new to this person. And yet, the child would still have little conception of this new world. He would have no idea of what would be safe or dangerous in this world. He would have no knowledge of beauty or ugliness. He would have no sense of value of good or bad, or the meaning of the things he sees. Such a person would not understand the difference between a tree or a man. He would not know that an animal is an animal or that a bird is a bird. All of this would have been around the person all the time, but he had not known it.

"Again, this person goes on for weeks or months, and then another miracle is performed and its ears are opened. ANOTHER WORLD IS SUDDENLY OPENED TO THIS ONE BY THE OPENING OF THE EARS. A vast, expansive new world comes to this one in the world of sound. He would hear people talking and wonder what those sounds were. He hears music, and the chirping of birds, and marvels at what he hears. He has no ability yet to evaluate the sounds, so there must be a learning process by which they can all be sorted and arranged and catalogued as to what they are, pleasant or unpleasant. He had no means of even dreaming of such a thing as sound, having been locked up in his own world apart from it all. He has possessed no means of contacting those around him. And the people about him, though filled with compassion and a desire to help this creature, could not in any way 'get through' to him" —end quote.

Believe me, precious friend of mine, THERE IS A WORLD AROUND US THAT THE NATURAL MAN HAS NEVER SEEN. It is there now, and has always been. Little by little God is opening our spiritual eyes and we are beholding with wonder things that we have not suspected or even dreamed of as being about us. With our physical senses we have absolutely no comprehension of that world, because there has been no way for it to communicate with us. But the Spirit of God is opening the vision of His elect in this hour to see things that eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. There is a realm, a dimension of reality, a sphere of existence, a world, a universe, a Kingdom that God has prepared for His sons, and He is revealing it to us by His Spirit.

Strange and wonderful emotions stir within us as we begin to discern the value of the things we see by the eye of revelation. We are testing them and trying them to grasp their certainty and their purpose and intent. We are daily exploring this wonderful world of the Kingdom of Heaven that is opening before us. We know that it is the land our heavenly Father has prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. There is no way for this higher world that is around us to reach us until God opens a channel. Mighty angels and glorious creatures in heavenly realms may be possessed of a burning desire to make us understand about this new world, but they cannot do so. Never until God Himself quickens and transforms us by His Spirit is this new world opened to us. Carnal-minded men think of heaven in terms of golden streets, harps, gold slippers, white robes, palm branches, trumpets, and so forth. But heaven is a busy world in which mighty things are accomplished. Heaven is an active, aggressive realm and it is all around us and within us. Some of us know by the moving of the Spirit that this spiritual world is in existence here and now, and it is our Fatherland. Jesus came and demonstrated heaven, but the people could not see it. Before their very eyes Jesus demonstrated the power and the glory and the life of that bright world about us, yet most were blind to it.

One morning the servant of Elisha awoke and stepped outside the house where they were visiting. He looked about and saw that he and his master were surrounded by a great and terrible army and he cried to Elisha to ask what they should do. He was frightened beyond belief because in his limited ability he could see no way out. But can we not hear Elisha saying, "Don't be fearful, we have more with us than they have with them." Consider the astonishment upon the countenance of this servant and hear him say, "I wonder what is the matter with you, Elisha. I went out and scanned the mountains, I saw all the host of the enemy there. I don't see anyone here with us." So Elisha prayed the Lord to open the eyes of the young man, and God did so. What a sight he saw! ALL THE TIME HE HAD BEEN IN THE VERY MIDST OF GOD'S ARMIES OF HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE AND DIDN'T KNOW IT. He had been surrounded by the very power of God and the world of God, but he possessed not one faculty that could reveal it to him. He was just as certain as the Russian Cosmonauts that there was nothing there. He could not see, taste, feel, smell, or hear what was all

around him. There had been no connection between himself and this other world until God opened the eyes of his spirit and revealed it to him.

Men who witnessed the demonstration of the first telephone made by Alexander Graham Bell, refused to believe that there could be any such thing as a telephone or a voice coming through a wire. THERE IS A WORLD ABOUT US and we try to tell people about it but they inform us that they have seen all there is to see and heard all there is to hear, because they have the Word of God. But the Kingdom of Heaven is not a book, the Kingdom of Heaven is not a place, neither is the Kingdom of Heaven an age. The Word was not made a book, the Word was not made a place, the Word was not made an age—the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now that same Word is made flesh in us, in all who are the sons of God. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! Hallelujah!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 4 BIRTHED INTO THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God .. "

### PART FOUR

#### THE NEW BIRTH CITIZENSHIP TO THE KINGDOM

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

This is the last resurrection appearance of Jesus before His ascension. At this time Jesus discussed with His disciples the coming of the Holy Spirit and gave them instructions about waiting in Jerusalem. He gave them some idea of what would accompany their experience of receiving the Holy Ghost. They would receive power. During His three and a half years of ministry, Jesus attempted to turn the minds and hearts of the disciples to spiritual things, and graduate them from constant expectation of external and natural happenings. The earthly kingship idea of Messiah was prominent among the Jews. They expected that when Messiah came he would defeat Israel's oppressors and immediately go to Jerusalem and sit on David's throne. The people would inaugurate him as king of Israel, and Israel would soon become the one world kingdom. They had good reasons for believing this idea, because they believed the prophets of the Old Testament.

Jesus tried to overcome their concept that the restoration of the kingdom was to be a literal affair. He tried to transfer their vision from the literal to the spiritual. He tried to make them see something other than a visible kingdom. He kept proclaiming that there was an invisible Kingdom of the heavenlies wherein is found life and reality. It was natural for them, however, to look for a literal, restored kingdom in the earthlies, for with their natural minds that is how they perceived the promises of the prophets of old. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets had left an impression upon the people of Israel that the Messiah for whom they looked was going to come and establish a literal kingdom of a visible government in the earth.

For example, turn to Isaiah, chapter nine, and read. Do so as though you were an Israelite looking for Messiah, as though your nation had been overthrown by the foreign armies of Babylon, Assyria, or Rome. You are in subjection to a foreign power, and you are listening to your prophets prophesy. They are proclaiming that because Israel sinned, because they kept not the law of the Lord, because they went a whoring after other gods and did abomination before the Lord, God sent the foreign government to destroy their land and their holy city and temple, and carry them away into captivity. Suppose yourself sitting among the Israelites, listening to Isaiah prophesy, weeping because your nation had sinned and God had brought the judgment of your enemies upon you. You long for the time when you can go back and see Jerusalem's walls erected again, and the temple of Yahweh glittering once more in its glory upon mount Moriah.

Put yourself in the position of one of those citizens of Israel listening to the Word of God coming to them from their prophet, gazing at Jerusalem in rubble, under the hand and dominion of a foreign, heathen government. Just imagine yourself listening to the prophet speaking to you the words recorded in Isaiah chapter nine. "For unto us (Israelites) a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7). This is the Word of God through the prophet, to the people of Israel. If you can, place yourself back there listening, as a people whose land, government and throne have just been devastated by foreign armies. Now God promises you a king, a Messiah. He promises that when he comes he is going to re-establish the throne of David, which to them was a very natural and literal throne in a physical and visible city on earth. This Messiah will restore the kingdom to Israel and bring in an age of peace and blessing. He is going to sit on David's throne and kingdom to rule it, to establish it in judgment and justice.

You are now bursting with the bright hope of the glorious kingdom of David! And you have a promise from the prophet Isaiah that it is going to come to pass. And the scene is repeated again and again through the prophets Jeremiah, Daniel, Zachariah, Ezra. and others.

The Jews in the days of Jesus were still looking for the Messiah that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, Haggai and Malachi had promised. Each one of those prophets gave them the idea that this Messiah, when he came, would be a temporal, external, visible king. A king that would militarily defeat their enemies, go up to Jerusalem and ascend Mount Zion, rebuild the palace as well as the temple and the walls, and sit again on the throne of David re-established there. Putting oneself in their place before Jesus came, one can understand that with their natural minds they had real reason to believe that this earthly kingdom would come to pass. Their prophets had made it clear that this was what they could expect.

The Jews could not see the spiritual reality to which the prophetic utterance pointed since they did not have spiritual insight. They could see only with their literal, individual, human approach and perspective. They could see only the promise of the visible kingdom they supposed the prophets were prophesying about. It seems that this was still in the mind of the old prophet Simeon when Jesus was brought into the temple in Jerusalem as a babe. Even the words of the aged prophetess Anna and the angel, if taken in the letter of the Word context, reflect the hope of a literal kingdom established in Israel, in Palestine. Thus one can see and understand why the disciples, also, in spite of Jesus trying to transfer their hope from that which is natural to that which is spiritual, from an earthly Kingdom of God to a spiritual Kingdom, held tenaciously to the visible, temporal idea. You can understand why they, not being quickened by the Spirit, and without spiritual perception, could still be in expectation of a literal kingdom established upon the earth.

The primary reason for Peter turning away from the Lord, denying Him, and the other disciples scattering into the night, was because the Messiah they had followed for more than three years was not fulfilling what they thought Isaiah and the prophets said he would do. He was not conquering Rome. He was not seizing power. He was not becoming king. They became confused. They supposed that this Man was supposed to take David's throne in Jerusalem. Instead of taking David's throne, He is letting Pilate sentence Him to death upon a cross. All the disciples trusted in the words of the prophets and cherished the hope of the restored kingdom of Israel. The disciples were confused and frustrated because they had no spiritual perception yet. They had been born of the flesh, but not born of the Spirit. They had been born of man, but not born of God. They had been birthed from the earth, but not birthed from above. They could understand natural words with natural minds, but were unable to understand spiritual words with spiritual minds. They, like Nicodemus, could understand earthly things, but had no understanding of heavenly things.

What is the Kingdom of God? It is a goal—a quest set before us toward which we daily press—the goal of entering into a completely different realm; a different civilization; a higher order; different form of government; a realm governed by God. The Kingdom is a heavenly thing, for it is the Kingdom of Heaven, the subject of God's heavenly counsels. The Old Testament prophecies made known His earthly counsels. They concerned natural men, physical nations, geographical locations, carnal warfare, territorial conquests, literal thrones, outward rituals and ceremonies, national laws, temples of stone and gold and cedar wood, animal sacrifices, priestly vestments, feast days, etc., etc. This is of great importance, showing how completely the Kingdom lies beyond the outer world. It has a different origin; it is revealed at a different time; it cherishes a different hope; it is entered by a different birth; it belongs to a different sphere. After the glowing commendation of the faith, inheritance, and exploits of the Old Testament saints and heroes, in Hebrews chapter 11 we are distinctly told that all these "received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that without us they should not be made perfect." Does not our Lord tell us that "among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he"? The Kingdom of Heaven is the spiritual realm of which Christ is the Head and King. The true Church is the metropolis of the Kingdom, the sons of God are the throne, the center of order and government in the Kingdom.

George Hawtin wrote of this realm: "May the blessed Holy Spirit open the eyes of our understanding that we may see that beyond the veil of flesh is the realm of God. There men and women, having passed through the binding, blinding veil of the flesh, pass out into the open sunlight of God's precious revelation. There they begin

to see things as He sees them and to understand them as He understands them. In that realm beyond the veil of our human flesh we come to know God as He knows us. Here we begin to walk no longer in the light of the sun and the moon, or in the light of the natural mind, but we now walk in the light of the Shekinah, the light of the Holy Spirit, who has come forth from the Father into the world to dwell, not with men, but in them. The way we once thought of God and understood the things that belong to His realm becomes foreign to us. Then we thought that God was such an one as ourselves, but now we see His purpose is to make us like Him.

"Beyond the realm of the flesh we walk, not only in a new realm, but in an entirely new mind. It is the mind of Christ. Here in this heavenly realm we begin to think as God thinks, to see as He sees, to comprehend as He comprehends, and to desire as He desires. Here we become citizens of a new world, a new country, even an heavenly country. Here old things are passing away and all things become new. We cannot have a renewed mind while we live and walk after the desires of the flesh and the carnal mind. That is where the prosperity doctrine has led millions astray. They have set their affections not on things above, but on possessing the things of the earth, and unbeknown to themselves, while they demand everything that appeals to the natural man, their desires for the treasures of the Spirit begin to fade away.

"After enumerating his abundance of natural things and natural gifts, talents and accomplishments, all of which belong to this realm of flesh and blood, the apostle Paul declared that he counted them all on the level of dung, and that is exactly what they are. Men and women who glory in the natural and the abundance of earthly things will be found sleeping when the trumpet sounds. Our Father in heaven has made provision for us whereby we may live above the world as true citizens of the heavenly realm. In this realm of the Spirit we have a new heart and a new mind. We have new eyes to see the invisible, new ears to hear the inaudible. Here in this world we communicate only with words that are spoken, but those of us who have walked at all in the Spirit have found that the Spirit of God speaks to us very definitely without the use of spoken or written words so that we know what He said and what His rebukes and instructions were. In this realm beyond the veil of the flesh, in this heavenly country and new citizenship, we begin to know His voice as we never knew it from the far off country of the flesh. It is a new realm, a new era, a new country and a new citizenship. Those who walk here have a new attitude. This is the realm of life eternal, and I am convinced that neither life nor death nor principality nor power nor things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" —end quote.

Hannah Hurnard relates the transformation that came to her life at the discovery of this higher reality. "Little by little everything in my circumstances altered. It was as though I had really moved into another country—a heavenly one, where I was surrounded by things that I found more delightful than anything that I had experienced in the past. Even more wonderful than that, I actually began to feel as though there were angels and heavenly beings coming and going all the time, and, for a very matter-of-fact and practical person like myself, this was a most wonderful and awesome experience. All sorts of spiritual influences and inspirations were given to me which seemed to 'open the eyes of my understanding', so that I seemed to have been born into a new world and universe altogether, or to have escaped from the prison-house world of what my physical senses could perceive, into a vast and glorious world perceivable only through newly developing spiritual senses. Not through psychic senses, which enable people to see what is going on naturally elsewhere in the world, or what is going to happen in the future, but through spiritual understanding of truths which had been hidden to me until then —and which now began to reveal a world of REALITIES and experiences and contact with higher powers, such as I had never before envisaged" —end quote.

## **THE NEW BIRTH**

Let us go back some two millenniums to the venerable city of the great King. It is night. A citizen is stealing along the street furtively, keeping to the shadows. Having gained admission into the house where a certain itinerant teacher is staying, the visitor says to Him, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him." It was really a brave and daring thing for this night visitor to do. On the one hand, he was a distinguished citizen, an ecclesiastical authority among the Jews, a member of the renowned Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of Israel. On the other hand, the teacher whom he had come to consult, although famous for certain healings and teachings, was only an untitled rabbi from Nazareth in provincial Galilee.

The first words of the new teacher are, however, astounding. The words spoken by Jesus to Nicodemus are freighted with divine significance, for in that interview the Lord revealed foundation truths concerning the Kingdom of God. Instead of deferentially receiving him, Jesus said to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." What an unexpected, stunning affront to this exemplary Pharisee, this honorable member of the Sanhedrin, this professional expert in Israel! The Kingdom of God was a term with which he had been familiar since childhood. He believed that by virtue of his own birthright as a Jew he was already a member of that Kingdom. And now this itinerant carpenter-teacher from despised Nazareth dares tell this distinguished Pharisee in his very face that unless he is born again, born from above, he will not ever see the Kingdom of God! Astounded and confused, he asks, defensively, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" But the new rabbi, in no way offended by his visitor's stupid question, proceeds to repeat, with increasing detail and emphasis, the terms of entrance into the Kingdom of God. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

Imagine the unborn twins Jack and Jill debating whether there is life after the womb. Their small, dark world has been unusually active lately, and both Jack and Jill realize that their days in the womb are numbered. But while Jill argues that there is much more to existence than their life in the womb, Jack refuses to believe in something he has never seen. Then suddenly their world begins to collapse. They feel a tug, intense pressure. There is pain for the first time ever. Jack holds on; Jill slips. Her head is pushed harder and harder into a dark tunnel. There is pain, more pressure. It's happening, thinks Jack, this is the end. And while he holds on for dear life, he sees a piercing light and hears Jill's final cry. Then silence. But while Jack weeps for his sister, Jill lies safely in the arms of her mother. She has been welcomed into a new family and a whole new world—a world of dazzling light, vast distances, and great opportunities. And Jill wishes she could tell Jack that there is indeed life beyond the womb and that it's better than anything imaginable. But she can't, Jack will have to see for himself. IT IS BIRTH THAT BRINGS THE NEW IDENTITY AND THE NEW WORLD.

A human life begins at the moment of conception, but at that point in time it is not truly a person, it bears little resemblance to the man or woman it will one day become. At the time of conception the embryo looks more like a fish than a human being. Many important changes take place as the child develops in the womb over the gestation period of nine months. The formation period ends with the onset of childbirth. When the baby is ready, a change in the chemistry of the mother's body causes the contractions that bring the birth to begin. Continual and intensifying contractions finally thrust the baby out into a new world. The attending physician cuts the umbilical cord and severs the connection between mother and child. The infant's lusty cries broadcast the news of a new person arriving in the world. Think of the great changes that must take place in the infant at the moment of birth. In an instant, after hours of struggle, from a liquid environment, he is now surrounded by air. From total darkness, he is now flooded with light. From a world of confinement and silence, he is now brought into a world of freedom and communication. He must begin to breathe immediately. No longer will he get nourishment from his mother's blood; he must begin to eat. There is everything to learn, and the learning starts immediately and never ends. It is exciting, thrilling!

In the great and wonderful plan of God, the birth experience determines a human being, for it is by birth that the previously unborn fetus takes on its identity as an independently living, breathing, human being. Can we not see that identity begins with birth? The nature of our birth, and its reality, determines who we will become. Our pedigree and genealogy is of utmost importance. Your life is a unique creation of God. You are a special creature in all of God's vast universe. It is at birth that the certificate is issued whereby the child is registered as a citizen of his or her country and the world. It is at birth that a name is given to the child, establishing for all of his life his individual identity. In like manner, the birth experience determines the identity of a son of God who possesses the life of Christ. Jesus did not tell Nicodemus, "Ye must be conceived again," although there is truth in that, too. He said, "Ye must be born again." It is a mystery to us all, but the fact remains that God has ordained that a wonderful transformation takes place by birth. It is at birth that the child is given the "breath of life" thus becoming a "living soul." All through the Bible birth was the event that established the identity of the child and his or her position in the family as a son or a daughter. Inheritance, protection under the law, legal matters of all kinds, and pedigree were all reckoned from birth. Conception determined none of these things under the law—only birth. How wonderful and significant are the blessings and benefits that accrue by birth!

What a mighty transformation there must be in a man's life, in his nature, in his character, in his state of being, in his desires, in his attitudes, in his behavior, in his understanding, in his goals and objectives before he can truly say, "I am not of the world. I have a new birth. I am born into another Kingdom. I belong to another King. I am in the midst of the world with all its crookedness and sin and sorrow and limitation and pain and death, but I do not belong to it." I wonder if you can get that.

We hear of the new birth and we think we understand it. Faintly we hear the truths of sonship and imagine we are already sons of God. We have seen through a glass darkly, but face to face we behold all things as they are. The mists that have hung like shrouds upon the distant majestic peaks are fleeing away before the rising sun of righteousness that we may know as we are known. In the true and eloquent words of another: "Believers of all ages have sold themselves woefully short on all the great promises of God. We have been content to say that every believer was born again and needed but to wait until some distant day when he would fly away to heaven either by death or by rapture. I remember seeing this sign vividly portrayed by the public highway: Except a man be born again, he CANNOT GO TO HEAVEN. That statement, I fear, has been the sum and substance of Christian belief, but we have missed the true meaning of the truth given to Nicodemus so long ago. To be born from above is to be BORN FROM A HIGHER REALM. Spirit is higher than flesh even though both should grow together in one body. To be born of the flesh is one thing, for there you are born into a NATURAL REALM capable only of partaking of NATURAL THINGS. But to be BORN OF THE SPIRIT is to be born into a new and higher realm where the ETERNAL THINGS are CLEARLY SEEN before us even as natural things are seen by the natural man. Without birth from above it is IMPOSSIBLE to see the kingdom of God, for natural men have not been given the power to see spiritual things.

"The realm of the new birth is the realm of sonship. It is the realm where Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived and moved and had His being. Not that He was born again, for He had never sinned nor died and needed not the regeneration of ordinary men. But He lived and moved in the REALM OF SONSHIP full and complete. He lived and moved in the REALM OF THE KINGDOM and opened up the way for us to enter in. As Moses led Israel to Kadesh Barnea where they could actually see the promised land but through unbelief turned back to the wilderness, so Jesus led the whole world to a sort of spiritual Kadesh Barnea where the glory of the Kingdom came into full view only to be lost sight of in a spiritual wilderness in which we have wandered for almost two thousand years. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived in a realm above and beyond ordinary men, for while we have lived as sons of men, He lived as the Son of God. While we have been from beneath, He was/tom above. While our kingdoms have been of the earth, He was not from hence. While this is undeniably true to any honest man, yet, praise be to the eternal purpose of God, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became the Son of man that we who were born sons of men might become sons of God" —end quote.

Regeneration, new birth, sons of God—these are all terms with which most Christians are familiar. The beautiful analogy is accepted by everyone. But all this means to the average Christian is that he conjures up the nice spiritual feeling of thinking of himself "as if" he were a "real" Son of God, as Jesus was and is. The average Christian has absolutely no idea of the transcendental implications of this new birth into the family of God. Most think of being a child of God as sort of an "honorary" title conferred on them by an indulgent God who accepts them as "little adopted human children" to whom He plans to give as their reward for accepting His gift of eternal life a beautiful park, a celestial playground called "heaven." This heaven is designed for them to enjoy for eternity, playing, loafing, running, shouting, rejoicing, visiting, playing harps, waving palm branches, and doing whatever other harmless and sinless thing their heart may desire.

But let us understand what it really means to actually be BORN into the very family of GOD. I prefer to turn the phrase "the family of God" around, in order to better grasp its significance. Instead of saying that we are born into the family of God, it is just as correct to say that we are born into the GOD FAMILY! I may say, by way of illustration, that I was by natural birth born into the family of Eby. But this also means that I was born into the EBY FAMILY. It is merely two ways of stating the same fact. I am of the EBY KIND. I AM EBY. Not only are men born into the family of God, they are born into the GOD FAMILY—the family that is God. Not only are we birthed into the Kingdom of God, we are birthed into the GOD KINGDOM—the Kingdom which is God. We are of the GOD KIND. And startling as it may be, this GOD KINGDOM, or GOD FAMILY, is the ELOHIM of the scriptures! And to be born into THIS FAMILY means that we have the potential to become ALL THAT HE IS!

The new birth is nothing less than the birth of a God-being, the birth of a Christ-creature, who becomes "Christ IN YOU the hope of glory" (Co1. 1:27). There is no new birth outside of the actual birthing of an actual Spirit Being who becomes the "inner man," the new "me." It is my spirit quickened by His Spirit, God birthing of His own divine life into me thus making me alive from the dead, a new creature on the Celestial Plane. So many Christians glibly talk about a born again "experience," or a "change of heart," being wholly ignorant as to what must transpire to effect this change, to implement this reality. Our Lord said, "Ye must be BORN," not now of the flesh, but of the Spirit. Religionists, both then and now, are incapable of grasping this greatest of all truths and its astounding implications. And so they fail to understand that as a woman gives birth to a son, bringing an actual child into the world as a living, breathing personality with an individual identity, nature, mind and will, so does GOD GIVE BIRTH, delivering out of His own loins the offspring of Himself, of His own kind, of the divine nature, of the GOD SPECIES, to grow up into the fullness of His own divine Being.

This is exactly what the apostle John was explaining when he wrote, 'He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' This is a divine reality, but is also a parable, illustration or analogy. It is the picture of a babe, who has been conceived, developed in the darkness of a womb until the fullness of time, and then born into the light of the world. The members of its body are fully developed. A matured child is born into the world, the exact replica of its parents. That is the parable. Whenever the word "born" is used it presupposes the whole analogy of conception, months of waiting for the life to develop, and the final thrust of the new being into a new world. The new birth is nothing less than the birth of an actual divine, heavenly Being, a son of the Father, who is as ageless and deathless as is his immortal Parent, differing only in development and rank.

How wonderful are these things! They are far beyond our expression or the ability of the most eloquent to describe! It is a marvelous fact that the very life of God is communicated to the believing heart via the new birth. But what is the life of God? It is the content of God and God Himself. All that is in God and all that God Himself is are in the life of God. All the fullness of the Godhead is hidden in the life of God. The nature of God is contained in the life of God, and His wisdom, knowledge, will, power, and glory. Every facet of what God is and can do, is included in the life of God. With any kind of living thing, all that it is rests within its life. All of its capabilities and functions issue out of its life, and all of its outward activities and expressions originate from its life. It is that kind of living thing because it has that kind of life. Its being rests in its life. God is the supreme living Being, and all that He is, of course, is in His life. All that He is— whether truth, holiness, light or love—is derived from His life. All His expressions—whether goodness, righteousness, mercy or forgiveness—are derived from His life. All His divine capabilities, powers and actions are inherent in His life. The reason that He is such a glorious and powerful God is that He has such a glorious and powerful life. Hence, His being God rests in His life. And all that is in the life is transmitted through the seed of that life and reproduced in the offspring of that life. Think of it!

I am impressed to share the following from the writings of the late Douglas Wilson. "Not long ago we were reading from chapter twelve of Hebrews concerning the true sons and the bastard. We had often meditated on the fact that the child known as a bastard could in no wise help or change the circumstances of his birth. We knew well there was a stigma attached to the child, under the Old Testament especially. We were never quite able to reconcile all that we were told concerning such children, until just recently the Lord put a thought in our minds that settled the whole question. We quote now from Hebrews 12:5-10. 'And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh to you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all (sons) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He FOR OUR PROFIT, that we MIGHT BE PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS.'

"In the above quotation we find two kinds of sons. At least in one sense of the word they are sons. There is the son that receives chastening of the Lord, and there is the bastard son that does not. In one sense of the word,

the bastard, or as some translations put it, the spurious son, is as much a son as the true son. It can make no difference whether the spurious son knows who his father is or not, HE HAS ONE, just the same as the legitimate son. In some cases it is the very same father. We have come to see there is something in this and related passages that we need to understand. Let us first examine some reasons why children are brought into the world. We must remember always that the child itself has absolutely nothing to say about being brought into this life. It has nothing to say about its color, nationality, place of birth, sex, or anything else. We may say that at least some of these things are determined by the laws of nature, but we would rather say they are determined by the laws of God working ALL things according to the counsel of His own will, and that applies to all people.

"The first and basic reason for the birth of children is for the preservation and increase of humanity. Humanity has no other way of perpetuating itself except through the birth of children. Whatever other reasons there may be, and there are several, they will all rest upon this basic one, the inherent instinct for self-preservation in humans. The savage in the jungle, or the highly educated and refined person in the highest strata of society, must return to this basic principle in order to perpetuate himself and the rest of the human race.

"We suppose that the greatest natural reason for bringing children into the world is because they are desired and wanted for themselves. The love of husband and wife, combined with the father and mother nature, is designed and given to humanity to cause them to want and desire to bring children into being, simply because they DO LOVE AND DESIRE THEM. The principal desire in the lives of parents is to have a family, to provide well for that family, and to see that each member of that family is initiated into his or her life with the best possible preparation and advantage that the family can provide. Some children are very fortunate and blessed, for they enter into a loving family circle and have parents who desire the best for them. The atmosphere is conducive to the best development of the children, and in that love and care there runs the vein of discipline, wisely administered to cause the children to develop into the kind of men and women that are a credit to the community, the nation, and the world.

"Another group of children are brought into the world through ignorance. Many of these children are unwanted and the care they receive is minimal. Sometimes they are abandoned or given away. In one segment of this class we find those who are born into this world only because of the sexual desire of the parents, often unmarried, and these children are unplanned for and unwanted. These are illegitimate children, humanly speaking, the children without a true father and often deserted by the mother. Some of them are resented or even hated and they become the shame of the family into which they are born. The stigma of their illegitimate birth follows them continually. These children are the victims of the uncontrolled passions of their parents and these are children that are born entirely WITHOUT A PURPOSE. These children are often looked down upon by society and yet, they CAN IN NO WISE HELP THEIR CONDITION OR THEIR BIRTH.

"Now let us look at the group we are most concerned with. In this last group we want to consider those children who ARE BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Their birth is not in any sense "accidental." The conception and birth are the result of planning by the parents to bring a child into the world to accomplish a certain purpose. There is the knowledge of a need, a work that must be done, and the child is deliberately brought into the world to do that specific thing. Even before the birth, the child may be given by the parent over to that work, as Samuel was given to the Lord by Hannah, and all efforts are made to bring that child to the very highest capabilities to accomplish this purpose. THIS IS A CHILD BORN FOR A PURPOSE and trained for it. SUCH HAVE BEEN THE KINGS OF NATIONS AND THE PRIESTS OF THE ORDER OF AARON. Such ones stand out from others and their lives are different than the lives of their fellows. Some know from their early childhood that they are destined for a major role in the life of this world. These are children BORN FOR A PURPOSE even in the flesh.

"But let us see something about the CHILDREN OF GOD. How loosely we have used that term! Any church member or religious person calls himself a child of God. Yet we can observe that there is ABSOLUTELY NO SPIRITUAL PURPOSE IN THEIR LIVES. We find multitudes of religious children, brought forth in one manner or another, filling the churches, but we can discern no spiritual purpose or destiny in their lives. They believe they are saved from hell and the devil and someday will fly away to heaven, but now they have nothing to do but go to church, obey the church rules, and wait for the coming of the Lord. And in heaven they will have

nothing to do, no responsibility, no constructive ministry, no outreach to creation, just eternity to dance, sing and shout—an eternal 'party'. Yet these have no conception of eternity, nor yet of the great plans and wonderful purposes of God for His creation. They are children BORN ENTIRELY WITHOUT A PURPOSE, or in the language of this article, they are bastard children.

"These children cannot help their condition, neither can they do anything about it. The church system that was responsible for bringing them forth, took no forethought as to why they would bring these children into being. In all probability it was to increase the population of the church and benefit the church budget. But for the most part they 'just happened.' What we missed in the past, but are now beginning to see, is that the true child of God IS A CHILD BORN FOR A PURPOSE, and trained to the highest degree of ability to fulfill that purpose. We emphasize again that even the bastard has a father, but he is a child born without a 'father purpose.' He is just brought into the world to make out the best he can. He receives no chastening (training) for any specific purpose, but just grows up into whatever may come his way. But behold the wonder, the thrill, the glory, the expectancy of a CHILD BORN TO FULFILL A PURPOSE! A true son, fulfilling the purpose of the Father's heart in the great work that is yet to be done throughout the ages to come.

"We think of Jesus the Christ in this particular. Surely none will deny that JESUS WAS A SON BORN FOR A PURPOSE. He was the Lamb of God SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. He came to fulfill the words of all the holy prophets who prophesied of His coming. He came to reveal the glory of the Father to the world. He gave Himself by the eternal Spirit to fulfill the purpose of God in the work of redemption and recreation of the world. God has a plan. He always has had a plan, even from before the beginning. And just as God had a Lamb, a Firstborn, a Forerunner, a Captain of our salvation, from the beginning, BORN FOR THE PURPOSE of fulfilling His mission on our behalf, so does God have other sons BORN FOR THE PURPOSE OF GOD in their mission and work. Just as Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered, so do all the other sons learn obedience by the same means, for there is a world to come that will be under the jurisdiction of those sons as Kings and Priests, and they must be trained.

"Now we can begin to see this passage about bastards and sons in a far different light than ever before. Now we see the bastard, not as one condemned forever from the presence of God, but simply as one BORN WITHOUT A PURPOSE, yet one who in due time will be cared for by those sons BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Surely this makes a division in God's people, it elevates some above the rest, but is that not how it is in all the world and in all of nature? ALL CANNOT BE KINGS AND PRIESTS, anymore than all in our nation can be President or in the government. But there does rest upon the Kings and Priests a great and awesome responsibility, and for that responsibility the sons MUST BE CHASTENED, having already been BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Please keep always in mind that this chastening is training for the place prepared for the son" — end quote.

## **CITIZENSHIP IN THE KINGDOM**

It is almost impossible to imagine what it would mean to be a man without a native land or home, destined to wander from place to place throughout life with neither rights nor privileges of citizenship. Sir Walter Scott alludes to the lonely frustration of such a predicament in the immortal words of his Lay of the Last Minstrel:

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead, Who never to himself hath said,— This is my own, my native land! Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd, As home his footsteps he hath turn'd, From wandering on a foreign strand!"

If this depicts the worth of the country a man claims for his own, I know of nothing more wonderful than discovering one's citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. Pride of citizenship in a nation is wholly justifiable under the administration of men. With the Roman Empire, everyone living in territory controlled by Rome was considered part of "the Roman Empire," whether they were a slave or a citizen. But only freeborn men were naturally citizens. It was a cherished thing to be a citizen of Rome. The apostle Paul sometimes used his Roman citizenship as a badge of credibility and power (Acts 22:25-29). But how much more glorious it is to find citizenship in the everlasting and incorruptible Kingdom of God! The name of the man who has been born of

God, appears therefore, in the census of the heavenlies. His home or citizenship is in heaven, even though he lives outwardly upon the earth.

There is at this present time a Kingdom scattered abroad over all the face of the earth; mixed and mingled among the peoples of all the kingdoms of the world: a people who are separate and apart from all the other kingdoms. They are not recognized by the world as a kingdom, they have no formal consulates in Rome, London, Paris or Moscow and no ambassador at the United Nations. They have no boundary lines separating their territory from any of the other nations of the world, and they do not have a visible king as some other nations have. They are the Kingdom of God on earth, scattered all over the earth among all the peoples of the world. God calls them, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (I Pet. 2:9).

They are a people who have been drawn out of the other nations of the world, redeemed by the blood of Jesus out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation and filled with the divine nature and Holy Spirit of God. These have been born again, giving them a new identity, a new life, a new allegiance, a new hope, a new destiny, and a new heritage. They are citizens of a new land, a heavenly country, and their King lives and rules within their hearts and minds and bodies. The world does not know them as a nation, for it cannot see their birth certificate, their true manhood, their land or their King. Wherever they are in this world they are strangers and pilgrims in a strange land. They were once citizens of the nations of the world, but being now born of God they have a new parentage and have been translated out of the kingdom of the darkness of this world into the Kingdom of the Son of God. They were one time in the flesh, without Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, and without God or hope in the world.

So we have today a great and glorious Nation—a Nation of Kings and Priests unto God, scattered abroad over all the whole earth, in and among the nations of the earth, in and among the kingdoms of the world, but not any part of those kingdoms. While they are maintaining their separation from the world, they are growing up into Christ, so that when He shall appear, they shall be like Him and come into their full inheritance. They are constantly being changed, and as time goes on, they shall put off more and more of the things of the old world they have left, until they become matured sons of God in the Kingdom of their Father. But they are strategically placed among all the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations for a divine purpose—there shall be a conquest of all these territories until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and forever! God will give the nations to His sons as their inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth as their possession and they shall rule them with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:7-9). The stage is now being set for this glorious victory, and all nations shall come and worship before the Lord. The Lord shall be King over all the earth and all kindreds shall serve Him. His throne shall be manifested through His sons and His authority shall be over all. The Holy Spirit has witnessed through all His holy prophets in every city and every place throughout the past generation that THE TIME IS AT HAND. The sons of God are ready to be manifested, the purpose for which the body of the Christ has been so meticulously prepared is ready to be revealed before the face of all nations, and God will do His strange new work to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption, from the tyranny of sin and sorrow and pain and death.

Ah, beloved, do you not sense in the depths of your ransomed spirit a sense of divine destiny—that you were indeed BORN FOR A PURPOSE? Have you heard the sound of the trumpet thundering out the message: YE SHALL BE UNTO ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS! God doesn't need Kings and Priests in heaven, although that is the realm from whence they rule. HE NEEDS KINGS AND PRIESTS ON EARTH. "And they shall reign over the earth" (Rev. 5: 10). The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of this divine government (Rev. 21:24). Truly we have received the call to sonship, to kingship, to priesthood, and the plan of God overwhelms my spirit and my soul rejoices in His unfailing purpose! WE HAVE BEEN BORN FOR THIS!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 5**  
**BIRTHED INTO THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God .. "

**PART FIVE**

**SEEING THE KINGDOM**  
**ENTERING THE KINGDOM**

As I begin this message I acknowledge my indebtedness to Henry Drummond's wonderful book **NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD** for some of the thoughts shared in the following pages. May the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God seize upon our hearts and impress indelibly upon our minds the wonderful truth that all things that are seen in the Natural World are but pictures and images of the **GREAT REALITIES** in the Spiritual World. And in the understanding of the impassable gulf that exists in the Natural World between the inanimate and the animate, the dead and the living, lies the revelation that in the Spiritual Realm there is also a great uncrossable gulf between the worlds of Spiritual Death and Spiritual Life, between the carnal mind and the spiritual mind.

There is a wonderful law known to men of science that is called the Law of Biogenesis. This Law demonstrates that during all of recorded history life has only come from pre-existing life. No human power has ever been able to produce life out of inorganic chemical substances, nor has such a phenomenon ever been observed by human eye. We know that life is not now being originated on earth and that all the life forms today spring from pre-existing life forms of some kind. The inorganic world is staked off from the living world by barriers that have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, no chemistry, no electricity, nor any form of energy, nor any evolution can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. Only by the bending down into this dead world of some living form can these dead atoms be gifted with the properties of life; without this direct contact with life they remain fixed in the inorganic sphere forever. It is a very mysterious Law, which guards in this way the portals of the living world. And if there is one thing in nature worth pondering for its strangeness it is the spectacle of this vast helpless world of the dead cut off from the living by the Law of Biogenesis and denied forever the possibility of resurrection within itself. Here we stand in the presence of the uncrossable gulf—the gulf of all gulfs—the gulf between **DEATH** and **LIFE**.

The Word of God contains an explicit and original statement of the Law of Biogenesis as it applies to the spiritual life. In the vision of the spiritual world presented in the scriptures, the first thing that draws the attention is a great gulf fixed. The passage from the natural world to the spiritual world is hermetically sealed on the natural side. In the natural world the door from the inorganic to the organic is shut, no mineral can open it; so, the door from the natural to the spiritual is shut, and no man can open it; the door from the earthly to the heavenly is shut, and no power of earth can open it. This world of natural men, of carnal minds and mortal bodies, is staked off from the spiritual world of God by barriers that have never been crossed from within. No organic change, no modification of environment, no vitamin, hormone or chemical substance, no meditation or mental energy, no moral effort, no improvement of character, no religious exercise, no ritual or ceremony or tradition, can endow any single human soul with the attributes of spiritual life, immortality; or incorruption. The spiritual world of God and His sons is guarded from the world next in order beneath it, the world of the carnal mind, by a Law of Biogenesis—**"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God...except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God,, (Jn. 3:3-7).**

It is not said, in this statement of the Law, that if the condition be not fulfilled the natural man will not enter the Kingdom of God. The word is, cannot. It is not that God arbitrarily shuts out the spiritually dead from the kingdom of the spiritually living. There is a great Law involved here. Paul by inspiration pointed out this Law: **"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,, (I Cor. 2:14).** It is not simply that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, but he cannot. It is as utterly impossible for the carnal mind to know spiritual

things as it is for a stone to spontaneously generate life. The entrance of the natural man into the world of the Spirit of God is simply a scientific impossibility!

The Law of nature is: Except a mineral be born "from above,,—from the kingdom just above it—it cannot enter the kingdom just above it. And except a man be born "from above,, he cannot enter the Kingdom just above him. There being no passage from the lower kingdom to the higher, whether from inorganic or organic, or from natural to spiritual, the injection of a LIFE is a necessity if a stone or a plant or an animal or a man is to pass from a lower sphere to a higher sphere. The earth will never possess (lay hold upon) the Kingdom of God so long as eternity shall endure. It must be the other way about. The Kingdom of God, the higher Kingdom, must possess the earth. Though the Kingdom of God is within me, yet I cannot possess it. It must possess me, or it will never be known. If I try to possess Christ, I will be as barren in the future as I have been in the past, but if CHRIST POSSESSES ME, then I will be hid with Christ in God and God will raise me up to find my existence in the realm of His divine life and glory.

As we consider these thoughts may God Almighty grant us that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. Let us open wide our hearts and minds before the Lord that He may reveal the eternal truth of this subject to our hearts. The principle by which, in nature, the inorganic is raised up into the organic, and, in like manner, in God's economy, the natural man is raised up out of the death realm into the life of the Kingdom of God, is stated simply by the Lord Jesus in **Matthew 13:31-32**: "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs.' Let us UNDERSTAND! How are the inorganic, non-living mineral elements of the earth raised up into the organic kingdom of living things? Within the seed is a germ of life. The seed containing the life is planted in the earth, in the lifeless mineral world, in the kingdom of the dead.

Once buried in the earth, with all the right amounts of water and air, and the right temperatures, the seed germinates and the life within the seed begins to grow. Finally the shell of the seed bursts and there takes place a release of the life from the seed. As the life is released it immediately SEIZES UPON the chemical elements in the earth, converts them into food, and then builds up living tissue out of matter that never lived! The inorganic chemicals become organic tissue! The dead is converted into the living! The lifeless elements of the earth are transformed into the living substance of the plant. This is one of the most amazing facts in nature, though it is happening every minute all around us! Now we can see clearly what the Lord Jesus meant when He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, but when it is sowed in the field, and becomes grown, it is the greatest of herbs. The plant stretches down to the dead world beneath it, touches its minerals and gases with its mystery of life, and brings them up ennobled and transformed to the living sphere. In like manner, the breath of God, blowing where it listeth, touches with its mystery of divine life the dead souls of men, bears them across the bridgeless gulf between the natural and the spiritual, endows them with its own holy and eternal and divine qualities, and produces within them these new and marvelous faculties, by which those who are born of the Spirit are said to SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD and ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

How futile in the face of such truth as this is any form of self-reformation! How worthless and unprofitable the empty rituals, the static creeds, and the vain and lifeless traditions of the carnal religious systems! Place a lifeless rock in the dead earth and nothing will happen. Administer lifeless ceremonies and dead doctrines to a man dead in trespasses and sins and likewise nothing will happen. However thorough the self reformation may be, however beautiful the traditions and doctrines of religion, however impressive and inspiring to the soulish nature of man the pleasing platitudes of sermons, the harmony of music and the pageantry of programs, it leaves us without life and hopelessly dead to the glorious realities of the Spirit of God. Well did faithful Paul bear witness to the life-giving work of the Spirit in the lives of the Ephesians when he said, "You hath HE QUICKENED, who were dead in trespasses and sins...but GOD, who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, HATH QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST...and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (Eph. 2: 1-5).

With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ's indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He

alone can take the things of God and show them unto you. Nevertheless, I can certainly assure you that, the moment the grand and glorious fact of His indwelling life grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life. Yea, and I shall further add that the quickening power of His abiding life will also begin to change your mind, transform your emotions, and renew your body as well. It is the Law of Life.

To bring a dead natural man with his carnal mind of death up into the higher Kingdom of divine life necessitates the implantation of the incorruptible seed of God into man's earthiness. The point I want to make very clear is that the New Creation is more than the eternal and incorruptible life of God from heaven. The New Creation is that life planted in the earth, seizing upon the earth, changing and transforming the earth, raising it up to find its existence in the higher Kingdom of divine life. Jesus is Himself the pattern. We know how the Word, who had from eternity dwelt in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended up into the Father from whence He had come, He was still the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of man, the first begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself. In His resurrection and ascension He was no longer only the Mighty God, but He was the Mighty God whose divine life and nature had laid hold upon the humanity of man and had raised it up into identification with Himself. He is still a MAN, for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the MAN CHRIST JESUS. The Son of man became the Son of God. The whole wonderful work of Christ in redemption was not merely to deliver man from the law and its curse of death, but to BRING HUMAN NATURE ITSELF UP INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DIVINE LIFE, TO MAKE US PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field.,,

Even now at this very moment the life that we live in this body of flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God; and that faith assures us fully that the incorruptible seed, sown by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit, shall issue forth in incorruption, immortality and eternal life. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Death is corruption and life is incorruption. As the rush cannot grow without mire, as the seed cannot grow without water, as the mustard seed cannot grow without earth, so, in a manner wonderfully illustrated by these marvels, the incorruptible Christ seed, planted in the corruptible earth which we are, bears its fruit in immortality, incorruption and eternal life—the New Creation. The seed cannot become a tree without the earth, and the earth cannot become a tree without the seed. The tree is neither the life in the seed nor the elements of the earth. The tree is an entirely new creation, something that did not exist before, not life or earth, but life and earth! It is the commingling and restructuring of the two into a union, making of the twain one new thing. The tree is the elements of the earth QUICKENED AND MADE ALIVE by the transforming power of the life in the seed! Such is the New Creation. The New Creation is neither the eternal God (pure spirit) nor is it man (physical). The New Creation is CHRIST, the God-man, humanity admitted into the full glory of the Divine, human nature transformed and received up into union with the eternal Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is composed of redeemed men who are putting on the divine nature and the incorruptible life of God. That is why we must have the redemption of the body as Paul has said, "**But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES by His Spirit that dwelleth in you', (Rom. 8:11 )**. Even now at this very moment the divine life of God is at work within the elect, changing, transforming, lifting us up into the higher Kingdom.

I would say to you again that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which many babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is in every plant and tree, every beast and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and substance, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism. Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the spiritual life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of the being. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a...seed, which a man took, and sowed in

his field.,, The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus when He "passes this way,,, nor from the weekly reviving or refreshing that comes to weary souls as they gather together in church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship, encouragement and blessing of those of like precious faith, but I declare to you today that the life of sonship can only be known as we become sensitive to the reality of the ABIDING CHRIST WITHIN, conscious of His speaking, guiding, governing, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the mind, and the body into the image of Him who created them.

As speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are the evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, so the redemption of our bodies from the power of decay and death is the evidence of the manifestation of the sons of God. "We ourselves too, who have and enjoy the firstfruits of the Spirit—a foretaste of the blissful things to come—groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, which will reveal our adoption, our manifestation as God's sons" (Rom. 8:23, Amplified Bible). This change in our bodies shall not come by the mighty working of Christ crashing down through the clouds, but by the DIVINE INWORKING OF HIS INDWELLING LIFE as Paul by inspiration said, "He shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. "

## SEEING THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God means many things to many different people, according to their understanding. This is only natural, because of the many figures under which the idea was presented by Jesus, and also because people are at different stages in their progress along the way to the Kingdom, which means that they have attained different degrees of growth as children of God in the family of God. Jesus said that one must be born again in order to "see,, or "enter,, the Kingdom. Here we find Jesus laying down the preliminary requirement for an understanding of the Kingdom, as well as entrance into the Kingdom. But He does not say that upon being born again one would immediately fully see or completely enter into the Kingdom. But spiritual birth is the prerequisite. Understanding the Kingdom spiritually and laying hold upon its reality can only follow the new birth—not precede it. Until you are born from above you have neither the ability to see nor the potential to enter into the Kingdom of God.

First of all, then, the Kingdom is not a natural state, for it must be entered following a new birth. And a man can no more bring about his second birth—the birth into the spiritual world—than he could have brought about his first birth—the birth into the physical world. It comes to one from another world. He is given birth from a higher realm. It is the work of God alone. It is a new order that one enters into under entirely new conditions. It becomes accessible by the experience of a new life, a new identity, a new citizenship, a new spirit, a new nature, a new will, a new attitude, a new ability, a new objective.

When men come into the world, they are born outside of the Kingdom of God, and they cannot see into it. They may go round and round it, and examine it from the outside, and pass an opinion on it. But they are no judges. They are not seeing what they are speaking about. For that which is born of spirit is spirit, and that which is born of flesh is flesh; and fleshly men can only give an uninformed and unenlightened criticism about something spiritual that they do not and cannot understand. Therefore the critical value of a natural man's opinion on spiritual matters is nothing. His opinion is simply ludicrous—he is talking about a thing that he has never seen.

So far as one's experience of the Kingdom of God goes, regeneration makes all the difference. It is as if someone had been standing outside some great cathedral. He has heard that its windows are of stained glass and exceeding beautiful. He walks all around it and sees nothing but dull, unimpressive and unintelligible colors. There is nothing worth seeing there. Its beauty must be highly exaggerated and overrated, he concludes. But let him go in. Let him see things from the inside. And his eye is dazzled with the gorgeous display of colors and detail. The miracles and parables are glowing upon the glass; and the figure of Jesus is there, and the story of His love is told on every pane: and there are choirs of angels, and cherubim and seraphim and glory everywhere.

So let a man enter the Kingdom of Heaven—let a man be born again and enter—and he will SEE the Kingdom of God. He will see the glory of Christ and the King in His beauty, and beholding as in a glass the glory of the

Lord he is changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. Marvel not if it is necessary, to see all this, that he must be born again. Within this great world there are a number of little worlds, to which entrance is only attainable by birth. There is the intellectual world, for instance, which requires the birth of brains; and the artistic world, which requires the birth of taste; and the dramatic world, which requires the birth of talent; and the musical world, which requires the birth of harmony and ear. A man cannot enter the intellectual world except he have brains, or the artistic world except he have taste. And he cannot make or Jind brains or taste. They must be born in him. A man cannot make a poetical mind for himself. It must be created in him. Hence "the poet is born—not made."

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God, (Jn. 3:3). What does this word "see,, mean here? Everyone with spiritual understanding knows that the words "see,, and "know,, are identical in their spiritual meaning. When I tell a friend something he did not see before, and I am trying to get him to see it, all at once there passes over his face the illumination that indicates understanding. He says, "Preston, I see it., What does he mean? He does not mean that he sees anything with the eye of flesh. He means that he "understands,' or "knows,, it. I talk to a blind man who has no eyes to see at all. I explain something to him and presently he says, "I see it!" Does he see anything? Not with his physical eyes—but he knows it. How many times a day do you say, "I see!" So Jesus is telling us that apart from the new birth a man cannot understand, comprehend, or know the Kingdom of God. It is better to know the Kingdom of God by the spirit than to see with physical eyes any "age" or "external government" that might be called the Kingdom of God.

If the Kingdom is external then any drunkard, prostitute, rapist, murderer or atheist can see it. There were many who saw Jesus with their physical eyes but they never once saw the Son of God. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him, despised Him and hated Him, while they looked upon Him. You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless your eyes were opened as were the eyes of the men of Emmaus, you would not know Him to be the Christ. Millions of people today see God's Christ—His many-membered body on earth—and know Him not! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not, (I Jn. 3 : 1 ). They see us but they don't see us—they do not know us by the Spirit. But when you are born of the Spirit you see what other eyes cannot see. You see the unseen and the eternal. You know the things that are divine. You see God and you see the Kingdom of God.

I suppose if we could hear angleworms arguing, some learned angleworm might try to tell the illiterate ones about a race of beings called humans. He would tell how they were divided into two sexes, men and women. Now, that would be a strange thing to an angleworm, for angleworms have both sexes within the one individual. Then this angleworm would tell how humans had legs to walk with, and arms and hands to use, how they had eyes 1:o see with, a tongue to talk with, and lungs to breathe with. All these things would be utterly beyond the ability of an angleworm to comprehend, and I imagine the unlearned angleworms would say to the one who tried to tell them about the vast world of humanity, "Nuts! Did you ever see a human?" He, of course, would have to say that he never had, since angleworms have no eyes!

Almost all men are dreadfully devoid of the understanding of spiritual things. They are as blind to the world of the Kingdom of Heaven as angleworms are to the world of humans. The pulpits today are filled with preachers who are blind leaders of the blind. Blind men do not see. If you are blind I could talk to you about the beauties of the rainbow, about the spectrum of colors, about rays, reflections, optics, but such discussions as this would be utterly futile. I could continue them for forty years and you still would know nothing more about sight. You might roll your blinded orbs at that place from whence you have been told that light is coming, but all to no avail. Though there be beauteous sights all around you, there is but one problem; there is but one thing that is lacking: sight. You are blind. Jesus told the religious leaders of His day, "Ye have eyes and see not., Blind! Gropping in darkness. These cannot know the true nature of things.

And nothing has changed in the religious world in the past two thousand years. They cannot see the Christ who walks in their midst nor can they see the glories of the Kingdom of God.

You do not understand a thing by memorizing it. You may memorize the whole Constitution of the United States or the whole Bible and not understand any of it. You do not understand a thing by hearing it, by seeing

it, by reading it, or by any representation that can be made of it. You only understand by knowing, the knowing that comes by experience. Understanding is knowledge - personal, real, conscious possession. That insight into a thing that gives the true knowledge of it is what it means to "see.,, What depth this gives to the words of Jesus to His disciples: "And 1,11 tell you something else and this is the truth, that there are some of you right here standing in front of me who will not die before you have had a dramatic insight into the Kingdom of God and how it comes with power,, (Mat. 16:28; Mk. 1:9; Lk. 9:27). It is not to see it outwardly with the eyes, it is to see it inwardly with the understanding. It is not to hear it outwardly with the ears, but to hear it inwardly with the comprehension. It is not merely to repeat, or be able to tell about it, but to know it. If I know the Kingdom of God I see the Kingdom of God.

"It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mat. 13:11). "...I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory, (Col. 1:25-27). Until you have experienced that mysterious transformation that we call the new birth, you cannot understand any of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. The word "mystery," in scripture comes from the Greek root word MUO which means "a sacred secret.,, It was that which in the ancient mystery religions could be known only by the initiates— those initiated into the mysteries. Only members of the spiritual family of God, which is His body, can be initiated into and know and experience the sacred secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The natural man is dead. He is dumb, deaf, and blind to the spiritual world of God. To be blind simply means to have no vision of what the Father desires. The natural mind is very dark and without understanding. Only the Holy Spirit can awaken it. Human efforts to enlighten men to the deep spiritual things of God will always fail. ONLY TO CHRIST IS POWER GIVEN TO OPEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND even as the scales fell from the vision of Saul of Tarsus when Jesus purged them away. This explains why the Bible remains to a great degree a closed book to the most educated but unconverted or unanointed man, while it is an open book to many of the most simple and ignorant of believers. This explains why a man may be educated and trained to hold all the theological degrees that all the theological seminaries in the world can bestow upon him, and yet be utterly blind to the great spiritual revelations of infinite depths and eternal glory within the pages of this blessed Book of Books. This explains why carnally minded men who have read the Bible and have studied it through and through, and know the Hebrew and Greek, will yet fail to find the living Christ or the transforming power of the Holy Spirit or the glories of the Kingdom of God or the wonderful hope of sonship or the ultimate restitution of all things within its pages. It seems strange that with an open Bible before them they do not see these truths which to us are perfectly clear. But, after all, it is not strange, for these things are mysteries known only to those who know the spiritual code and have been initiated into the fraternity of God's family by the miracle of the new birth. Jesus said that these things were hidden from the wise and the prudent and that they were revealed to babes. A babe is one that is born, and so, until you are born from above into the Kingdom of God you cannot receive these things into your heart. Spiritual truths are for spiritual people, and must be spiritually discerned. If you have tried to share the wondrous things God is speaking to His elect in this Day with some carnal, unspiritual Christian, and have found them dense of understanding and disinterested, then know that you must first pray for their birth from above and then patiently wait for the Father to bring them to that birth, before you can hope that they will receive anything from your hand out of the treasure house of the Kingdom of Heaven. At the same time, the most humble and unlearned saint who abandons all to God has no difficulty finding all these glorious truths, and a thousand more, as plain as the noonday sun in the Word of God.

We are told in the wonderful parable of our Lord that in this, our day, the Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins. These ten virgins took their lamps (understanding-enlightenment) and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. But five of these were foolish, and five were wise. It is my determined conviction that these ten virgins, in one application, represent the senses of man—the five foolish senses of the outer man, and the five wise senses of the inner man. The five foolish virgins are the five soulical senses of the outer-man-body. A mind that judges everything by the outward appearance as perceived by the external senses IS FOOLISH! To every outer sense you have an inner spiritual counterpart.

Our mind is that part of us that thinks and is the seat of consciousness; it is our intellect and in it dwells our ability to reason. When we are born of the flesh, we are born with a natural mind. We enter this world with five

senses: sight, hearing, smelling, taste and touch. These are natural physiological and psychological senses, and feed information to our natural mind. Paul writes about our new birth in I Peter 1:23. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.,, This new birth is by an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, even that Word that was from the beginning which is Jesus Christ. This incorruptible seed is the life of the Christ by which we are made alive unto God. He is the author of eternal life. When we are born of the Spirit, God gives us a corresponding set of these same senses, which operate in our spiritual nature, in the inner-man body.

In the natural no one has ever been able to see in this world unless they have been born. So it is in the spiritual realm. Just as there are five natural senses in the natural realm, so also there are five spiritual senses in the spiritual realm. The five senses of the outer man are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell natural things; but these same five senses in the world of the spirit are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell all spiritual things which are invisible and incorruptible, as the apostle explains, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him—but God HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US BY THE SPIRIT; for the spirit searcheth (out) all things, yea, the deep things of God, (I Cor. 2:9-14). When we are born from above the FIVE SENSES OF THE SPIRIT WORLD become resident and operative within the inner-man body. Gradually, as this inner man grows and we are quickened to become aware of these senses, the EYES of our understanding open wider and wider to the things not seen by the natural eye; by degrees the HEARING of faith increases until every good promise of God is established as truth within and we learn to know the voice of the Father, and to distinguish between His voice and all other voices—"My sheep hear my voice, and a stranger they will not follow,' end "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith,,; in time we come into TOUCH with the Lord in His invisible presence and powers; little by little we TASTE and see that the Lord is gracious, and we eat and drink heavenly food with Him at His table in the Kingdom; after a time we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense-prayers and praises which are a SWEET ODOR to the Lord, and we are able to discern every spiritual fragrance that is or is not of Him, and the stench of the flesh. As the natural senses can be cultivated, so can the spiritual; and the cultivation of these spiritual senses constitute marks indicating our growth in the Kingdom, our development as sons of God, to the completeness of our new selves in the glory, honor, and immortality of the divine nature.

The sons of God have eyes within that see on a level that is not seen by the eyes of the outer-man body. You can have 20/20 vision with your physical eyes and never see what you see with the "eyes of your understanding,, (Eph. 1 : 18). It must forever be settled in our hearts that there is no true reality in any of the things that are SEEN, for how can we say that things that are always changing and passing away are realities? The only eternal things in the whole universe are the things that are NOT SEEN by the outer eye, and yet it is not that they are really invisible, for they are merely invisible to the kinds of eyes we have in our outer-man body. Eternal things are only inaudible to the ears of the natural and can be perceived only beyond the senses of the soulish man. The Holy Spirit has faithfully recorded of Moses, that grand hero of faith and spiritual vision, that "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE, (Heb. 11 :27).

Here is the mighty power of the New Creation: it sees what others cannot see! It sees, amid the thousand things natural men see and are guided by, something infinitely greater and more real—it SEES GOD. No wonder it leads a man to think and act differently from other men. On everything it looks at, the bright light of eternity is shining. The depths it perceives are infinite. The heights it beholds are immeasurable. The truth it understands is without flaw or error and is eternal. No wonder that under the inspiration of that vision it can do mighty deeds, for it sees God its helper and strength. Let me here say to every saint of God that just as, in any pursuit, the eye can be trained to see what others cannot see, so the spiritual eyes of the new creation inner-man body can be trained to see God everywhere and in all things. Abide in His presence until the heart is filled with it. You will begin to recognize HIM in everything that happens, when to others there is only mystery, perplexity, or tragedy. Seek to walk in the light of His countenance. Seeing the INVISIBLE will make it easy to forsake this world and do the will of God! The heavens are shut up from the natural man. He cannot see eternal things. He hears only the lower sounds of earth. But you see beyond all this into the very heart of God, into the depths of His great plans and purposes, and the "whys,, and "wherefores,, of all things since the creation of the world and unto the consummation of all ages. You see the Kingdom of God!

## ENTERING THE KINGDOM

Far away in the depths of my spirit the perfumed breezes of the Kingdom of Heaven sweep over my being until my very soul weeps for joy and laughs for gladness. I write to you today of a realm of reality that is wonderfully real, solid, and awesome. It is called the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ intends for us to actually enter into the Kingdom of God here and now, and to begin exploring it in its height and depth and length and breadth. "Get thee out of thy country...unto a land that I will show thee," the Lord commanded Abraham. Just as on any earthly adventure, we must be willing to be surprised. And we will be, for "eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard," what God has prepared for us.

We must expect to encounter some strange and exotic new realities. We will also find ourselves faced with some rather confusing and sometimes upsetting situations. We may at times be discouraged and hindered by unexpected storms and difficulties, which are part of the processing of God and the necessary trial of our faith. Some of our most cherished opinions and long-held beliefs will be upset, but we will fear no evil, for the Chief Shepherd will be with us all the way. But unlike earthly adventures we have embarked upon the most essential and profound journey a person can ever take. Our soul is blossoming in the light of His face, as His flower coming into its own, and the vast glory of God is flooding upon us like a breath of clear air. There is a place that flesh and blood have never seen, nor even imagined. This is an adventure that makes the word adventure sound profane, and yet that is exactly what it is. It will pierce eternity and transcend time itself. This is not a religious exercise—it is an attainment in the Spirit.

To "enter into," the Kingdom is, as we should readily understand, more than to "see," it. Moses stood on the heights of mount Nebo and saw the Promised Land, but he never got into it. God kept him on the other side of Jordan, although he was the leader of God's people, because of his disobedience. We also make a great mistake in assuming that we are called upon to "build", the Kingdom of God. That is a humanistic heresy. We have thought that we were called to create a new order. But this is not so. The Kingdom of God is. It is the way things are. It is a realm of reality, of life, of activity, of power and glory. We do not build it—we enter it. We become citizens and members of God's government by a mighty birth into a new reality and our subsequent entrance into and appropriation of the reality.

Some people think that the Kingdom cannot be entered until some future time called "the Kingdom Age," or "the Millennium,". Nowhere does the Bible teach such an idea. Jesus taught that entering into the Kingdom is a present reality. He said, "The tax collectors and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you,", the rebellious priests and elders of Israel (Mat. 21:31). To the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus said, "**You shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in, (Mat. 23:13).**" A similar saying is found in **Luke 1:52**, "**Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.**" This same idea appears in the words of Jesus to a scribe who responded to Jesus, teaching, "**You are not far from the Kingdom of God, (Mk. 12:34).**" And in Matthew 11:11 Jesus says that the one who is now in the Kingdom of Heaven, even the least of those now in the Kingdom, are greater than John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets. People were already entering the Kingdom in Jesus' day, and we, too, have been "**translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, (Col. 1:13).**" John the Revelator said that he was a brother and companion to the saints of his day in tribulation, and "**in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).**

Entering the Kingdom is directly related to the new birth, for in speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus said that unless one is born anew he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Jesus never said that in order to be saved one has to be born anew. Neither did He ever say that the saved person is already in the Kingdom. To the dying thief's request, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom,", Jesus replied, "Today you will be with me in Paradise,". The Lord did not say, "Today you will be with me in my Kingdom." Admission to the Kingdom of God goes beyond one's salvation experience. Forgiveness of sins is not entrance into the Kingdom. Justification is not entrance into the Kingdom. Reconciliation is not entrance into the Kingdom. Sanctification is not entrance into the Kingdom. To enter the Kingdom one must first be born from above. Alas, it is a sad fact that of the vast millions of believers claiming to be saved, very few see or enter into the Kingdom Realm of God. The reason is that while they have received Jesus as their Saviour, they refuse to accept Him as their King. It is only the born again person, quickened to Celestial Realities, who realizes that to share the glory of

Christ he must surrender his rights to himself and place himself under the absolute lordship of Jesus. He knows that to enter the Kingdom in the here and now, he must be governed from above and live on earth as a son of God, just as Jesus lived, doing always and only the Father's will. Throughout the entire time that Jesus was on this earth, He, as man, was the living personification of the Kingdom of God. It is birth into that very realm of HIS SONSHIP that enables us to see and enter the Kingdom of God. It has nothing to do with "salvation,, and "going to heaven.,, It has everything to do with the nature, the wisdom, the knowledge, the power, and the glory of sonship.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of lawlessness, **(Mat. 7:21-23)**. We do not enter the Kingdom by confessing with our mouth the Lord Jesus unto salvation; by prophesying in His name, by casting out devils and doing many wonderful works in His name. No matter how righteous or capable a person may be, no matter how faithful in the church realm or gifted in the spirit; no matter how honorable or humble, it remains true that he or she cannot enter into the Kingdom of God on that basis. The Kingdom of God is union with God in the fullness of His divine life and requires a "following on,, to KNOW the Lord.

When the Lord says to all the healing and deliverance preachers, the miracle workers, the revival crowd, the faith and word people, "I never knew you," He doesn't mean that they weren't saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, or that they were impostors and fakers, or that He was not acquainted with them. To "know,, a person in this way speaks of the most intimate association and union as when we read, "And Adam knew his wife, and she conceived.,, "I never knew you,, means He did not know you in that intimacy of fellowship and vital union that characterizes the Kingdom Realm. One can only become a partaker of the life of Christ, which is the life of sonship, which is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God, by virtue of coming to KNOW HIM. This is why Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Though Paul had been converted through his supernatural encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road; though he was forgiven, reconciled, cleansed, justified, Spirit filled, called to be an apostle, mighty in word and deed, yet with what travail of soul did he cry out: "That I may KNOW HIM!,, And he associated this "knowing" of the Christ with his own apprehension of that unto which he was apprehended of Christ Jesus. He did not count himself as already having apprehended. He knew that he must still know Christ in the fullness of the power of His resurrection and in the complete fellowship of His sufferings that in that fuller and deeper experience of KNOWING CHRIST he might be CONFORMED UNTO HIS LIKENESS, and thus have an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God.

The eternal purpose of God for man has been that man would know Him. God delights in man knowing Him and therefore declares, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD more than burnt offerings. Then shall we know, if we FOLLOW ON TO KNOW THE LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, **(Hos 6:6,3)**. All that God has done and shall yet do in His redemptive purposes is in order that we may know Him. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for ALL SHALL KNOW ME, from the least to the greatest,' **(Heb. 8: 10-11)**.

When we are regenerated the Spirit of God, containing God's eternal and divine life, enters into us that we may have the capability of knowing Him from within. Therefore the knowing of God constantly increases with the inward growth of His life. It is only because God has given us His life that we can know Him. This can be understood by the fact that every creature in the universe can only fully relate to another being with the same kind of life. What bird can understand the ways of a man? What man can understand the language of a dog, or why he marks his territory and sniffs the way he does? To man all dogs bark essentially alike and one dog's bark is much the same as another dog's bark. However, animal behaviorists have demonstrated that dogs "talk,, in their barks and growls, actually communicating with one another in definite patterns of dog "speech.,, This ability is inherent in their nature.

Man likes to think of himself as the only "social,, being on earth. However, every created life form in the whole world is what we call "social,,. "Social,, means that there is definite relationship, understanding and communication between beings. This social aspect is rooted in the ability of a being to "know,, another being, thus sharing with that being a common inherent understanding, communication, and relationship, all of which is due to the oneness of their life and nature. The social aspect is only realized within a species— between beings of the same "kind"?. Why does a cat bow its back and "spit" when a strange dog passes by? Why will a dog chase a cat but will "sniff, another dog? This is because the cat fully relates as a social being to another cat and the dog relates to another dog as a social being.

The simplest aspect of social behavior among animals is seen in the "herding,, of cattle, the "schooling,, of fish, and the "flocking" of birds. However, social animals do more than just stay together— they do things together. A family of ducklings in the park goes through a common rhythm. Part of the day they will feed, keeping close together wherever they go. On other occasions they will bathe together, and after a bath they swim to the shore together and spend half an hour or so preening, standing next to each other. Then they fall asleep, side by side. But notice! These are all ducks, sharing a common life and nature. There are no dogs with them following the same routine. Why? Because one can only understand, relate to, communicate with, fellowship and work together with beings of the same quality of life. Therefore, one can only truly KNOW another being of the same kind!

Some animals express themselves to others of their kind through a simple posture, or a change of color, or by giving off a particular scent, and some, such as porpoises, are highly intelligent and lead extremely complex social lives. But what bird can understand the language of a porpoise, or what duck would comprehend the intentions of a cichlid fish when it sets its fins in a certain position and changes its color pattern to say that it is protecting its territory? What beast of the field can comprehend the actions or intentions, the desires or aspirations of men? And what natural man, made a little lower than the angels, can perceive the things pertaining to the angelic realm; and what heavenly angel, marvelously created by the skillful hand of God, but not begotten of God's own divine life, can understand those glorious things appointed to the sons of God who are born of God's Spirit, the offspring of His divine life, and called to share even His throne and to inherit all things? I have cited these illustrations to point out the unmistakable truth that every being in the entire universe of God can only "know,, those other beings that share their own common life and nature.

This explains the vast importance of our birth into the very Family of God. God has given us HIS LIFE, and it is because we are "His kind" of creatures, that we are able to KNOW HIM! If we were not of the God species there would be no possibility of ever knowing God, no matter how dramatic His efforts to convey Himself unto us. When we are born of God, His Spirit, His seed, containing His life, enters into us that we may have the capability of knowing Him from within. This knowing of God gradually increases as His life develops and matures within us. The more His life grows within, the better we know Him. The better we know Him, the more we will experience Him, enjoy Him, understand His ways, act according to His nature, express His ability, and allow Him to live out through us in our whole being. Thus we may say that all the growth of our spiritual life depends upon OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, and our knowledge of God depends upon the increase of His life within. This gives us an accurate understanding of the absolute truth of Jesus, declaration: "And this is life eternal, that they might KNOW THEE the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Those who teach that saints who die are dead like a dog, unconscious, and non-existent, obviously do not understand either the miracle or the mystery of the new birth. Eternal life is here now, for "we know that we have passed from death unto life.,' "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins.,, The Kingdom of God and of Heaven is here now, waiting to be possessed by those who esteem it of enough worth to lay aside all else and press into it. No one can find true righteousness, absolute perfection, spiritual maturity, unshakable peace, infinite love, fullness of joy, eternal purpose, incorruptible life, unlimited power and heavenly glory until he or she obtains it in the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom call has gone forth, multitudes have heard the sounding of the trumpet. God's intention is to lift us out of the limitations of the flesh realm and the immaturity of our babyhood walk in God, and lift us up into His likeness and His incredible wisdom, power and glory. We not only cannot earn such treasure we scarcely can believe it! Yet the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. The testimony is immutably confirmed in our deepest hearts and we are responding to the call in this our day of visitation. Praise His name!

Along this line brother Paul Mueller has penned these challenging words. "Jesus said, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God., And Jesus prefaced this remark by saying, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God., It is impossible just to see the Kingdom of God, to view that Promised Land of love, peace, life and blessings abundant, unless we have been born again. Moses is an example of one who saw the Promised Land, which is typical of the Kingdom of God, but was not permitted to enter into that new land. Just before his death, Moses went up 'unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land...and said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with shine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither, (Deut. 34: 1-4). Moses was a godly man who served the Lord in strict obedience, except for one transgression that kept him from entering the Promised Land (Num. 20:7-13; Deut. 32:48-52).

"There is a vast difference between seeing the Kingdom of God, and entering into it. Moses only saw the Promised Land, but Joshua and Caleb entered into that land and partook of the abundance it provided. Jesus also made a clear distinction between seeing the Kingdom of God and entering into it. Were it not for the fact that the realms of seeing and of entering the Kingdom are mentioned both in the experience of Moses, and in the words of Jesus, we might overlook the distinction. However, the point is made in both instances and is worthy of our sincere and prayerful consideration. I do not want to be one of those who merely sees the Kingdom of God, but who fails to enter into it. To have the initial experience by which we may see the Kingdom of God is only the earnest of our salvation, the down payment on our full inheritance. But to be saved in fullness is to enter the Kingdom of God, being active participants in the administration of that Kingdom. It is my prayerful desire to partake of the glories of the abundant life of Christ that is freely provided all who will persevere and cross this mighty Jordan, even though it be at flood stage.

"Of course, it is not our choice that determines whether we will cross over, but is a calling given of the Father. If we have been faithful to Him all through our wilderness journey, obediently receiving the corrective chastisements of His rod, we are then undoubtedly among that chosen remnant who shall cross this Jordan of death in triumphant and overcoming victory. Multitudes of Christians will be content to climb Mt. Nebo with Moses and view the Promised Land with longing hearts and wistful eyes. They will dream on in their sleepy bewilderment, desiring the fruits of that new land. However, many are unaware of the truth that the more glorious spiritual appearing of Christ is necessary to enable us to enter that new land of abundant life.

'The ministry of yesterday only brought us out of the world and took us into the wilderness of testing. The leadership of yesterday, the best of them, could only lead us up to the Jordan. Christ is here now, in a new and living way, to lead us beyond the Jordan and into the Promised Land. Contrary to all outward appearances, the house of the Lord, which house we are, is not going to fall and go the way of all flesh, but we shall arise out of this realm of sin and death, by the glory of the incorruptible Son of God, to walk in the high places of His abundant life.

"The remnant the Lord has called unto Himself are the pioneers of the Kingdom of God. They are walking out into uncharted spiritual territory very much like Israel of old on their march to that first Promised Land in Palestine. This is a way no one has walked before. Some of the principles of the past we thought were proper and right seem to have no relevance today. The Lord is doing strange, new things with His chosen ones as He leads them by His Spirit. Through the tests and trials of the wilderness of this worldly order, we are being prepared for another phase in our pioneering walk. As we have been obedient to the Lord through the present ordeals, following the leading of His Spirit, we are then prepared for the next segment of our walk on this new path to the fullness of His Kingdom,, —end quote.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 6**  
**BIRTHED INTO THE KINGDOM** [continued]  
**BY: J. PRESTON EBY**

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God .. "

**PART SIX**

**"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5).**

Scripture abounds in figures, and Jesus always spoke in symbolic terms. When He said, "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you," He certainly was not advocating cannibalism! I-~~e~~ was using a natural figure to illustrate a spiritual truth. So when He says one must be "born of water" do not understand water to mean what we are accustomed to think of as the natural water that men drink or wash in. It is a figure of THE LIVING WORD OF GOD. New birth ever' and only' is by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God. These are the only two agents directly involved in the new birth throughout the scriptures. **"Being born again' not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, (I Pet. 1:23).** Some have thought the water to mean baptism. But there is no mention of baptism in chapter three of John, nor is baptism ever connected anywhere in the New Testament with the new birth. A man can no more be born again by coming up out of natural water than he can be born again by entering the second time into his mother's womb. Both are physical, natural, earthly, temporal and corruptible things. They are not agents of the spiritual world at all.

Others have thought the water referred to physical birth—the water in which the babe is encased in the womb of the mother. That would make the scripture read, "Except a man be born physically and spiritually, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.,, But the subject on the lips of Jesus has nothing to do with physical birth at all—He is talking about being born again. That is the only birth that qualifies a man for entrance into the Kingdom of God. Natural birth brings man into the physical world, but has not one whit of power to usher a man into the Kingdom of God. What Jesus was calling for had nothing to do with human origin, even if it was Abraham. That had been given to Nicodemus by his parents. The life Jesus spoke of had to be given by God. God's Kingdom is not a matter of descent, or national blood. Jesus was saying that no one can be born naturally into God's Kingdom. The only entrance to this Kingdom was to be born of the Word and the Spirit; in fact, it could only be seen by being born of the Spirit. The citizens of God's Kingdom were Spirit-born. No, my friend, Jesus is not speaking of either water baptism or physical birth— He is saying that unless a man is born again of both the Word of God and the Spirit of God' he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

The traditions of the past have so dimmed our understanding that every truth is side-tracked and diminished by the shallowness of the carnal mind. Thus it is with the truth of the agency of the Word and the Spirit in the new birth. The great truth is that when Jesus announces the awesome reality of the new birth He presents to us THE TWO NEW PARENTS. The Spirit of God is the new spiritual Father; the Word of God is the new Mother.

Let us understand exactly how the conception of a new life takes place. Human life begins when a sperm cell from the father enters and fertilizes an egg cell of the mother. The joining of these two cells is called fertilization or conception. Together, the sperm and egg create one single human cell. Every human life begins as one single cell. This one cell contains 46 chromosomes. Twenty three of the chromosomes are from the sperm of the father, and 23 are from the egg of the mother. All heredity is dictated by the 46 chromosomes. They determine whether the new human will be tall or short, have small or large bones, have blue eyes or brown eyes, even whether it will be susceptible to certain diseases or not. At the moment of conception the chromosomes of the sperm cell and the egg cell come together, and the traits that the child will inherit from his parents are determined. Both mother and father contribute equally to the child's heredity—with only one exception. It is the father's sperm that determines whether the baby will be a girl or a boy.

This brings us to a mystery understood by very few of the Lord's people, but it is the truth. It is evident that God contains within Himself both the masculine nature of the father and the feminine nature of the mother. Was it

not when God created Adam male and female that he was said to be in the image of God? (Gen. 1:26). God's masculine nature is manifested as SPIRIT, whereas His feminine nature is expressed as WORD. Now, as I have previously pointed out, there are two elements involved in our begetting as children of God—the Spirit and the Word. "Except a man be born of Water (Word) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Peter tells us that we are "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). It is significant to note that when Peter tells us that we are being born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, the word for "seed" in the Greek is not SPERMA, or sperm, as from the Father, but the word SPORA which simply means a seed as that which contains the origin of life or the characteristics of nature.

We are born of the Word and we are born of the Spirit. It is only when the Word is quickened or fertilized by the Spirit that divine life is generated within. Just as it requires the male sperm and the female ovum to beget a human child, so it takes the union of the Spirit and the Word within the believing heart to beget a child of God. And each contributes equally to the child's heredity—the kind of child he is. The Word contributes, as it were, 23 spiritual chromosomes, and the Spirit likewise contributes 23 spiritual chromosomes. Let us see how this works.

The SPIRIT OF LIFE is dispensed into us directly from our heavenly Father. "Behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father...for truly John baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:4-5). "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son (sonship) into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). The Spirit is the sperm of God. Sinlessness is one of the hereditary characteristics passed on to a son of God from the seed of the Spirit. "Whosoever is born of God cloth not commit sin; for His seed (Greek: sperma, sperm) remaineth in him (as inherited characteristics): and he cannot sin because he is born of God" (I Jn. 3:9). Your outer man may through the weakness of the flesh fall into sin, but it is impossible for your new creation inner man to sin, for he is born of God.

The WORD OF LIFE, on the other hand, is dispensed into us through the church, which is His body. This true church is the Jerusalem that is above "which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26). That God's motherhood nature is revealed through the church as the bride of Christ is clearly shown in Ephesians 5:23-32. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church (as a bride), not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

The Spirit of sonship is given to us as the sperm of God directly from our heavenly Father. But the Word by which we are begotten again is ministered to us via the ministry of the church. The following verses make this very plain. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever...and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. 1:23-25). Again, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (I Thes. 2:13).

This brings us to a truth which is at the same time both wonderful and dreadful. When children of God are conceived by the joining of the sperm of the Holy Ghost with the ovum of the pure and incorruptible Word of God, the result is a perfect child of God that will be able in all respects to grow up as a son or daughter of God into the very image of God. If you pause to think, however, you will become fully aware that the whole church system today and of many ages is filled with pathetically deformed children of God. This is not due to any fault on God's part—the work of the Spirit in every man and woman who has believed has been a perfect work. The sperm of God has absolutely no defect in it. It cannot pass any spiritual defect on to its offspring. But there is a great and damning fault in the church world that seems to be past explanation. It is a fault that has developed and grown more grotesque as the years have come and gone. The word that is ministered through the church

mother has become an inconceivably perverted word, a polluted word, a defective word, and the defects within that word are passed on as congenital anomalies— birth defects— to the children born of that word. The children of God born of an impure word come into God's spiritual world bearing genetic defects, flaws, weaknesses and abnormalities.

The Baptists preach one word, the Catholics preach another word, the Pentecostals preach a different word, the Mormons preach something else, and so on throughout Christendom. Two thousand years ago the same beloved apostle John who wrote so extensively of God's marvelous love also left us this solemn warning, "Little children, keep yourselves from IDOLS (that is, false gods, or false ideas and representations of the true God)" (1 Jn. 5:21). "Little children, keep yourselves from false ideas about God!" Do we have false ideas about God? I fear we do. How the world and the church are filled with them! Many people view God as a schoolboy did: "...the sort of person who is always snooping around to see if anyone is enjoying himself and then trying to stop it." Then others make God out to be a tyrant, or a vengeful, wrath-filled fiend. Some paint a God so weak that the will of man is stronger than the will of God. others speak of God as always trying to do this and that, but the devil is ever hindering and thwarting God's purposes, getting the upper hand, defeating God's best laid plans, tripping up and overcoming the saints, until it would seem that the devil is himself the omniscient and omnipotent one. Some have a God so capricious that He will only save you if the correct formula is repeated over you in water baptism. Vast numbers blaspheme the Holy Ghost by attributing the works of the Holy Spirit to the devil, contending that if you speak in tongues, prophesy, heal the sick, or do miracles you are of the devil, and dispense that perverted word into their offspring who do truly trust Jesus as their Savior. Some say that Christ can only be ministered to you through the sacraments, or a particular ritual, or the ministry of their denomination, or membership in their movement, or by believing only the doctrines of their church and listening to no one else. others teach their people that they cannot go to heaven if they use tobacco, drink wine, wear jewelry, put on make-up, cut their hair, go to movies, or wear or not wear certain kinds of clothing. We could pile error upon error, with pagan holidays, customs, and philosophies that have been introduced into the church realm and have become such an established part of her practice and teaching until the whole world believes that these things are surely taught somewhere in the scriptures or were established by the apostles or by Jesus Himself!

A dear brother in Christ has penned these valuable words of admonition: "The opinions we form by hearing about people are usually found to be wrong after we have come to know them personally and intimately. This is also true concerning God. When you come to know Him as He really is, you will find Him very unlike the description given by theologians. You will come to know that much that they teach is only rubbish because it is contrary to the nature of God. It certainly was so with the Jewish theologians and doctors of the law. When Jesus came He smashed their theories to bits and tore the robes of their ecclesiasticism to ribbons. He ate with sinners, cast the devil out of the Syrophenician, let a sinful woman of the street wash His feet, forgave a thief, healed on the Sabbath, ate with unwashed hands, called the most esteemed religionists of His day liars, hypocrites, children of the devil, whited sepulchers, and a generation of snakes. They thought that they knew God, but they didn't. He was more pleased with the sincerity of sinners than with the ritualism of scribes and Pharisees. When you come to know Him, you will find that it is the same now as it was then.

"Furthermore, to know Him who is truth empowers one to immediately recognize all that is error. The more you come to know Christ, the more you come to recognize the flagrant error of so much that is taught in the name of truth. If the doctrines that men try so hard to prove run contrary to the very nature of Christ, then know that all that is contrary to His gracious Spirit is error. For years without number the evangelicals in their missionary fervor have taught that all heathen men will be condemned forever to groan in eternal flames in unremitting torment because they did not accept Christ, their ignorance of His existence being no excuse whatever. I have no hesitation whatsoever in calling this a lie, because everything about it is contrary to the very nature of the blessed Christ I know. It is contrary to His love, contrary to His kindness and mercy, contrary to His foreknowledge, contrary to His immutable wisdom, and contrary to His great and all-inclusive redemption, of which it is stated that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" —end quote

While preparing this message for the printer, a word arrived in the mail from Bob Torango, a word so powerful and anointed, and so in accord with the burden of my own heart, that I would be remiss if I failed to share a portion with you. He wrote: "Why, you may ask, doesn't the world follow after the message of the church? The

answer is that the message is one of a God that is a dictator instead of a God that is a Father. The message of the church is tainted with words of judgment promising harsh punishment for sins, delivered without a voice of love. This nullifies the true reason for God's judgment, which is to bring us to correction and joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the same scenario that is played out every day in an abusive home where the parents lash out at their children in a fit of rage, striking them with physical blows meant to bring them into submission but accomplishing the direct opposite. There can be no substitute for love. A hug will accomplish more correction than a blow to a child's body.

"I am not suggesting that a child should never be reprimanded, for I realize that any child will continue to misbehave if given a free reign, but I do believe that the parent is responsible for punishment that exceeds the transgression. This happens more times than we want to think. The parent has a bad day at work, the car breaks down, the air conditioner goes out, and the frustration over these matters is unleashed upon the children, which, by the way, can't do anything right in the eyes of the enraged judge of the house. The result is a beating that is more therapeutic for the parent in venting their frustrations than it is for correction of the child's behavior. Judgment of any kind should never be administered in a spirit of rage or loss of sensibility. The result is much worse than if there were no punishment at all.

"The church, enraged over the continued rejection of their version of the gospel story becomes more and more abusive toward anyone that does not see things their way. Instead of being the magnet of God's love to creation, the church has become a judge of God's wrath that cannot be approached by anyone except those who have lost all hope of love in their life, and they commit to the stranglehold of religion just to belong to a group that will give them a sense of security. This, dear ones, is the standard definition of a child that is abused. Some of us that have never been found in an abusive relationship have doubts whether or not the relationship is truly abusive. Why don't the abused children tell someone about their beatings, if they are truly abused? Why don't they run away from home? The saddest truth of all in an abusive situation is that the abused individual, especially a child, is convinced that they deserve this treatment. Added to this is the reinforcement that is given to this submissive behavior by our societal mores that continuously drill into our children that their parents are the judges of their life and have the moral and legal authority to administer beatings whenever they see fit. The child is reinforced to never question the judgment of their parents by teachers, who are surrogate judges when at school, or by their playmates who are in ordinary relationships with their parents. The abused child is cut off, quite literally, from any hope of escape or explaining their situation to others. The result is a child that grows up to be either withdrawn, extremely low in confidence and self-esteem, or else one that acts out the acts of senseless violence upon society that were acted out upon them in this abusive environment.

"The world mirrors this same stereotypical attitude within the church. They are either scared to death of the church, or they are violently opposed to it. What a tragedy it is to see the church in this shape. Whereas the church has been ordained to be the mother of the world's lost children, opening her arms with grace and love to all that are in need, she has instead been seen as an abusive judge in the earth, spitting out statements of eternal damnation and unthinkable horrors on all that do not follow her commands. No wonder the Lord is preparing another church! The church that is known as "mainstream" is a fake, dear ones! She is a wicked stepmother that has no bond of love with the world at all. This wicked church loves the world in word only, and that only because the Bible says she must! The lost children of the world are only her lawful responsibility, and by God, if they don't shape up she is threatening to throw them all into eternal hell fire. Raise up your Jerusalem, o Lord! Raise up the true Mother of us all, bring her to us and let her lay her cool, soft hand upon the wounds that have been inflicted by the abusive counterfeit church of religious dictators. Let her sweet kisses fall upon our head and let them take away the fear and anguish that has been perpetrated upon the world's lost children. oh, dear friends, can't you just envision the power that will be unleashed when the true, nurturing nature of the New Jerusalem, the beautiful Bride of Christ, the loving, compassionate Mother of us all wraps her arms around us and holds us until the crying stops and cleans the dirt from us as she takes the filthy rags off of us that religion put upon us and she covers us in clean, silky linen made up of the righteousness of our Father.

"Even now, as we speak out against the tyranny of an out of control religious mother of Babylon, we see the damage that has been done and the scars that remain in the hearts of the people of God. Some will flinch and

pull away when the hand of Christ is stretched out to them. For some, the message of a loving God that asks nothing of us but to believe in His love and come to Him to live with Him in peace and grace is too good to be true. For them, the abused offspring of a wicked guardian, beaten without reason, locked up in cult-like communities of religious bondage, forbidden to question the teachings and rules of their overseers, psychologically brainwashed into testifying to the goodness of their tormentors in order to stay in good graces and not be publicly humiliated, for them the message of unconditional love is foreign and suspicious. In their world of abuse, everyone has an angle, an ulterior motive, a con. Nothing is truly free in their relationship with the wicked mother. Yes, they have programs for the adults, a big gymnasium for the children, a beautiful building to gather in, but only if they continue to give their money to the wicked mother. In fact, they have come to the awful truth that mother only loves them if they support her with their money.

"The wicked mother especially enjoys telling her forced child laborers the tales of what will happen if they think they could ever leave her domain. She goes into great sickening detail in describing the terror that awaits them outside the walls of her prison. Giant scorpions with tails that sting and torment you, dragons that eat little children, starving children that cannot buy any food and will watch each other starve to death without having the mark of the beast. She tells them of devils lurking behind every door' waiting to jump on them and make them slaves of evil. These are the bed time stories that the mainstream church puts her children to rest by. The fake church tells her young children that they are hopelessly evil and that all their lives they will have to serve the wicked mother in order to earn their way to heaven. The abused are told that God can't even look upon them' that He never heard their prayers before they came to live with the wicked mother, that God turned away from them in their sorrow, because He is too holy to look upon sin! Whereas, the opposite is true. God always hears groaning creation, and not one word intended for His ears goes by the wayside. Indeed, God has moved for us even when we were sinners, and countless times saved us from destruction with or without our asking Him to. He has moved heaven and earth to keep us in this world and is constantly working on our behalf" — end quote.

It is a mystery too deep to fathom, but God in His great mercy honors His Word on whatever level it is preached, and in spite of the character of those who preach it. It is a fact that multitudes of men have been turned to seek and find God even by words that are pitiful mixtures of truth and error and preached by men and systems of reprobate minds. Their children are born of mixed natures as was Ishmael, truly born of God by the Spirit, yet born of Hagar, the Egyptian bond woman, through the fleshly word, the Word of God mingled with the ideas of men. The many and varied erroneous ideas about God and His Kingdom, contorted representations of truth and reality, each bring forth spiritual expressions of their religious lineage. Some of these unfortunate children are born completely paralyzed spiritually and others are still-born, conceived by a totally dead word. Those who preach the Word of God as a dead letter of literalism, legalism, and carnality, void of spiritual understanding or the breath of life, fill the earth with children of God having inherited weaknesses, deformities, and pathetic imperfections.

I do not doubt for one moment that many who read these lines were first conceived in their spiritual life by a defective word! only as each of us is miraculously and supernaturally healed can we hope to come into the image and likeness of God as His sons. How precious the knowledge that regardless of the poor and wretched condition of our early conception, GOD IS A GREAT HEALER! He can heal the embryo in the womb, or He can heal the child of tragic birth. As this great healing work takes place in our lives, through the gracious dealings and faithful processings of the Lord, we are dramatically and gloriously transformed in our spiritual lives. Gone are those "religious" spirits, bondages, customs, speech, mannerisms, methods, practices, fleshly efforts, false doctrines, static creeds, empty rituals and ceremonies, lifeless programs, dead works and denominational hype which once characterized all our understanding, attitudes and activities. All the marks of Babylon were upon us—not impressed merely from without, but genetically reproduced within us by the very Word that conceived us.

Have the flaws in your own character, my beloved, been magnified in your eyes until you despair of ever attaining to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus? Today, dear one, I point you to CHRIST THE HEALER. Think not for one moment that Jesus Christ is the healer only of diseases of the body. He has come to cleanse His church, to sanctify and purify His people, to purge and refine and make every whit whole His children called to be sons. I declare to you today that HE IS THE HEALER AND RESTORER OF HIS FAMILY. He

purges out of His Kingdom all things that defile and offend. Listen! The great and wonderful mercy of the Christ receives those who have blemishes, and His power heals all who humbly bow before Him, calling upon the name of the Lord. Have you received the call to sonship? Then get rid of the blemishes! The Holy Ghost is closely examining candidates for this ministry. The qualifying time is NOW. The "in part" ministries of the church age may get by with blemishes and defects, but the King-Priest ministry destined to deliver the whole creation from its bondage to corruption must itself first be freed from every vestige of carnality, weakness, limitation' sin and death, transformed into the image of God. How is this thing done? "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved BLAMELESS (without blemish) unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23). If you are to be cleansed, healed, made whole and preserved without blemish there is only one way' and that is shown in the verse that immediately follows the one quoted above: "Faithful is HE that calleth you, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT." What a word! THE KINGDOM FAMILY OF GOD

The Kingdom of God is that Kingdom which is God. As with all kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel was a family of the children of Israel—the family descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which became one of earth's nations. Nearly all kingdoms originated as an ethnic entity, a racial group, developed from a clan or family. Thus, the Kingdom of God comprises the Family of God—a family into which man may be born, and which is being formed into a RULING OR GOVERNING family that shall have jurisdiction over all nations, that is, the whole earth, and, eventually, the entire universe!

For almost two thousand years there has raged a theological battle over the Godhead. Some have contended that God is one Person in three manifestations, and that Jesus is that one Person of God manifested in the flesh. Others believe in the trinity—that God is eternally three distinct Persons' co-equal' co-eternal, and consubstantial, united together as one God. There is yet a third school of thought known historically as Arianism which views God as a duality—the one eternal and almighty God together with His Son whom He begat at some point in time, and by whom He created all other things. Now, I have my own view of these things, but far away in the depths of my spirit lies the secret, sacred knowledge that God is greater than all of man's puny definitions. It is no embarrassment to me to admit that I know nothing yet as I ought to know, but the spirit of truth within me today bears witness that the truth lies far beyond the limitation of any of man's concepts.

None of the above views grasp the fuller truth set forth in the scriptures and now revealed by the Holy Spirit. The wonderful truth is—God is ultimately not one Person, nor is God two Persons, nor yet is He three Persons. God is a FAMILY, for we are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, and the sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God. We are the citizens of the Kingdom of God founded upon the family of God. God is a KINGDOM! God is reproducing, expanding, increasing HIMSELF! Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God—or the GOD KINGDOM—human beings have to be born again. He patiently explained to this inquiring ruler of the Jews that it was not a physical re-birth into the human plane that He was talking about, but a newborn spirit being on the spirit plane. The apostle John elaborated on this birth when he wrote, "But to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons (children, offspring) of God, even to them that believe on His name" (Jn. 1 :12). The word "sons" in this passage is from the Greek TEKNON, which means "one born" or a "child". That a birth as the offspring of God is what John intended is made clear as he continues in the next verse: "Which were born' not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

This is not a mere conception as some say' for the Holy Spirit testifies to every man' saying, "And I cannot speak unto you as spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto BABES IN CHRIST. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat" (I Cor. 3: 1-2). Again, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers' ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: FOR HE IS A BABE" (Heb. 5:12-13). Yet again, "As NEWBORN BABES, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2). Then John tells us' "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth IS BORN OF GOD, and knoweth God...for whatsoever IS BORN OF GOD overcometh the world" (I Jn. 4:7; S:1, 4). Regenerated believers are called the children of God all through the New Testament. Nowhere does God call us divine fetuses or embryos! Children are born ones. Embryos and fetuses do not drink milk, neither do they love or do the will of God! Nor are they chastened. How beautifully does J. B.

Phillips translate the meaningful words of the apostle John: "Consider the incredible love that the Father has shown us in allowing us to be called children of God—and that is not just what we are called, but what we are. Our heredity on the Godward side is NO MERE FIGURE OF SPEECH—which explains why the world will no more recognize us than it recognized Christ" (I Jn. 3:1).

The way into the Kingdom is so narrow that only one can enter into it at a time. It is the way of life in everything else. One baby is born at a time. One flower bursts into bloom at a time, and yet it seems as if they all come together. I am thankful that there are seasons of God's moving in which great multitudes are born, but it is one at a time, and each one has an independent spiritual life. That is the way of sonship. God is not the Father of a great conglomerate of spiritual life. He is the Father of spirits—independent, original, unique, and absolutely independently constituted spirits. Paul says of this Fatherhood of spirits, "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the FATHER OF SPIRITS, and live?" (Heb. 12:9). God is the Father of spirits—not angels or demons or fairies—He is the Father of our spirits. The only spirits in the whole vast universe that are born spirits are the children of God! Each one must be born of God by the distinct operation of the Spirit of God. You may be as great a Rabbi as Nicodemus, and know nothing about these things. You may have to be told as Jesus told Nicodemus, "Art thou a Rabbi, a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?"

The Greek word Jesus used which is translated "born," is GENNAO. It refers to the entire birth cycle— from conception to entrance into the world. Vast multitudes today do not know the difference between being born of man and being born of God. And almost as many do not know the difference between such terms as forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, salvation and the new birth. They repeat the sinner's prayer and confess faith in Jesus and then are informed by the preacher that they have been "born again." But it is a lie. It is a delusion. It is a deception. It is a monstrous heresy. Error cloaked in Biblical terms is still error. In the case of the current evangelical "born again" movement, scriptural terminology is being used to teach just the opposite of its original meaning. Stated simply the error is this—that men are born again as a result of something they do. This something may be "going forward" at the close of an evangelistic message, praying the "sinner's prayer," making a "decision" for Christ, or "repenting" and "believing" the gospel.

The sad results of such a teaching can be seen all around us. Evangelists who believe that men dead in sin can and will be born again if the right kind of emotional and psychological inducement is presented, push and pressure lost people into making "decisions". Whatever is necessary to get people to come forward, or raise their hand, or pray a prayer, or sign a card, is tried by today's "soul winners." Highly emotional meetings, prolonged appeals, repeated musical choruses, and even the deceitful tactic of having counselors strategically placed in the audience to come forward at the time of the "appeal" to make it appear others are responding—all smack of the techniques of crowd psychology. Those who do come forward are then rushed through a process, a formula, and coached into believing that they are now born again. Deep down, though, the vast majority know that nothing so dramatic has really happened. The evangelist has done something, the sinner has done something, but God has done nothing. There has been no miracle. The heavens have not been opened to them. That some people are brought into an experience with God in these situations is no doubt true. You may even be one of them. But it is in spite of these methods, not because of them.

Men are not born again because of any action on their part. What effort did you exert to be born into this world? What contribution did you make? Jesus said nothing of any action or decision that Nicodemus must make, nor did He quote him the four spiritual laws, or have him repeat a prayer, nor did He even tell him to repent and believe the gospel. As a matter of fact' Jesus was not telling Nicodemus to do anything! "You must be born again" was not a command Nicodemus was to obey, it was simply a statement of fact. He was talking about God doing something, coming and sovereignly and miraculously generating life in man. I never chose the family I was born to. When I stop to think about it, I have had very little choices in life. I certainly didn't choose to be born! I didn't pick the chromosomes that make up the genetic structure called Preston Eby. To a marvelous and beautiful degree there is a destiny that put us here' the way we are' where we are, when we are, and what we are. "Of His own will begat He us." The new birth is something more than having your sins forgiven, or being reconciled' or being justified, or being saved, as wonderful as all those things are. It is the birth of a new and glorious life which thrusts one into a new and dynamic reality— the Kingdom of Heaven. In

the new birth God does not become your Forgiver, your Reconciler, your Justifier, or your Savior—He becomes your FATHER in a most real and glorious way!

In that far away beginning the Almighty Creator proclaimed, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness." God made cattle "after their kind," after the cattle kind. He made "every winged fowl after his kind," after the bird kind. But it is abundantly evident that God purposed to make man AFTER THE GOD KIND. Now, incredible as it may seem to those who do not understand the mystery of God, God is a FAMILY. This does not mean that there are many gods. There is only one God, just as there is only one Adam and one Christ. Adam is a many-membered man, Christ is a many-membered son, and God is a many-membered Godhead! The Person of God is expressed through a variety of manifestations of Himself as He reproduces Himself after His own "KIND". It is in man that God is reproducing His kind. Man is God's idea, God's image, God's likeness, God's expression, God's revelation' God's manifestation. Man' out of all the infinite creation of God, has the supreme potentiality of being born into the very divine family of God' of which divine family Jesus Christ is the firstborn among many brethren. Jesus Christ is the first perfect representation of God, and Jesus was and is a MAN. He is the express image of God's Person.

Do you realize what this means? It means far more than having an immortal body. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Christ is "the express image of God's person" (Heb. 1:3). The word "express" is from the Greek word CHARAKTER from which we get our English word "character." It means that Christ is the CHARACTER IMAGE of God. The transcendent essential factor is that God is PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER. It is the supreme intelligence, combined with holy and righteous character, that most importantly distinguishes God from every other life form. Of course God, too, possesses supreme and omnipotent power and eternal, incorruptible existence. But without right CHARACTER, such power and perpetuity would be destructive and dangerous. A monster would be in control of the universe! And should any one of us acquire an immortal body prior to having developed a holy and incorruptible character, a devil would surely be born!

Come now, and let us reason together. Character springs from nature. Understand this and you will understand a great truth: NATURE is inherited; CHARACTER is developed! No one is born possessing character. Every child of Adam is born into this world with a sinful (flesh) nature. But that precious little infant does not yet have a sinful character. As the child grows its character is formed progressively out of its nature. The nature gradually manifests itself through the actions of the child as character. In the same way we have by regeneration been made partakers of the divine nature. And while this new birth is the most astounding miracle of the ages, it is, nonetheless, merely the birth of a spiritual infant possessing divine nature but not divine character. Now, divine character must be developed from the divine nature—God manifesting His nature outwardly through our attitudes, words, behavior and actions. The character is formed in the crucible of experience, as we learn in every situation and circumstance to yield our vessel to the Holy Spirit who is the active agent in our divine nature.

We tread softly here. With bated breath we read **Ephesians 3:14-15**. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the WHOLE FAMILY in heaven and in earth is named."

Through the new birth we become bona fide members of the original cosmic family, actual generated sons of God. Thus through the new birth we truly become God's very own offspring' His kin, His family' His clan' His kingdom, a kind of "extension" of His Godhead. That this group outranks all other orders of beings in the universe is attested by Paul's dramatic questions in **I Corinthians 6:2-3**. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

In a recent meeting Bob Torango said, "We are citizens of the true Israel, not those who are born after the flesh, but those who are born of the Spirit. The citizens of the Kingdom of God are from every nation, tongue, tribe and people. It is that citizenship that holds us steady on course. It is that citizenship that has brought us this far. We cannot deny the genes of our natural body. I can say that I'm not from my mom and dad, I can get angry with my parents and accuse them and say, 'I'll bet you just found me out on a tree stump somewhere,' but that doesn't make it so. That's what my brother used to tell me. My brother, when he wanted to get even with me because of something I had done to him, would tell me, 'Well, you don't know it, but mom and dad

found you out on a tree stump in the woods, and they brought you home.' But I can't deny them. And they can't deny me, because it's in the genes. If I've been born of someone, I have their genes. I can move out of their house, I can change my name, I can alter my appearance, I can do anything I want, but my genes will remain the same. I am a child of the loins of my parents. You can do anything in the spirit, or in your flesh; you can get all kinds of titles such as "Doctor," "Reverend," "Bishop," etc., but that doesn't make you anything more or less than what you are in God. You are the offspring of God, the fruit of His loins, the product of His Spirit. Men can call you garbage, liars, winebibbers, wolves, heretics, Beelzebub, antichrist or any other title they might lay upon you—all is absolutely meaningless—the reality is in your genes! It's in your spiritual lineage that goes beyond Adam—it goes right into the Father. Adam isn't the root of my tree. The root of my tree is God, the I AM. The Alpha and the Omega is the root of my tree" —end quote.

Here is an entirely new, unique and exclusive order of beings, which may be classified as a "NEW SPECIES". There is nothing like it in all the kingdoms of infinity. This is the order of beings that Paul called "the new man," the "new humanity," destined through citizenship in the God Family Kingdom to be the aristocracy of the universe. They form a new and exclusive royalty, a divine ruling hierarchy who are called "the sons of God." It is an organic family relationship. How wonderful are these things! They are far beyond our expression or the ability of the most eloquent to describe. Oh, to be able to grasp the greatness of our calling! We have been born again of the very life of God! When we have matured and God has brought us experientially to the full potential of His life in us, there will be nothing impossible to us. We will even have creative powers. Like Father, like son. We will be creators! Can your faith go this far? If we are born of God we are born of the life of the almighty Creator. This is the life that Jesus lived and demonstrated. Twice out of a few rolls of bread and a couple fish, He created enough food to feed five thousands of people, and He said we would do the same. "The works that I do shall ye do also' and greater works than these shall ye do..." I want to know the life of this God! I want to know experientially the power He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. I want to know and experience all His holiness, righteousness, love, power and goodness. To this end I seek to completely surrender myself to Him and I am asking Him for grace to be able to do this. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God.

Gracious Son of God, reveal the Father to us in a way we have not known before! Make us overcomers, that you may be able to write the name of your God, the Father's name, the name of the city of your God, and your new name, on our foreheads. God is in the process of preparing a people FOR HIS NAME—a company that will bear His name, that will be called by His name, those who know His name because they are born of His seed. To these the Son reveals the name of His Father, He reveals the Father unto them. They will bear the name of Yahweh for they will be filled with His fullness and they will do His works, for the fullness of His power and understanding and nature will be in them. He will be in each of them in the measure that He was and is in Jesus, and will speak His words and do His works through them. They will be like His first-begotten Son, they will be conformed to His image, the express image of His Person. Jesus, the Son, knew the Father and He was the only one in His day who did. The Lord said to the religious, as He undoubtedly says to the religious today, **"...ye say that He is your God; yet ye have not known Him; but I KNOW HIM and keep His saying" (Jn. 8:55-56). "As the Father knoweth me, even so KNOW I THE FATHER" (Jn. 10:15).** The first-begotten Son knew the Father and it is this knowledge His spirit of sonship imparts to the rest of His brethren, that they also may know the Father, and knowing Him, shall reveal Him unto creation. All creation waits for this manifestation of the sons of God. For two thousand years creation has continued to wait for this manifestation, but the time of their waiting is fast drawing to a close. The hour is at hand. The Spirit has spoken this from one end of the earth to the other through the mouths of His holy prophets in this our generation. It is a sure word. It has been attended by mighty dealings and processings of God in the lives of those who have received the call to sonship. In the fullness of time, **"...the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits" (Dan. 1 1:32).** We will be this people **"...if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. 6:3).**

From earliest times there has been a thirst for the new and undiscovered. Astronaut Michael Collins remarked in *The Home Planet*: "It's human nature to stretch, to go, to see, to understand. Exploration is not a choice, it's an imperative." Very few will probably ever have the opportunity to travel to the moon, and yet we can all take the most rewarding journey of all. This is the spiritual exploration that reaches into the realm of infinite Spirit—the present reality of God's Kingdom on earth. In the Bible we find stories of people who took such journeys in obedience to God's bidding. Abraham was certainly a spiritual explorer. The book of Hebrews records: "By

faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went...for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Those who are willing to obey God and follow the Spirit's leading in any age find themselves embarking on a spiritual quest in which the human heart reaches out for a larger sense of home. Obedience to God's leading and faith in God's provision inspire many today to seek a stronger foundation on which to build their lives than material ambition and human prestige. It takes courage and vision to be a spiritual pioneer' to follow the road of spiritual insight that signposts greater attainments and accomplishments for the sons of God.

Captain James Cook was a famous English explorer who lived about two hundred years ago. His adventurous life began when he joined the British navy at the age of 27. He surveyed the St. Lawrence Channel and the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador before he was given his own ship, the Endeavor, to command. He sailed this ship all the way around the world, exploring the coasts of eastern Australia and New Zealand in that way. After returning to England he set out again for the South Pacific with two ships, and explored the icy Antarctic Ocean. He explored the New Hebrides Islands and discovered the island of New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean off Australia. Captain Cook is recorded to have made the statement, "I have no desire to merely go where other men have not gone—I want to go as far as it is possible for man to go." His dream, for all practical considerations, was realized in geographical terms. He had no idea, of course, of the vast new frontiers yet to be opened to man by the advent of the space age.

Today I make Captain Cook's dream my own—but on a different and higher plane. I do not idolize Peter or Paul or John. I do not follow St. Augustine, Martin Luther' John Calvin' Menno Simons' John Wesley, George Fox, John Alexander Dowie, John G. Lake, the Pentecostal movement or the Latter Rain. I have no desire to merely go where other men have gone in God or to do what they have done in God' however great and glorious that may have been. As I write these things and meditate upon them I am keenly aware of the momentous Day to which we are come. As George Hawtin once wrote, "The things belonging to the old order of the dispensation of grace have waxed old and are ready to vanish away. But sadly and with deep regret we find that everywhere men and women are clinging to those old things that are passing away as drowning men cling to a straw. To them these precious antiques must be kept at all costs. They love their sects, their crowds, their endless and wearisome meetings, their sermons, song services and special numbers, their revival meetings and their missionary programs and all the other paraphernalia that has belonged to an age now passing away.

"We have become like the priests of the Old Testament whose greatest fear of Christ and His apostles was that they would change their beloved laws and customs (Acts 6:14). They cared not about God's purpose for the world and the universe. That was not important in the least. The important thing to them was that the old system be maintained and that there be no change. Tradition has it that, when the great veil in the temple was rent in twain at the death of Christ, opening the way into the holiest of all, the priests had it sown together again that all things might remain as they had always been. When Jesus was buried, they took every imaginable precaution to make sure He did not rise' but He arose in spite of their care and ever lives on high and in the hearts of His people" —end quote.

It is time, beloved children of God, to arise from the mists of yesterday and press onward and upward into the Kingdom of God. "The fullness of God," "the image of the Son," "we shall be like Him," "I will grant him to sit with me in my throne" "the manifestation of the sons of God,"—these are but a few of the wonderful phrases that speak powerfully of HOW FAR IT IS POSSIBLE FOR MAN TO GO IN GOD. Jesus Christ is the trailblazer on this heavenly road. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The Lord is actually inviting mankind to take a spiritual journey that breaks through all physical and mental limitations into the spiritual realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. A certain man told his sons and daughters this story over and over as they grew up:

**There was a calf that made a trail. The trail turned into a path.  
Dogs and sheep walked in the calf's foot steps,  
Followed by men, complaining of winding trails;  
But came along day by day any way.**

The path became a lane' Then a road, then a village street,  
Then a thoroughfare, Then the central street of a renowned metropolis.  
Some centuries and a half Trod in the footprints of that calf.  
A hundred thousand men were led By one calf near three centuries dead.  
For men are prone to go it blind Along the calf paths of the mind;  
And work away from sun to sun, And do what other men have done!  
Beaten paths are for beaten men; They blindly follow where others trod;  
But men of faith search long for God; So they set sail where none have been.  
They sail on uncharted sea, Fearing not what men before have done.  
I heir soul's desire is just to BE The express image of the Son!  
There is a people in the land That follows God and God alone,  
Refusing beaten paths of man, They will not rest till they reach home.  
When the sons of God for joy did shout, We were there, and our hearts cried out  
For realms in Spirit to set us free— We are the people sailing uncharted seas!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 7 THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God .. "

### PART SEVEN

#### THE FORERUNNER PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

"Mankind does not understand the longing that is within him and we may be sure that all the inanimate creation is also blind and in the dark. We have become like babies who sometimes cry for reasons they know not, refusing to be comforted. Our souls often deplore the awful conditions that are in the world —the rebellion, anarchy, delinquency, self-assertion, and war - yet if we could look deeper than the surface, we would understand that all these things actually spring from man's hatred and rebellion against the bondage he is in. In his darkness and bondage he imagines that could he but throw off his restraints he would be happy, that could he have all he wants, he could be content, but he does not know that his discontent lies far deeper than his outward life. While he thus seeks liberty from without, he does not know that the inner man is seeking for freedom from the bondage of corruption and all the wretchedness into which the carnal mind has brought him. Man is longing for freedom from the slavish thralldom he is in but, not knowing God, he seeks freedom by rebellion only to find that his new-found freedom is even a greater and more hateful bondage than the one from which he escaped. But those to whom Christ the King has revealed Himself know that true freedom is found only when Christ is crowned King. When He comes into the life, the snares of the fowler are broken, the tears of sorrow turn to pearls of praise, sins of years are washed away by His blood" - The Page.

According to the good pleasure of His will, and to the praise of His glory, the plans of God from the creation of the world focused on the Kingdom. From age to age God lead mankind, in each age setting the stage for that fullness of time when He would establish His Kingdom in power over the earth. The glory of God was revealed through all His works from that awe-filled moment when the almighty Creator first uttered those omnipotent words, "Let there be!" All the works and institutions of the early ages, however, were to become but chaff and refuse in the light of the transcendent grandeur of Christ's Kingdom. Ears had heard God's own voice thundering the law from Mount Sinai, but no ears had heard the message of compassion, grace, mercy and power from the lips of heaven's King. Eyes had seen the golden glitter of the temple built by man, but no eye had seen the reign of God's love and power in the hearts of transformed men. Hearts had dreamed of God's future for men, but human hearts had not the power to imagine the glories God had in store.

At the time of Abraham all nations had fallen into idolatry. The knowledge of God was merely a flickering candle in some remote corner of darkness. To Abraham God was pleased to make Himself known, and to promise that of him He would make a great nation and a company of nations, and in him and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. To accomplish this purpose God selected the spot in which he and his posterity were to be placed; and no spot on earth could have been better suited for the purpose. **God said of it, "This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her" (Eze. 5:5).** Many mapmakers in the Middle Ages placed Jerusalem in the center of their maps with the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa arranged around this center like blades of a pinwheel. The land of Canaan - a tract of country situated about midway between the three great divisions of earth -- Asia, Africa, and Europe—on the great highway of nations, and in the very path of conquest, commerce, and travel, was equally accessible to all parts of the known world.

There were four specific items that set the stage for the coming of Christ and the rapid spread of the gospel of the Kingdom. First, the Roman Empire provided a highly efficient and comprehensive system of roads, facilitating ease of travel throughout all provinces controlled by Rome. Just a century before Jesus, day the world was intensely localized and subdivided and broken up into separate little nations' with their separate religions and customs and laws' their jealousies and suspicions, their constant wars, their bristling frontiers

barring communication. But after the setting up of the Roman Empire the conditions changed rapidly. When Jesus came, instead of frontiers nations separated and suspicious, He found a leveled world with the fences down. The Roman roads traversed the civilized world, the iron power of the Caesars kept universal peace. Good news could spread easily. The highway was open for the coming of the King!

Second, because of the Pax Romana, or Peace of Rome, travelers could move from one province to another with little concern for anything such as a passport or visa. The general spirit of peace provided a fit medium for the dissemination of new ideas across borders.

Third, prior to the Roman conquest, Alexander the Great had brought Greek to his empire. By the time of the Roman Empire, Koine Greek had become the world language. This was a common form of Greek spoken by the masses and the language in which the New Testament was written. Not only could the apostles and evangelists travel safely throughout the vast Roman Empire; they could preach in the same language everywhere they went. Such a situation has never existed before or since that day. If one were to try to preach the gospel in the same area now he would have to know Greek, Italian, Spanish, Slavic, Turkish, Hebrew, and Arabic. Paul preached in Greek from Damascus to Rome.

Fourth, the penetration of the Jewish religion in all the civilized world of that day set the stage and served as a springboard for the gospel of the Kingdom. The whole world was intensely pagan, but into that pagan world went the Jew with his worship of the One God. It was a new message. For centuries the Jews had been scattered throughout all the nations of the world. There was a Jewish community, sometimes numbering thousands, in every city. At the time of the Babylonian captivity a new institution arose. It was the synagogue, or "gathering together," a term which first signified the congregation and then the place where the congregation worshipped. By the time of Christ there were Jewish synagogues in every major city of the Roman Empire. The apostle James could say to the Jerusalem Conference, "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath" (Acts 15:21). The reading of the Mosaic law was heard in the synagogues each Sabbath not only by Jews, but also by Gentile proselytes (converts to Judaism) and a still larger group of "devout men" who attended but did not join. Thus the Jews spread among the nations not only the worship of God and the synagogue, but also the MESSIANIC HOPE. People's minds and hearts were thus being prepared for the coming of the Messiah. And come He did - "in the fullness of time." Just when the stage was set for Him by the overruling wisdom and power of God, He stepped into history announcing, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news!" (Mk. 1:15).

## THE FORERUNNER

John the Baptist performed the word of the Lord as revealed by Isaiah the prophet which was a preparatory ministry in advance of the coming of Christ. It is constructive to observe how God's new revelation of the Kingdom takes up exactly where the last words of the Old Testament leave off. The very last words from heaven, preceding the interval of silence that lasted for four hundred years after Malachi laid down his pen, were these: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

The very next words reveal the fulfillment of this promise in a striking way, and the significance of the fact is awesome. In the angel Gabriel's message to Zacharias, we have a direct continuation of the subject of the last words spoken by God through Malachi. For Gabriel's words to Zacharias, while he, a priest, was exercising his office in the temple were the next words sent from heaven to earth. This is the record: "And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to

make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Lk. 1:1 1-17). It is abundantly clear that the purpose of Gabriel's message was to announce the great person promised in the last words of Malachi, who should perform the Elijah-ministry of "turning the hearts to the Lord their God,, thus making ready a people "prepared for the Lord."

Some time ago Paul Mueller wrote: "Much of the preparation necessary for the coming of the Lord took place in John's life while he was in the desert. John was about six months older than Jesus and about thirty years old when his ministry began. He ministered for a year or a year and a half, then spent another year or more in prison before he was beheaded. John's preparation amounted to perhaps the greater part of thirty years in the wilderness without schools, colleges, universities or teachers. In our modern world of knowledge and education, John would have been considered a fool. However, he was anything but. John the Baptist was constantly ministered to by the Holy Spirit as the way of the Lord was being prepared in his own life. He remained in the desert for most of those thirty years and was not bothered by the many distractions in the world about him, for he daily communed with the Lord. All during those years of preparation, John grew in the knowledge of the Lord and became the way for the coming of Him who was to introduce His kingdom of peace and righteousness. And when John came out of the wilderness, he did not consult with the learned elders of Jerusalem. Rather, he went right to work in the spirit and power of Elijah, preaching repentance and calling all Jerusalem and Judea to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord. Not only was the way prepared in his life, but he also set about to prepare the way of the Lord in the lives of others."

Knowing that someone important was coming to stay in your home would mean, of course, that you would make things as presentable as possible. Should your guest be a president or a prime minister, you might even do some quick redecorating, buy a new mattress for the guest room, or whatever. But you would get ready! Two thousand years ago the world heard a startling announcement. The great King of the universe, the Lord of glory, is Himself coming to this world that He created, loves and cares for. GET READY! When Christ came the preaching of His gospel did not begin with His own preaching. That was not the first preaching of the gospel. Mark's Gospel says, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord...John came and preached..." Therefore, the scriptures themselves declare that "the beginning of the gospel,, was not the preaching of Jesus Christ, but was the preaching of John the Baptist. There is no question about that. That is the beginning of the good news of the Kingdom. The gospel began when John came announcing the approach of both the King and the Kingdom.

Let me illustrate. If Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain should die tonight you would see a very strange scene. Before more than a very few minutes had passed, the declaration would be made solemnly in the chamber of death that the Queen was dead. In a moment the high officers of state would turn about and salute the King. The heir apparent would become the monarch in a moment, but before he had ever assumed the reins of power; before he had ever issued a proclamation of any kind; before he had committed a single royal act as the successor of his mother as the King of Great Britain and the Commonwealth; before he had ever done one thing as the great ruler of hundreds of millions of people, a strange thing would happen.

There would issue from the Royal Palace, in peculiar garments, a number of men called Heralds. The Chief Herald would march at the head, and they would go into the street in a historic part of London. They would stand there with their long silver trumpets, and the Garter King at Arms would cause them to blow seven times. Then he would declare, "The Queen is dead. Long live the King.,, His proclamation would be the first legal proclamation of the reign of Charles Philip the present Prince of Wales, as the King and Emperor of all of Great Britain and the Commonwealth of nations over all the lands and seas. It would not be because the Garter King at Arms was greater than the King, but because the law of England demands that his proclamation shall be set forth in a particular way. Only one man in all the kingdom can do it, and only certain Heralds under his command can accompany him. That man is the man appointed by law and by centuries of custom as the Announcer of the death of the Queen and the reign of the new King.

At a definite time appointed by God' a man of strange habits and appearance began to preach in a remote desert part of Judea, near the river Jordan. "Repent' for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" he thundered. This man was of the priestly tribe, and had been consecrated to God from his infancy by the vow of the

Nazarite. He was not clothed in soft raiment, but in a coarse tunic of camel's hair; he had no craving for sumptuous food, but was content with the simplest fare of dried locusts and honey from the rock. he was no reed shaken by the wind, but a gnarled oak that the wind could neither bend nor break. He was literally the Voice of one crying the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!" He professed to be raised up by the Spirit of God to announce the immediate appearance of the Messiah. Like the prophets of old he had a message directly from God for the people of Israel. His message consisted of the announcement that God was about to act. God would again visit His people. The Kingdom of God was at hand, and the King was already in their midst!

The effect of John's ministry was instantaneous and electric. Israel was moved as Israel had not been moved for centuries. His voice reached from the Jordan to the capital city, and awed its heart. Pharisees and Sadducees, priests and scribes, publicans and sinners, went forth to listen. East and west, north and south, the tidings spread that the silence of centuries was broken, and that God's voice was to be heard. Publicans, like Zaccheus, left their ill-gotten gains; Pharisees, like Nicodemus, left their phylacteries; soldiers of Roman or Herodian armies who were on the march, the common people in their myriads—all left their homes and occupations and hurried to the Jordan, till the river banks were black with the crowds of penitents. "There went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.,, Beneath his burning words thousands repented, turned from their old ways, and began to climb toward the heavenly life.

Some thought that John was the Messiah. His fame soon reached the government and priesthood in Jerusalem. The Jewish authorities sent a deputation of priests to inquire who he was. He told them that he was not the Christ, but was sent to introduce Him. "I came to point Him out to Israel." He was raised up by God to prepare their hearts for the great revelation of God they were about to receive, to shape their thinking for the new and glorious age about to dawn.

We can readily see by the teaching of Jesus that He never spoke of the Kingdom of God as previously existing. To Him the Kingdom is something entirely new, first to be realized. Even of John the Baptist He says that he was not in the Kingdom of God, because his whole style of ministry identified him with the preceding dispensation of the law. "The law and the prophets were until John, but since that time the Kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it" (Lk. 16:16; Mat. 11:13). According to Jesus the Kingdom involved such altogether new forces and such unparalleled blessings and realities, that all the works and provisions of former moves of God on earth paled by comparison. They were the words of God, but not the reign of God. They were the works of God, but not the rule of God. They brought men into contact with God, but not under the dominion of God.

Jesus made a startling declaration. "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he" (Mat. 11:11). Many wonderful men had lived before John the Baptist. Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel, and many other powerful men of God had been born and had done exploits in the name of the Lord. But Jesus said that no one that had been born up to that time was greater than John the Baptist. In saying this, He was putting John the Baptist in a very high position. But then He said something even more astonishing. He said that even the least of us who are in this heavenly Kingdom is greater than John the Baptist! What an exalted position He has reserved for the members of His body the citizens of His Kingdom! This means that even the least of the called out, the apprehended, the elect, whether a child, a day-laborer, a janitor, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, when we are born from above, birthed into the spiritual world of God, transformed in nature, renewed in mind, regenerated in heart, and invested with the power of the Holy Spirit, we are in a superior position among God's people than John the Baptist and all the other men of God that went before.

The words of Jesus are clear: John the Baptist is the greatest man that ever lived—outside the Kingdom of God! Those who enter the Kingdom have the potential to become ministers of a SUPERIOR DISPENSATION' even that which by the Spirit of God shall subdue all things unto God and make all things new. In Matthew 5:19 there is another significant word. Here we find the story of a man who disobeyed one of the Lord's commandments and even taught others his disobedience. The scripture says that he will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven. At first this may not seem very encouraging. Who wants to be the least in the Kingdom?

But the good thing about it is that this man was still found in the Kingdom! He may be the least' perhaps, but nevertheless he is there. And even this one, the very least in the Kingdom of Heaven, IS GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST! Think of it!

A greater than Solomon is here, beloved, a greater than Moses, a greater than John. The greater is now realized in the Christ of God, and I declare that those whom God is bringing forth in conformity to HIS IMAGE shall be a part of the greatest dimension of the Kingdom ever revealed. Consider, in light of the fact that John was the greatest man that ever lived before Christ, and the very least in the Kingdom is greater than he—how unspeakably awesome is the greatness of those elect sons who qualify as THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

## PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM

"And Jesus went about all Galilee' teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all the sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them" (Mat. 4:23-24). The ministry of Jesus began in a manner, which is the essence of simplicity. Note the words again, "teaching,,, "preaching," and "healing." That means there was enunciation, application, and demonstration. First, He taught. Now, first of all He did not heal people. He did not preach to people, but, first of all, He was the great Teacher. He went about teaching—preaching— healing. Teaching is the first thing He did, preaching is the next, and healing is the last.

The Word of God is the power of God unto salvation. Hence, the necessity of teaching, first of all. That is why in this hour just before the manifestation of the sons of God, as God prepares to do a new thing and usher in a new age, teaching is the first thing He is doing. Teaching is more important than preaching. We have had the idea that if a minister got very emotional and loud he is preaching. Preaching, technically, is only the proclamation of an ascertained truth. The proclamation by the Herald, "The Queen is dead, long live the King!" is preaching. There is no argument about it. It should be short, sharp, and to the point. Proclamation is not teaching. Preaching is not teaching. When Jesus went to a place, His disciples went before Him and said, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." There was no teaching about that. They simply preached, proclaimed.

You will notice that this order -- teaching, preaching, healing — is not accidental. The same statement is made in other parts of the Gospels. For instance, in Matthew 9:35, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." Then in the eleventh chapter we read, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and preach in their cities." The teaching came first and the preaching next, and the healing last.

In the "teaching" of Jesus the old ideas of the Kingdom of God were charged with divine and heavenly meaning; it was NEW LIGHT. What did He teach? I want to tell you what He taught. I know. There are things I do not know by the million, but there are some things I do know, and I know what Jesus taught. I know, but I know it not yet in all its fullness. I have been sitting at His feet for more than fifty years. To me the Christ has filled my life, and for me there is no life, no reality, no love, no power apart from Him. He has been to me, all. He is more to me now than ever, and I know Him. I know something of the power of His resurrection and I know something of the fellowship of His sufferings' and I have trod somewhat in His footsteps, and I love to speak His Name. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! My Christ, my Lord, and my God! The name that charms our fears, quickens life within, and gives peace, love and immortality. He taught only one thing—the Kingdom of God. That is not a doctrine or creed—the Kingdom is life and power and reality and glory unspeakable. He preached deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, the setting at liberty of them that are bruised, and the acceptable year of the Lord—the day of blessing and release for all men.

Then He came preaching. What a word is this! It is the cry of the Herald. We call him a preacher who delivers his well-prepared sermons to his select and cultured audience on Sunday morning; but the preacher is a

herald, whose voice rings out on the quiet air' suddenly, startlingly, "Prepare! Prepare! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" The Greek word here translated "preaching" was commonly used of a special event in the Roman Empire of Jesus' day. It was the announcement—the proclamation—that a son and heir had been born to the Emperor. This proclamation also went out when the heir came of age and when he ascended to the throne to become the next Emperor. John the Baptist came preaching, announcing, heralding the coming of Jesus, the King of glory. But Jesus came announcing a far greater and much more enduring inheritance, beyond His days on earth. God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, was ready to restrain men no longer by law. He was ready to do a new thing—to bring men into His Kingdom, into His own realm, into His own state of being as His very own sons and daughters. God was ready to make ordinary men royal citizens of His Spiritual Domain, His Divine World, the Kingdom Realm. First He would make them citizens. Then from among those citizens He would select an elect company and form them into a divine government, kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, overcomers, the manifested sons of God, to administer His Kingdom and reign over all things after the power of incorruptible life.

The healing was the evidence, the supernatural proof that the "Sun of Righteousness" had indeed arisen "with healing in His wings." "It was never so seen in Israel" (Mat. 9:33). Go back with me in thought two millenniums ago in Capernaum, in the land of Israel, and see what a manifested son of God is like. Jesus is the firstborn, the elder brother of this sonship order and His voice rang loud and clear across the green Galilean hills as He cried, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And they came from every direction bringing victims of every type of disorder—lame, blind, deaf, mute, fevered, epileptic, lunatic, demonized—until it seemed as if the whole of Galilee gathered at His feet.

Come, see a little girl whom He healed. It was yesterday, only God's yesterday that this happened. Come, I want to lead you along the streets of Capernaum, and take you into this house. See that little daughter, but twelve years of age, lying there. See the father, who is a rabbi, bending over her, and the little maid is whispering, "Father, go and get Jesus to come and heal me." "I dare not, my daughter, if I do the rabbis of the Great Council in Jerusalem will strike my name from the roll of rabbis; they will curse me in the temple of my God. Oh, daughter, I dare not do it." And the maid replies, "Then I shall die; no doctor can heal me." Said the rabbi, "Daughter, you shall not die." "Yes, my father, I shall; for you cannot get Him to come and heal me unless you go to Him and beseech Him." And the rabbi cries, "Then I shall worship Him; you shall not die." Away speeds the rabbi, and he searches through the streets of Capernaum for Jesus, and cannot find Him. Then he is told that He has gone to Gadara, but is coming back today.

He watches for Him beside the sea, and the moment that Jesus appears he falls at His feet and worships Him, and cries, "Lord, my little daughter lies at the point of death; come and lay Thy hands upon her and she shall live." Jesus says He will go. Away through the streets He goes with the rabbi. On the way a woman touches the hem of His garment and is immediately healed. He turns around and addresses words of comfort to her. Then they go on. Suddenly a messenger comes to the rabbi, and says, "Your little daughter is dead; do not trouble the Master." But Jesus said, "Be not afraid, only believe. Did I not say I was going to heal her?" "Yes." "Then I am going to do it." They go into the house and into the room and there they find the beautiful little girl dead! Oh, she is dead! But the hand of the Christ is laid on the head of the child and He says, "Talitha cumi! Maid arise!" In a moment the spirit has come back into the body and the maid arises and looks into the face of Jesus. She lives! She is well! "Blessed Jesus! That was done by Thee yesterday, and Thou art just the same today! Thou art raising up Thy life within Thy many brethren that Thy glory may be revealed to all creation, from the highest heaven unto the lowest hell, in this Thy greater and more glorious day!"

We have not yet witnessed the magnitude of the ministry that shall be revealed through the manifested sons of God. God is preparing His perfected and matured body, anointed with the seven-fold Spirit of God, and this enChristed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history with the suddenness with which Jesus of Nazareth appeared two millenniums ago and with ten thousand times more power than a Luther' a St. Patrick, a Wesley, a Whitfield, a Finney, a Moody, a Billy Sunday, or any of the revival showers of this century. God has moved deeply upon my heart to prophesy to God's elect that there is approaching a grand and glorious MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a fresh revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is going to come in the midst of a people who truly love His appearing, and I see and hear signs that already He is beginning to come. We are standing on the threshold of a new and

fresh and transcendental manifestation of our Lord. Not this time through apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This time it will be through SONS. It will be like tens of thousands of Jesus's turned loose in the streets of the cities of the world. These things are burning like a furnace inside of me. I am being quickened by these things. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a part of this manifestation that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself IN ALL HIS LOVE, GRACE, POWER AND MAJESTY TO ALL CREATION.

Jesus did not theorize about the Kingdom, but He taught, preached, practiced, and set the powers of the Kingdom in operation. For three and a half years Jesus manifested sonship full and complete, not the in part and by measure we have known through the Church age. Jesus did mighty works and spoke the words of the Kingdom among the people of Israel. He also ordained twelve and seventy and sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of God and demonstrate its power. It was not the design of Jesus to keep His power within Himself. Rather it was His delight to share with His own. After His ascension He gave of this power by measure to men and women within His body, gifted ones in the Church. And now, in the end of the age, out of this Church He is bringing many sons to glory' exact copies and replicas of Himself, His brethren. To these shall be given the fullness of the power of His resurrection within each one to deliver creation not only from sin and sickness, but from the bondage of corruption -the very power of death in spirit, soul, and body.

Christ appeared just when the cosmos was ready for the revelation. Paul says that "when the fullness of time was come" God sent forth His Son, (Gal. 4:4). The Kingdom was the supreme concern and purpose in the heart of Jesus, as it now is in those who have received the call to sonship. The Kingdom was His dearest dream, the one consuming passion of His life. As a child' when He studied the Holy Scriptures and communed with His heavenly Father' the reality of the Kingdom of God was birthed in His life and set the fires of expectation burning in His soul. As He fulfilled His daily responsibilities' as He strolled in the solitude of the peaceful Galilean hills' the hope that constantly throbbed within His breast and would not let Him go was that of the Kingdom of God. It was upon the Kingdom that He meditated when He went to worship at the synagogue. It was of the Kingdom that He spoke to His Father in the secret place of prayer. In the soul of Jesus the reign of God was supreme.

When Jesus turned aside from the carpenter shop that day' He set out to proclaim the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom was ever His dominant theme. By deed and by example' no less than by word' He toiled to expound it. With divine motivation He set out to bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth. The world of His day was mad -pagan' vicious' violent' wicked' and intolerant beyond description. His was the most impossible task of which we can conceive. But He was convinced that by the power of His Father all things are possible. He was absolutely sure that God was stronger than the devil. He was absolutely certain that sin and death in their every ghastly and hideous form should at last be driven out of the world and that God should reign in every human breast from the rivers to the ends of the earth. He longed, and bade us pray, that this glorious consciousness of' and obedience to, God's reign should be shared by every man, woman, and child that lives or has ever lived. That' surely' is what we ask when we pray as He taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come!"

## **THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM**

When Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, He called on the people to repent and believe the good news. By repentance the people would be delivered of the past with all its dead religious forms and ceremonies' law and regulations' and would be free to embrace the new gospel of the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus. When I think of the radical change Jesus brought into the world at that time, it is not surprising that many rejected Him and refused to believe His message. This was especially true of the tradition-bound religious people' such as the scribes' Pharisees' and Sadducees. It will not be different in the day of the manifestation of the sons, but they will triumph over all until God is truly "all in all."

The message of the sons of God is the same message proclaimed by the first Son of God. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel..." What gospel? "...the gospel of the kingdom of God...,, That is the gospel Christ proclaimed. The message He brought was about the Kingdom of God. It was not about the Church, for the Church is only an aspect of the Kingdom, a part of the process. It was the gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus wanted proclaimed AS A WITNESS to all nations! Jesus said, "I

must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also. For therefore am I sent" (Lk. 4:43). Jesus commissioned His disciples to teach the Kingdom of God. "Then He called the twelve disciples together, and...He sent them to preach the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9: 1-2). "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom..." (Mat. 4:23).

Jesus' parables concerned the Kingdom of God.. To His disciples, in explaining the parable of the sower, He said: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God," and then explained to them the parable. Again, "Then said He, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I resemble it?" (Lk. 13:18)—and then came a parable. "And again He said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven..." and then follows the parable of the leaven.

After Christ's resurrection, the disciples were with Him forty days. Of their conversations during this time we read, "...until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things; pertaining; to the kingdom of God.." (Acts 1:2-3). After the day of Pentecost "Philip went down to the city of Samaria...when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ' they were baptized, both men and women,, (Acts 8:12). The apostle Paul spoke boldly at Ephesus for three months "disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.,, On a later trip, at Miletus, Paul called for the elders of the Church at Ephesus. Saying his farewell to them, he said, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more, (Acts 20:25). Then at Rome, "there came many to Paul, into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God..., (Acts 28:3). Again at Rome, "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God..." (Acts 28:30).

The churches—the apostasies would be a better word for the most part—are always talking about "the Gospel." Why do they not go on? Why do they not conclude the words? The gospel of what? The word gospel is incomplete. Gospel means "glad tidings,, or "good news". But the good news of what? What is the good message about? That is a legitimate question, because the full meaning is not presented in the word "gospel". It is presented in the Bible, yes, as "the gospel of the Kingdom of God,, the good news of the Kingdom of God. The good news is that God has a Kingdom and that He is establishing it in individual lives, in homes, in cities, in nations, and in the world. The good news of the Kingdom of God— that is the gospel. It is not the gospel of the Baptist Church, or the gospel of the Presbyterian Church, or the gospel of the Lutheran Church, or the gospel of the Roman Catholic Church, or the gospel of the Pentecostal Church. It is not the gospel of any church, movement, nation or man. It is the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

You hear the different expressions brought forth by preachers, "I preach the gospel of the New Testament", "I preach the gospel of salvation", "I preach the gospel of grace", "I preach the gospel of Christ", "I preach the gospel of God", "I preach the gospel of eternal life", "I preach the everlasting gospel", "I preach Paul's gospel", "I preach the Foursquare gospel", "I preach the old-fashioned gospel", etc. These expressions may be well and good, a couple of them appear a time or two in the scriptures' but just what do the masses of people conclude from them? Many people think there are several different gospels. I heard a preacher say that we have no business preaching the gospel of the Kingdom at this time. He said' "I only preach Paul's gospel and that is the only gospel for us to preach.,, But the gospel Paul preached was the same gospel the Lord gave the other apostles to preach—the gospel of the Kingdom. When Paul called the elders from Ephesus to talk to them for the last time' some of His words were these' "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, shall see my face no more,' (Acts 20:25). What gospel did Paul preach? The same as Jesus told His disciples to preach when He sent them out to the villages of Israel; he preached the Kingdom of God. Grace is a part of that gospel. Salvation is a part of that gospel. But none of those aspects are the gospel. They are merely parts or segments of the gospel of the Kingdom. Some people say, "We preach the FULL GOSPEL!., Indeed? The only "full gospel,, in the whole world is the gospel of the Kingdom! It is the all-inclusive gospel. It contains all the plenitude of God's rule by the Spirit. It will carry you all the way from your elementary walk in God to maturity in the mind of Christ and the image of the Father. As far as the scriptures and the Lord are concerned there is only one gospel—the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

This truth of the Kingdom is missing from the popular preaching of our day. Our long years of captivity in Babylon have erased the knowledge of the Kingdom from our minds. The Kingdom has become a future hope rather than a present reality. The term "kingdom," is mostly absent from the evangelism you hear from the churches, television preachers, and crusades. The sad fact is that the popular gospel of the church systems is not fully rooted in the Word of God, nor does it correspond to the heart of God or the eternal purpose of God.

As I scanned the morning paper, I noticed that every article reported "old" news: a prominent sports figure arrested for drunkenness, a man charged with conspiracy, a government policy criticized, wars and rumors of wars, and a riot in the Middle East. There is really nothing new about such stories. They're simply modern versions of what people have been doing since Adam and Eve disobeyed God. The news headlines from three millenniums ago would read the same as this morning, paper. A humorous columnist wrote a bit on the news printed in daily newspapers. It is actually NOT news, he insisted, since it is a reporting of events that already have happened. Therefore it is no longer new, but old when printed. He insisted that it really ought to be called OLDS!

So what is real news? It isn't about the kind of conduct that comes naturally, that repeats out of human nature again and again, but behavior that takes more courage and strength than we're capable of. When someone acts in ways that are holy, righteous, loving, and for the good of creation – now that's news! How many know today, that Jesus, gospel was a sensational, never-before proclaimed NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT? Jesus was a NEWSCASTER. His news was something absolutely NEW —never before proclaimed to mankind. It was the most wonderful NEWS ever reported. Actually almost too wonderful for humans to believe. It was the news of the utterly transcendent potential of man. It was the news of the Kingdom of God within. It was the news of a realm of life, a dimension of reality, where sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, ignorance, poverty, limitation, fear and death can all be overcome and man can know and think with the mind of Christ and live in the abundant life of God. The word "gospel," means GOOD NEWS and that is the only news this poor old world needs to hear—the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD! It is the good news concerning the reign of Christ. It is the good news about salvation, deliverance, healing, blessing, provision, a new mind, a new nature, and the dominion given to the sons of God. It is the good news of manifested sonship. Jesus was HIMSELF the revelation of what the Kingdom is for all men.

The following words by Paul Mueller are encouraging. "'Then said He unto them' Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder' which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old' (Mat. 13:52). Notice Jesus, reference to those who are 'instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven., All manner of teaching has gone forth and is still going forth, but much of it has to do with the church order of the past. Much of it is useless in this new Day! But Jesus taught the truths of the Kingdom of God. It is only the blessed truths of the Kingdom of God that shall enable us to withstand the great shakings of this time. All other teachings and instructions shall fail the test of time. But the Kingdom of God and all related truths shall prevail when all else fails. Therefore, the Lord would instruct us in those truths of the past, present, and future, which pertain to the coming of the Kingdom of God to the earth!

"The coming of the power, the authority and the throne of the Kingdom of God to the earth was not a surprise to those instructed unto the Kingdom. The truth of it was proclaimed by Jesus, as well as His apostles and prophets of that day and this. It is the hope of all mankind! It is only that the church system and its leaders have lost the blessed truths of the Kingdom of God. Multitudes in the church system turned away from the truths of the Kingdom and embraced instead the narrow, restricted and confined teachings of man regarding church order. All those who are thus involved with the things of the past age are blinded to the reality of the Kingdom of God and the blessed throne of that Kingdom, which is a positive influence now in the earth. Only by repentance' which is deep and complete, can anyone see the narrowness of the past age and embrace with joy the glories of the Kingdom of God in the earth.

"The gospel of the Kingdom includes not only the promises of Luke 4:18-19, but all the promises of the original prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3 as well. The gospel of the Kingdom is indeed the gospel for the whole person. It truly is the good news of the sovereign dominion of our almighty God! It is the Jubilee message for every person of every nation and tongue. The gospel of the Kingdom includes the fullness of salvation, the removal of the curse, the restoration of all things, and prosperity for all. It is a message of the Christ Life for every person! And

we are the first fruits; we are the seed of the beginning of the restoration and reconciliation of all things, which marks the blessed reality of the Kingdom of God on earth. But to get here, we marched ever onward and forward at our Lord's bidding. Our Father never allowed us to camp and remain at any of the road-markers of the past!" —end quote.

The gospel of the Kingdom includes the whole purpose of God and if we wish to inherit the Kingdom we must embrace the whole purpose of God. We have known many people who have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and they are quite satisfied with that level of experience. They get saved, live a few years and die and go to heaven. To be with Christ after one dies is a wonderful hope, but God wants us to enter in to all He has for us. Others have learned what it is to consecrate their lives to God and desire to serve Him with all of their hearts. Others desire a holy life that is set apart for God. Others seek to be filled with the Spirit of God and desire to be led by the Spirit. Others long to receive spiritual gifts and enter into a spiritual ministry, and still others desire to go on and become manifested sons. They long to overcome, to be conformed into the image of God, to put on the mind of Christ, and sit with Christ in His throne (Rev. 3:20-21), not because they are power-mad, but because there is a deep and compelling desire to minister to the whole need of the whole creation.

We have the record of the revelation of God's Kingdom purpose in I Cor. 15:22-28. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith that all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL".

GOD ALL IN ALL—this will be the grand conclusion of the great drama of the world's history and the conquest of the Kingdom of God. There will come a day - the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we cannot realize it—when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that God gave Him and which He won with His own blood and established and perfected from the throne of His glory. ALL IN ALL - such is the grand goal of our God. He will yet be everything to everyone of His creatures, as it is fitting He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart for "He has created all things, and for HIS PLEASURE they are and were created, (Rev. 4:11). Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the sin and sorrow and death of the ages. Let us with joy believe it! Let us exult as we receive it! Let us be "laborers together with God,, to accomplish it! May this simple phrase, that the smallest child can utter, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every darkness, a balm for every wound, and our ages-lasting consolation and good hope. Let us awake from the terrifying nightmare of Babylon's delusions and let us wing our spirits to God's glorious consummation. Here is a vision worthy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ - GOD ALL IN ALL. God help everyone who reads these lines, God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, that we may be in the fullest sense the FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS REDEMPTION. This is realized when HE IS ALL IN US for we have appropriated the fullness of Himself. Amen!

While we praise God for every moving of His Spirit and each step of His a11-wise p1an, the fact remains that none of the revivals of history has ever once-for-all defeated Satan, sin, and death. No revival in any land has turned the whole world to God! No dealing of God with humanity has ever brought to pass the TOTAL TRIUMPH of His Kingdom in all realms! Sin and death still stalk across the earth, the vast masses of humanity held tight in their terrible clutches' with sorrows beyond description. Is there no deliverance for these? How truly the whole creation groans and travails in pain together, waiting, not for another Luther, nor another Paul' nor another Finney, nor another Peter, nor another Moody; waiting not for another Pentecost, nor for another healing campaign' nor for another prophet' nor for the rapture. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD, (Rom. 8: 19). And why does all creation stand in the wings waiting with bated breath, crowding the door and standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own? "For the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered...INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD! (Rom. 8:21). Praise God!

Thank God' Daniel 7:27 is really true! "And the kingdom and dominion' and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE HIM!, Thank God, Ephesians 1:10 is actually the fully inspired word of God! "And this is in harmony with God's merciful purpose for the GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD when the times are ripe for it—the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes' things in heaven and things on earth' to find their one Head IN HIM', (Weymouth).

If God had no such plan for the world, what kind of a God would He be? An African tribe has this notion: "God is good and wishes good for everybody, but unfortunately He has a half-witted brother who is always interfering with what He does. The half-witted brother keeps on intruding himself and does not give God a chance." This quaint conception of God is interesting since it conforms precisely to the modern "gospel,, of the church system! Their version goes like this: God is good and wishes good for everybody, but unfortunately there is a cosmic accident. One of God's highest creations, one of the protectors of His throne' one of God's own bodyguards, the singing, musical archangel Lucifer, rebelled and became the devil, and he mischievously and maliciously goes about everywhere interfering with what God does. The devil keeps on intruding himself and doesn't give God a chance.

The good God, according to the common testimony of church goers' is ever trying to do this and that' while the devil is continually interfering with His plans' frustrating His purposes' usurping His instruments and defeating the issue. On some good days the good God wins, on some bad days He loses. They go about continually talking to the devil, praying to the Devil (though they call it commanding and rebuking), and giving place to him over and over again. They "bind,, him in this meeting and in that situation, but, like Samson breaking the cords of Delilah, he bounces right back in full regalia at the next meeting or occasion. These "devil-worshippers" ever beat the air against him and do, occasionally, they claim, win a battle against him, but the war rages on. If they do not get an immediate answer to their prayer, they are sure the devil is hindering. If everything does not go according to plan, the devil is interfering. If obstacles appear along the way, the devil is fighting them. They live out their lives in a constant state of paranoid devil-consciousness. The churches are literally filled with these devil-worshippers. They do not intentionally plan their worship this way, but it develops into that form, nevertheless. These go on and on about the devil' attributing so much power and mischief to his cause, and inadvertently sing his praises, because they truly believe in the devil. I have been in meetings where the people spent more time talking to the devil than they did talking to God. What faith they have in him! What power and wisdom they ascribe to him! With what cunning does he, to hear them tell it, repeatedly "out-fox" the good God! In their minds he is HIS MAJESTY THE DEVIL!

I do not hesitate to tell you that that is NOT the gospel, it has absolutely nothing in common with the "good news" of the KINGDOM OF GOD! Such teaching is no compliment or credit to the dominion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, it is a monstrous heresy, a wicked blasphemy. If God allows Himself to be "outsmarted,, or "hindered,, or "defeated" by the devil, then God is Himself the half-witted brother' if I may say so reverently. You cannot have a half-God ruling over a half-realm without implying a half-wit as God.

The King of the Kingdom has said' "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God' then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Mat. 12:28). In other words' when Jesus cast out demons He was representing what the Kingdom of God will do. When you get the rule of God in your life there is no devil anymore. We have the same illustration when Jesus cleansed the temple. He went into that natural temple in His physical body and chased out all the animals and the money changers and all who merchandised the bestial realm in the temple of God. How He cast them out! He was illustrating that greater temple which we are, and when the Christ comes in, when the rule of God is raised up within, when the Kingdom of God is come' all that has occupied and usurped this temple' contaminated this temple' controlled this temple has to go. At the recognition of His presence and at the power of His Word they all march out. Anyone with one spiritual eye and half spiritual sense should know that Christ does not co-habit with devils. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

The gospel of the Kingdom is yet to be preached in power to the inhabitants of the world in our generation. The gospel of grace has gone into most of the world, the gospel of salvation has penetrated nearly everywhere, but not the gospel of the Kingdom. God is raising up His sons in this day to again proclaim that very gospel to

every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Jesus was the firstborn of the Kingdom realm in His day. Now many sons are being brought to His glory. Many who read these lines are being processed and matured, as Jesus was for thirty years in Nazareth before His sonship ministry began, to be shown to the world as the sons of the living God. A new move of God is at hand - not another church revival, but THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL BE SEEN IN POWER. God has let us into the secret of His counsels. He has granted us wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a message of the utmost importance to deliver to His people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending the manifestation of the sons of God. A new order looms bright upon the horizon. A new Day is dawning. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are coming down, the present order is about to end, and the dominion is now given to the saints of the Most High. Praise the name of the Lord!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 8**  
**THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART EIGHT**

**THE MANIFESTATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF THE KINGDOM**

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk. 1 :14-15).

Great controversy has raged over the precise meaning of the Greek word ENGIKEN, here translated "is at hand." The simple Greek word from which it is formed (ENGIZO) means "draw near", but ENGIKEN is the perfect tense of this verb. This is a significant tense in Greek for which we have no exact equivalent in English. It indicates an action that has taken place in the past, but which also has a continuing effect in the present. Here, if we labored it, we could say that the perfect tense means, "It has drawn near and is now very near." It certainly means very much more than just an ordinary present tense that would be translated "is drawing near." The New English Bible seeks to do justice to this Greek perfect tense by translating it, "The kingdom of God is upon you." The verb could also be translated, "The kingdom of God has arrived," that is, it is a present reality now, not just a future eventuality.

The essence of the message of Jesus was that God's chosen time had arrived—NOW. His Kingdom was already breaking into the world of men. This was no longer a promise for some distant future for which men must wait with a hope so fragile that it soon dwindles into disillusionment. God's action had begun. Men must awaken to the truth of it, and respond eagerly and actively. Satan's realm was already threatened, invaded and about to be conquered. The ancient hope was already being swallowed up in present reality. NOW was the moment of God's action, and the time for man to act in response. Men were summoned to identify themselves with this arrival of God's Kingdom, and to make themselves God's instruments in its coming. Their response is demanded urgently, without delay, without hesitation, without misgiving. The fact that God is actively breaking into the life of the world is expressed in such terms as these: The Kingdom "has drawn near", "is coming", "will come", "has burst upon", "is forcing itself into", and "men are pressing into it".

When Jesus said the Kingdom was at hand, He surely didn't mean that it would not appear for hundreds or thousands of years! Two positive and incontrovertible facts are written of the Kingdom. It is said that the Kingdom of Heaven is "within you" (Lk. 17:21) and that it is "at hand" (Mat. 4:17). Where is your hand located? Is your hand not right before you? Is it not accessible for your every command? And are not all things reachable by your hand said to be "at hand"? If you were to ask me where my Bible is, because it is here on the desk before me, I might answer, "It is right here—at hand." on the other hand, if my Bible were at home I would say, "I'm sorry, it is not at hand right now." To be at hand means to be near, present, reachable, attainable! At hand bespeaks of something that is within our grasp, not something that is away out in the future; but something that is now. Not the Kingdom that was, not the Kingdom that is to come, but the Kingdom that IS, that is NOW. If the Kingdom of God was not to be established on earth until the millennium two thousand years later, how could Jesus have said, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the good news!" So it is that when Jesus came two thousand years ago declaring that the Kingdom was then at hand, He was saying that the reality of the Kingdom—GOD'S INTERNAL RULE BY THE SPIRIT—was even then accessible and attainable by all who would receive it. How could Jesus say that the Kingdom was at hand, that men had entered it that it had come upon them, if it was not to appear for ages? How could an event be said to be near, or even present, if it was actually further off than the whole period of the history of Israel from Moses to Christ!

There comes the time in the life of every son of God when he claims the Kingdom as a present tense reality in his life. The Kingdom of Heaven is here just as much as it will be there in some indefinable and indefinite

future. It is not a matter of "here" or "there", nor a matter of "now" or "then" at all—for "neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, Lo, there!, for, behold, the Kingdom of God IS..." This realization of the "isness" of the Kingdom is the first step to Kingdom reality. What blessed instruction we receive in the words of Jesus, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye (change your mind) and believe the good news." When a man or woman is quickened by the spirit of truth to say, "The time is fulfilled for me, right now," he enters into a new relationship with the Father and the present and the future merge into oneness. What is the good news of the Kingdom? IT IS HERE! one cannot have God without His expression, His realm, His rule. It is within you because God is within you.

The Kingdom is not an antiquated Jewish dream, dusty with the history of centuries. It touches us at all vital points—if we are sons of God. It is an immediate and personal concern. It is God's unfolding plan of the ages, His time-abiding strategy for redeeming us from ourselves and the vanity of the flesh and the world. It is God's way of conforming us into the image of His Son and making us one in Him. We are faced then with the solemn truth that when we pray for the coming of the Kingdom we are not praying for the advent of some great world-wide political or economic program. We are not praying for the end of the world, or for the rapture, or for the millennium, or blessing upon the state of Israel, or the exaltation of the United States and Great Britain. It is far more personal than that. This is a prayer that storms the gates of my own little kingdom, and breaks down the barriers between the will of God and me. It brings the rule of the Spirit in mind, heart and body until the glory of God arises upon me and His glory is seen upon me, bringing blessing and transformation to all He touches.

I'm sure most of those who read these lines have read the following by an unknown author. "Nearly two thousand years ago in an obscure village, a child was born of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village where He worked as a carpenter until He was thirty. Then for three years He became an itinerant preacher. This Man never went to college or seminary. He never wrote a book. He never held a public office. He never had a family nor owned a home. He never put His foot inside a big city nor traveled even 200 miles from His birthplace. And though He never did any of the things that usually accompany greatness, throngs of people followed Him. HE HAD NO CREDENTIALS BUT HIMSELF."

On what mission was Jesus sent? We already know the answer to this question. Jesus began His work in Galilee as the messenger of the Kingdom of God. He testified by acts of power that the Kingdom was close at hand, and sought to effect in men the "change of mind" that would make them worthy to receive it. His mission was to usher in the beginning of the Kingdom, making its blessings, benefits, privileges, and supernatural powers a present possession for all who by faith would use them—to usher it in as a living reality which would grow and grow until, by a final crisis, it passed into the perfect and all-consuming Kingdom of God.

In the third chapter of Matthew, when Jesus began to preach that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, He was preaching that there were three things being brought into this earthly realm and they came in at the same time as the Kingdom, for they are the Kingdom. one of them was the ROYALTY OF HEAVEN. THE ROYALTY of heaven had moved into the earth and was tabernacling with men, abiding in flesh. And though Jesus was the royalty of heaven, yet He took a house made of flesh just like we live in, and walked upon earth. The royalty of heaven went about touching the lepers, commanding demons to go, lifting up the sick and afflicted, forgiving sins, and teaching men the ways of the Kingdom. The royalty of heaven raised the dead, showed many signs and wonders, and moved through this earth which had now become the realm of heaven. The second thing was that the RULE OF HEAVEN had been injected right into the earth. The third thing was that the REALM OF HEAVEN had been moved into the earth. We no longer need to think that we must go some place in order to get to heaven. IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO US. Jesus brought the rulership, the realm, and the wonderful royalty of heaven into the earth to take over the dominion from mankind. It is even so today. This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God on earth!

In Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son, the new age of the Kingdom had arrived. Its privileges and powers were available, and He used them freely and fully. Although the priests and other leaders of the static religious system of the day were busy with their time-worn routines of the dead past, and the slumbering world was doing business as usual, nevertheless, a new day had come and Jesus came forth in the life of the Kingdom. Now the Son of God had to reveal Himself personally to all Israel, thereby establishing a new order providing the necessary guidance for all who believe and follow Him.

After the Lord announced that the time for the beginning of the Kingdom had come, He went into the synagogue at Capernaum and began to teach. Immediately, the people noticed something very different about this man. There was an authority in His teaching that the scribes did not have. Furthermore, a man in the synagogue in which resided an unclean spirit began to cry out. The evil spirit could not withstand His presence nor the power of His authority. When Jesus rebuked the demon, commanding it to come out of the man, the demon cried out with a loud voice. When the people saw this happen before their eyes, they were greatly astonished. Never before had they seen an evil spirit come out of anyone by the direct command of a man. None of their religious leaders, nor even the prophets had such power. They questioned among themselves about what new doctrine or power this was (Mk. 1:21-28).

It was true. A new power had come into operation among men. All through the old Testament times, though the prophets had power to perform miracles and do exploits, not one person had cast a demon out of anyone by means of a direct command. What was this new power that was operating among men? our Lord Jesus, Himself, explained it this way. He said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come..." (Mat. 12:28). This new authority which He was exercising over demons and over all things was the sign and proof that the Kingdom of God had begun. When He first began to preach, He had said that the Kingdom of God was drawing near, but now, after He had started to cast out demons by the power of His Word, He declared, "The Kingdom of God IS COME." It was no longer future, but had become a present reality.

That same Jesus has now been made Lord and has absolute power over all nations and all mankind so that the course of history is altered. The coming of Christ to the earth was a mighty manifestation of omnipotent power. By the power of His coming the whole nation of Israel was changed. The course and destiny of many lives was completely transformed as men and women repented of their sins and the empty religious realm in which they had served, and were brought into harmony with the Kingdom. Multitudes who lived in subsequent times, all through the past age, have also experienced the transforming power of Christ. This is the power of the Kingdom of God. Christ was the seed, the firstborn, the pioneer, the proto-type, the author and the beginning of all that the Kingdom is. Those days of the Son of man were sample days of the Kingdom in the blessings bestowed. All the mighty works done by Jesus were but a taste of the Kingdom.

Jesus came into the world in the time of the Roman Empire. His ministry was carried forth under the rule of the Roman government. He was crucified on a Roman cross, pierced with a Roman spear, and sealed in His sepulcher under a Roman seal. But praise God! He burst the bands of death, shattered the seal of mighty Rome, and arose the conquering Christ. And not only that—He ascended Victor over all the powers of darkness, having brought to naught the prince of this world, having brought in eternal redemption for a lost world and redeemed all back unto Himself. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high and poured out upon the first few citizens of His Kingdom the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom of God was birthed, and gathered from Jew and Gentile alike a vast multitude into its bosom. What a flood of light and glory and power fell upon the world in the ministry of the humble followers of the Lamb!

And what glorious days those were! How God blessed His people! Mighty signs and wonders were performed as God confirmed His Word with signs following. The Word of God, anointed by the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early Christians that they had turned the world upside down! —so powerful was their message and spirit. In spite of persecution, in spite of untold thousands of saints impaled upon crosses, burnt at the stake, and fed to hungry lions to the thunderous applause of wild spectators, it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Paganism fell. The mighty Roman Empire shut up its idol temples, all the gods of the ancient world perished from the face of the earth forever, and multitudes of many nations sat down as disciples at the feet of Christ and His apostles. That, like the ministry of Jesus Himself, was but a sample, a demonstration of the Kingdom, but not the fullness of that Kingdom when it has grown and developed in the hearts of an elect people who shall establish it in the fullness of God over all nations and peoples and realms. The words of Jesus and His apostles reveal that "ages" are required to carry the Kingdom through its various stages of progress and development and finally deliver it up to the Father with all things subjected and God "all in all."

Frequently one hears the opinion voiced that the only thing that will save the world of our day from utter ruin, and the race itself from destruction, is a beneficent SUPERMAN, an authoritative one who would be wise enough to map out a new and better course for the people, order his plans put into effect, and have power to enforce his edicts. Convince the world that such a ruler is on hand and he would probably be universally proclaimed! Not a single one of the kings of all the nations, past or present, ever possessed these qualities. A king qualified to take over this chaotic world of today would need to fulfill the prophetic picture given to us by King David, "Give the King Thy judgment, o God, and Thy righteousness...He shall judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, Thy righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor...in His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 72: 1-8).

The one of whom these words speak is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord our God is the King, and His Kingdom shall rule over ALL. And praise His name, He is even now bringing forth in the earth a KINGDOM PEOPLE—the harvest of the Christ-life sown into the earth—who are discovering His Lordship over all of their lives. When all hell assails us, when the power of death all around crowds in upon us, when the pressures of this world would frustrate and vex and suffocate us, when our own passions and emotions and self-will would drown us in a sea of carnality and ungodliness, then HE STANDS UP WITHIN US AS KING—in Kingly authority. When the world, and our own flesh, would tear us apart and smash our lives and our hope of sonship upon the rocks, HE IS THERE, the still small Voice, the deep inner consciousness that all is well, that He, the Lord of glory is the Mighty one in the midst of us, and all is secure in His loving hands, for He ordained our path and made provision for the hour. He is Himself the provision, the indwelling Christ, the anointing, the authority inherent in the Spirit moving in our lives. Through all these testings and processings we are being prepared for our "showing unto the world" in the righteousness, power, and glory of the Kingdom of God. Press on, o sons of God!

Jesus is the beginning of the Kingdom of God and Jesus is a Sign. His life is a Sign pointing to, and a pattern for, His anointed body. Those who make up His body shall follow in His steps and be conformed into His image. This thing of which Jesus is a Sign is a SON COMPANY, born from above, filled with His Spirit, possessed of His glorious mind, caught up into the purposes of God, processed through Father's faithful dealings, and anointed for rulership...to sit on the throne with Him. This body of people, though composed of a multitude of saints throughout the world, and gathered out of the ages, yet is seen in the scriptures as ONE BODY, also spoken of as ONE PERFECT MAN, the OVERCOMER, and the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD. How this elect body comes into existence and what happens to it and through it can be learned by studying the Pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. And although there will be unnumbered multitudes of people saved by the grace of God through the precious blood of Jesus, and we certainly thank God for these dear ones, still the high purposes of God are tied up in that company of saints who press their way toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Consider now what is next in order for the people of God today! Would you like to have a true prophetic insight into God's purposes and plans? Then consider the Pattern Son. See how the baby Jesus began to grow up into mature manhood. Except for one brief glimpse of the boy Jesus at the tender age of twelve, we know nothing of how He grew from babyhood to manhood. Yet we know that He did. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:S2). And though the growth of His body in this hour may appear to be imperceptible from day to day, just as with the growth of a natural child, it's progress is sure, and in the Father's appointed time it will come to the full maturity of the Christ Man. Let us look at the boy Jesus. When we do see Him, where was He? What was He doing? See Him there, He is in the temple, His mind upon the things of God, astounding the lawyers and the revered doctors of the law with His knowledge of God and the depth of His revelation, while the other children are playing their religious games in the marketplace. The doctors of the law cannot understand this lad, nor the source of His wisdom, who someday will be God's Man; neither can they answer His searching questions. See how He is about His Father's business, recognizing at least in a measure who He is and the magnitude of His divine calling.

See Him at Jordan laying down His life and giving Himself into the hands of His Father in such a way that He became a vehicle for the expression of God. God reveals His might in the storm and His power in the lightning.

He has expressed His creative ability in the majesty of the universe. But only in Jesus, His Son, could He truly reveal and express His divine nature. So the Son, as a man, laid down His own rights, His own thoughts, His own will and ways, and became a visible means of expressing that which was divine, that which was invisible. No man can see the invisible God. But He has one to truly represent Him to creation, one to express His love, His grace, His goodness, His knowledge, His wisdom, His glory, His authority and dominion in heaven and in earth. He has one like Himself, in His own image, a human-divine one, and at Jordan He placed this one publicly as HIS SON. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," declared the Father's voice out of the heavens.

From His anointing at Jordan, Jesus entered a ministry for three and a half years that destroyed the powers of hell, and shook this world to its very foundations. HE IS THE PATTERN. Looking unto Him, we see our course set before us. "Be of good cheer," He said, "I have overcome the world." Never once was anyone turned away that came to Him. There was no disease too strong or too advanced, there was no limb too crooked, there was no eye too blind, there was no storm too violent, there was no demon too powerful, there was no corpse too dead, there was no sinner too wicked, there was no situation too helpless or hopeless. He was victorious over every devil, over the elements of nature as the winds and the waves obeyed His mighty Voice, over every evil force. He had entered into that realm that the enemy had usurped from Adam, and had won it back, step by step as He walked for thirty years with His heavenly Father. Glory to God! THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH.

What does this mean to you and me, my brother, my sister, who have received the call to follow the Lamb? We don't yet see all things under the feet of God's CORPORATE SON (Heb. 2:8), but (verse 9), "we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor." We see the Head, the Firstborn of this body supremely victorious, waiting until the body comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that His enemies become His footstool. The Head is victorious, triumphant and crowned! But this glorious work that He began shall be carried forth until His whole body, even the feet, shall rise to the place of authority that He has. **"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom. 16:20).** Now in these appointed days there is coming forth a body of people, raised up by the Holy Spirit of God, who are not content to let Satan and the carnal mind and the curse rule here on this earth. They are crying out for deliverance and interceding for the Kingdom of God on earth. They know not how this can be done, for it truly looks impossible! But having heard from heaven they gladly embrace the hope. The Spirit of God is now revealing truths that have been hidden from ages and from generations. Hope is springing up in the hearts of the saints, God's "called out ones," and they are beginning to see that we can follow Jesus into that which is beyond the veil, into the Holiest of all, into the fullness of God. These are looking not to be ordinary Christians, but extraordinary. These are not looking to die, but to live; not for eventual victory in heaven, but for victory right here on this earth.

Can our finite minds comprehend even in a measure what this shall mean, to walk in the STATE OF BEING Jesus lived in? To have dominion over everything within our own hearts, wills, minds, desires, emotions, intents and passions, so that we express only and always the Spirit of our Father? To have dominion over the elements, the beasts, the birds, over the worse diseases and the most powerful devils. Yes even victory over death itself, the last enemy to be conquered. Some claim now to have already conquered physical death, while they still fear a mad dog, still fasten their seat belts on the highways, and still eat three meals a day to sustain their life. Precious friend of mine, death is the last enemy to be destroyed! But fall it must, before the mighty power of God working within the enChristed. Jesus said that the works He did, we would do also, and even much GREATER WORKS (Jn. 14:12). This power is not given for us to gratify our carnal appetites with bread made from stones, nor for sensationalism, nor to build a kingdom for ourselves, nor for financial reward, nor to make a name. Jesus was tempted with all these things, and He overcame every one of them. And so will those who follow His pattern. Praise God! What a destiny! How marvelous the plan of God! How glorious the path of those who walk with God!

"The life which Jesus lived on earth was the greatest parable ever known. It was a parable of the KINGDOM OF GOD. He fully demonstrated by His divine life and power all the blessings that were to follow in His Kingdom. The evil things that we have learned to live with and accept as part of our very existence He conquered, putting them beneath His feet. Behold this King as He delivers those who believe from every sickness known to man! The word of His mouth makes the lame man to leap as an hart. Hear Him as He

commands deaf ears to be unstopped and blind eyes to see. Listen with bated breath as His wisdom puts all His enemies to silence, causing them to say, 'Never man spake like this man!' Stand in awe beside the tomb of the dead while He Who is the resurrection and the life calls, 'Lazarus, come forth!' Weep with the forgiven woman to whom He said, 'Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.' Feast as He feeds the hungry multitude with enough and to spare. Rejoice as He preaches, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' Stand in awe as He stills the raging storm even as He stilled the fevered brow. Weep with His friends as He died. Shout for joy that He liveth again to reign, no more in humility and rejection in tiny Palestine but in power and wonderful glory OVER ALL THE EARTH" —The Page.

## THE MANIFESTATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF THE KINGDOM

The wandering Nazarene, who a short time before had been denounced, condemned, and cast out as a deluded dreamer and dangerous heretic by the synagogue at Nazareth, and deserted by His own people, soon became acclaimed throughout Galilee and all Israel. He found favor with God and men. He was no longer Jesus of Nazareth; no more the shepherd and carpenter; no longer the son of Joseph and Mary. He was Christ, the Son of the living God; not of this world, but of the other world. The secrets of the universe were no longer hidden from Him. The deceptive dazzle and glittering tinsel of this world held no attraction for Him. The barrier, which separated this earth from the heavens, had vanished. He feared no criticism, no hostility, no man, no demon, no weapon, not even death. His heart overflowed with the infinite love of His Father for creation. The broken hearts of His countrymen were comforted.

New hope, new faith, new courage, new understanding, new victory, new joy, new peace, new righteousness, a new law of life, new power and glory were revealed to all who hungered and thirsted after righteousness and sought for the Kingdom. He forgave men their sins, He cast out the evil spirits with His word, He healed the sick and raised the dead. Instead of the implacable law, which Moses inscribed on hard granite, the law of God's own nature began to be written into the hearts of men. A new chapter in the history of the world began to be written. The God who hitherto had revealed Himself only through prophets was now to dwell in transforming power in the hearts of the humble. What a victory for an obscure preacher who had sprung from poverty into notoriety and prominence, and who fearlessly denounced the priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees! "Verily, I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

Jesus the Christ came into this world as the second Man, the last Adam, the new Federal Head of Adam's ancient race—redeemed and restored. He stood in all the dignity and splendor and wisdom and power and dominion given to man in the beginning ere sin and limitation and death passed upon him. What a Man! Sinless man. Perfect man. Diseaseless man. Unlimited man. Anointed man. Crowned man. Man in the image of God. God-man. Man the revelation of God to creation. Deathless man. What a specimen! What a Man! And yet—don't forget this—He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, even Adam's benighted race. What infinite strength out of incredible weakness! He was EVERY INCH A MAN!

Can we imagine what Jesus might have accomplished had He elected to use the wisdom and knowledge and power resident in His PERFECT MANHOOD for His own ends? He could have used His power for wealth and become the richest man in the world. He could have used His talents for worldly power, usurped the thrones of the rulers of this world and become Himself Emperor of the mighty Roman Empire. He might have used His power for sensual gratification, attracting the fairest women of the world to Him, building the largest harem of the most beautiful women ever possessed by a man. He could have become the world's greatest general and military tactician, or the most famous artist, or the most acclaimed orator, or the most accomplished musician, or the most brilliant scientist, or the most articulate philosopher; or the most important, distinguished, eminent, exalted, renowned, or noble of a thousand different vocations and positions, or all of them put together! But He didn't. He could have rallied the masses and marshaled an army before which the name of Alexander the Great would pale into oblivion. He could have built great hospitals, magnificent schools of learning, and gold-domed cathedrals. He could have initiated wonderful programs to better society and save the world from disease, poverty and trouble. But He didn't! He said, simply, "**When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I can do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these**

things...for I do always those things that PLEASE HIM" (Jn. 8:28-29). This is the simplicity and the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

When Jesus trod the pathways of this earth two thousand years ago He came forth as the LIVING MANIFESTATION AND DEMONSTRATION of the Kingdom of God. When He gave testimony to the presence of the Kingdom, He was the only one experiencing it. He was in the realm of God, under the rule of God, and the dominion of God was working in Him exactly as it should be in all men. In every aspect of His life He was completely submitted to God's reigning and ruling. For the first time since the sin of Adam there was a MAN walking the earth who perfectly expressed the nature, will, power and purpose of God. Through Jesus' life, words, and ministry the Kingdom of God was declared to men. He was the unique manifestation of God's Kingdom. He was God's message to mankind, not a message merely in words, but a message in BEING. He came to demonstrate what a citizen of the Kingdom is and must be. He was Himself the first citizen of the Kingdom; He was the founder of the Kingdom; in Him the Kingdom was embodied.

Look at Jesus, my beloved, and you will see at once what the Kingdom means and how a citizen of the Kingdom lives. oh, the wonder of it! The child of God is a man or woman who is born a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. In this world citizens of different countries behave in different ways. We would not be likely to mistake a Frenchman for a Chinaman, or a Nigerian for an Eskimo or a person of our own country for either. Therefore it is quite clear that the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven must be different from people who are merely citizens of this world. The New Testament over and over again insists that the sons of God must live a life worthy of their sonship that the citizens of the Kingdom must live according to the laws of the Kingdom. They must live a divine and heavenly life-style. They express the nature of the Kingdom and manifest the power and glory of the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit.

"But all of us have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into His own image, and this is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18,) Phillips translation). You may have seen a room, the walls covered with mirrors at different angles, and when you stood in the midst you were reflected at every point: you were seen here, and seen there, and there again, and yonder again, and so every part of you was reflected; so is the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is the center, and all the sons of God like mirrors reflect His glory. Is He a man? So are they! Is He the Son of God? So are they the sons of God! Is He perfect? So are they! Is He exalted? So are they! Is He a prophet? So are they, making known unto principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. Is He a priest? So are they, priests forever after the order of Melchizedek. Is He a King? So are they, for He has made us priestly kings unto God, and we shall reign unto ages of ages. Look where you will along the ranks of the family of the Most High, this one thing shall be seen, the glory of Christ Jesus in His saints, even to the surprise and wonder of all creation.

"When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). The crowning honor of Christ shall be seen in His many brethren, the manifested sons of God. All who grow up into His fullness shall shine like the sun in its brilliance in the Kingdom of their Father. Today we are like vessels on the potter's wheel, but half fashioned, yet even now somewhat of His divine skill is seen in us of His handiwork. Still the unformed clay is in part seen, and much remains to be done; how much more of the great Potter's creating wisdom and transforming power will be displayed when we shall be the perfect products of His hands! In the bud and germ our new nature brings honor to its Author; it will do far more when its perfection manifests the Finisher. Then shall Jesus be glorified and admired in every one of us when the days of processing are ended and we are manifested in the full glory of the Kingdom of Heaven. Then shall thousands upon thousands of ones like Jesus of Nazareth walk the pathways of this world and the harvest of the Christ-seed shall bring a new and mighty dimension of the Kingdom of God to all creation.

Behold, and see, ye who laughed at His Kingdom, see how the little one has become a thousand— yea, thousands! Now look ye, ye foes of Christ, who saw the handful of corn on the top of the mountains; see how the fruit thereof cloth shake like Lebanon, and they of the city do flourish like grass of the earth. Who can reckon the drops of the dew or the sands of the seashore? When they have counted these then shall they not have guessed at the multitude of the many sons Christ brings to His glory! And all this harvest from one grain of wheat, which except it had fallen into the earth and died, would have remained alone! The church of the past two thousand years is not the fruit of that original seed planted in the earth; it has been first the blade, then the

stalk, and then the ear—that is how the Kingdom of God develops. The "full corn in the ear", the final fruit and harvest of that seed is THE MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD, those conformed precisely to the image of that firstborn Son and filled with the fullness of His divine life. The life flows through the blade and the stalk and the ear — but the life settles in the grain in the ear and there incorporates all its fullness and likeness. The full corn in the ear is the only complete reproduction of the original seed and the only stage of development of that life capable of reproducing that life. Ah, my beloved, what a harvest from that lone Man of Nazareth! What fruit from that glorious Man—the firstborn Son of God!

Do you have a ministry? Do you have a gift? Have you a talent? Have you an ability? Is there an expression and fragrance of Christ through your life? Know this, precious one, it is not God's eternal purpose in your life but merely an instrument by which the Father is perfecting within you His nature, His righteousness, His faithfulness, His grace, His wisdom, His power and His glory. This present time is a practice session, a trial run, a proving ground, a small sample of the glory yet to be revealed. We are mere apprentices of the Christ to learn the ministry of sonship. You must not think, as do the babes in the church systems, that when you are done working here that the Master will say, "You have finished your course, I have discharged you from your responsibilities. Go and sit on a heavenly mount and Sing and dance yourselves away for ever and ever." Not at all! I am only learning how to preach now; I shall be able to preach in the age and the ages to come. You are only learning to teach now; you will be able to teach when Christ is fully revealed in His saints.

You are learning the ways of His wisdom, righteousness, love, power, authority and glory now; yes, to angels, and principalities, and powers, and worlds, you shall make known the manifold wisdom of God throughout ages yet unborn. All those stars, those worlds of light, who knows how many of them are inhabited? I believe there are regions beyond our imagination to which every son of God shall become an everlasting illumination, a living expression of the infinite love of the omnipotent Creator. Remember how the Lord will say, "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things**" (Mat. 25:2). He is to keep on doing something, you see. There is no stagnation in God's great and eternal Kingdom, and there is no end to the increase of His government and peace. Instead of having a home and family, or a Sunday School class, or a bit of a community, or a small or vast ministry to govern, the overcomer is to be made ruler over some VAST PROVINCE. Read the forty-fourth verse of Matthew chapter twenty-five: "of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." What a word is that! That is nothing short of UNIVERSAL DOMINION.

Do you know how it used to be in the ancient times in the Spartan army? Here is a man who has fought well, and has been a splendid soldier. He is covered with wounds on his chest. The next time that there is a war, they say, "Poor fellow, we will reward him! He shall lead the way in the first battle. He fought so well before, when he fought one hundred with a little troop behind him; now he shall engage ten thousand with a larger troop." "oh!" you say, "that is giving him more work; he should be honored with rest." But that is God's way in the development of His sons in His Kingdom. That shall be our heaven—not a mansion over the hilltop or a cabin in the corner of glory land—but to be always in the battle, forever working and increasing and winning in the everlasting and unbounded Kingdom of our God! I have fought the devil in my own life, I have fought the devil in my home, I have fought the devil in the church, I have fought the devil in the world, and God has given wonderful victories. I shall continue the warfare against sin, sickness, sorrow, fear, torment, limitation and death in all the hells of this world, in that hell in the underworld, and in all the worlds and all the hells in all the realms of God's vast creation until there is no sin nor death nor devil anywhere and God is all in all. That is my hope that is my vision that is my call and my destiny. And that is the hope, vision, call and destiny of all the sons of God.

In God's blessed Book numerous ages are visible, stretching in a vast panorama from the first ray of light in chapter one of Genesis to the end of the dispensation of the fullness of times when all shall be subdued unto God and God becomes all in all. As the years have gone by the Holy Spirit has convinced me more and more that it is intensely important to the spiritual growth and understanding of every son of God to know the intention of God in each successive age as it unfolds. Some precious saints have in ignorance stated, "I am not concerned about what God may do away out there in the ages to come; it is enough to know what He wants me to be doing right now!" That sounds very wise and spiritual, and it gives me pain to say it, but the truth cannot be denied that such a statement is really an excuse, a "cop out" to absolve these dear ones from

searching the scriptures or exposing themselves to the revelation of God's beautiful plan of the ages. Furthermore, it saves them the trouble of getting involved in some controversy! What spiritual cowards we are!

The Kingdom came when the King came. Nothing can be clearer than that. In His battle with evil Jesus saw the foretaste of the ultimate triumph of God in the earth. Because He came preaching the Kingdom of God, He was demonstrating the glory and the power of that Kingdom and showing us the wealth of its glory by doing for the few what will eventually be done for the all when the light of His Kingdom shall cover all the earth as the waters cover the sea and every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall sing praise and glory to the Lamb of God. In His death He engaged in mortal combat with him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and conquered. Jesus was declared by the Father to be the Son of God with power because of His resurrection from the dead. At the right hand of God He continues to reign through His body on earth and shall continue to reign from stage to stage, from victory to victory, and from glory to glory, until **"He hath put all enemies under His feet" (I Cor. 15:25).**

Here is God's Kingdom plan in a nut shell. In Christ's incarnation, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension we see the initial victory. Through His people during this dispensation of the church, we see His continuing and increasing victory. And in the manifestation of the sons of God we see His ultimate victory. The Kingdom spans all generations and ages from the advent of the firstborn Son into the world to the manifestation of the sons of God. FINAL VICTORY SHALL THEN BE ACHIEVED. Then shall the Kingdom be delivered up to God, even the Father, **"that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).**

God has a wonderful Kingdom plan! Failure to understand God's plan of the ages will leave us on the rocks of ignorance and unbelief and we will spend our lives in the shallows, chatting aimlessly about God's acts and blessings, but never knowing or embracing His purposes. I am convinced that those who reject or deliberately side-step the great truth of God's plan of the ages and the reconciliation of all things to God will never be a part of that blessed company of sons who are destined to set creation free! How can anyone be God's instrument to bring deliverance to the whole creation while he closes his eyes and stops his ears and shuts up his heart to the beautiful revelation of His purposes?

There is nothing that opens the wellspring of love, of faith and understanding, in the human heart like the knowledge of His purpose. What infinite joy, what satisfaction and assurance floods our souls when for the first time in our lives our great and wonderful Father is seen to be a God of purpose, knowing the end from the beginning because He planned the beginning and planned the end! He created all things and made all things and brought all things into being that His glorious purpose might be fulfilled. It was this triumphant knowledge that gripped the heart of the apostle Paul when writing to the Romans, he drew aside the veil to give the saints a clearer view into the mysteries that lay hidden in God's mind from the foundation of the ages. This is what he plainly stated: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Now take particular notice of the words that follow: **"For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him (God) who has subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:18-21).**

Frankly, I never cease to be amazed at those who profess to yearn for the sons of God to be manifested, who continually quote the scripture about the WHOLE CREATION GROANING, WAITING for the manifestation of the sons of God, because THE CREATION ITSELF SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD— and then when you tell them that the sons of God shall really, truly, actually, factually, completely SET ALL CREATION FREE they get bent all out of shape and call you a heretic, or ask foolish questions like, "What good is it to believe that?" If God isn't going to do what He said; if the Christ isn't going to actually draw all men unto Himself; if the whole creation is not going to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; if God will not make all men alive in the Christ; if the last enemy, death, and hell shall never be destroyed; if the devil is going to possess the souls of the vast majority of men forever, and thus be the victor; if God is never going to become "all in all" or "everything to everyone everywhere"; then I fail to see what is the purpose in all this qualifying for sonship, for a glorious ministry in the age and the ages to come, for THERE IS NO MINISTRY FOR THE SONS, and No

TRIUMPH FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD. We may as well forget about sonship, forget about being kings and priests unto God, forget about setting creation free, content ourselves with the current church program, and be satisfied that while untold billions are damned to the flames of hell forever God shall have His sweet little handful of saints to dance and shout with Him over the hilltops of heaven!

This is not the end-time. Every generation and age has its end-time. one day Jesus' disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. As they observed its magnificence Jesus told them, "Truly I say to you, by no means will a stone be left here upon a stone and not be thrown down." While He was sitting on the Mount of olives, the disciples approached Him privately, asking, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and the end of the age?" (Mat. 24:1-3). All three of those questions have been fulfilled historically. Jesus came in an end-time, the end of the age of the law and all previous ages that pointed forward to His coming. He came at the end of a Judaistic world, at the end of the old Covenant, and when the Spirit was poured out, when the church was established, when the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the nation and the whole Old Testament economy was destroyed in A. D. 70, the end came. He came at the end of those ages. "... but now once in the end of the ages hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9:26).

If you will take your concordance and run every reference in the Bible concerning "last days" you will have to conclude that it is referencing the last days of the dispensation of the law and Judaism. You can say we are living in the last days, the last of the last days, or the end-time matters not what term you use, but you are wrong on all counts. It's a lie, it misleads, injures and confuses the Lord's people. Ah, yes, we are living in "last days," but not in "the last days" generally referred to in the scriptures.

But according to the word of the Lord there is yet an age and ages to come! "That in the ages to come He might put on display the exceeding riches of His grace in...us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). This is an end-time, but not the end time. The true and final "end time" the Bible presents speaks of the final consummation of all ages, the climax and end of all times and dispensations, when God's plan of the ages is fully fulfilled. All words about THE END-TIME close with Jesus reigning supreme over everything everywhere. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. And when all things shall have been subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:24-25,28). The word "subdued" means "to line up as a troop or an army in subordination or surrender." This verb appears three times in verse 28. Literally it reads, "Now when the universe shall be lined up as a troop in subordination to Him, then also Himself the Son shall be lined up as a troop in subordination to the one lining up a troop in subordination to Him, in order that God may be all in all." What a word!

What love! What wondrous love! What victory! What a glorious consummation! The might of God's strength which operated in Christ, raising Him from the dead, was sufficient to exalt Him to the highest pinnacle of the universe, thus ensuring that all His enemies would be reconciled to Him, that every opposing power would be made subordinate to Him, that all sin and death in every realm and in every man and in every creature throughout all the unbounded heavens would be so swallowed up of HIS LIFE until God would be ALL IN ALL, bless His glorious name! The gospel of the grace of God! Truly it is not just for this age, but extends to all ages and realms. May it flood our hearts that they may, indeed, be illuminated with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This kind of total subjugation to God is that which is being wrought in the "firstfruit company" in this hour. Have you totally surrendered yourself to God? This is what God demands. In numerous places, in various ways, in different words, God says the same thing over and over again. And yet, sometimes it seems that we fail to get the message: Yield yourselves to God! Submit yourselves to Christ! offer your bodies as living sacrifices! Lay down your life! Present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead! Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness but as instruments of righteousness unto God! Put off the old man! Put on the mind of Christ! Come out of the harlot Babylon! Walk in the Spirit! Again and again, God says the same thing. And what He now requires of us, His firstfruits, He ultimately requires of the whole creation!

It seems that, usually, we are ready to do almost anything but surrender ourselves to God. I recall the time when the British general came to surrender to Washington. The general began with a flowery speech in which he praised Washington for his magnificent military tactics and the way he had conducted the campaigns. He was eloquently praising Washington when Washington suddenly interrupted him with these words: "Your sword, sir!" Similarly, we come to offer God the flattery of our lips, the praise of our hymns. And God is saying to us, "Your sword, sir!" Surrender is what God wants! Total surrender of all our will, our ways, and our lives!

The following words by George D. Watson will help us see the unsurpassable beauty and majesty of what it really means to be SUBDUED UNTO GOD. "Before God can launch us out into the breadth and sweetness of His service, and entrust to us great things for Himself, we must be perfectly subdued in every part of our nature to His will and disposition of His mind. We must be subdued in our hearts, in our wills, in our words, in our tempers, in our manners; subdued through and through so thoroughly that we will be flexible to all His purposes and plans. We must be subdued that harshness, severity, criticism, sluggishness, laziness, impetuosity, and all wanting our way, even in religious matters, must be subdued out of us. Conversion will not finish this work.

"We must be subdued, not merely in our own opinion, not merely think ourselves subdued, not only subdued in the esteem of our friends and fellow workers, but subdued so perfectly that the all-seeing eye of God can look us through, and the omniscient one knows that we are subdued. God must conquer the man that He can trust with His great thoughts and plans. The Holy Ghost must saturate us with a divine conquest, before He can use us to conquer other souls. The Lord will begin to subdue us with gentle means; and if we sink lovingly and promptly into His mind, the work will be done; but if we have flint or iron in our nature, and it is necessary, He will use heroic means and put us between the millstones and grind us to powder, until He can mold us without any resistance to His purpose. We must be so subdued that we can hold our tongues, and walk softly with God, keep our eyes upon Jesus, attend to our own work, and do God's will promptly and lovingly, glad to have a place in His Kingdom.

"Oh! it is grand to be absolutely conquered by the Holy Ghost, and swing out a thousand miles from everybody and everything into the ocean of God's presence. When we are subdued in the sight of God, He will work miracles in us, and power in experience, in healing, in finance, in service, in gentleness, and in sweetness of the inner heart life; miracles of grace that will astonish us and surprise our friends, and utterly amaze our enemies, when they come to know the magnitude of what God has wrought. Let us get subdued in every way, in everything!" —end quote.

Oh, the ineffable glory to be revealed when ALL RULE AND ALL AUTHORITY AND ALL POWER AND ALL ENEMIES AND ALL THINGS SHALL BE SUBDUED UNTO CHRIST AND GOD SHALL BE ALL IN ALL! What expectation this evokes in our hearts!

A little seed is the beginning of a great tree. A mustard seed becomes a tree in which the birds of the air can nestle. That great day of which our text speaks, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, and God shall be All in All—that is the great tree of the Kingdom of God reaching its perfect consummation and glory. Ah, beloved, let us take the seed of that glory into our hearts and let us bow in lowly surrender and humble submission, saying with a broken heart and contrite spirit, "Amen, Lord; this be my one thought, this be my life—to yield myself to the unutterable yearnings of the Holy Spirit that I may not rest, but ever keep my vision set on that day—the day of surpassing glory, when in very deed God shall be ALL IN ALL." God help everyone who reads these lines, God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, that we may be in the fullest and total sense the FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS KINGDOM. This is the beginning, and the power, and the glory, of the Kingdom of God! Amen!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 9 THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART NINE

#### JESUS PERSONIFIED THE KINGDOM BEHOLD THE KING

We are all sailing the sea of life. All are mariners, spiritual voyagers. We might profitably use the following illustration. Tom Smith and John Jones both presumably own sailing vessels. They agree to race to a certain point in the Pacific Ocean one hundred miles due west from Los Angeles harbor. The first few hours out all goes well. Fair and constant winds enable them to keep their course at a steady rate of speed. But then foul winds are encountered, and a storm drives them far off their course and separates them from each other. The following morning breaks with each one alone on a vast ocean on which there are no road signs and no mileposts. There is nothing as far as the eye can see but blue water. Somewhere on that ocean is a spot which is exactly one hundred miles due west from Los Angeles harbor. But in which direction is it? Both boats have lost their bearings. They know not how far they have sailed, nor in which direction. In other words, they have no knowledge of where they are. So, until they take their bearings, and learn their exact positions, it is positively impossible for them to know in which direction or how far away their destination is. They might be one hundred miles from it, or it might be only five miles distant. And so, until they learn exactly where they are now, it is impossible for them to know what the next mile will be.

Each and every son of Adam is a navigator on the sea of life. And the voyage upon which we all embarked at birth is one for which none of us was fully prepared or equipped; we were thrust out upon a tempestuous sea, there to maneuver our tiny bark to another shore. Winds, tides, and currents swept us out to sea, and carried us on alone. Humanity, at present, is divided into a thousand fragments both individually and collectively. We are fragmented, separated—LOST! But I have good news for you, my friend—it is possible to discover exactly where we are now—and how to get back on course to that bright and beckoning harbor ahead—for our heavenly Father has sent One to search for us and SHOW THE WAY!

#### JESUS PERSONIFIED THE KINGDOM

We have centered the Kingdom around the King. And that is truth that is off-center unless we understand what it is that makes Him King. Jesus didn't preach Himself as King—He ran from it! He preached the Kingdom, in His magnificent parables He defines the Kingdom, He tells us what the Kingdom is like; and in the Sermon on the Mount He enunciates the great principles or laws of the Kingdom. In this world there are various kingdoms—the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom. Each of these kingdoms is a sphere of existence, a plane of being. Yet none of these kingdoms has a KING! Each kingdom has certain inherent characteristics and specific manifestations. Each is part of a "kind," a "realm," a "domain,"—that is what makes them a kingdom.

"King" is from the old Anglo-Saxon word "cynn" pronounced "kin." Our modern word "kin" is from the same root denoting kindred, kinfolk, kinship, kinsmen, kind, people, race. King actually meant "one of noble birth," one who was born or came out of, and thus was the "kin" of, nobility. It didn't mean that he was the ruler, but that he was from that "class," the class of those who had power and wealth. The king was simply one who bore the characteristics of that order. If the animal kingdom, or the vegetable kingdom, or the mineral kingdom should have a king it would be one of that order par excellence, beyond comparison, the one whose every characteristic is in full splendor, the perfect specimen, the representative one, the epitome of all the order is. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Can we not see by this that Jesus Christ is THE KING of God's Kingdom just because He is the One who came and exhibited the full splendor, majesty, power and glory of the realm of God intended for man. He came as the man par excellence, the One of greatest excellence, the representative One, beyond comparison, the perfect specimen, the epitome of all

man was ordained of God to be. In His very person He defined for fallacy and sinful men a NEW KINGDOM, a new sphere of existence, a new plane of being, a new dimension of consciousness—the kingdom of men in the image and likeness of God!

More than a century ago Johann Blumhardt wrote, "True man is missing...False men with a false spirit, with false desires and false aims, think that they are real men. The false man is the world's undoing. True man is still missing until Jesus comes and does away with the false man. Yet now we do have the fortune to know that there is One in whom the world is God's again, in whom all that is created is again placed into the light of the first creation. This One is Jesus. Jesus, the Son of man, is more real than any other man, more childlike than all other children. He lives among men, and He is the Kingdom of God. He does not make it, or bring it; He is the Kingdom! Why? Because He is God and man. When God created the world He founded His Kingdom on earth. The earth was His Kingdom. And who was to reign, to rule, and to care for it as His representative? Man. God's Kingdom was in paradise through man. God's Kingdom is on earth through one upright man, no matter what men are like otherwise. One True Man—and God's Kingdom is here!"

There is one image that is perfect: the blessed Son of God, the visible manifestation of the Father, the only one who has ever walked upon this planet who sums up the totality of DIVINE HUMANITY. He is the only whole, united, balanced, UNFRAGMENTED MAN! In Jesus Christ a Man stepped forth who came from God without any lack, so that in Him was expressed the fullness of the image of God in man. Jesus is man as he was created in Genesis 1:26. He is man in the image and likeness of God. That is the true man. Man today is lost. He knows not from whence he came, he knows not what manner of man he is, he knows not where he is, nor where he is going. He is lost in his separation from God and from the godhood that is his in the likeness and image of God. Jesus Christ is the One who shows us just where we are—and opens up the way for our return into the Kingdom of God. In order to know the power of the Kingdom of [Heaven, the anchor of hope must be cast beyond the veil of this carnal, dying realm into the Shekinah into which Jesus has passed before us, as by faith we are led to prove for ourselves and demonstrate for those about the authority of the SPIRIT OF LIFE WITHIN over the law of sin and death in the flesh.

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus taught and demonstrated so wonderfully through His sonship ministry. He spoke the words of compassion and power into the souls of all marred creatures and called them beloved children of God. He didn't call them sinners, or condemn them. He saw them as they were meant to be, as they are in the eyes of the heavenly Father. That was the value of their lives. He healed their diseases, forgave their sins, raised their dead and lifted them up from the mire and defilement and set them on the pathway to holiness and restoration to their lost estate that they might live again as sons and daughters of the Most High.

The great Italian sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, told of receiving a block of marble with one flaw. Because of this flaw, no artist would submit a design—except one. In the public square of Florence a fence was built around that piece of marble, and a little shack was erected for the artist. For two years the sculptor labored. Then on a certain day a vast multitude of the citizens of Florence assembled in the public square; the fence was torn down, and the shack was taken away. At this unveiling all of Florence beheld the result and marveled. Since then Italy and all the world have marveled at Michelangelo's "David". I have seen it with my own eyes in the museum in Florence, and there are no words to describe its magnificence. In that block of marble was a statue, others did not see it, but Michelangelo did. And, precious friend of mine, in that lump of clay which is you, the almighty Father sees an image too—the image of Jesus Christ! And God is working unceasingly and tirelessly to form the image of His Son in you. No truth has come with more soul-gripping force and power to the elect of the Lord than the beautiful hope of sonship to God. Well indeed may we yield ourselves into the hands of heaven's skilled sculptor that HE may form His Son in us. All it takes is to chip away that portion that conceals the image. The image is there if only it can be uncovered, brought forth out of our innermost being. The outer veil of the carnal mind and the obscurity of the flesh are all that the sculptor must chip away in order to reveal the image of God within. It is for sonship that the whole creation groans in a sort of universal travail while it eagerly waits to see the glorious sight of God's sons coming into their own (Rom. 8:22-23). It is the Son in the sons—the revelation of Jesus Christ! There is coming a day when all the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God. With a heart of understanding and a spirit bright with the hope of God's eternal purpose the apostle penned these meaningful words: "...it pleased God, who separated me from

my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to REVEAL (apokalupto: to uncover, unveil) HIS SON IN ME" (Gal. 1:15-16).

George Hawtin once wrote: "Did you ever stand in awe and marvel at the work of the great artists on earth? Perhaps expressions failed and words became inadequate as you gazed with wonder at the faces of the presidents carved in the heights of Mt. Rushmore. Wonderful as these things are, it must be that, ere the sculptor placed his chisel upon the stone to chip it away, he beheld in the uncut rock the very image of that which he by toil and skill would bring into being. Thus it was that God, the mighty architect of the universe, beholding in His own Spirit the glorious image of things to come, set the forces of His own will in motion to bring forth with unerring exactness the image of His pleasure in the very likeness of Himself. God with omniscient wisdom planned with unerring and immutable accuracy every blow of the hammer that would in the end bring forth from the uncut rock a race of sons in the image of Himself."

What was fully manifested and seen in Jesus is potential in every man. Something of that same divine spirit that was expressed in Him in all fullness is also in us. Something of the same divine likeness in which we were created is hidden in all men. Concealed and corroded by sin the resemblance is not evident save to the penetrating search of love, but there is something of God-life in every man. Our spirit must indeed be quickened by His Spirit before it can be made evident and recognized. To be "dead" does not mean to be non-existent, but to be unresponsive to the realm of spiritual life. The body in the casket is not non-existent, otherwise there would be no point in attending the viewing. But it is certainly unresponsive to the world about it! This is what Paul meant when he wrote: "And you hat<sup>1</sup> He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past ye walked (dead men walked!) according to the course of this world...among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus...for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:1-6,1).

It has been said that in Jesus Christ the divine and the human meet, but this is also true of everyone of us. He is the true humanity who is the Son of God. It is not that He is super-human, but that we are subhuman. But inasmuch as we are human at all we are akin to Him. The first man and the second man are both man. The first Adam and the last Adam are both Adam. Those in the first man are in part what the second man is in perfection. The whole purpose of our lives is to become human in the sense in which He was human; to be changed into the same likeness from one glorious conversion to another, even by the Lord who is the Spirit—PERFECT MANHOOD. Christ is to grow up in us, and the whole process of life is one in which "He must increase, but I must decrease." Paul said it so well, "It pleased God to reveal HIS SON in me," which precisely describes the life of sonship, for the Son of God is the PERFECT MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE. It is as the Spirit of Christ becomes manifest within us that we approach nearer and nearer to the true humanity as it was seen in Jesus, "till we all come to a perfect manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). His possession of our lives will grow, until we are fully "strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inward humanity," being "filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:16,19).

Now, the best way to promote an idea is to wrap it up in a personality. The Maytag repairman is an example. Always sitting with nothing to do, he personifies the idea that Maytag washers never break down. That is what God did in Jesus Christ. He wrapped up all His nature, character, glory, grace, wisdom, knowledge, love, and power in a man and stood Him up in the earth. This man was God's Idea—the Word! And Jesus Christ is the ideal of all mankind, the second man, the last Adam, the example and pattern and proto-type of God's will and purpose for all men. What Jesus is, is what God meant when He said in that long ago beginning, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). That is GOD'S IDEA! That is GOD'S WORD! That is the glory and majesty of man AS HE WAS INTENDED To BE!

The people of God today have no greater need than the need to know the power and glory of CHRIST WITHIN. CHRIST is the image of God, the scripture says. I know these words may seem to be incredible, but they are truth—the very first mention of the "image of God" is applied, not to Jesus Christ, but to our forefather

ADAM (Gen. 1:26). As we consider the wonderful advent of man created "in the image OF GOD" we can only conclude that this is a spiritual man brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God Almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power and attributes. The image of God is the nature of God reproduced in man. Thus, man is the true image of God. And Jesus Christ is the image of God because He is the true man, man as he was meant to be. Jesus revealed to "lost" men their true origin, heritage and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption (buying back to the original) shall be—THE IMAGE OF GOD. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, man as he was and man as he shall be. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning and as he ever shall be world without end—THE IMAGE OF GOD. Of Him it is written, "He is the expression of the glory of God—the Light-being, the out-ricing of the divine—and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature" (Heb. 1:3, Amplified). Christ, and humanity in Christ, is like a ray of light that comes from the sun—man, the extension of God, emanates God.

When the Lord lowered man into this gross material realm man possessed, by the spirit, the divine potential to overcome the flesh, sanctify it, transform it, preserve it, infusing it with the qualities of life— holiness and incorruption. Jesus, the last Adam, the Ideal Man, came and demonstrated for us this very principle. This potential in man to rule the natural by the spirit is shed forth in Jesus' mighty works—by His healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, forgiving sins, doing miracles, and raising the dead—He transcended by His life, words, and actions all the so-called laws of the material, mortal realm. The great significance of Jesus' mighty works will never ring clear in our spirits until we understand that He did not perform as a unique, different, higher kind of man—all His wonderful works were the example and teaching of what is NORMAL FOR MAN IN HIS TRUE STATE AS THE IMAGE OF GOD. As the last Adam Jesus demonstrated all that the first Adam lost—mankind's heritage as the sons and daughters of the Most High. Little wonder, then, that He confidently and joyfully proclaimed to His disciples, "The works that I do shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do" (Jn. 14:12).

By His resurrection Jesus proved the spirit within to be OMNIPOTENT, all-conquering, all sufficient. He met and mastered death itself by the law of the spirit of life. He took no drugs to fight infection or inflammation. He did not depend upon health food or pure air or vitamins or herbs to renew depleted energies. He did not require the skill of a surgeon to heal the torn palms and bind up the wounded side and nail pierced feet, that He might use those hands to remove the napkin and the grave clothes, so that He might walk as before. Jesus vanquished every material obstacle, overcame every law of matter, and stepped forth from His gloomy grave, crowned with the glory of a sublime success, and everlasting victory—the role-model for each and every man and woman of Adam's race! Jesus' victory over sin, sickness, pain, limitation, death and the grave was for the enlightenment of all men and the salvation of the whole world. Paul writes, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved BY HIS LIFE (within)" (Rom. 5:10). Glory be to God and peace to the fainting hearts! Christ hath rolled away the stone from the door of human hope and faith, through the revelation and demonstration of Life in God, the life resident in the SPIRITUAL MAN. Halleluyah!

We are never told how long Adam lived in that wonderful Garden where the glory of God was revealed through him in dominion and blessing to creation, but that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image of God was but a dim figure of the day when a whole company of sons in God's image would reign in splendor over all things in all realms throughout all worlds and all things in heaven and in earth would be gathered together into union with God in His life and purpose. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the first and Head of this glorious company, and as typified and shadowed by the first man Adam He is the connecting link between God and creation—the revelation of the invisible Father to the visible worlds. A God who is unseen and unknown, or who is only the product of inferences from creation, or providence, or the mysteries of history, or the wonders of my own inner life, the creature of logic or reflection, is very powerless to sway and influence men or to affect creation. The limitations of our physical faculties and the boundlessness of our hearts both cry out for a God that is nearer to us than that, whom we can see and love and know. The whole world wants the making visible of Divinity as its deepest desire.

Christ meets this need. How can you make wisdom visible? How can a creature see love or purity? How do I see your spirit? By the expression and deeds of your body! And the only way by which God can come near

enough to the natural creation to be a constant power of eternal life and light and love is by creation seeing Him at work in a man who is His image and revelation. Christ's whole life is the making visible of the invisible God. He is the manifestation to the world of the unseen Father. Jesus Christ in all His words and in all His works is the perfect instrument of the heavenly Father, so that His words are God's words, and His works are God's works; so that, when He speaks, His gentle wisdom, His loving sympathy, His melting tenderness, His authoritative commands, His prophetic threatenings, are the speech of God, and that when He acts, whether it be by miracle, by wonder, by transforming grace, by creative energy, what we see is God working before our eyes as we never see Him in any other creature or thing anywhere in the whole vast universe.

E. Stanley Jones said of this Man who is the revelation of God to creation, "He did not argue that life was a growth and character an attainment—He 'grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.' He did not speculate on why temptation should be in this world—He met it, and after forty days' struggle with it in the wilderness He conquered, and 'returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.' He did not discourse of the dignity of labor—He worked at a carpenter's bench and His hands were hard with the toil of making yokes and plows, and this forever makes the toil of the hands honorable. As He came among men He did not try to prove the existence of God—He brought Him. He lived in God, and men looking upon His face could not find it within themselves to doubt God. He did not argue about whether or not there was a resurrection, for the Pharisees believed there was and the Sadducees believed there wasn't—He raised the dead.

"He did not teach in a didactic way about the worth of children—He put His hands upon them and blessed them, and setting one in their midst said, 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' He did not argue that God answers prayer— He prayed, sometimes all night, and in the morning 'the power of the Lord was present to heal.' He did not teach in the schoolroom manner the necessity of humility—He girded Himself with a towel and knelt down and washed His disciples' feet. He did not discuss the question of the worth of personality—He loved and served all men from the least to the greatest. He did not discourse on the 'equality' of men—He went to the poor and the outcast and ate with them. He did not try to prove how pain and sorrow in the universe could be compatible with the love of God—He took on Himself at the cross everything that spoke against the love of God, and through that pain and tragedy and sin showed the very love of God. He did not discourse on how the weakest human material can be changed and empowered to change the world—He called to Him a set of weak men, ignorant and temperamental Galilean fishermen, transformed them and sent them out to begin the mightiest movement for uplift and redemption the world has ever seen.

"He wrote no books—only once are we told that He wrote and that was in the sand—but He wrote upon the hearts and consciences of people about Him and it has become the world's most precious writing. He did not paint a Utopia, far off and unrealizable—He announced that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, and is 'at hand' and can be realized here and now. He did not discourse on the beauty of love—He loved. We do not find Him arguing that the spiritual life should conquer matter—He walked on water and fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. He did not argue the possibility of sinlessness— He presented Himself and said, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' He did not merely ask men to turn the other cheek when smitten on the one, to go the second mile when compelled to go one, to give the cloak also when sued at the law and the coat was taken away, to love our enemies and to bless them—He Himself did these very things, and in the agony of the cruel torture of the cross He prayed for His enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

"He did not merely tell us that death may be conquered—He rose from the dead, and lo, the tomb now glows with light. Many teachers of the world have tried to explain everything—they have changed little or nothing. Jesus explained little and changed everything. Many teachers have tried to diagnose the disease of humanity—Jesus cures it. Many philosophers speculate on how evil entered the world—Jesus presents Himself as the way by which it shall leave" —end quote.

The grand fact is that this Jesus of Nazareth, by the sheer force of His personality, has so impressed Himself upon mankind, and upon human history, and upon principalities and powers in the heavens, and upon spirits in the darkest underworld, and continues to impress Himself, that the only adequate description we can give of Him is EMMANUEL—God with us; that in the Man Jesus dwelt and dwells the fullness of the Godhead, under bodily conditions. In Him all we can ever know of the invisible Creator becomes concrete, and therefore

becomes powerful to save. And if all this has been effected by one son of God revealing the Father to creation, what, I ask, shall be the result when A VAST COMPANY OF SONS SHALL BE BROUGHT TO RULE AND REIGN in His glorious image and likeness over all the earth and throughout the vastnesses of infinity forevermore. Ah! What an Eden of God's glory it shall be when judgment is given TO THE SAINTS of the Most High, when all the OVERCOMERS out of all the ages SIT WITH THE CHRIST OF GOD IN HIS THRONE even as He overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne; when SAVIOURS shall come up on MOUNT ZION to judge the house of Esau (flesh) and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 21). Then shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then shall all things in heaven and in earth be gathered together into one in Christ. Then shall God be All-in-all.

The firstborn Son said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on the earth: and now, O Father, glorify Thou me with shine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (Jn. 17.1-5). To "glorify" God means that man's total expression of life would emit the very presence and effulgence of God. An illustration of what it means to glorify God can be seen in the simple incandescent light bulb. Screw it into the socket and the invisible electrons flowing through it are transformed into the light and heat energy that causes the halo of light. The bulb is glorifying the invisible electricity making it visible and beneficent to mankind. The sons of God are thus ordained to glorify the Father, emitting His presence, revealing His character, manifesting in a visible way His invisible reality.

I have shared the following story once before, not so very long ago, but am constrained to share it again. John Wesley, it is recorded, was one day preaching in a rough neighborhood of London, where raucous and vulgar sensualities were in command, when two ruffians appeared at the edge of the crowd. "Who is this preacher?" they asked, roughly. "What right has he to come here spoiling our fun? We'll show him'?" A moment or two later, each with a stone in hand, they began elbowing their belligerent way through the throng. But just when they were ready to "let fly" at Wesley's face, he began talking about the power of Christ to change the lives of sinful men. In that instant something dramatic happened. Even as he was speaking a serene beauty, a celestial glow spread over his face. The two men, obviously quite overcome by this unusual radiance of glory, stood there momentarily, their arms poised in mid-air. Then one turned to the other, and said, "He ain't a man, Bill; he ain't a man." Their arms came down. The stones dropped from their hands. As Wesley continued to preach, the altered expressions on their countenances spoke of the softness that had stolen into their hearts. The sermon over, Mr. Wesley began making his way through the crowd. The path that the people respectfully opened for him brought him within arms length of where these tough boys were standing. One of them, almost tenderly, reached out and touched the evangelist's coat. At that, Mr. Wesley paused, placed his hands on the heads of the lads, and said, "God bless you, my boys!" As he passed on, one of the ruffians turned to the other, and said, "He is a man, Bill; he is a man. He's a man like God!" This is the heritage of the people of the Lord.

## **BEHOLD THE KING!**

Kings are not in great demand these days. When we think of kings, we imagine powerful rulers who meddle in people's lives. They require huge sums of money to keep their expensive homes and palaces running. And they have the nasty habit of requiring us to do things we don't really want to do. Most of the nations of the world have discarded the rule of kings. They prefer either democracy or communism, with governmental systems involving congresses, parliaments, presidents and prime ministers. The order of kingship has almost disappeared, but the people are no better off and no more satisfied with their present governments than they were with their kings. Most are not really free nor truly happy. Now, in the United States we talk of creeping socialism. The nasty kings of the past have turned into nasty "big government." The world stays in a state of constant turmoil and confusion, with revolutions, riots, wars, carnage, hostage situations, political prisoners, violation of human rights, persecution, economic failures, gangs, drugs, moral breakdown, hijackings, crime, racism, poverty, fear and hatred everywhere.

There is no doubt about it—the kings of this world have failed, and it is abundantly evident that the governments, which have taken their places, are quite unsatisfactory. And it is just this very condition that cries out for a new world order. It is surprising to many to hear the Bible say that true joy is found, not in democracy and freedom, but with a king in charge! Even in the world many hold the opinion that the only thing that can

save the world from utter chaos and destruction is some great SUPERMAN, one who would be wise enough, good enough, and strong enough to create an entirely new order for the nations of mankind. and have the power to put his plans into effect and enforce his edicts. Convince the world that such a ruler is at hand and he would probably be universally acclaimed!

I have news for you—there will indeed arise such a ruler. He has, in fact, already come into the world, but only a few have been aware of His presence. Only a small number of people, out of earth's teeming billions, now truly know Him or have experienced the genius of His rule. Two millenniums ago a man walked the dusty pathways of the land of Israel whom His disciples and followers believed was destined to be the world ruler that all the prophets of ancient times had foretold. This man was raised as a boy in the town of Nazareth in Galilee of the Gentiles. Today, Nazareth is a noisy city, with a population of about 200,000. But in Jesus' day, Nazareth was a small town on a ridge. That does not mean that it was an isolated village, because it was located on one of the primary trade routes connecting the empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Rome, Assyria, and Babylonia. Day and night foreigners marched the highway and brought their life-styles into the streets of Nazareth. As a boy and as a young man Jesus gazed upon the occupying Roman soldiers, sailors, merchant men, and the trade caravans that brought goods from far-off lands. He saw harlots, zealots, rebels, philosophers, thieves, and priests and priestesses of the pagan religions. The people who passed by His tiny town of Nazareth brought news of events from great cities around the vast Roman Empire. The town provided a young man with a window to the world.

Jesus did not grow up behind a window of obscurity, but saw face to face in all its stark reality all the world had to offer—its best and its worst. He saw the flowers that bloomed on the hillside in the spring, and the majesty and solitude of the green Galilean mountains. But He also saw the sensual lust and crudeness of the surrounding cultures. He felt the Roman's hate of His people. He saw violence, sin, death and destruction. He saw drunkenness, revelry, debauchery, and heard every filthy gutter word in the languages of His day. Childhood impressions leave an indelible impact on any evolving mind, and it was no exception with Jesus. With all the negative faces and fears to which He was exposed, He could have grown up to become a negative reactionary, a wild, ruthless, militant revolutionary. But with the aid of His heavenly Father the view He had of life as it really is was a part of the preparation necessary for His sonship ministry and the kingship to follow.

Jesus was the only man alive who not only saw life as it really is—He saw God as He really is! And there you have the perfect catalyst for the Kingdom of God! out of His relationship with His Father grew a mighty faith that the power of God in man could change the course of history and bring redemption and restoration to the fallen race. Jesus saw fabulous possibilities in the worst person. He saw fantastic potential in the most unlikely personality. He saw the triumph of the spirit. He saw victory over sin, sorrow, limitation, fear, bondage and death. As the Kingdom was raised up in His own life He saw that the roadways carrying merchant men out of Nazareth, and the highways that brought conquering armies in, could be used to carry the gospel of peace, joy, righteousness, love, power and hope to the whole world.

When Jesus stepped forth in Galilee proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom of God He had no formal education, He had no list of academic credentials. He could claim no politicians as His friends. Never had He courted or dined with power people in industry, commerce, politics, the military or religion. He couldn't have been a name-dropper if His life depended upon it. He had no organization and no supporters. He was a total unknown. He had no money and no natural means. He had no name recognition anywhere. Even after thousands flocked to Him and multitudes sat at His feet, He founded no movement, He had no army, He never enforced His will on the people. He didn't exalt himself or live apart in isolation, or in splendor and luxury. He was known only for His kindness, His gentleness, His approachability, His unconditional love, His unmitigated mercy, His unfailing goodness, His surpassing wisdom, His spiritual power and His wonderful compassion. He loved everybody and was merciful and sympathetic even to the most wretched sinner. He healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, caused the blind to see out of obscurity and the lame to leap as an hart, raised the dead to life again, and cast out the devils with His word.

Have you ever wondered why in Jesus' day there seemed to be so many people who were crippled or blind or deaf or terminally ill? It is because Galilee is part of a massive volcanic fault line, stretching from Syria through the Jordan River valley, across the Red Sea, all the way down to Lake Victoria in Africa. Beneath this fault,

fissures of molten lava heat the springs around the Sea of Galilee. People traveled great distances because they believed they could be healed by the water and minerals in the hot springs. Astute investors built cities near these pools and erected beautiful marble bathhouses with inlaid mosaic. Businessmen and physicians charged high fees for the ill to sit in these baths. I do not doubt for one moment that that is one of the reasons God selected Galilee as the location for Jesus' sonship ministry. The hurting, the sick and the dying were there, Christ was always finding a hurt and healing it, showing how they could overcome all things and turn their scars into stars. One of the most revealing observations made concerning Him states, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).

But the world was too evil to appreciate so noble a character. He was hated and despised by those in authority, and charges were brought against Him. One of the charges was of sedition—that He claimed to be a king. He was brought before the Roman governor, Pilate, for trial, and was questioned. "Art thou a king?" He was asked, to which He replied, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world" (Jn. 18:37). This confession became His death warrant—for the angry rulers of Judea who wanted Him put to death chanted, "We have no king but Caesar!" In the night madness Pilate finally realized he could do no more to save this man's life, so he permitted a crown of thorns to be pressed upon His brow, and showing Him to the mob, he cried, "Behold your king!" But they shouted back, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

It is interesting to observe Pontius Pilate's perception of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus informed Pilate that He is indeed a king. Pilate was an officer of the Roman Empire. He appeared to know little of the Hebrew prophets. He was seeing only the carpenter's son who stood before him. Pilate's conception of a king was defined by Caesar and Herod. A king is a person of supreme authority over a nation. A king lives in a palace and is attended by a variety of lesser authorities and powers. The king should be a person of integrity, knowledge, wisdom and personal magnetism. Pilate "sized up" this man before him and he discerned the character and nobility of a king. Pilate was not talking "religious" talk. He weighed his words in the light of his professional perception of a king when he wrote the title and nailed it to the cross: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. They crucified Jesus, but He told His disciples that He would rise again. And He did. He arose the conquering Christ and from that day to this He has been patiently, consistently, and methodically forming and establishing His Kingdom in the earth, in the hearts and lives of His elect. And it shall yet triumph over all!

There is yet to be a revelation of His person and power in an unprecedented measure before the face of all nations. The fullness of God's glory was once manifested in the firstborn Son of God, and it shall ultimately be manifested in all His "many brethren." This night of sin and death and darkness is stormy, but the light of His presence and the power of His Kingdom will soon become manifest, and the sorrows of earth will give way to the brightness of the new day of deliverance and release for all mankind. All peoples shall yet bow before Him in this Day, and all nations shall obey Him and serve Him. Thus it is written and thus shall it be. This one is GOD'S KING. You see, my beloved, God's government is a KINGDOM—not a democracy, not a military government, nor any other form of government. God has not raised up Jesus to be president or prime minister or military dictator. God is not forming His sons into a company of congressmen, senators, parliamentarians, cabinet members, or secretaries of departments of government. No! Jesus has been anointed KING and He "has made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS, and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:13-14,27). "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:30-33).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7).

Ah, yes, Jesus has real power—"power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him" (Jn. 17:2). Other men spoke and their words died with their echo: Jesus spoke and His words shook the world. Other men died martyr deaths and were not long remembered; He died and His cross now stands against every skyline. He is the True King, the Real Man. He has power—like dawn's banners, like the unseen constraint of tides, like a fragrance, like great music, like buried seed, like that spirit in history which litters time with the debris of proud empires and wills that "the meek shall inherit the earth."

The gospel that we have in the Bible is the gospel of the Kingdom of God. The gospel that presents Jesus as King, as Lord, as First One, as the Maximum Authority. Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." What does this mean? I am the king of my life; I am seated on the throne; I make the decisions; I glory in the fact that I do it "my way." But when the Lord Jesus comes I must abdicate my throne and let Him sit on the throne. Now everything must be done HIS WAY. The testimony of those who are really in the Kingdom of God is all the same: "Till I met the Lord Jesus, I was the commander of my life. Since I met Him, He commands."

Most people are Christians because they want to escape hell and go to heaven. If all the preachers and teachers one day called a press conference and told their people, "We have discovered that there is no heaven or hell," how many would stay in the church after that? Most of the people would ask, "Why are we coming then?" They were coming for heaven, not because JESUS IS LORD AND EVERYBODY MUST SUBMIT TO HIM. You see, they have missed the idea of the Kingdom altogether. In the hour in which we live the vast majority of Christians are more miserable than most other people in the world. They are only enduring this life in order to eventually get to heaven where they imagine they will spend the next billion trillion years or so singing, playing harps, shouting, and dancing over the hill tops of glory. I am quite sure that if such people would admit the truth, they would admit that even a thousand years of singing, shouting, playing harp music and dancing about in white robes would become quite monotonous and very boring, to say the least. I find that most of these people can't endure five hours in a church meeting even if the glory is falling all around! Most of them start watching their watches about noon on Sunday morning! The problem is that their theology leaves them with nothing constructive to do and all eternity to do it in! They know nothing about the KINGDOM OF GOD. A kingdom denotes rulership and advancement of all kinds. It means WORK and RESPONSIBILITY and a place of ministry and power to bless. God has a purpose and a great plan for this earth and for the whole vast universe. His Kingdom purposes have nothing to do with dancing on the streets of gold—they have everything to do with redemption, restoration, and creation involving the earth and all the boundless endnesses of infinity! This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

Then there are those who are Christians for a fire escape out of hell, not because Jesus is King and they truly hunger and thirst after the righteousness, peace and joy of His Kingdom. I do not believe that it is an understatement when I say there are untold millions of Christian believers who have no true love for God, no intimate relationship with Jesus, no vital union with the Lord, but are going through the motions of serving Him out of fear of going to hell, as a slave in fear of a tyrant! If such persons had the fear of hell removed from them it is obvious that they would promptly tell God to go to hell and then proceed to drown themselves in devilish pleasures and fleshly pursuits. If the wages of sin were removed, they would immediately go out and live it up in the world, serving both the flesh and the devil. That is where their hearts are now, but they cannot risk hell, so they "serve" the Lord. Such have no love for God at all, their eyes have never beheld the King in His beauty, they have never seen the Lord high and lifted up with His train filling the temple, their hearts have never been touched by the altogether loveliness of the all-glorious Lord and King of the universe, their heart-strings have never been touched by the beautiful melody of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Jesus is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. He is not the soon coming King as the citizens of Babylon are trained to say, denying by the very words that Christ has any Kingdom on earth at this present time. Such ignorant statements always leave me cold. What could be further from the truth, which teaches us that Christ

now sits with His Father in His throne and that all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. We are already citizens of that Kingdom and have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear son. Already it has taken place, already Christ has a Kingdom and is its King. From the barrenness of Patmos the beloved apostle John wrote that he was our brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:9).

Christ is the great King right now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible. He shall yet arise in power and glory in His completed and perfected body—the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD— revealing Himself as the great conquering King, bringing deliverance to every man and all creation, reconciling all things unto Himself, on earth and throughout all the unbounded heavens. Every son is finding his place in this Day and the hour of manifestation is nigh at hand.

Not long ago we received these words from the pen of Paul Mueller. "The kingdom of God is the only hope for the world! May God give us all a vision of Christ the King and Lord of all. He is high and lifted up, far above all other powers. His train, or the skirts of His priestly garment, fills this temple, which we are. His train or priestly robe covers, protects, enables and empowers us with His royal, priestly, Melchizedek authority. Jesus Christ is the Head, and we are the body. His robe of royal, priestly authority and power covers the entire body, which we are, making us one in Him (Ps. 133). He rules from His throne in the realm of Spirit. God grant that we shall see Christ in His ascended glory, seated on His throne and ruling in all the earth, and we with Him. When we see Him, we shall indeed cease from man. Then we will stop regarding man and esteeming him as the hope of the world. The truth is, we also are the hope of the world, for we are hidden in Christ, who is the King and Lord of all. We are becoming one with Him and are being made a kingdom of kings and priests unto God and His Father (Rev. 1:6). A vision of this Christ and His glorious, all encompassing kingdom will deliver us from looking to man. Then we will put all our hope and trust in Him who reigns in life forevermore."

George Wylie wrote a precious word about the reverence of the sons for the Son, the esteem of the kings for the King, and the devotion of the lords to the Lord. "It is a marvelous thing to belong to the family of God. I'm so glad I belong to the God family, that God is my Father, and that we, the sons of God, have such a wonderful elder brother. But just because He is one of the family, and we are one in Him, doesn't mean we should treat Him as just another member. Let us never forget that He is Lord, and that our Father is God. 'But to us there is but one God and He is our Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him' (I Cor. 8:6).

"When the last king of England died, the family was gathered around his bedside waiting. As soon as the king had breathed his last breath, and it was evident he was gone, the first thing the Queen did was to turn to her eldest son, bow before him, and say, 'Your Majesty.' He was her son, but he was now more than that; he was her king. And as her king she gave him the reverence and respect due to his position. She didn't say, 'My son Edward, you are now king.' No, she addressed him with respect in reverence to his position, bowed in submission to him, and said, 'Your Majesty.' What she was really meaning was, 'My King.'

"The rest of the family did the same; they bowed to their brother, as Joseph's brothers bowed to him in Egypt, and also said, 'Your majesty.' I suppose up until this time they treated him as a brother; they likely played with him, argued with him, and perhaps sometimes fought with him. No longer! From now on he would not be treated as just a brother, but as a king—their king! We have a wonderful Father and He is God and Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things; and we have a wonderful brother, and He is the Head of all principalities and powers, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has all power in heaven and in earth. His name is above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. Before His majesty every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. All realms and all worlds and all dominions and all nations and all men shall worship and adore Him and pledge their eternal allegiance to Him. He is Lord of all. Next to our Father He holds the highest position in the universe; so let us reverence them and their names in humility and undying devotion and exaltation" —end quote. Amen and amen!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 10 THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

### PART TEN

#### THE KINGDOM—LITERAL OR SPIRITUAL?

Speculation about, or inquiry into the future are favorite pass-times of both saints and sinners. Among Christians it often takes the form of a fascination with, and search for, the "signs of the times"—signs of the approach of the end of the age or the dawn of the Millennium. These signs are often of a political, social, or judgmental kind—events in the State of Israel, the struggle between the so-called Christian nations and world Communism, New Age religion, the New World Order, conspiracy theories, natural disasters, and the decay of public morals in Western society. Popular books, which claim to recognize and to interpret the signs, to identify the Antichrist, or to unveil the date of Christ's second coming, sell in great numbers today. Other people become excited with each passing comet, or every natural disaster, seeing in each some mystical omen portending the imminence of the "rapture", the beginning of the Great Tribulation, the end of the world, or something else.

The church world is literally filled with SIGN-WATCHERS, though I dare say most of them have missed the meaning of the signs altogether, for they read with the carnal mind, having the understanding darkened. We can be so taken up with the natural signs of wars and rumors of wars, violence, political intrigues, of earthquakes and disasters, until we totally miss the real thing that is happening in the realm of SPIRIT, or hearing His voice within, that He might bring us into complete union with Himself, that we might BECOME His salvation unto the ends of the earth. We watch the evening news, and suppose that we are watching for His coming. We hear of the storms, the floods, drought, crime, wars, AIDS, the rise and fall of governments, and our perspective becomes distorted, and fear and doubt seize hold of our souls, until we become more conscious of the darkness of "this world," than we are of the light and glory and triumph of the INDWELLING CHRIST. Any time we are troubled by, or anxious about, the things coming to pass upon the earth, it is obvious that we are WATCHING THE REALM OF DARKNESS rather than LOOKING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD; we are of those who "dwell upon the earth" instead of those "raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places." The Kingdom of God can only be discerned by the spirit—it does not come by such outward observations!

"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:20-21). These words are illuminating indeed. First, our Lord was answering what was in the hearts of those Pharisees who put the question to Him. The doctrine of the rabbis was that the Kingdom of God would come with the accompaniment of great signs and outward displays of divine power, whereby the enemies of Israel would be miraculously overwhelmed, and they themselves be swept triumphantly into, and securely established in, the coveted place of world supremacy. I would be remiss should I fail to point out that modern day dispensationalism is practically identical with first century rabbinism! What the Pharisees were expecting two millenniums ago is precisely what most Fundamentalist, Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians are expecting today. Only Jesus has a different idea!

Jesus corrected their error by saying that the Kingdom of God comes not with ocular evidence, which is the literal meaning of the word rendered "observation". It does not come with outward show that can be seen with the eye. In other words, it was not the sort of Kingdom they were expecting. There would be nothing of such a startling or sensational character in outward cataclysmic and apocalyptic events that would cause the spectator to say, "Look here! Look yonder! The Kingdom of God is coming! There is the Kingdom!" Then He utters an impressive word—"for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

Have you ever noticed how things you've eagerly anticipated, yearned for, even determinedly pursued, often seem to fall short of your expectations? And how rich and meaningful those unexpected moments of happiness can be—an especially beautiful sunset that occurs during your drive home from work or the smile of a child you pass on the street? The difference isn't in the experiences so much as it is within us. That is what happens when we discover the truth of the words Jesus spoke—that the Kingdom of God is not what we have expected and yearned for, it isn't up in the sky or "out there" to be found in some situation, circumstance, person, location, time, event or possession. The Kingdom isn't the "Millennium", or some particular "church" or "movement", or a date on the calendar, or Jesus reigning over in Jerusalem—it does not come by observation and it can never be said of it that it is either "here" or "there". The righteousness, peace and joy we experience in the Kingdom stem from our relationship with God, whenever or wherever we are. But these realities are apt to be overlooked if one is seeking for the Kingdom in external things, events and time periods. Could there be any more glorious truth than this—the Kingdom of God is within you!

Let us look again at the words of Jesus in **Luke 17:20-21**. "And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, **"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."** The word "demand" in English is a strong word. It's not a request, it's not a petition, it's not an inquiry. It means to ask for urgently and with authority — requiring a response. The Pharisees were demanding of Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come. Man is always concerned about the time of things. In America, especially, we are extremely time conscious. We want to know when—right to the minute. The Pharisees were of this same spirit. They weren't asking what the Kingdom is, or how it comes, or what they could do to prepare for it. They wanted to know when it would come.

They were not unlike some in our generation who have searched out "dates" and made predictions about the time of the Lord's coming, the end of the age, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the manifestation of the sons of God. The date on the calendar when these events are supposed to happen is of supreme importance to carnal minds. It is interesting to note that Jesus did not answer the Pharisee's question. And, may I add, neither does He dignify men's carnal date-setting by doing anything on that particular day or hour. His silence is deafening! Jesus told the Pharisees how the Kingdom does not come. He didn't tell them when. He said they should not be asking about its sequence in time or its visible manifestation. They should not be looking for it externally. He didn't say a word about when. He told them where it already was—"behold, the kingdom of God is within you." He told them it doesn't come by observation, with outward show. You can't see it coming. But He didn't tell them when. Why didn't He tell them when? Because the Kingdom is not something external -- it exists in the realm of the spirit. The Kingdom is always "at hand," available, accessible, and its coming is relative to your consciousness of it and relation to it. In spirit there is no time. In spirit there is no physical location. There is no geographical point of reference in spirit.

The Day of the Lord is not a date on the calendar. It doesn't begin one day and end another. It's not a twenty-four hour day, neither is it a thousand-year day. The Day of the Lord IS. "God IS LIGHT, and in Him there is no darkness." That is the Day of the Lord. It is the illumination of the light of God. The Day of the Lord is a condition that takes place within a people. It is the light, the understanding that begins to dawn in our consciousness that elevates our awareness of God and the dimension of spirit. It is the understanding of the Almighty. It is the revelation of God's glory, majesty, will and purpose. In Genesis God called the light "day" and Jesus said, **"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12)**. Then He said, **"Ye are the light of the world" (Mat. 5:14)**. And the apostle Paul by revelation added, **"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:4-5)**. What is happening is that understanding is coming to us. Understanding is light. Paul prayed for the Ephesian saints that **"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1: 18)**. We're getting understanding. We're understanding God. We're understanding His Spirit, His ways, His truth, His plan, His purpose, His heart—so the Day of the Lord is dawning in us. The Day Star is arising in our hearts and the shadows and darkness are fleeing away in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Just as day and night co-exist on earth side by side, so the Day of the Lord and the gross darkness that covers the people co-exist side by side. Just as Americans walk in the brightness of the noon-day sun at the same time that Chinamen

slumber in mid-night darkness, so there are both children of the Day and children of the night in the world today. Some men walk in darkness while other men walk in light. Some men abide in darkness while other men abide in light.

The Day of the Lord neither begins nor ends. It simply IS. God has never known anything but the Day that He is. It begins for us at that blessed moment when, quickened by the Spirit of God, we consciously step into it, just as the natural day begins for us when we arise and greet the dawn. The fact is, it has been day somewhere on earth all the while the veil of darkness hung over you as a shroud. Day has nothing to do with time. It has nothing to do with dates. It has nothing to do with the calendar. It has nothing to do with the ages. It only has to do with your relationship to it. If someone asks when the Day of the Lord begins I cannot answer. The Day of the Lord IS. In like manner, the Kingdom of God IS. "The Kingdom of God IS within you." "The Kingdom of God IS righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The Kingdom of Heaven IS like unto...?" It is not a matter of "when" at all. Jesus always taught about what the Kingdom is, never about when it is. The disciples and the Pharisees were always asking when, and never once did Jesus answer them. Yet, almost all Christians in the church systems today are talking about when the Kingdom of God is going to come, and show very little interest, if any, in what the Kingdom is.

May the blessed Spirit of truth give all who read these lines eyes to see that the Kingdom of God does not come by observation. It is not something you can see with your physical eye. The Pharisees looked on Jesus and said, "Is not this Joseph's son? Was His father not a carpenter?" They didn't see the Kingdom of God. Yet Jesus standing before them was the very personification and embodiment of the Kingdom. But they couldn't see it. They knew Him not. They knew not the day of their visitation. Only when the Father revealed Him did any man know the King of the Kingdom. Jesus said that in order for a man to see the Kingdom of God he must be born from above. Some people think that Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God. My friend, you are deceived. If Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God then any harlot, thief, murderer, liar, drunkard, or any sinner can see the Kingdom. Any member of Adam's race can see it. Any child born of the flesh can see it. Any carnal minded church member can see it. If Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God then it also can be entered by natural birth. All who have been born of the correct genetic and genealogical heritage are automatically citizens of the Kingdom by physical birth. If the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples constitute the Kingdom of God Jesus lied and is a deceiver of the first magnitude.

Furthermore, if Jesus must return to planet earth in a visible, physical form and sit on a great throne in Jerusalem, Israel or in London, England then the Kingdom of God does come by observation and you can say, "Lo here! or, lo there! because the Kingdom of God is in London." The whole church world is looking for Jesus to ride out of the skies on a white steed with a sword coming out of His mouth to smite the nations. His feet will land on the mount of Olives and the mountain will split asunder. He will fight in the valley of Megiddo and defeat all His enemies; then He will set up His Kingdom in Jerusalem and rule over the Jews and the whole earth. But you see, precious friend of mine, there is something dreadfully wrong with this scenario. The Kingdom of God comes not with observation. Hear it! The Kingdom does not come with outward show. It doesn't come by sudden apocalyptic events that shake the earth and startle the nations. I tell you the truth—it doesn't come that way. It never has. It never will. There is no abrupt butting into a wall of time when suddenly everything will be changed by climatic outward events. That is not how the Kingdom comes. I have this on the authority of the King. But that is what the religious crowd thought then, and that is what the religious crowd still thinks today. The Kingdom is not coming, it's at hand—today.

That is precisely what Jesus taught. That's the problem with religion, they think that the Kingdom of God is someplace else or at another time. They cannot believe that the Kingdom is happening right now. But that is the reality of the Kingdom. It is true—of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. It shall yet break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms and shall rule over all and stand forever. But right now the Kingdom of God IS WITHIN YOU. And right now the Kingdom of God IS AT HAND. And right now men can both see the Kingdom and enter the Kingdom by being born again, born from above, as the Greek puts it, birthed out of a higher dimension—the realm of the spirit. You will never know or partake of the glories of the Kingdom until there is a quickening, an enlightenment that takes place within your consciousness on a spiritual level.

Some people think that the Kingdom of God has been held in abeyance, it has been held up in heaven somewhere, until Jesus comes back and establishes it in the earth. Why, my beloved friend, you are just about two thousand years behind time. Don't you know Jesus already came and established the Kingdom in the earth? "Now after that John was put into prison, **Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news" (Mk. 1:14-15).** "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man is pressing into it" (Lk. 16:16). You say, "Well, we're waiting for Jesus to come back and make the Kingdom take over." Well, my beloved, He has to come back in you in His fullness to make it take over! "...that you may be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven ..when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:5-10). That's how it's going to take over. There will be no other take over of the Kingdom of God except it comes in and through you who are hearing the Word of the Kingdom, who are entering into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom comes not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you. These are the profoundest of words. These words define for us in the grandest way the nature of the Kingdom and the truth about its location. A number of times in my life I have encountered people who were all enthused about great meetings or crusades or revivals that were happening in certain places, and they encouraged me to attend. They told me, "That is where God is working. That is where the action is." They may as well have said, "That's where the Kingdom of God is in evidence." This is an hour when God's little children are running to and fro, seeking signs and wonders. When men and women are saying to one another, "Have you heard evangelist...? Have you heard prophet...? Have you seen what God is doing through brother...?"

They run from city to city, from crusade to crusade, from seminar to seminar, from meeting to meeting, seeking to see a miracle or hear some new thing. While it is good to "go and see" if we are seeking something from God, this mad rush from "here" to "there" is a sign that we have not yet discovered the reality and power of the Kingdom of God within. We still believe that if we can run fast enough, travel far enough, see enough miracles, hear enough preachers, healers, and teachers, we will get "healed," get "faith," get "peace," get "power," get "victory," become "like Christ," or get whatever it is we lack within ourselves. That is what the Pharisees were trying to do. I have gone on occasion to the meetings where the Kingdom of God was supposed in manifestation in power. There was action there all right. It seemed as though some were being healed of sicknesses, and demons were being cast out, and there was a large crowd of people there and great excitement. But it was difficult to tell where the showmanship ended and the power of God began. There was a fine line between what some of the people may have been receiving out of their own great expectation in faith, and how much of what was going on was the result of crowd manipulation and mass psychology. There was a great stage show put on by professional musicians and a speaker dripping with charisma who held the audience spellbound. The people seemed quite sure that it was the very power of God.

Men chase back and forth to these spectacular events seeking signs to strengthen their faith, to recharge their weak characters, to liven their jaded spiritual appetites, because of their refusal to seek these things in the only place where they can be found—"behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The Kingdom of God is not localized, either in a single person or place. There is no need to purchase an airline ticket for the next great healing and miracle crusade, or to Canada to witness the so-called "holy laughter," or to Florida to see the "Brownsville Revival," or to some other state to become part of a group and their preacher who claim they alone have the message of the hour, and if you want to come into sonship and escape death into immortality you must be joined unto them—for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within YOU! The God of miracles and power and eternal life and victory is closer to you than the very air you breathe, closer even than the blood coursing through your veins. He is nigh you, even in your mouth and in your heart. He is there where you are today, in the midst of all your pressures and testings. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. The God of the Kingdom lives within your own spirit and can do more for you today right where you are than all the great claims and grand events "here" and "there."

Well has a dear brother written: "Jesus said we, like the Pharisees, are seeking in the wrong place. We are seeking the kingdom, the faith, the power, from without, at the hand of some man. But the kingdom is not outside—it is 'within you.' **'But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly' (Mat. 6:6).**

Of course there is a blessing that comes when saints get together to enjoy fellowship, prayer, singing, and anointed preaching of the Word. But the real, lasting strength of God that sustains us day by day, comes not from these periodic 'feasts,' but from the steady diet of daily secret prayer, praise, and feeding on the bread of life. Jesus was right when He said, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink' (Jn. 7:37). And He was correct when He instructed the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, 'But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up (from within) into everlasting life' (Jn. 4:14). And He did not miss the mark when He told the multitude, 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst' (Jn. 6:35).

"When the disciples walked the shores of Galilee with Jesus, they looked to Him for their strength, their faith, their inspiration. When He was not with them, they were inadequate to meet the needs that arose. When He was asleep on the boat, they were terrified by the storm and came running to Him for help. When Jesus was on the mount of Transfiguration with Peter, James, and John, the other disciples at the foot of the mountain were helpless before a devil-possessed boy (Mat. 17:14-21). But, before Jesus left the earth, He reassured His disciples that He would send another Comforter to take His place. And this other Comforter would not be, like Jesus, 'with them,' but 'within them'—inside them. This other Comforter was truly Jesus Himself returning to them as the Indwelling Spirit. 'And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you (as Jesus), and shall be in you (as the Holy Spirit)' (Jn. 14:16-17). Thereafter, their courage, guidance, victory, power and growth were not to come to them from without, but from within; not from someone else, but from the Holy Spirit which dwelt within their own body-temples.

"Why all this running to and fro? This is a restless, surface-thinking age. We are accustomed to having everything done up in packages and handed to us, with little effort on our part. No longer do we go into the restaurant and wait for the waiter to take and prepare our order. We pull through the drive-up, roll down the window and expect a nice looking girl to shove the food out the window to us. No longer do we spend hours in a hot kitchen, mixing, broiling, baking; we simply pick up a few fast-foods on the way home from work and have an instant meal. In our spiritual lives, no longer do we feel the necessity of spending hours on our knees, or faithful trysts with the Word of God. We run over to a church service and expect to take home a week's supply of spiritual nourishment, all done up in a neat package, at a bargain price. But Jesus, unlike our modern streamlined civilization, does not promise any ready-made, ready-mixed, precooked, and quick-rising Bread of Life. He still says, 'Be still and know that I am God.' 'And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall seek for me with all of your heart..' 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen shine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.'

"When we run to and fro seeking blessing, inspiration, strength and faith from another, we are really trying to sponge off someone else's prayer, ride on someone else's ticket. For had he not spent hours on his knees with the Father, had he not fasted and prayed and paid the price, he would have nothing worthwhile for us when we came. We are trying to ride into the Kingdom on his coattails. Children may get by with that, but that will never bring you to sonship! You may get into the church that way, but it will never usher you into the Kingdom!"

## **THE KINGDOM—LITERAL OR SPIRITUAL?**

Carl Schwing once wrote: "How little we have known in the past of the Kingdom of God. About all we knew was how to spell it and argue over it and naturalize it. But now the Spirit of understanding is being poured out upon us and we are beginning to look into the Open Kingdom...no longer hidden in the shadows of types and figures, rather, brought into the sphere of reality. The Kingdom of God is the very mind and heart of the Everlasting Father. It is the center of all things. And wonder of wonders, it is in you and in me, by brother-sister-sons!"

Many Bible teachers speak of a "Spiritual Kingdom of God" and a "Literal Kingdom of God." These are both carnal, man-made terms and are entirely extra-biblical and unscriptural. Nowhere do the scriptures speak of a "Spiritual" Kingdom as contrasted with a "Literal" Kingdom. God does not have TWO Kingdoms. He has only

ONE. That ONE KINGDOM is, however, both Spiritual and Literal. It is a spiritual rule of God wrought by the Spirit of God in the lives of literal people, in literal places and affecting very literal circumstances. Man, as well as the whole earth, is now literally impacted by the rule of God in and through His chosen ones. And the nations and rulers of earth shall yet in a total sense become affected literally by God's Kingdom-dominion in the earth.

But carnal religious tradition has falsely interpreted the Kingdom of God in its present reality during this age as a "Spiritual Kingdom," and the Kingdom of God in its future reality during the "Millennium" as a "Literal Kingdom." This notion arises from a misunderstanding or lack of understanding of the meaning of words. According to Webster "literal" means "real—not figurative or metaphorical." That which is literal is simply something real. I submit to you that GOD IS REAL Now, God is not physical, material or tangible, but He is very, very real! God is neither figurative nor metaphorical. In like manner, SPIRIT IS REAL. Spirit is not physical, material or tangible, but Spirit is very, very real! Spirit is neither figurative nor metaphorical. When the Spirit of God moves or comes upon a person tremendous things happen. Like the wind, you know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth, but you hear the sound thereof and you see the mighty effect of its power. Spiritual things are, in fact, the MOST REAL of all realities in the universe for they are unchangeable and eternal, whereas earthly things are temporal and passing. So to say that the Kingdom of God is at one time "spiritual" and at another time "literal" is a confusion of terms. The contrast should not be between literal and spiritual but between natural and spiritual. The Kingdom is not natural or earthly but is at all times and in all stages both spiritual and literal. It is only literal because it is spiritual! The Kingdom is never figurative or metaphorical. It is real—very, very, real! The great truth is that the Kingdom of God has never been any more or any less spiritual than it is RIGHT NOW! And it shall never in the future be any more or any less spiritual than it now is. By the same token, the Kingdom has never been any more or any less literal than it is right now, and it shall never in the future be any more or any less literal than it now is!

The Kingdom of God is concerned with eternal and spiritual realities. God's Kingdom is spiritual in its essence and in its operation. In comparison with the economy of Moses the Kingdom is inward instead of outward. Some would like to establish the Kingdom along Old Testament lines so as to re-assert the outward political, judicial and legislative and to smother the inward and spiritual. A number of our Anglo-Israel friends, strangely fascinated by an old Testament economy that has forever passed away, have a great deal to say about the Israel nations coming under the laws of Moses during the Millennium, but precious little about the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But in an age when the Kingdom has come with power, and been unveiled in the hearts of God's elect, this hankering after the old Covenant is an outmoded and discredited concept. It is not unlike the case of the children of Israel in the wilderness who preferred their Egyptian existence to the new level of blessing to which God had brought them.

Thousands of years ago God made a covenant with Abraham. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great...for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (**Gen. 12:1-2; 13:15-17**). We see at once that the great feature of this covenant is a multiplicity of seed for a man that hitherto had been childless; and that this multitude of people is to become a great nation, and that they were to be given the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. The covenant specifically deeds a PIECE OF NATURAL REAL ESTATE TO THE PHYSICAL OFFSPRING OF AN EARTHLY MAN!

While there are many beautiful spiritual types in Israel's entrance into and possession of the Promised Land, the fact remains that throughout the Old Testament one reads the history of a physical people receiving natural blessings in an earthly land. In the Old Testament the Lord always referred to an earthly land. You can recall how many times from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the end of Malachi the Lord stressed the land again and again. The land...the land...the land I promised to thy fathers; the land I promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the land I promised you; I will bring you into the land; I will give you the land; I will bless you in the land. It was the land, the land, always the LAND!

The center of the Old Testament economy is the temple within the city within the land. The temple was a natural temple within a material city built upon the physical land. You read how God brought His people into the Promised Land, and His people remained there and enjoyed all its riches, a land "flowing with milk and honey." They ate and drank from the land—all their living came out of the land, the land was everything to them. But the blessings of this land were mere temporal blessings lavishly bestowed upon a fleshly and mortal people. Notice the kinds of blessings promised! "But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven...and it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day...that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season...that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and shine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest shine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Deut. 11:11, 13-15; 28:35, 8).

The Old Covenant was a carnal covenant made with an unregenerated race of earthly men. This covenant, we are informed, "had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary...which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect...which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them UNTIL THE TIME OF REFORMATION" (Heb. 9:1, 9-10).

There is a wonderful order which God has established relative to creation, the progression of truth, and the unfolding of His purposes in the earth, and it is this: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual" (I Cor. 15:46). The principle is evident everywhere in the scriptures. First the old creation, then the new. First darkness, then light. First Abram, the natural man, and his seed, the fleshly Israel, and their inheritance, the earthly land of Canaan; then Abraham, the spiritual man, and his seed, the enChristed, and their inheritance, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. First Adam, formed of the dust of the ground, a living soul; then the second man, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit. First the law of Moses, then the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. First the manna in the wilderness sustaining physical life, then the true bread come down from heaven that if a man eat of it he shall never die. First the water refreshing the land of Canaan, then the water Christ gives which is a well of water springing up unto eternal life. First the temple of stones from Solomon's mines, then the temple of living stones, a spiritual house, the habitation of God through the spirit. First the lamb from among a man's flock, offered in sacrifice, then the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and the spiritual sacrifices offered unto God by Him. First the natural body, then the spiritual body. And the wonder of it all is this—that the end of the Old is the beginning of the New; and out of that which forever passes away there comes forth that which is eternal and destined to remain. It is imperative, therefore, that we should always observe that which is first, that from it we may discern that which follows—the spiritual, the heavenly, the incorruptible, the TRUE which the first typifies.

If we know the scriptures and have light from God, we will realize what is meant by "the land." The land is but a figure of Christ as our all in all. In the Old Testament the descendants of Abraham were brought into the land; in the New Covenant those born of the Spirit are brought into Christ. Have you ever realized that Christ is now the territory of your life? Christ is the land! You may feel that day to day you are living on this earth, compassed about, hedged in, and shut up by the myriad problems, pressures, and frustrations of THIS WORLD. But you must realize that this earth, nor any part of it, including the land of Israel, Great Britain, America, or any other place, is not your real land, this world is not the sphere of your living. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). The land is but a type of Christ as everything to us. By virtue of the new birth we now have the ground to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ! God gave us this ground. This ground is our land and we may enter in and fully possess all its glories by faith.

I deeply feel that most of the Lord's people are still living in the old land—the "shadow"—and have discovered but little of the true land, the substance of which is Christ. What a vast difference there is between the shadow

of an object and the object itself! Shadows can be beautiful, as when, for instance, a day draws toward late afternoon and the mountains cast long shadows, transformed into purple, greatly enhancing the scene. But the shadows are at best only shadows, creating wonderful illusions, but with no substance to them. It is my conviction after forty-five years of ministry that multitudes of Christians are today contenting themselves with the shadow instead of the substance. I think we can look upon the shadow and the substance as picturing two sorts of lives lived by God's people. There is a life, if we can indeed call it such, which is just a shadow of the real thing; things spiritual are not real to the one living it; the whole thing reeks of the scent of the "earthiness" of the old natural land. These folk, though religious, church going people, may even sing choruses, clap their hands, speak in tongues and prophesy, but in most aspects of their daily lives MIND EARTHLY THINGS. They preach a lot of frothy discourses concerning the abundant life, but the abundant life of which they speak is not the abundant life of Christ Himself, but mere external blessings of answered prayers, healing, health, jobs, houses, bank accounts, automobiles, clothes, and a thousand other earthly things which they imagine represent the "abundant life". It is not the abundant life of "those who dwell in heaven" but "those who dwell upon the earth."

Ah, dear ones, the best of all this world has to offer—the best jobs, the highest salaries, the finest homes, the choicest automobiles, beautiful clothes, good and luxurious furniture and an abundance of the amenities of life have nothing whatever to do with the abundant life of which Jesus spoke when He said, "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly." The abundant life is experienced in CHRIST THE SUBSTANCE' not in the shadow. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth, saith the Lord. If God has favored you with temporal things, then you may accept them, but do not deceive yourself by supposing that these temporal things are a sign of God's favor or your spirituality, for such is not the case. The fleshly Israel of old enjoyed all these earthly things for which men seek, but they did not have the abundant life Jesus came to bring.

Hear now the exhortation of the firstborn Son of God. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things, which he possesseth. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. But rather SEEK YE THE KINGDOM OF GOD; fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom...provide yourselves with bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens (the realm of the spirit) that faileth not...for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The national Israel with its promises of physical blessings is but the shadow—Christ is the substance. Yet many Christians choose to live in the earthlies in place of the heavenlies!

Only the Holy Spirit can make this real to us, but one of the most significant utterances ever made by the apostle Paul is found in **Ephesians 1:3**. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST." The source of all blessing is God who is Spirit. "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (**James 1:17**). All blessings, temporal and spiritual, come from the gracious hand of our heavenly Father. However, the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God are not primarily temporal, physical, or natural blessings for the outer-earth-man. They are not creature comforts. They are spiritual blessings bestowed upon the inner-new-creation-man. These spiritual blessings are received and experienced only "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." They are in Him and are communicated from the high and holy realm in which He dwells. These are the blessings of the life of sonship, and when you have appropriated all the blessing of this new and heavenly land, which is Christ, you will be a manifested son of God. That is the richness of this land! This glorious land is the realm of incorruption, which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death. It is filled with blessings which God has covenanted with all who dwell in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, blessings of wisdom and knowledge, of joy and peace, of love and faith, of grace and glory, of righteousness and power, of the mind of Christ and the image of God. The mark of a son is when he asks most often for spiritual blessings instead of temporal blessings. One will know that he is no longer numbered among the lusty throng who "dwell upon the earth" when, in all his seeking, he seeks only and always those things which are "above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God."

"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" (**Jn. 18:36**). "The kingdom of God is not eating and

**drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50).**

The Kingdom of God is not local, national, or international. It is not physical or temporal. It is spiritual, universal, and eternal. Jesus said that His Kingdom is not of this world, but it is to function in the world. To the woman at the well He imparted the deep and wonderful knowledge that neither mount Gerizim nor Jerusalem play any role in the Kingdom of God, for God is not to be worshipped in either of those places nor in any other physical locality. Those who now worship the Father must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Just as earthly kings rule in temporal and material realms, so God, the King of His Kingdom, rules in the realm of the spiritual and eternal. The spiritual and eternal transcend this world, though they may be known, entered and experienced in this world. That which is physical and temporal must eventually pass away; that which is spiritual and eternal will abide forever.

Since the spiritual and eternal are higher and more abiding, it follows that the temporal and material are ultimately to be ruled and guided by them. There should be no conflict between the two, for just as soul and body are subjected to the spirit in the perfect man, so the natural creation is to be ruled by the spiritual that God's Kingdom may come and God's will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Temporal affairs should always be permeated, shaped and controlled by spiritual powers. That very principle is what makes us the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Our outer man expresses the inner man of righteousness, joy, and peace, revealing the glory of Christ unto creation. The whole ministry of Jesus was filled to the full with teaching concerning great Kingdom principles. He did not concern Himself with petty rules and regulations governing the outer, every day life of the people. He laid down great abiding spiritual principles that worked from the inside out. If men grasped the principles by which their lives were to be guided, their every day conduct would take care of itself. These principles are the New Testament written not upon stone, but upon the fleshy tablets of the heart by the Holy Spirit.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that the Kingdom of God is neither temporal nor material. If it were temporal, it would have needed to be changed from time to time. All the temporal kingdoms of the world have been almost revolutionized within the last sixty years. Things temporal must be changed to suit the changing ages. Things that are spiritual remain permanent throughout the centuries and aeons of existence. Temporal kingdoms must be visible, exercise force, collect taxes, legislate laws, punish offenders, and maintain armies. The spiritual Kingdom by its very nature can do none of these things, since its operations are only in the realm of the spiritual and eternal. Can we not see by this that, since the Kingdom is spiritual in its nature, only those who have been transformed by the washing of regeneration can ever hope to enter. But because the Kingdom is spiritual in nature, we must not assume that it has nothing to do with man's social, political, and economic relationships. That is a fallacy into which it is easy to fall. There would be no reason for a Kingdom of God at all, if it is to be entirely divorced from practical life. This is the greatest value of the Kingdom. While not being temporal in nature, it enters definitely into the lives of people and directs them in the paths of righteousness and blessing in all their human relationships. Just as the Kingdom of God in a man's life will make him an honest, loving, caring, just and wise man in his home and business, so the Kingdom of God in the lives of the rulers of nations will make their governments honest, loving, caring, just and full of wisdom on behalf of their people. That in no way makes their governments the Kingdom of God, but their governments are brought under the sway, influence, guidance and power of the Kingdom. In just this way the Kingdom of God must come to our homes, to our schools, to our churches, to our businesses, to our charities, to our governments from the top to the bottom. The inner must rule the outer, but the outer can never be the inner. "For, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

The Kingdom of God is spiritual, a spiritual dimension presently available to men upon this earth. You will need a measure of God's Spirit to see God's Kingdom. Christ is that measure. Since the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, it is obvious the Spirit of Christ is needed to see or discern the Kingdom. Is it possible to be filled with heavenly joy today in the midst of earth's sorrows? Yes, it is! Is it possible to receive the peace of God today in the face of the myriad conflicts and pressures of this world? Certainly it is! Is it possible to walk in the righteousness of God in the world right now? Absolutely! If this is all possible then it is possible for you to enter into the Kingdom of God today in this present world. The Kingdom of God is a spiritual dimension that we can walk in, live in, and abide in while on the earth today. As you walk in

the Spirit, you are walking in the power of the Kingdom of Heaven. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:17). As we let the Holy Spirit rule us, what other son could we be? If we are the sons of God, what other Kingdom could we be living in than God's Kingdom? We are called to manifest the will of God through our life. When the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, the Kingdom of God has come. As sons of God we want to heal, bless, create, and bring life because the life-giver is within us. We are the sons of the Kingdom. We are the expression of the Lord's will. Christ the King is in us, ruling through us. He has given us His peace so that we can impart peace to others. He has given us His joy so that we can impart joy to others. He has given us His love so that we can manifest love to the world. The sons of the Kingdom have no fear. They trust and fear God only, so they walk in peace, they walk in meekness, they walk in love, they walk in His likeness. When we allow the Christ to rule us, reign through us, work through us, there will be a manifestation of God's Kingdom through us to the world. The world will become influenced by, and subjected to, the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is not a place to which we can go. The Kingdom of God does not comprise "saved" flesh and blood, forgiven and justified natural, mortal men. The Kingdom of God comprises new creatures, creatures which are of the substance of eternal life. The Kingdom is within you as your inner man. The outer man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed day by day. Only as we pass from being flesh and blood descendants of Adam, to being life-giving spirits descended from our heavenly Father, do we enter the reality of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is not a theological stance, a creed, a doctrine, a message, or a movement. The Kingdom of God is the germinating, growing, developing and coming to maturity of the Divine Seed planted in the earth of every man, now quickened by the Spirit of God. It is the raising up of the life and substance of God within us. When the seed grows to maturity there exists a great tree of life from which all the creation of God can draw nourishment, healing and restoration.

Many people still conceive of the Kingdom of God as some kind of outward, structured government with Jesus sitting on a throne somewhere in the world and all the sons of God sitting on thrones with Him. The Kingdom of God, however, is not established or fashioned by any external rule, but by the inward life and experience of Christ. It is the body of men redeemed by Christ and transformed into the image of God. Matters not whether it is the Kingdom in its present limited scope, or the Kingdom in its final consummation when every knee has bowed and every tongue confessed and all men of all ages have been gathered together into one in Christ and God is all in all (Eph. 1:10). It is the same. Nothing about the Kingdom changes. The Kingdom is within and only comes as Christ is raised up in men's lives by the Spirit.

Suppose we should say, "Let us make a man in the image of such and such a person." Now we cannot make a living man by any external method, so we make an arm out of wax, a head out of marble, a torso with wood, and the legs and feet of some clay. Once these are assembled in the exact size and shape and painted in the exact color, we may have the true image of that man, but we do not have the reality of the man. The real man is not manufactured by outward manipulation, but born and nurtured by the growth of life. This true man was first conceived of a living seed, born of a living mother, and then grew by the nourishment of life. Ultimately he became a man with a certain image, perhaps the image of his father. If manufactured, there may be the image, but not a man.

You see, there are two ways of making things in this world. Many things are made by the works of men's hands. Other things are made by the power of life. Let us look closely at this. You may make a table, an automobile, a beautiful painting, or a masterful statue; you may build a house or raise up a skyscraper. No matter how many things you are skilled enough to make, all have one thing in common: they have no life. They may be very beautiful and extremely valuable, but not one of them is living. Whatever form they have, whatever resemblance to any other object, animate or inanimate, they are just things. The power of life can in no way be developed from without by the work of men's hands.

On the other hand, if you have a beautiful little child, you don't pay much attention to his image. You don't make a form to fit over his body as he grows and try to shape him day by day in a particular way. You don't use a chisel and work at fashioning his countenance with a certain appearance of nobility. The work of the hands avails nothing. First, he is conceived of life and born of his mother, then you nourish him with milk and good food. The child then grows and grows, assuming a certain shape and image. The ultimate image was already

in the life when he was conceived. The image comes out of his birth and growth of life. Just as you could not form your child, so neither can you form the Kingdom of God. If we try to form it, all we have is an image without life. Bring back the laws of Moses, bring back Jesus with a sword coming out of His mouth, and let Him try to enforce His Kingdom on men with might from without, and men will be forced to obey, but their hearts will be unchanged. It will be an image without life.

We can manufacture a toy or a doll, but there is no way for us to manufacture a man. We can manufacture silk or paper flowers, but there is no way for us to manufacture a rose. It must be something of new birth in the spirit and growth of life in Christ. Just as the church is composed of people, so the Kingdom of God is made up of people. Jesus called these **"the sons of the Kingdom" (Mat. 13:36-38)**. No King on a physical throne enforcing external laws can bring forth one single child of the Kingdom. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see...enter the Kingdom of God." That was true in Jesus' day. It is still true today. It will be just as true during the "Millennium" or any age or ages yet to come. It will be true in that glorious day when all things everywhere are gathered into Christ and all kindreds and tongues and nations and dominions serve Him. All the external miracles, all the outward blessings, all the lovely manifestations of the Spirit, even if put there by Christ Himself, do not change the heart. Jesus fed the five thousand by a miracle of miracles, and the people walked away from Him. The Kingdom will not come through any external pressure or power, but only by the inward regeneration and actual transformation of each and every man into the image of God by the indwelling spirit of life. Ah, yes! "The Kingdom of God is within you."

The sons of the Kingdom are the only true men on the face of the earth. The sons of the Kingdom have put on the mind of Christ and understand the true nature of all things. They are filled with heavenly wisdom and are strengthened by divine power. They are created in the image of God and reveal the glory of Jesus Christ. They have the ability to rise into the plane of the spirit. He who has in him the Kingdom of God and from this Kingdom looks down upon the kingdom of the world is moved by compassion and is ready to stand in his place in the hour of the manifestation of the sons of God. The hour is at hand. Blessed be HIS glorious name.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 11 MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD

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## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART ELEVEN

### THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD DELIVERANCE FROM THIS WORLD

"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" (Jn. 1 8:36).

The Kingdom of God is not of this world. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). Jesus said that His disciples are IN the world, but not OF the world (Jn. 17:11-16). The Kingdom, likewise, is IN the world, but not OF it, not established by the world's methods or operated by the world's standards. It does not function by the politics of the world. The Kingdom of God does not contain a Republican or Democratic platform. It is established and maintained on a different basis from the kingdoms of this world. When we enter this Kingdom we are not taken out of these earthly realms, but we are rescued from the jurisdiction of darkness, the hateful spiritual world empire that energizes the governments of earth and enthralls mankind. We have been removed into that other spirit realm whose Monarch is God's beloved Son and our Elder Brother.

What does Jesus mean when He says that His Kingdom is not of this world? One of the key words translated "world" in our English Bibles is the Greek word KOSMOS. It is worth taking time to examine this word in a good Greek Lexicon to see how wide is the range of meanings it has in scripture. The word originated in Classical Greek where we find it denoted principally one underlying thing: a harmonious order, system or arrangement. Out of this meaning it may be applied to the earth, the inhabitants of the earth, society, the whole race of men alienated from God and thus hostile to the ways of God, the universe, worldly affairs such as worldly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, customs, ways, methods, organizations, systems, institutions, governments, etc. The idea of orderly arrangement or organization lies behind all of the aforementioned categories. The earth, the solar system, the universe, society, government, commerce, education, social institutions, finance, entertainments — all these and many more operate by precise laws, order, arrangement, system, and method. Behind everything that exists and all that happens in the visible, material realm we meet a planned system; and in this system there is a harmonious functioning, an established order. That is the world. None of it is of the Spirit of God. None of it is established along the lines of God's ways, God's righteousness, God's nature, God's word, or God's will. The Spirit has an altogether different standard and order out of the invisible realm. That is the Kingdom of God. Therefore every organized system of the visible realm is the "world" in contrast to, and set apart from, the Kingdom of God out of the invisible realm of God's Spirit.

Adam, the man in God's image, walked amidst the fragrant mists of Eden in the living presence of God. He heard the voice of God in the spirit and lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. God Himself was his life and his every motivation and action sprang from the power of that life within. In that heaven blest realm the sounds he heard were spiritual sounds, the things he saw were spiritual things, the things he touched, smelled and tasted were spiritual realities. As yet there was no KOSMOS, no "world," no organized system outside of himself that he related to, subscribed to, or was influenced by. There was no outward constituted order of any kind. There was only God and man. It is interesting to note that the word world does not appear anywhere in the story of creation and the fall. In fact, its first mention is not until the days of the prophet Samuel!

In his first epistle, the apostle John informs us that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I Jn. 5:19). "This present evil world" (Gal. 1:4) is now governed by those who obey the carnal nature, the serpent within them. The serpent mind rules through carnal individuals thus filling the world with the wickedness and corruption so

evident everywhere. The result of the serpent nature in mankind is the conglomerate world system—economic, political, and religious—prophetically called Mystery Babylon. The most outstanding characteristic of the serpent is his ability to deceive. From the very opening chapters of the Bible, he is depicted as a liar and a deceiver. "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat," was Eve's sad lamentation, and in the closing chapters of the Bible, the fact and magnitude of his deceiving nature is further emphasized in the inspired words of the Revelator wherein he states that he is **"that ancient serpent called the devil and Satan, which DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD" (Rev. 12:9).**

Although Adam became corrupted by sin and expelled from the precincts of Eden, he was still living in the presence of God. It is not until the fourth chapter of Genesis that we read of Cain that he **"went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden...and he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch" (Gen. 4:16-17).** This is most significant! "Nod" is the Hebrew word for exile or vagrancy. Thus, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, away from the influence of the Spirit, away from the life of the Kingdom of God, away from his inheritance in God, into exile, to walk totally independent from God and outside of God. This "land of Nod" or condition of exile is stated to be "on the east of Eden." The Garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, was westward, but Cain traveled eastward. Adam was banished from the tree of life, driven eastward (Gen. 3:24), and now Cain continues on yet farther in an eastward direction (as all the metaphysical religions do today!) away from the presence of God. Ah, what powerful realities lie concealed within these simple words of Holy Writ!

The Word of God clearly reveals that the route of spiritual progression is from east to west. Jesus Christ who is the wisdom of God, is pictured by the Psalmist as a bridegroom typified by the sun who comes out of his chamber to run a race through the heavens (Ps. 19:4-6). Malachi speaks of Christ as **"the sun of righteousness, arising" (Mal. 4:2).** Everyone knows, of course, that the "race" of the sun is run from east to west. The lightning referred to in Matthew 24:27 is actually the sun, for the Greek word merely means a bright shining, and lightning, as we know, does not flash from east to west, having no specific design or direction. With this in mind the words of Jesus are clear, "For as the bright shining (sun) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Cain, had it not been for sin, would have been living in the Garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In spite of sin he was still able to know the presence of God, for it was from the presence of God that he departed when he went out. The presence of God is the anointing. But now Cain is rejecting even the presence or anointing of God upon his flesh, and moving in the opposite direction he goes further and further from the life of the Spirit. His final end is that of an exile, a vagrant, living on a territory not pertaining to him, not his true inheritance or possession. There, alienated from God, and severed from the anointing, the record states Cain dwelt. He settled there. He built there.

Happy is the man who clearly understands that the pathway of the anointing is ever from glory to glory, and as long as we are short of the image and incorruptible life of God we must never settle anywhere!

The very condition of settling precludes our re-entrance into the Paradise of God. The man who settles is lost from the on-going purposes of God. Those blessed ones who in this hour hear and heed the call to sonship cannot settle in any zone until they stand in holy splendor with the Lamb upon the pinnacle of mount Zion in the heavenly sphere of life and glory and dominion. But men always settle when, following the spontaneous moving and revelation of God, they begin to organize and systematize it, building walls of formulated creeds and dogmas about it, endeavoring to preserve it, as though the almighty Spirit who gave the outpouring in the first place is somehow unable to carry it forward to its glorious consummation. Once the move of God is creedalized and organized, those within its walls are nevermore free to follow the course of the anointing, or to walk with God in the on-going unfolding of His glory. They have gone out from the presence of the Lord, and there they build a city (religious system, order) after the rudiments of the world, there they settle and there they dwell, exiles from the Kingdom of God, vagrants living on a territory not pertaining to them, not their true inheritance or possession.

Sin began with Adam in the Garden, for Adam sinned and was corrupted by sin and overcome by death, but he did not fall into the world at that point, neither was he possessed by the world then. The word "world," as I have pointed out, translates the Greek word KOSMOS meaning order, arrangement, system of things. The world is

a negative thing in relation to God because it is a system organized outside of the anointing of God. James declares, "...the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The apostle John adds his instructive testimony, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn. 2:15-16).

Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the world is the movie theater, the dance hall, ball games, stylish clothing, jewelry, and such like. Others confuse the world with the earth. But the world is the present system of things upon this earth conceived by the carnal mind and generated by the natural man. The world consists of all that man has instituted that replaces God in his life. The present political, economic, educational and religious systems are not of God, but of the world. When people, activities or things—whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly—enslave man and usurp God, they comprise the world. Anything that causes man to disregard the Spirit, be removed from the anointing, stop making progress onward and upward, or be independent of God is the world. All that does not come from the Father, all that originates from any source other than the mind of Christ, all that man institutes by his own carnal wisdom and fleshly activity is of the world. It is not according to God's purpose for man to be subject to any system that he himself creates! Nor is according to God's purpose for His people to be subject to religious systems that they themselves create! All are contrary to the life, nature, word, and ways of God.

## THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4). The word "foundation" translates the Greek word KATABOLE, which is a compound word, made up of BALLO meaning "to cast, to throw" and KATA meaning "down". When man fell from his high and holy relationship with God and was cast down into the darkness of this gross material realm, the "foundation" of the world was laid in his heart. The "building" of the world was the fruit of his actions. But—blessed be God! The apostle Paul informs us that our heavenly Father elected some sons in Christ "before the foundation of the world." The word "before" translates the Greek word PRO meaning "to go before, to precede". Hence, the Father's act of choosing us in Christ preceded the fall of man and the establishment of the world system. We are not told how many days, years, or eons this choosing preceded the world, but methinks it was away back there when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy!

Since the world is in such opposition to God we must consider its origin and process of development. The world began with Cain. Cain built the first city—organized society, civilization—which typifies the worldly system of independence from the SPIRIT. The world did not exist when man was created (except in abstraction), but developed gradually after the fall, as man removed himself from the anointing and walked in his own carnal way. When man was brought forth from the formative hand of God there was already the universe, the heavens and the earth, and all created things; but the world did not exist. Following Adam's expulsion from the Garden, when carnal men began to multiply upon the earth the serpent in man gave direction and character to the "New World Order" of man, thus the scripture speaks of the natural man as walking "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2).

There are three primary requirements for man's existence and well-being on the earth: provision, protection, and pleasure. For a man to live an abundant and fulfilled life in the earth realm he needs the provision of food, clothing, shelter, etc., a means of defense to protect himself from adversaries, and a form of recreation and amusement for his happiness. Prior to Adam's transgression GOD WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THESE THREE NEEDS OF MAN, and they were supplied abundantly in the garden of Eden experience, albeit on a much higher level. After Cain's departure from the leading of the Spirit, the scripture describes him as "of that Wicked One" (1 Jn. 3:12). The preposition "of" is from the Greek EK meaning "out of". "Cain was OUT OF that Wicked One"—the seed of the serpent! Cain's father was Adam and his mother was Eve—nothing can be plainer than that in Genesis 4:1. This is the very first proof that the serpent is in man! Cain was born of Adam and Eve, but he was the seed of the serpent.

Out of the descendants of Cain were produced the founders of man's own system of supply for these three great needs of life. These were the three sons of Lamech. Jabal was the father of tent dwellers and cattlemen (Gen. 4:20). Tents and cattle are for the supply of mortal man's living and therefore belong to the category of provision. In the beginning God revealed Himself to man as his provision, making Himself available to man in the tree of life, that in union with Him we should have all things, even the supply of God Himself. Jabal represents man's own efforts, apart from the life of God, to make provision for himself. Spiritually, this symbolizes the carnal religious systems with their rituals, ceremonies, ordinances and programs designed to "feed" God into man. All religion is the invention of man in his effort to meet man's spiritual need — apart from the life-flow of God! Alas! the multitudes of men within these systems understand not that the reality of God's life is not contained in, nor ministered through, creeds, programs, rituals, ceremonies, or ordinances. Those who live in that realm know nothing of the wonder of the Christ within. Man's religion is of the world, for it is outside of God, being not of the Spirit, nor by the anointing.

Another of Cain's sons, Jubal, was the father of all that handle the harp and organ. Playing harp and organ is for pleasure and inspiration and thus pertains to the category of pleasure. This worldly aspect is fulfilled spiritually in the maze of social activity in religion, as well as in much of the music, programs, and sermonizing, all of which is designed to be pleasant, acceptable and entertaining to the people. I do not think that any spiritually-minded person could disagree with me when I say that nearly all the concerts, programs, and pulpit showmanship that constitute most of the so-called "ministry" among God's people today are without doubt very appealing to the carnal mind which is ever wont to feed upon soulish entertainment rather than with reverential awe and holy brokenness to drink at the eternal fountains of living water that flow from the throne of God. I am convinced that our faithful Father has given the ministry of the blessed spirit of Truth, and that that spirit of Truth abides within all who receive of Him. There is abundant supply! While God has given spiritual ministry for the perfecting of the saints, the worldly church system has given us a veritable smorgasbord of religious shows for the entertaining of the saints. Most solemnly do I declare unto you that all such ARE OF THE WORLD, and not of the Father, for their methods and means lie outside of the anointing of the Spirit and can never lead God's people beyond the husks of man's own vanity. Thank God! a people is arising who are finding their way out of Cain's pleasure land of entertainment and sentimentality, back to the Paradise of God, back to the tree of life, back to the Kingdom of Heaven where they drink deeply of this sublime truth: **"...in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore!" (Ps. 16:11).**

The third son, Tubal-cain, was the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron instruments. These instruments were formed for the purpose of defense, thus referring to the category of protection. All the armaments of all the nations of the world today are the result of the spirit of Tubal-cain. All the martial arts, hand guns, mace, and every other offensive device used for self-protection pertain to this category. On the spiritual side, ignorant of the power and sufficiency of the indwelling Spirit, with what pompousness do the religious systems construct about them their walls and implements of defense! Church history is replete with examples of revival after revival in which men were sovereignly caught up into heavenly places of revelation, glory, and power, only to have man put his hand of flesh on the workings of God, to control, protect, and preserve it as though the omnipotent Spirit needed man's useless wisdom and regulations to preserve His mighty work! Out there in Cain's world you must have the brass and iron implements of Tubal-cain—implements of organization, denomination, fellowships, coverings, creeds, rules, regulations, boards, lawsuits, etc., to defend and preserve the work; but, praise God! as one moves westward back into the anointing of God's life the omnipotence of the indwelling Spirit Himself becomes our fortress and exceeding strong tower. With what deep comprehension of the ways and power of the Lord did the Psalmist pen the words of faith in the ability of God alone when he wrote, **"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. For THOU art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor shall our horn be exalted. For THE LORD IS OUR DEFENSE; the Holy One of Israel is our King" (Ps. 89:15-18).**

In these three important inventions of the sons of Cain man found within himself the answer to his need of supply, defense and amusement. Man found no need of God, of His presence, life or power, for he set about to establish his own world, independent of God. This was the civilization produced after mankind departed from the presence of God—a godless life created by men. This present world system of things is patterned after the order of Cain. It is all outside of God. That does not mean that it is all evil. It simply is not of the Spirit! How clear that in this earth the politics, economics, education, entertainment, commerce and religion are outside of

God! When we have learned how the world was formed, it is easy to define the world. Originally, man was in the family of God, lived by God, relied entirely upon Him, and had at his disposal ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD. Now the serpent, through subtlety, sophistry, the carnal mind, the wisdom of this world, has systematized the world to replace God in being all to man. Man, having forsaken his inheritance, having departed from the presence, and having lost His life relied upon the world and was overcome by the world. Therefore, the world consists of everything that replaces God and possesses man.

Cain built a city—as did Nimrod after him. "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he (Cain) builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch" (Gen. 4:17). There was no city in Eden, no fleshly system, no external order, no carnal arrangement of things. Not system, but LIFE! He who makes God's house of living stones depend on mere outward forms; he who confounds Truth with the shibboleths of sects and denominations, or the usurpation of preachers, builds upon the baseless and shifting sands. The true and eternal Church depends solely on the presence, life and power of Christ. If you treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to God, sweep away from your spiritual walk as much as you can the infinite cobwebs which the ambition and ignorance of men have spun for centuries over the Lord's heritage. Flung to the four winds the voluntary submission and all the vain deceits, traditions, and ordinances, which, like those of the Pharisees, are but "weak and beggarly elements".

It is not the form but the essence, which constitutes true religion. Christ knew nothing of external paraphernalia, and those who follow the Lamb know nothing of it either. Distinguish between the flickering shadows of outward symbols and the verities of incorruptible life. Distinguish between the valueless injunctions of touch not, taste not, handle not, and the divine nature that produces love, joy, peace, righteousness of heart, and all the fruit of the Spirit. The Kingdom of God standeth not on food and drink, or any other outward thing, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. You will not find Christ by following the sects and self-promoting ministries who shout with anathemas, "Lo, He is here!" or, "Lo, He is there!" but if you faithfully walk with the Christ you will discover that He is within you. He is right there within you in all the power and might of His Kingdom rule and glory.

Seek truth and you will find it, because God is the God of truth. Truth is not far from you, for Christ is the truth and He is within you. If you desire heaven you must win it; for heaven is the realm of the Spirit and a state of being, not a place. God is in heaven and God is in you, therefore heaven is within you if you can find it. No preacher can give it to you; no ritual can give it to you; no creed or message can give it to you; no mere ordinances or ministrations of men can open its doors for you so much as a single inch. You must find it by forsaking the world and self, and all the carnal religious exercises and activities of the world, to hear the quickening voice of the Spirit, to walk after the Spirit, to live in the Spirit. The home and heaven of God is within you, precious friend of mine, for you are the temple of the living God, as God hath said. Apart from this all else is but fringes and phylacteries. If, by the aid of God's Holy Spirit, you have discovered the King and the Kingdom which is within you, though all parties excommunicate you, and all priests and preachers anathematize you, nothing can harm you; and when you pass from the babble of the world's malediction, and the falsehoods of erring religion, and have passed westward through the portals of Eden, and scaled the heights of mount Zion, clear and high for you shall peal the eternal verdict, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased!"

The world today has its own religious dictionary of definitions of "God" and "Spirit" and "Church" and "Heaven" and "Hell" and a hundred other things, and they speak and think within the framework of those definitions. But GOD SPEAKS A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE and has a different dictionary of definitions by which He speaks to His people and according to which He works. If all the multiplied practices and methods employed by the churches today were suddenly swept away, it would in all probability cease to function. If the churches had to drop all their rituals, forms, programs and ceremonies; all their confirmations, baptisms, and communion services; all their special singing, organ music, and altar calls; all their organization, titles, and church buildings, they would feel as though they had been stripped naked and could not serve God in any way. All this simply demonstrates the terrible fact that the faith and dependence of the churches is not in God, but is in the trappings they have accumulated to themselves through the centuries. Lest someone accuse me of being brash, vindictive or extreme, let me remind you that when the early apostles went out and turned the world upside down for God THEY HAD ABSOLUTELY NONE OF THE THINGS MENTIONED ABOVE. All they had

was God—the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! But today, the thought that God is perfectly able and fully willing to run His Church without the aid of anything in the way of fleshly contributions, is found to be abhorrent to the average church member, and even more shocking to the average preacher! When the sons of God are manifested for the deliverance of all creation they will have none of the world's instruments, and that is just the reason God is dealing with His elect so severely in this hour to come unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.

God's true Church, in contrast to the false religious systems of Babylon, has never been contaminated by the world. You may be assured, my beloved, that the Father has faithfully answered the prayer of Jesus, "And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify (separate) them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:13-17). There is a little flock, there is a remnant, there is a body of Christ, but its members are scattered abroad and almost invisible to the great Babylon. They are the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and they are the called and chosen and faithful who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They are those who have turned to God, the eternal Spirit, and to wait for the glory that is revealed as the sons of God come into their own.

These are they who have not the form, but the power of god-likeness, those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, and overcome all things by the faith of the Son of God within. Its ministers are not robed in material robes of scarlet and gold; they are robed in the righteousness of Christ. They are not trained in the seminaries and teachings of men, but by the spirit of grace and wisdom and revelation from God on High. They are not busy interpreting or parroting the doctrines of the church systems or employing the theological terms of religion; their very lives are the interpretation of the Christ enthroned within their hearts. They have no interest in persuading people of what they believe; their whole ministry is to bring people into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with GOD and His CHRIST. In other words, GOD IS SUFFICIENT for this Church He has placed in the world of men! Because God is sufficient, because the Christ within is all-in-all, this Church is left entirely free from all carnal encumbrances to pursue the work God has given it of bringing His elect unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that the Church may be the revelation of God's manifold wisdom to all the principalities and powers in the celestial realms, and the hope of all creation for deliverance and restoration to the Kingdom of God. Let all who have received the call to sonship know once and for all that CHRIST WITHIN IS SUFFICIENT! All else is—the world!

## DELIVERANCE FROM THIS WORLD

Consider with me the depth of meaning in the words of the apostle Paul wherein he says of the Lord Jesus, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from THIS PRESENT EVIL, WORLD" (Gal 1:4). The description of this present world declares it to be evil, and Paul asserts that we are being delivered or saved out of it through Jesus who gave Himself for us. One cannot read these words without a feeling of utmost wonder at the revelation that just as it was the ark that saved Noah from the world of his day, so it is Christ who saves us from this present evil world. Noah was saved from his world by a ship, whereas we are saved from our world by a glorious Person! Let no one imagine that to be delivered from this present evil world means to be "raptured" off to some "beautiful isle of somewhere" any more than Noah was removed to another planet when he was "saved" from the world that then was. Of Noah's blessed deliverance we read, "For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were SAVED BY WATER" (II Pet. 3:18-20).

Yes, my friend, Noah was saved by water—the very same water that destroyed the world! He was saved from a world, but the wonderful truth is that he had been "saved" from that "world" a long time before the waters of the flood arrived! For even as the scripture declares of Jesus, that He was "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," so the Word also testifies of Noah that he was "a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Noah was saved. From the world of his day. He was no part of it, though it was all around

him. Noah was different. He danced to a different tune. He lived out his life by a different set of standards. He walked with God while all the rest of mankind wallowed in the filth of the lusts of their flesh. And now, in this our day, God has sent forth His Son Jesus to save us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD!

Vast multitudes of men and women all about us walk through this life with their minds closed, their hearts centered in this old world. How men's hearts and lives are tied to this world! The man who is living in this world is forever worrying about earthly things—how he can provide more in the bank for old age, how he can provide more to see and hear and taste and feel and smell—the pleasures of this world, how he can be sure he will never want for food, clothing or shelter. His concern is that the outer physical man will never be in need, never be unsatisfied or dissatisfied. He is always mindful of the comfort, entertainment, protection and provision of the natural man. However much we may elaborate on this point, we will not express it more aptly than did the apostle Paul when he declared, "For they that are of the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh." On the other hand, there is a small minority who spend their lives minding the things of the spirit. The welfare of the inner man, the spiritual man, the new creature, the heavenly man is uppermost in their thoughts, for they seek the mind of Christ. They, like Paul, "die daily" to this present evil world, counting it as a passing thing that is destined for destruction.

The child of God stands out as the revelation of the divine power of Jesus Christ to come into the spirit of man, and change it and make it lovely and pure and wise and powerful like God Himself. To come into the mind of man, and take possession of all its faculties, infusing the mind of Christ until that man esteems the fashions and fantasies of this world as less than nothing, seeking always to be one with the Father. To come into the nature of man and transform it by the power of God until his thoughts and desires and actions are filled with wisdom and understanding, manifesting the life and glory of the world to come, the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. These, being after the spirit, mind the things of the spirit. These are putting on immortality and incorruption, for the Christ shall come into even our diseased and mortal bodies until the action of the Holy Spirit revolutionizes every cell and our bodies are quickened by the spirit that dwells in them (Rom. 8:11). This, my beloved, is what it means to be SAVED FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD!

I know of nothing that will so thoroughly awaken the fathomless depths of wisdom and understanding than the blessed knowledge of the sacred mystery that Christ saves men right now from this present evil world. And while you, dear reader, may be one of those waiting with rapturous expectation to be whisked away and "evacuated" off this earth to spend eternity in some far-off heaven somewhere, Peter expresses with urgent and profound aspiration the true desire of all sons of God who groan for the deliverance of creation and the triumph of the Kingdom of God, saying, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise look for NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found in Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (II Pet. 3:13-14). It is an incontrovertible fact that the average Christian today is not looking for the same thing Peter was looking for—new heavens and a new earth.

Did Jesus teach us to pray, "Come quickly Lord Jesus, and take us to heaven," or did He teach us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven?" To be saved from this present evil world doesn't mean to be taken anywhere. It means to be transformed, it means to be in a different condition, or state of being, than the world. It means to be holy instead of vile, spiritual instead of carnal, heavenly minded instead of earthly minded, peaceful instead of agitated, full of wisdom and understanding instead of ignorant and foolish, full of faith instead of fear and frustration, living instead of dying. With what holy understanding did our Lord beseech the Father, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn. 17:15-17). This was Noah's condition too, his state of being, in his corrupt world. He was perfect with God. And now it is our turn to be perfect with God, to walk with God, and be completely delivered out of this present evil world into the life and power and glory of the Kingdom of God—the new age, the new condition, the new state of being—the NEW WORLD ORDER, the WORLD TO COME! People are always looking for the "end of the world," but most sincerely do I say to you today that this is where the world ends—it ends within yourself. The new heavens (spirit) and the new earth (soul and body) are glorious and eternal realities right now upon this earth for each and every man and woman who has been delivered from this present evil world. The new age has

dawned within our hearts, the new world has come into our reality, old things are passed away and, behold, all things are now made new. Hallelu-yah!

It is very essential that those who press forward into God should always keep in mind that "world" means an order, system, or arrangement of things. This involves a way of life, social structure, culture, philosophies, political ideologies, religion, economics—all products of the carnal mind. How enlightening the words of scripture, "And we know that we are of God, and the WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS." A number of translations render the latter part of this passage, "the whole world lieth in THE WICKED ONE." This whole world system has not only made its bed in wickedness, but it is under the control of a cosmic wicked mind—the satanic spirit incarnate in man's fleshly nature. How few truly comprehend the magnitude of this! How many precious saints are yet deceived into believing that there is at least something of God in the politics of this world, in the educational programs of this world, in the economic system of this world, in the laws of this world, in the fashions of this world, in the philosophies of this world, and in the culture of this world. Somehow it does not sink in that these institutions are, one and all, completely and forever, without any exceptions whatsoever, UNRIGHTEOUS PRODUCTS OF THE CARNAL MINDS OF NATURAL MEN!

I do not hesitate to tell you that practically all, if not indeed all, of the men and women who fill the smoke-filled rooms where the ideas are birthed and the decisions made concerning all of these affairs are indeed carnal minded men, sold under sin, dominated by the master spirit that controls this evil age. oh! how we have wanted to believe that our nation, with its laws and liberties and godly heritage is somehow an expression of the Kingdom of God because it was given to us by noble and religious men. We have reasoned that "democracy" is the best and highest form of government because of the liberties it gives to the religious community and the guarantee of civil rights to its citizens. We have even imagined that "capitalism" is somehow a God-ordained economic system because it brings material blessings to so many people. But the word of the Almighty is against that! The immutable testimony of the spirit of Truth is that "the WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN THE WICKED ONE." And while we have "Christian activists" busily trying to either preserve or christianize a passing order, the carnal institutions they are bestowing their fervent labors upon are steadily disintegrating and sinking into demonic chaos before their very eyes, as God demonstrates for all to see the incontrovertible truth that even our cherished systems and institutions are OF THIS WORLD "which passeth away."

The seeds of destruction were planted in the very foundations of our nation. When you give men "freedom of speech" and "liberty" you must give it across the board. It is given to saints and equally given to devils! It is given to righteousness and equally given to carnality and corruption. When you have the "rule of the people" you can never have a government any better than the people. If the people are good you will have good government. If the people are bad you will have bad government. The majority always rule. The only thing that can save America and the world is the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God transforms men. That is what the world needs—a new breed of humanity! The Kingdom of God is not of this world system. It doesn't rule by legislation, committees, agencies, courts, police, or military might. It rules only by the inward power of the Holy Spirit that regenerates and transforms men into the image of God.

And yet, some still entertain the notion that out of our present government will come the integrity and wisdom to solve the immense problems facing our increasingly weakening and depraved society and explosive world situation. Surely one of our political parties will come up with the answer! Perhaps God will raise up a godly President to lead our nation out of its political, economic and moral morass! I prophesy to you today—no President either can or will lead America to righteousness unless he does so along lines and through agencies other than our constitutional system. HE WOULD HAVE TO BE EITHER A FLAMING EVANGELIST OR A MANIFESTED SON OF GOD! Nothing else will do. How many Christians have swarmed to the polls like herded cattle to cast their vote for some candidate they were propagandized into believing was a Christian, or godly, or honest, or Conservative, or religious, or something else; only to awaken later to the unvarnished fact that in spite of all the shrewdly managed image-building and propaganda he was, in truth, just another politician like all politicians, a specimen of the system that spawned him, controlled by the spirit of the age of this world system, which, as truly as the word of God has taught us, "is under the power of the the wicked one." There is a simple, but sure, test by which one may discern whether anything pertains to the Kingdom of God or is of "this world". "For all that is in the world...IS NOT OF THE FATHER, but of the world" (1 Jn. 2:16). The truth is that all that belongs to the Kingdom of God originates in and proceeds forth from the SPIRIT OF THE

FATHER. Whatever is of the Father is not of the world. Whatever is of the world is not of the Father. That is the law of the Kingdom. Every thought, word, desire, action, activity, method, system, movement, or institution that flows from the life of the Father is an expression of the Kingdom of God. Conversely, all that is of the world originates in and springs forth from the carnal mind. It takes no spirituality at all to walk after the order of the world, but it takes a true commitment to the Holy Spirit to walk in the order of the Kingdom of God, which is the order of the Spirit.

This world is not for us. Its methods are not for us. Its fashions are not for us. Its institutions are not for us. Its ways are not for us. Its life style is not for us. Its mentality is not for us. Its spirit is not for us. We are different. We are of God. We are called to higher things. We are led by the Spirit, the sons of God. God is saving us out of this world. Those apprehended to sonship are overcoming this world even as Jesus said, **"I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33)**. John wrote, **"For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I Jn. 5:4)**. Peter admonishes, **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakes of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Pet. 1:4)**. And finally, the apostle James entreats us, **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God!" (James 4:4)**. And thank God! the world is passing away. Not the earth that we live on, not our solar system, but the world— this present carnal system of things. And with it, all the chaos, sin, war, crime, poverty, pain, pride, deceit, death; yea, all that is not of the Father shall pass away. We have God's word for it!

Even now as we learn to rise up in God, to put on His mind, to walk in His ways, to know His voice, to be led by His Spirit, to be conformed to His image, the nature, glory and authority of that NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH is being formed within us. There has been released from heaven in the last several years a great and wonderful expectancy. It is the expectancy that all heaven is about to break loose in the midst of the Lord's people on a world-wide basis. Do you identify with that expectancy? God is raising up voices throughout the length and breadth of the land to say, "The earth is about to see the glory of God in an unprecedented way." A host of heavenly messengers has been released to every corner of the globe bearing the message, **"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind together will see it, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 40:5)**. I have heard that message from every quarter of the earth, and it is the word of the Lord for this day. Those who think all things are going to continue on as they are, are deceived. Even as I write, this planet is in the greatest spiritual, political, and economic change since World War II. The century and the millennium will soon change. History's "odometer" will turn up to 7000—the beginning of the seventh day since Adam was banished in sorrow from Eden's fair garden. But that means nothing to me except that I have heard the voice of the Lord announcing that He is about to do a new and wonderful thing in the earth. The manifestation of the sons of God is at hand. God is about to accelerate His Kingdom program in the earth. There will be a great change. Deliverance will come. The Day of the Lord will shine brighter than ever before. Whole nations will be impacted by the power of the Kingdom of God. Immortality and incorruption will begin to spring forth in a people. God shall roar out of Zion. The Lord Jesus shall come in His people in all His glorious fullness. Mercy and judgment shall kiss each other in the midst of the earth. Great and terrible shall be the Day of the Lord! I can assure you that a new age is on the horizon, a new dispensation of His working, and we cry out to be ready, and a partaker of that life-flow.

**"I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn. 17:14)**. If Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it, and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed realm from whence He came? The answer is, the Father sent Him into the world to redeem the world. In these two expressions, "in the world," and "not of the world," we find the whole secret to His work as the manifested Son of God in the earth, and the King of the Kingdom.

He was "in the world" to face the powers that rule the world, to learn obedience, and to overcome the world. He was "not of the world" to bring men the life from above, that which man lost from his consciousness in sin, that men might see it and long for it and have it quickened again within them. He was "in the world" witnessing against its sin and shame, its static religion and corrupt government, its impotence to know and please God. He was "not of the world" founding a Kingdom entirely spiritual in nature and heavenly in origin, entirely

independent from all that the world cherishes, promotes, and imposes, with principles and laws and a spirit the very opposite of those that rule the world.

Ray Prinzing's comments are enlightening. "Came a day when Jesus was brought into custody before Pilate, and in submission to this man's rule, He did not seek to defend Himself. In fact, He stated, 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 of hence.' This world had its kingships, various authorities in varying degrees of rulership prevailed. Jesus was not competing with them on that level of kingship. If He was, it would be necessary for Him to rally His forces and fight to defend His kingdom. But He did not belong to the world, He was in it, but not of it, and therefore did not try to exercise its form of kingship. He had no contest with these men, He was not fighting flesh and blood. HIS KINGSHIP RIGHTS DID NOT PERTAIN TO THIS NATURAL REALM. His obedience to the will of the Father placed Him at their disposal, to do as they willed, even to the death of the cross. Full well He knew that there would come a day when the Father would give all judgment into His hand, and all earth shall bow before Him, for the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord. Blessed be His wonderful name!"

There is nothing ordinary about our Christ. Everything about Him is superlative. His perfection is far beyond all question. Our Christ is the most powerful among the powerful, the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty. With His nail-pierced hands He has lifted empires off their hinges. With the same nail-pierced hands He has lifted prodigals out of the hog pen. Our superlative Christ has turned the stream of time into new channels. HE MAKETH ALL THINGS NEW!

Whatsoever He touches, whatsoever touches HIM, becomes new. Our Christ governs the ages, and when we LOOK UNTO HIM we are changed from glory to glory into the very same image.

None of Adam's race shall ever enter this new world. **"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50)**. Adam must die, as was spoken in the beginning. Adam's nature and life cannot inherit this Kingdom. Not that God is vindictive or unforgiving. It's just that the Adamic nature cannot stand in that glorious light unto which no man can approach. So God is creating a new man. **"This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which SHALL BE CREATED shall praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18)**. This creation or world of which I speak was never in existence until Jesus came. He was the beginning of this new creation Man. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega. So through Jesus Christ, something new came into existence. And He is the Door, so none can enter this realm except through Him. He is the Head, so once in this realm you cannot move or operate in His divine principles except as He directs you. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, so no one ever had this without Him, and you will never get past Him or surpass Him; no matter how far you go in God, you will find that Jesus is there, too! He is truly the GOD-MAN. And in union with Him we become GOD-MEN. As it is written, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the GODS!" Oh, the wonder of it! This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

This is the Kingdom about which Jesus talked to Pilate standing on the portico above the courtyard in Jerusalem when Simon Peter was warming his hands around the enemies' fire. Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth," and "Are you the king of the Jews?" And it was to Pilate that Jesus replied with these significant words, "Thou sayest it; but my kingdom is not of this world else would my servants fight; but my kingdom is not from hence." There are not words to express all the fullness in that superb statement but it is obvious that Jesus was not talking about an earthly rulership nor a politically structured kingdom like the kingdom of Great Britain. Jesus said that the Kingdom of which He is King is a Kingdom that is not of this world. Jesus was saying, "The kingdoms of this world maintain their sovereignty and power by military might. My Kingdom does not operate that way. When my servants are under the impression that my Kingdom is of this world, then they will fight." And that accounts for much of the fighting in the world throughout the past seventeen centuries, as the Roman Church conquered by the sword in the name of the Lord and the Protestant Churches have done the same. No one can dispute that most of the wars since the collapse of the pagan Roman Empire have been religious wars. Most often the so-called Christian nations have been engaged in these wars, fighting the enemies of God with carnal warfare, and just as often fighting among themselves, as they are still doing to this day in the country of Ireland.

As long as we believe that the Kingdom of God is of this world our warfare will be with flesh and blood. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God," saith the Lord. Our warfare is not to be with flesh and blood on any level. If you see me battling with flesh and blood you can conclude that I have a misconception of the Kingdom of God. I demonstrate that I think it is a kingdom of the earth and not a Kingdom of Heaven, a kingdom of the natural and not a Kingdom of the Spiritual. When I have a true revelation and a true perception of the Kingdom of God in the heavenlies, my battle has ceased with flesh and blood, with natural men and by natural means. My warfare has begun and continues in the unseen realm of the spirit. Jesus called it "Kingdom of Heaven". Had He meant "kingdom of earth" He would have stated it thus. As long as we believe it to be kingdom of earth, we are going to contend and war with one another. We will insist that our creed is that Kingdom, or our organization is that Kingdom, or our group is that Kingdom, or our race is that Kingdom, or our nation is that Kingdom, and other creeds, organizations, churches, races, or nationalities not in our circle of friends have no part in that Kingdom, and we will fight for it.

There is no greater truth than the truth that our Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom, our King is a spiritual King, its citizens are a spiritual people, born of the Spirit, its ministry is a spiritual ministry, its authority is a spiritual authority, its dominion is a spiritual dominion, its laws are spiritual laws, its weapons are spiritual weapons, its priesthood is a spiritual priesthood, its sovereignty is a spiritual sovereignty and its power is spiritual power, blessed be God!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 12

## THE KINGDOM WITHIN

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

### KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART TWELVE

### THE KINGDOM WITHIN THE WORLD WITHIN TRIUMPH OF THE KING WITHIN

Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God cannot be fully appreciated until there is put by its side the conception that was held by the Jews of His day. The Jews are still looking for their Messiah. When Jesus came they were expecting a powerful military leader who would deliver them from the tyranny of Rome. They therefore rejected the humble Nazarene even though they saw His mighty works and heard His wonderful words of life. They wanted a military genius who would save them from the Roman yoke, and they were not interested in a Savior who would save them from sin. These men wanted a king of nations— God sent a King of hearts; men wanted a mighty deliverer—God sent the Son of His love; men wanted temporal, political power—God sent His Christ to lead them into spiritual power; men wanted to hear the clash of arms and the swish of swords—but God sent a Teacher and Healer and Miracle Worker.

The Kingdom was the one hope of the nation, the bright millennium for which every one waited; its establishment would bring in the golden age, whose glory would outvie all the splendors of their past history. It spoke to them of an exalted nation, a restored people, a perfected society; of the time when their wrongs should be redressed. This was the Kingdom the Jews expected: a display of divine sovereignty that would overthrow Rome, sweep the godless Gentiles away, purge the earth of unrighteousness and evil, and exalt God's people, Israel, in **their own** land over all the nations of **the earth**. Then the treasures of the nations should be at their disposal; the Gentiles should come to their light, and kings to the brightness of their rising; strangers (foreign hired workers and slaves) should stand and feed their flocks, and the sons of the alien be their plowmen and vinedressers; and in plenty, prosperity and glory, their Messiah King should rule over them. The national imagination was fired with the thought of this Kingdom. The minds of the people were full of it, their patriotism yearned for it. To them the signs of the times pointed powerfully to the imminence of its arrival.

The people of Israel had expectations about an earthly, political kingdom. Jesus came doing miracles and preaching powerful sermons. As His fame spread He gained thousands of followers and soon He began to fit their expectations. Who could better deal with the Romans than a man who could walk on water, feed thousands with a handful of food, cast out devils, heal the sick and raise the dead? But from prison John the Baptist sent two messengers to inquire of Jesus, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" John, like many of his fellow Jews, had expected God to send someone to oppose the powerful authorities, both Jewish and Roman. When Jesus came on the scene he trusted that He was the one who would confront the **established order and bring** it down. Yet there were things that troubled John...Jesus didn't seem to be fulfilling all of his expectations.

Jesus claimed that the new order of the Kingdom of God had arrived, but there was no visible change in the political order of the day. Jesus didn't stir up the crowds with fiery political speeches; He was not recruiting bands of fighters; He was not passing out swords; He urged no one to practice civil disobedience: and He was not organizing any resistance movement. So John wondered—Is Jesus really the One, after all? As Jesus entered Jerusalem riding upon a donkey, the vast crowds that had gathered felt a surge of patriotism, and in their excitement they waved palm branches and sang, "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: **Blessed be the King of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord:** Hosanna in the highest!" They were eager to raise up Jesus as their King to sit on David's throne. But Jesus cried. He climbed up the mount of Olives and wept. He could see the folly of seeking a deliverance and peace on the outside instead of in the heart. Gazing sorrowfully over Jerusalem He said, "If thou hadst known,

even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from shine eyes" (Lk. 19:42).

The corruption of the human heart is incredible beyond words to express and it would have been completely useless had the Lord sent His Son to be the deliverer of His people from enemies without, while leaving their wicked hearts unchanged and their carnal natures uncrucified. The men of Israel could have believed in Jesus as their Saviour from the Romans. As their Saviour from their sins they could not believe in Him, for they loved their sins. The King of Heaven came to offer them a share in His Kingdom; but they were not poor in spirit, and the Kingdom of Heaven was not for them. Gladly would they have inherited the earth; but they were not meek, and the earth was for the humble children of the perfect Father. The whole problem with the kingdom of Judah as a nation in the days of Christ was that they were unconverted. There was no birth from above. There was no new heart and no new spirit placed within by which men are transformed into new creatures and conformed into the image of God. They wanted Christ to come and rule from without over their external enemies, but they had no desire for Him to march triumphantly into their inner life to deliver them from the kings of corruption and idolatry that ruled upon the throne of their hearts.

The persistent, perverse, unholy disposition in the *natural man* and the *carnal mind* does not change itself. Refinement will not change it. Education will not change it. Social and rehabilitation programs will not change it. Prison will not change it. Evolution will not change it. Society will not change it. Religious creeds, ceremonies and programs will not change it. "Deliverance meetings" will not change it. The perfidious hearts and lives of unregenerated men can no more be changed by these means than an Ethiopian can change his skin or a leopard his spots. The only way a change can be brought about is by being "**created in Christ Jesus unto good works**" (Eph. 2:10). **In all the ages past the only permanent reformations have been** those which were wrought of God in INDIVIDUALS. All national reformations and improvements have ended in degeneracy and revolt. All ecclesiastical reformations, after they have run their course, have ended in backsliding and apostasy.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven** (Mat. 6:10). So then the Kingdom of God originates in the realm of Spirit (heaven) and finds expression in the physical realm (earth). It is set up in the believer's heart. He takes unto Himself His mighty power and subdues all things unto Himself. He goes into the soul, conquering and to conquer, until He has put all things under His feet. We are praying for the time when God will give every unbeliever in the universe to Jesus Christ for His inheritance. We pray for the day when the uttermost parts of the earth will come under His dominion and possession. We pray for the day when all kingdoms will bow before Him and all nations shall serve Him. We pray for the day when the mountain of the house of the Lord, His government of kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, the many-membered Christ of God, shall be established everywhere. We pray for that day when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in and all Israel shall be saved. In that day it shall be seen that Christ is King over the whole earth. He will appear to every soul on earth, in heaven, and in hell as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. It is proper for those who love Him and seek His appearing, to pray that He would haste the time. Everyone should pray that His Kingdom, the Kingdom of grace and glory and righteousness and power, would come quickly and swallow up the kingdoms of the earth.

Men need not a King to straighten out the mess in the outer world, in Washington, D.C., in Moscow, in the Middle East or in Bosnia—they need a King to change the inside of every man! "Please come Lord Jesus," I found myself saying the other day, after reading the gory news. Killings and muggings, and violent jail-breaks; endless marriage disputes; child abuse; the video tape muck and mire sewerage through our cities and homes; drunkenness with its toll of broken homes and killings and destroyed lives; mass killings of innocents by terrorism and in bloody strife in countries all over the earth; and last but not least, what kind of human beings have we that could push the red button, sending the whole race into oblivion? **THY KINGDOM COME!**

The truth is, not very much has changed in two thousand years. The vast majority of Christians today think *exactly like the Jews of Jesus' day!* The same crowd is all about us today. They want deliverance from the government, from persecution, from abortion, from communism, from the antichrist, from the tri-lateral commission and the council on foreign relations, from the banking system, from the vast political conspiracies that are steadily pushing the world toward a nightmare of tyranny. Most people are aware of the world's need for salvation. In these troubled days there is an almost universal longing for a better world. But our tragedy is in

seeking it from the wrong source. Like the Jews, we cannot believe that what we need to be saved from is OURSELVES!

## THE KINGDOM WITHIN

You remember that when the Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation...for lo, the kingdom of God *is within you*." The Pharisees were treating as future what was already present. The Kingdom of God was right there *within them* if they could have understood it. "But," someone objects, "surely the Kingdom of God was not within those carnal, hateful, legalistic, Christ-rejecting Pharisees!" Some say that the correct translation should be:

For the kingdom of God is *in your midst*," or "*among you*," meaning that the Kingdom was present in their midst in the person of Jesus, "among" them but not "within" them. It cannot be denied—the Kingdom was indeed present among them in the very life of the Son of God, the King of glory! **But that is not the meaning of this passage.**

The clearest meaning of the Greek can always be ascertained by *usage*. The way a word is *used* reveals its true meaning—the meaning that the Holy Spirit of inspiration puts upon it, not the meaning our English translators give it. It is a thing of wonder—the Holy Spirit has faithfully, powerfully, wisely and indisputably recorded for us the precise meaning of the word here translated "within". The Greek word is ENTOS meaning simply, according to Strong's Concordance, "inside; within". The word is used in only one other place in the New Testament, in Matthew 23:26. It is the Lord Jesus Himself that uses the word on both occasions, and notice what He says. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the *outside* of the cup and platter, but *within* they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is *within* (entos) the cup and platter, that the *outside* of them may be clean also." No one can argue that ENTOS means "in the midst" or "among" in this place—it clearly means "within". "Within" is contrasted with the "outside" of the cup and platter and plainly speaks of the pollution *within* the hearts of men, not *in their midst* or *among* them. The evil in men is not something apart from them or outside of them but something rooted deeply in the inward nature.

The question follows—how could Jesus say to the same Pharisees that both corruption was within them and the Kingdom of God was within them! It sounds like an obvious contradiction. But it isn't. Paul spoke of a dual reality within man when he said, "*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my (spiritual) mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members*" (Rom. 7:22-23). Little wonder that in desperation he cried out, "O wretched man that I am!" It is really very simple. The carnal, soulish heart of man is the seat of all uncleanness, just as the deeper spirit of man is the root of all godliness. So it is not surprising that the Pharisees failed to discover the presence of the Kingdom within them, for they were not walking after the spirit, but after the flesh. Yet they were potentially capable of either.

I am absolutely certain that the statement Jesus made to the scribes and Pharisees that day is very true. "The kingdom of God is within you." I totally believe that statement to be accurate. The Kingdom of God is within you, it is within me, it is within each member of your family, it is within all your relatives, your friends, even within your enemies. It is within the lowliest citizen of the most backward country, it is within the greatest of the ruling monarchs, presidents, or prime ministers. It is within mankind, it is within every man—even the scribes and Pharisees. This is the true light "*that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*" (Jn. 1:9). When the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus *when* the Kingdom of God should come He did not tell them when, but He did answer them. And on various occasions when Jesus' own disciples asked *when* the Kingdom would come He never once told them when. You can't really say "when" the Kingdom of God is coming because it always *is*. There is no "when" to it. It's just that we must know *what* it is and *where* it is and *how* it comes, to become conscious of that indwelling Kingdom. We must "enter in" to it within ourselves, experientially, for the Kingdom is even now "at hand". The church world has taught us that the Kingdom is something that came into the earth when Jesus came, but because the Jews refused to receive it, after Jesus died and rose and ascended into heaven it was *withheld* and *deferred* until He comes back again, *postponed* until a coming "Millennium". But I have good news for you today. Every one who reads these lines now receives the good news—the Kingdom of

God is *within you! YOU!* It is *now* within you. It doesn't have to *get* within you, it doesn't have to come from without to enter into you, it is already right there on the inside of you.

So note—not to the disciples who followed Him and kept His sayings, but to the Pharisees in their spiritual blindness Jesus spoke these amazing words: "The kingdom of God is within you." Again, some would say, surely the Kingdom of God could not be found IN these Pharisees, within them, for they were against the King. But, think again, for the territory is HIS regardless, whether He was actively ruling from within their hearts or not. The Pharisees were part of His Kingdom, only they were in rebellion against the King, their hearts were filled with treason, and there was a need to dethrone the usurped rulership of the flesh, that the true King might be enthroned. Where is the King's domain? WITHIN YOU! Yes, the Kingdom of God was indeed "within *them*" as a bright and radiant possibility. This appeals to me, in a sense, as the most beautiful thing Jesus ever said. Consider what the Kingdom of Heaven was in His thought—the most pure and perfect and heavenly of all existing realities; then consider that He said this to His implacable enemies, and to the men, who, in their lives, exemplified the exact opposite of what He had come to reveal and establish. Within these men—religious intellectuals and scholars, hypocrites, hateful—there slumbered this lovely and lovable thing—the Kingdom of the spirit. They were possible members of that Kingdom; in their spirits were all the materials necessary for the development of the Kingdom of God. I cannot emphasize too strongly that the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of the *spirit*, for *God is spirit*. Buried deep within every man is the spirit that has come from God, for every man is body, soul, and *spirit*.

The Bible says that "*God is the Father of the spirits of all flesh*" (Num. 27: 16; Heb. 12:9). We might ask, "Who, really, is entitled to think of God as Father?" God is the Father of all men. **Some men walk as** children of the devil, for they walk after the flesh, after the serpent nature. But God is still the Father of their spirit. God is the Father of all and He is the Saviour of all. He is the Saviour of all *because* He is the Father of all. There is a special sense in which God is the Father only of those who are reborn of Him through the Holy Spirit of regeneration. To these He gives, in a blessedly unique sense, the "spirit of adoption" or the revelation of their sonship, whereby they cry, "Abba, Father!" The Holy Spirit quickens *their spirit* to know that they are sons of God and to enable them to walk in that realm. Nevertheless, the fact remains, universal and unalterable, that God is the Father of the spirits of all men. If we had no spirit from God, the Holy Spirit would be unable to quicken our spirit and make it alive **unto Him**.

Father Adam is declared by the Spirit of inspiration to be "the son of God" (Lk. 3:38). He is indeed a "prodigal son." But notwithstanding his disobedience and banishment from Father's house, he has never ceased to be a son; the Father, notwithstanding His anger and punishment, has never ceased to be a Father. And He is a loving and tender and gracious Father who waits patiently for every prodigal to come home. And they *will* come home! Blessed be His name. He has built within the heart of every prodigal the capacity to return. How precious beyond words to express is the blessed truth that God-life abides within every man down in the depths of his spirit, although most men walk not after the spirit, but after the flesh. It is *there*, within man's spirit, that the Kingdom of Heaven is to be found. There is the root, the base, the seed, the fountainhead of God's life and God's rule. The Kingdom of God is truly within every man—but he knows it **not, and therefore walks unheeding its** claims and powers. But if ever he discovers that Kingdom of Life and Light and Love he discovers it within as his spirit is quickened by God's Spirit, his consciousness awakened to the Kingdom of the spirit within. The day comes for all, every man in his own order, when it can be said, "*And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...*" (Eph. 2:1).

While the Kingdom of God is thus *present*, it is also still future. Its full realization has yet to come. So long as there is in this world one man who has not surrendered to the spirit of Christ, so long as there is a single area of life that has not been brought into subjection to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, so long will the Kingdom remain *unrealized*, so long shall we need to pray the prayer, "Thy kingdom *come!*" All the misery of this world is due to the fact that there are still multitudes of men and women walking after the flesh, there are whole areas of human activity that are not birthed out of, or controlled by, the Spirit. The Kingdom is still imperfect, incomplete. Its full establishment lies in the future somewhere, as the apostle has taught, "*Then cometh the end, when He .shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet*" (I Cor. 15:24-25). Until that full establishment takes place, until God is experientially King everywhere and over

everybody and every thing in the union of love, the world's "golden age" will not have arrived. For the elect of God the Day has dawned! The Sun of Righteousness has arisen within our hearts! Our old heavens and our old earth have passed away. We live now in a New World, we sing now a New Song, our night has turned to Day. Darkness has flown away, sin and sorrow and death are swallowed up, God has wiped all tears from off our faces, we are living stones in the City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and all things are made new! This is the present glorious and eternal reality of the sons of God in this wonderful Day of the Lord! This is the Kingdom. and the power, and the glory of God within His chosen ones.

If I did not believe in the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God in all realms and everywhere and over every thing throughout the vastnesses of infinity, and if I believed that this world was to continue to be misruled and misgoverned as it is; if I believed that sin and sorrow and death and wicked men and vile institutions were to continue unto the end, I should despair of humanity and God, and I should certainly tear I Corinthians 15:20-28 out of my Bible and burn it in the stove. But God never gives up. God reigns! The good news which our Lord Jesus Christ came to preach is "good news of great joy **to all people.**" Praise God for the good news! God reigns!—that is the good news. God shall be Victor! God shall put every enemy under His feet and our feet! He is Lord of ALL!

## THE WORLD WITHIN

It is a blessed day for any man when he discovers that what the Bible calls "heaven" is in fact and in truth the REALM OF THE SPIRIT. It is not a place on some far-away planet, nor a figment of man's imagination, but a realm of reality where saints of God may dwell here and now. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavens in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). These things are hard to utter, because the vast majority of Christians cling tenaciously to the dark understanding of the carnal mind, and it is almost impossible for them to believe that heaven is an abiding and eternal reality. It is even harder for them to comprehend that the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS **WITHIN MAN**, and that in spirit we possess the fullness of its more excellent glory. To most of the Lord's people the outer, physical, and natural realm, including the supposed golden streets of that great "city in the sky," is the realm of REALITY while the spiritual realm, the unseen Kingdom within, is the realm of shadows, mists, visions, dreams and UNREALITY. At best it is of only minor importance. But just the opposite is the truth. The natural man (and most believers are pathetically natural) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.

If you would understand the scope and magnificence of the mighty working of God in your life, my beloved, consider the message of the radiant constellations of the illimitable heavens above and know that all the power and glory and wisdom and working so marvelously illustrated in their shining configurations is in fact and in truth wrought out in the deepest recesses of your own being. If you will give prayerful consideration to the statement of our Lord that the Kingdom of the Heavens is within you, you cannot avoid the conclusion that man is a copy in miniature of the universe, and every thing that exists or takes place in the vast expanses of the cosmos, also exists and takes place in the inner constitution of man. The powers and forces and laws that make up the nature and constitution of man are the same as the powers and forces and laws that on an infinitely larger scale are called the universe, and every reality in the heavens expresses itself in the consciousness of man, and reflects itself in the experience of man, enabling man to know the universe by himself, and himself by the universe.

Scientists are probing into two unseen worlds. one is a world too vast and far away to be seen by the eye, and the other is a world too small to be observed by the eye. I want to give you three words in this connection, together with their meanings. First, we find the word MICROCOSM. This word means a little world: any thing regarded as a world in miniature: man, viewed as an epitome of the universe. This word comes from two words in the Greek. one is MIKROS which means little or miniature. The other is KOSMOS meaning world, in the sense of an orderly arrangement. Thus we have the meaning of LITTLE WORLD. The word MACROCOSM, on the other hand, means the great world, or the universe. It also comes from two words. One is MACROS meaning great, and the other is KOSMOS meaning world. We noted above that the word MIKROS carried the meaning of "man viewed as an epitome of the universe." This word EPITOME means, among other things, a *condensed representation* of something. The word MACROCOSM then gives us the meaning that man is a

CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of all the universe, or man is all the universe in miniature.

After the original creation, God then began to move to bring the whole vast creation into fellowship and harmony with Himself. In order to accomplish this God made man in the image of the creation, but also in the image of Himself. Man is therefore the bridge or connecting link between God in His spiritual existence and the creation in its visible and material constitution. God put both Himself and the whole universe into man in miniature—a microcosm of the macrocosm! His purpose is that by and through man all things shall be brought into subjection to the mind of the Lord. We read in Hebrews that all things were placed under man, but we do not as yet see all things put in subjection to man, but WE DO SEE JESUS who was, we may safely say, as the second man and the last Adam, a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of God, the universe, and all mankind. In other words, what was done in and through the singular Man, Jesus the Christ, will also be done in and through the corporate man, but on an enlarged scale, for Jesus said we would do even greater works than He did. There is no stagnation in God, for He continually moves ahead. And as He moves, we move with Him, advancing according to His pre-determined plan. What wonders lie ahead of us in this majestic pathway!

The seventeenth century German mystic, the simple shoe cobbler from Gorlitz, Jacob Boehme, penned the following words which are just as revolutionary and up-to-date as the space age. "Now, dear reader, observe: If you want to know about Heaven and what Heaven is and where it is, you do not need to cast your thoughts many thousands of miles off, for that place, that heaven thousands of miles away, is not your Heaven. The true Heaven is not a created place but an uncreated place, and it is not found in a particular place but everywhere, even in the very place where you are standing and going. For when **your spirit within** yourself is able to penetrate inward through and beyond your own flesh and life, and is able to catch hold upon the innermost moving of God, then you are clearly in Heaven.

"I urge you to open the eyes of your spirits and your hearts, for I want earnestly to show you the true and proper way to the gates of God's Heaven. Behold! God is the True, the One, the only Being out of whom you yourselves were created, and within whose Life you are living even now. Therefore, Oh child of man, when you behold in your flesh the depths of the universe, the stars and the complexity of the earth, and all that is in heaven and earth, you are in fact truly in the presence of God. For He is All, and in him you live and have your being; and that same God reigns and rules over you as well, because He is your King and Creator. It is from this God that you receive even your senses and your ability to have consciousness and to know and think and express yourself. Don't you see? You are a part of Him, and your entire being is a derivative of Him. You are His offspring, you came from Him, and you truly exist in Him. If this were not true, you would never have been, for you are the image of God.

"And so, little children, if you now want and desire to draw near by faith to the Life of God, Listen! You must enter inward to the depths within yourselves wherein Christ dwells—not without. For within you there exists an eternity, even as there is an eternity within Him. So you must go in to the depths of the hidden secret place within you, to the very depths of the Eternal Willing in the Father. For it is within this Will or Desire that Wrath and Love eternally struggle against each other, and in which Love is the eternal victor out of the fiery dark wheel of selfishness, through the eternal cross in God's Heart, into regeneration bursting forth as the eternal glorious light of God's nature. His nature is Light, Gentleness, Mercy, Wisdom and Love forever, and it is expressed to us by His Voice, the Word, the Son, our Lord, Saviour, and God. And out of this eternally immense depth of God's Desire, there forever streams forth the Light and Love which is the uncreated glory. And this is the true Heaven.

"For in this depth within you, God eternally rules in Holiness in His uncreated Heaven. And His Willing within you expresses itself as the willing to all goodness, not wrath, and this willing ever reigns in everlasting dominion, the Sovereign God of Love in victory through the eternal cross on which was slain the Lamb of God before ever a single atom was created. And when you comprehend this, that is, the tragedy which forever occurs in the eternal depths of the Heart of God, and when you know that our God is safe forever, True forever, Merciful forever, and the Being of Love forever (because He forever dies to Himself on the cross in His own heart to all wrath and selfish desire), then my brothers and sisters, you will have crossed through and penetrated into the very and holy heart of God" —end quote.

Our dear friend and brother, Charles Roby, recently sent us this illustrative story. There once was a little boy who wanted to meet GOD. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry, so he offered her a Twinkie. She accepted it and smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave. But before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old woman and gave her a big hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" **He replied**, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!" Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." But before her son responded, she added, "You know, He's much younger than I expected." To which brother Roby added: "As you know, the only way we know GOD or the things pertaining to the KINGDOM of GOD is by the SPIRIT of GOD! Our mind can't comprehend this great mystery of GOD IN US, but God who is our Father has revealed it unto us by His Spirit: that we are flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone. Jesus said, 'When you see me, you see MY FATHER.' Isn't that a wonderful truth that expresses what Paul wrote: 'He that is joined unto the LORD is ONE SPIRIT!'"

Our transition from the kingdom of the flesh to the Kingdom of God demands the new strength, day by day, of some Fountain springing up through all the bitter wastes of earth. Bitter wastes cannot make themselves sweet: fountains must spring up in sweetness from the ground of Life. In a hotel in a certain city in the Northeast there is a notice in each room that the water is drawn from deep artesian wells. The city is on a narrow strip of sandy land. On the East is the salty ocean, on the West a brackish marsh. Shallow wells are all filled with undrinkable salt water. But shafts sunk deep enough yield pure, sweet water. Ah, *the flesh* is a shallow well! When a man tries to live by the carnal thoughts, ideas, ways, understanding, wisdom, methods and strength of the flesh realm of the outer world, he tries to quench his thirst with salt. It is the realm of death. But when a man taps into the **deep down inner resources of the SPIRIT he then** lives by the freshness, sweetness, vitality and power of the Kingdom of God within.

I **would say to you that the life** of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven, or standing by us, or worn as a garment, so that we stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth now and then when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is IN every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and cells, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism.

Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the Spiritual Life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of Being. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a...seed, which a man took, and SOWED IN HIS FIELD." The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He "passes this way," nor from the weekly refreshing that comes to our weary souls as we gather in meetings with others. Thank God for the opportunity to praise and worship the Lord **together, and for the fellowship and encouragement of those of "like precious faith," but I declare to you** that the life of sonship can only be known as we turn INWARD, to discover and know the living and eternal REALITY OF THE CHRIST WITHIN. Only in the consciousness of His voice speaking, His hand guiding, His power generating, His life producing, *from within*, is there infallible stability, undiminished strength, unfailing wisdom and knowledge, unlimited power, incorruptible nature and the unveiling of the image of God within. With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the potential of GOD'S INDWELLING LIFE to be a living, transforming, all-sufficient reality to your heart.

None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you.

## THE TRIUMPH OF THE KING WITHIN

The institutions of civilization find no place in God's program for the redemption of the world. The wisest and most powerful enterprises on the part of man cannot banish the evils of sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death. Thank God for humanitarian efforts for the alleviation of suffering and misery, the March of Dimes, the United Way, the Christian Children's Fund, airlifts to refugees fleeing war ravaged areas, welfare programs, rescue missions, and a thousand more. The heart of the child of God is a heart of compassion for the afflicted and needy on whatever level help can be rendered. I myself have contributed to such charitable causes. Yet we must not fail to point out that the root of social and national ills lies too deep for these agencies to eradicate. Sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death do not come merely by ignorance; therefore they cannot be removed by knowledge. They do not come merely by environment; therefore they cannot be expelled by improved circumstance. They do not come merely by poverty; therefore they cannot be annihilated by the infusion of money and programs.

The redemption of the race from the evils that afflict it, and work mischief and misery in it, must come about by the direct intervention of God. There is a valid reason why, as the scripture says, "Salvation is of THE LORD." It *could not* be otherwise! Since God drove man out from the Garden, from life, from the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, into a world of thorns and struggle and need and pain and death, it can only be GOD HIMSELF who brings man back into the blessedness of Eden. That is exactly why all the efforts of man to eliminate crime and poverty and sickness and bigotry and warfare and bloodshed have utterly failed. Only the mighty power of God within man can liberate man. That is the law of the Kingdom within. God Himself will bring victory as all men are drawn into Him, and the Kingdom of God is released within.

The character and procedures of the Kingdom of God are so entirely different from the ways of men, they do not compare. In far away Babylon the Holy Spirit witnessed through the prophet Daniel, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44). Though many look for a "revived Roman Empire" to arise in Europe with "Antichrist" at its head, the ten-toed confederacy of the end-times, yet, praise God, "IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED." That there may be a fulfillment in the outer world of appearances I would not deny, although it is my opinion that historically it has already been fulfilled. But the quickening of the Spirit upon the truth so vital for today bids me look beyond the *letter of the word*, beyond the outward manifestations, beyond the European Community and the Common Market, along with the religious Ecumenical Movement; and receiving of the *spirit of the word*, turning inwardly, we find that all that pertains to the kingdoms of this world lies within the heart of man, and there have been so many **kings which have ruled within us, and as** His Kingdom unfurls its banner over our lives, these kings are subdued and brought to nought.

There are kings of self-will, of worldly ambition, of fleshly zeal, of ruling thoughts, of compelling desires, of religious dogmas, creeds, and traditions and commandments of men, of soulish emotions and impulses spirited by the world, of fleshly appetites dominated by the five senses, of fears, doubts, anger, rebellions, weaknesses and sins. The still small voice speaks a word, and immediately carnal reason tries to argue us out of it. We sense His direction and leading to "stand still," but human sympathy and sentiment tell us to get involved in things **He has not led us** to do. So we yield and obey **these emotions and** impulses, and wonder why we miss the joy and blessing of the Lord. But, praise God, in the days of *these kings*— while they flourish, control, and bear heavy in their rule—shall the God of heaven set up His Kingdom and all authority and power shall be subdued before it. Into the midst of these kings has rolled THE STONE, it is breaking in pieces, consuming all these, bringing all into submission to Him!

Ray Prinzing has beautifully expounded along this line—"Many a battle has been fought *and won*, though devils were not rebuked, and there was no writhing on the floor in intense travail, nor any challenge by an antagonist against the truth believed—it was all INTERNAL. Battles of the mind, battles of inner spirit conflict, a

warfare against the vision, against the *thing* which God had personally revealed, but which the flesh was not ready to receive. And while we would 'reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,' yet only HE can complete this work in us and make it an experiential reality. So we surrender, and He works it out. 'Now why dost thou cry aloud? IS THERE NO KING IN THEE? is thy counselor perished?...' (Micah 4:9). Israel was desperate, she was in travail, in pain to bring forth, and was crying out in her distress. God answered back, 'IS THERE NO KING IN THEE?' Praise God, there is *one* in the midst of us who shall take the reins of the government, and He shall rule in righteousness, so that we eagerly await the emergence of *His Kingdom*.

"It is our own little INNER KINGDOM that needs The King, so it is to this realm that we ask the question, and praise God, can answer back positively, YES, THERE IS A KING WITHIN. Paul declared that 'we must through much tribulation (Greek: pressure) enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:22). As much as the flesh would desire an easier way into His Kingdom, there is no other way. If there was a list of special works to do, we'd struggle through, checking them off one by one, and lay claim to the glory. If a baptism would do it, we'd be baptized seven times face forward, or backwards, upside down, or however the requirement. BUT THIS IS GOD'S PROCESSING IN US, and He has purposed to do it through much pressure. If it isn't a physical pressure, it will be a mental one, and if not mental, then a spiritual one—as we travail to enter through the straight gate, and receive of His fullness. There is no cause to view this negatively, for it is this very pressure that shall literally and gloriously PRESS US INTO GOD, as His life becomes a REALITY WITHIN. One might have doctrines, visions, dreams, revelations, and be able to recite it to all who pass by your way, but they are of little value when just a mere form of head-knowledge. They have to be worked into us experimentally through the nitty-gritty processings of the day, until self is conquered, and Christ reigns supreme within us, and the vision becomes LIFE, a firm foundation upon which we can stand to face the storms of the times.

"In some occupations a man with very little authority, limited in his power to make decisions and rule over others, is referred to as a *straw boss*. Yet betimes this individual gets carried away with his own sense of importance and tries to go beyond his rightful place, giving orders and bossing others. Seems like we have all had our share of *straw bosses* usurping authority, as they would assume control over that which they have no right. We'll pass very lightly over the fact that most of the so-called 'shepherding movement' falls into this classification, as they usurp the Headship which rightly belongs to CHRIST in every individual. At the moment we are more concerned with these *internal* straw bosses—our own will, our own desires, our own impulses, etc., which would like to hold control within us. But when we have been OVERCOME BY CHRIST, He shall be King within. Praise His name! In fact there is quite a bit of truth in the statement that we shall only become *overcomers in Christ* in proportion to how much we have been overcome *by* Christ. To partake of His victory He must first become *Victor* over all our inner kingdom" —end quote.

I do not hesitate to tell you that the sphere of the Kingdom is the *individual heart*. This is the end for which man was made, the final cause of his creation, that he might be a province and principality of God: the King eternal septering him throughout his whole nature, spirit, soul, and body. When I pray, "Thy Kingdom come," I do not feel that I am praying solely for my city, my nation, the world, or the vast reaches of the cosmos. I do not think first or foremost about harlots, drunkards, drug addicts, criminals, atheists, Moslems, communists, or the masses of sinners throughout the world. When I pray, "Thy Kingdom come," I am not content with adding to the thought my unpleasant neighbors, the Mafia, or Fidel Castro. No! When I utter the prayer it is with the deep conviction that I am praying for *myself*. I am praying that God's rule may come fully and powerfully in my own heart, mind, nature and life.

Oh, **yes, this prayer has reference** to *ourselves*. There is a problem and that is that we have our own kingdom, the kingdom of man. My business, *my* enterprise, *my* family, *my* ministry, *my* church, *my* elders, *my* people, *my* thing that I am doing, that we are concerned with. And over against all that, Jesus sets His "Thy." "THY Kingdom come." When we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," we pray, "Father, come in Thy Lordship into my own heart; rule *there*; take Thy throne *there*; make me completely Thine." See what it means. It means that we are asking that every wicked way, every cherished sin and passion, every self-serving desire and ambition, every carnal thought, word and deed may be cast out of our hearts. It means that neither money nor pleasure nor prestige should have any power over us. It means that the Father's will and not our own may dictate fully

our lives. It means that the precious mind that was in Christ Jesus so possesses us until all death is swallowed up into HIS VICTORY. Oh, that is a great prayer!

I have known men that loved their sins too much, their pleasures, their money, their position, their religion, their traditions, their power, *themselves* too much, ever to be able to pray sincerely, "Thy Kingdom come!" The Kingdom is, first and foremost, the reign of God in the hearts and lives of men. Less than this it cannot be; more than this it will not be. There is no department of human life where the Kingdom can rule unless first God rules the heart. God cannot rule *nations* until first He rules in the hearts of the citizens of those nations from the king, president or prime minister all the way down to the garbage collector and the shoeshine boy. God cannot rule over *things* or *institutions* until first He rules the hearts of those who form, own and control those things and institutions. Imagine God trying to rule over an army without first winning the allegiance of the general who commands that army and the soldiers who fight in it!

Is it not a right thing and a possible thing, that all men should in their hearts yield allegiance to God? And were this allegiance yielded, would it not necessarily result that all our relations with one another would be transformed and hallowed by the law of His life within? Would it not necessarily result that the whole constitution of the world, in all its domestic, political, social, and economic arrangements, would be guided by the Spirit of God and would show in every situation and circumstance that God was ruling? You see, to bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth does not require that all forms of government and all institutions be replaced, though they may be— but that **the spirit of those who administer them be changed!** Capitalism or communism would either one work just fine if every person involved, from the top to the bottom, were guided and motivated by the spirit of love, generosity, faithfulness, honesty, goodness, brotherly concern, righteousness, meekness, and the mind of Christ. In order for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ it is not necessary for many employments or relations of life to be altered, but it is needful that WE OURSELVES BE ALTERED!

As brother Paul Mueller has aptly written: "Indeed, God does not change the world by man's armies, or by any of man's carnal systems of government. The Lord is beginning to change the world by first changing the hearts, souls and minds of mankind. People shall be changed, not by human agreements or by war, but by the operation of the Spirit of God in their lives. The Lord also is beginning to dispel the darkness in the world by imparting the greater Light of His presence into the hearts of His elect. This is the method by which the just and righteous rule of the Kingdom of God is coming to the earth. In this way alone, all the evil and darkness in all the earth shall be completely dispelled. Then the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God shall be fully manifested in all the earth for the glory and honor of our sovereign and omnipotent Father. And His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"The Kingdom of God has been planted as a seed in the fertile garden of the hearts of His people. And His Kingdom has been growing in the hearts of His people ever since. His Kingdom began in His faithful sons as a word or seed that sprouts in the ground. The Kingdom seed is the very life of Christ that was planted within us. As a seed in the natural soil sprouts or explodes by its inherent life, so the seed of the Christ within us has burst forth with His life to manifest the fruit of the Kingdom of God. The seed is Christ, the Word of God and the word of His Kingdom. When we receive that seed/word, and it grows within us, the Kingdom of God will grow, and indeed has grown, to become the greatest tree on earth so that the birds of the air will find lodging in it. That seed/word within us has sprouted, bursting forth by the Life of Christ to manifest first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear, until its abundant fruit shall fill the whole earth.

"The Kingdom of God is within you, and is not seen by observation. Christ, the King, reigns within your life and mine. Within you is the seedbed of His Kingdom that will fill the whole earth and then the universe. The same Kingdom that began in us has burst forth as a germinated seed to become a tender plant. That plant is growing until the power and glory of the King who reigns within His elect begins to spread His influence far beyond into all the earth. As He continues to reign in us and in the earth, all things shall be gathered into the Kingdom of God and nothing will be left outside of it. With enlightened spiritual eyes, and the mind of Christ, we can see the Kingdom of God as a great tree that is filling the earth and the universe with His peace, justice, righteousness and life. His Kingdom has now grown so that He is beginning to swallow up the kingdoms of

man and reign on this earth. The Kingdom of God that began within His faithful sons has grown from the original word or seed, then to the blade stage, and finally it has become the full corn in the ear.

"Our spiritual life is no longer to be seen as either a seed, or a mere blade, but we are now seen as the full corn in the ear. The natural earth brings forth fruit of herself when a seed is planted (Mk. 4:26-29). So also does the word/seed of Christ and His Kingdom grow within us, **and of itself**, to bring forth a Kingdom plant identical with the original seed. We cannot see its growth, but it is growing nevertheless. As long as we are feeding on Christ, nothing can stop the growth of the Kingdom seed within us. By virtue of the nature and life of the original seed planted within us, Christ must grow up within us to come forth with the same Life that He is. That is the law of natural seed-life! But the original seed grows within us by the power of the greater law and life of Christ and the Kingdom of God.

"If we have any questions regarding our present trials and tribulations, we should consider a reason for these trials. Within us is the seed life of the Kingdom of God. The planting of the Lord requires special care. As the farmer trims and prunes his crops to produce better plants resulting in a better harvest, so the great Husbandman and Lord of the vineyard dresses and cares for His Kingdom plantings. The harvest must go on! Nothing must be allowed in our lives that will curtail this harvest, either to reduce the quality and quantity of the harvest or to prevent it from taking place. So our wise Husbandman cuts and prunes us, removing everything in our lives that would affect the harvest. Christ is the Vine, and we are the branches. We are growing out of Him! His life is our life! As long as we abide in Him, this vine will grow to become that Kingdom tree which shall fill the whole earth with its abundant and life-giving fruit. Our Husbandman will see to it that we are always trimmed and pruned, fit to abide as a branch within the great Vine that He is. And now, our time of fruit-bearing approaches.

"The seed that we are becoming shall be scattered abroad to reproduce after His kind, filling the earth with Kingdom sons just like us and, more importantly, just like Christ. Understanding this blessed truth as we do, is it not important then that our wise Husbandman should put His chosen ones to the test, that He might prove us and purge us from all that is not of the purity of Christ? It must be so, otherwise we would reproduce after the carnal nature and not after the wonderful, loving, restoring and redemptive nature of Christ. Thank God for the blessed truth in Christ that gives us understanding of our present life and its difficulties! His truth is also setting us free from the fears and weaknesses of the past and of man. And how blessed and privileged we are to see the truth as it is in Christ!

"Let it be established then that the Lord works with the hearts of mankind, and not with the external things of this worldly order. Jesus said, **'When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. But he that receiveth seed into the good ground (of his heart) is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty' (Mat. 13:19,23)**. So it is that the Lord sows the word of His Kingdom into the hearts of His elect, enabling them to bring forth Kingdom fruit. The seed-word of His Kingdom sown in our hearts will bring forth the fruit of transformed lives.

"In the fullness of time, when the Lord begins to restore mankind, He will do so by transforming the hearts of individuals. Just as He transformed us by sending His word into our hearts, so the Lord will transform others. What our nation needs is the impartation of the divine word resulting in the transforming power of the Spirit in the lives of individuals, not more legislation, or more money for more police or more prisons. We may be sure that when the Lord begins to restore our nation and people, He will do so by sending His word into the hearts of men, and not by any outward, literal, legalistic means.

"By the mind of Christ we can see that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The new order of the Kingdom of God is being established within us, and we are walking out the path of that new Kingdom Order. We are becoming the Lord's new administrative order for the wonderful advance of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Kingdom of God is not of the status-quo; His Kingdom is the life-force of the creation which is ever progressive. The Kingdom of God is growing and shall never cease to expand until it fills everything in the universe with the very life that God is. The Kingdom of God reigns as the Christ within is coming forth from our lives. The power of the

Kingdom of God, which is a spiritual power, is flowing out of Zion now to shake all things and overturn the governments and kingdoms of man" —end quote.

It is a great folly to conclude that we can pray the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," by rote, in cool detachment. The Kingdom is not an antiquated Jewish dream, dusty with the history of centuries. It touches us at all vital points—if we are sons of God. It is an immediate and personal concern. It is God's plan of the ages, His time-abiding strategy for redeeming us from ourselves and the vanity of the flesh and the world. It is God's way of conforming us into the image of His Son and making us one in Him. We are faced then with the solemn truth that when we pray for the coming of the Kingdom we are not praying for the advent of some great world-wide political or economic program. We are not praying for the end of the world, or for the rapture, or for the millennium, or blessing upon the state of Israel, or the exaltation of the United States and Great Britain. It is far more personal than that. This is a prayer that storms the gates of my own little kingdom, and breaks down the barriers between the will of God and me. It brings the rule of the Spirit in mind, heart, and body until the glory of God arises upon me and His glory is seen upon me, bringing blessing and transformation to all He touches.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 13**  
**THE KINGDOM WITHIN** [continued]  
**BY: J. PRESTON EBY**

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART THIRTEEN**

**CROWNING THE KING WITHIN**  
**HOW THE KINGDOM COMES TO EARTH**

The place to fight sin and lawlessness and corruption is in human hearts. All other victories will be only temporary unless we gain the triumph here of our King. The human heart is the real stronghold of lawlessness, rebellion and evil. If it is subdued and cleansed, and the King rules there, the other victories are easy. Forms of evil, strange, terrible and glaring, have prevailed in the world since the days of Cain and Abel. Legislation has been designed by all nations and societies to suppress iniquity, but evil has only become more sophisticated and survived every program to curb or eradicate it. Men have promoted education to reform the habits and propensities of men, but beneath the veneer of culture vulgar passions still possess the heart. Men have even tried to cast the evil out, to exorcise the unclean spirit, but sin only finds new refinements and assumes different forms. In despair of final victory men have come to believe that sin cannot be destroyed.

A brother related how that some years ago, when he was in Chicago, on the ground of some technicality, three hundred prisoners who had been convicted of crimes were released from prison. Three hundred men with criminal instincts were turned loose upon the community by a mere technicality of law! If the Governor of any state who had the power should go to the state prisons and pardon every criminal, he would be impeached. Why, the people would not stand for it. Criminals turned loose into the homes and into the streets would multiply criminals, and crime would be even more rampant. But suppose the Governor of Illinois, in which that prison I have mentioned was located, not only had the power to pardon and let them out, but had the power to take criminality out of their hearts, and make every one of them an honest, good man—then I would say, "Governor, turn them all loose, and if there are ten thousand of them, all the better."

If we could find a man like that and place him in the jails and prisons of earth, among men who knew they were guilty of crime, and make them believe that he had the power not only to pardon, but to take the criminality out of their natures, with all the shame of their sin, and put them back in the place of honor they occupied before they committed crime, I tell you, he would be the most popular man, not only among the prison administrators and guards, but among the prisoners as well! They would be willing to build him a monument, giving him all the glory they could. Such a man would have a monument that would touch the stars. Jesus Christ is that Man. That is what Jesus Christ has done by making Himself King by His sacrificial love. He has gained for Himself the glory not only of removing guilt, but of removing defilement and uncleanness from every one who will trust Him. He is the Savior of all men, and in due time shall win all hearts and purify all lives. That, my friend, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

The Kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God over all. The foundation of this Kingdom is in the human heart. The world has not yet witnessed anything like the total and absolute government of God, except in the life of Jesus. But there has been an increase of His Kingdom from generation to generation and from age to age. A new order is now coming forth in the earth! The hour of the completion of the body of Christ that has been forming in the earth for the past two millenniums is now at hand. The age of the reigning of Christ in and through the manifested sons of God is now ready to be revealed. The reign of Christ in our lives is being confirmed as Father changes us, renews our minds, increases our vision, strengthens our faith, and transforms our natures. When He removed all the old religious traditions and doctrines and ideas that were not of Him, our Father was preparing us for the pure and holy and righteous reign of God in us and through us. In this new Day the love of God and the power of God shall prevail. The elect of God who are beholding the face of the Lord and being changed into His likeness are the highest expression of the Kingdom of God in the earth. To them shall be given the Kingdom and the Dominion over all things that they may reign in love, mercy, goodness,

power and righteousness, not forcing men to obey, but imparting to all men the transforming grace of God in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost without measure.

If every man's heart were pure all the evil and weaknesses and wrongs of society would be solved over night. No further movements, legislation, programs or enforcement would be necessary anywhere. Crime would disappear. Murders would cease. Violence would be heard no more in the land. The streets and schools and homes would be cleared of illegal drugs. Gangs would disband themselves. All streets would be safe twenty-four hours a day so that any young woman could safely walk about anywhere at any time. Wars would suddenly come to an end. Oppression and bigotry would no more raise their shameful standards. This one simple reality—Christ ruling as King in the human heart—brings to earth the power and glory of the Kingdom of God! Nothing else is needed. And nothing else will do.

The Indian mystic Sundar Singh related the following story. "A man of God saw in a vision that he had gone into a strange country. When he arrived there he was astonished that the people of that land came out and welcomed him with joy, as if he were a long-lost brother, or a friend who had just returned to them. He went into the city with them, and saw great mansions in which were all kinds of costly furniture and appliances, but their owners had gone out and left them open. He asked some of the men why this was, and they said, 'There are no thieves here. As long as men's hearts are locked up to God, so long do they need to lock their doors. But when the door of the heart is open to God, and He lives in it, then there is no need to put a lock on any door; for where the Kingdom of God is in the heart it is the Kingdom of love, where each serves the other in love and desires only his good.'"

There would never be a broken home, a heartbroken wife or husband, or deserted and destitute children if the nature of God was written in all men's hearts. There would be no evil or trouble anywhere on earth if the nature of God was written on all men's hearts giving them a heart in the likeness of His own and a mind as the mind of Christ. From the redeemed and transformed heart the law (nature) of God flows forth as a river of life. We still have those among us who thunder the letter of the law from Sinai's mount—but all such will change their tune if ever they stand with the Lamb of God at Calvary's hill, for there they find God removing His law from the external tables of stone to write them upon the fleshy tables of the hearts of new born men, who no longer keep the law because they cringe in fear, but because the spirit of that law has become their nature, the law of life within them. Can you imagine the United States' Government passing one sweeping law that says' "WE FORBID ANY MORE CRIME OF ANY KIND" — and it worked. Impossible. Laws are on the outside; you read them, you think about them, but few fully obey them. So laws cannot change the inner man; nor can the best of natural men follow the totality of any laws laid down in his behalf. That is why there is such torment and slavery under the law, for we have become aware now of what God defines as sin, yet we struggle with it nonetheless. But when the law is written in the heart no longer do men try to love God contrary to nature, but now, because they possess the nature of God, love, joy and righteousness flow like a river from the heart.

Herein lies the wonderful significance of the great truth Jesus proclaimed when he said, "**The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show): neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you**" (Lk. 17:20-21). There are still those among us who imagine that Jesus Christ is coming back to earth with literal armies to ENFORCE LAW AND ORDER. But should the Lord come in such a physical way to establish His Kingdom by force it could only result in a world full of immense prisons and unprecedented numbers of executions. Blood would flow in the streets of every city and village deeper than in any revolution or war of history. It would demand a tyranny surpassing that of either Hitler or Stalin. It is my deep conviction that social issues, economic issues, and political issues can be dealt with adequately only at the level of individual conversion. When the firstborn Son of God came into the world to reveal the salvation of God and the Kingdom of God, He did not engage directly in social welfare work, or attack directly the social structure of the existing society. Instead He gave Himself to the task of converting, remaking, transforming, and training twelve apparently unimportant men. These men, filled with the Holy Spirit of wisdom, holiness and power went forth converting, remaking and transforming the lives of countless multitudes of men and women in every nation under heaven.

The ministry of Jesus and that of the early Church is the proto type of the Kingdom of God. As the sons of God, destined to bring deliverance to the whole creation, dare we follow in the footsteps of HIS holy wisdom? The

heart of any social, economic or political problem lies in the hearts of individual men and women. New social structures and systems, new laws, new judicial systems, new political systems, new economic systems can never solve the world's problems so long as the heart of man remains selfish. Only when men pass over by conversion from self-centeredness to God-centeredness can the Kingdom of God become a living reality on earth. All of our external problems—race, nationalism, war, crime, poverty, oppression, sickness, death—all of these are but the external symptoms of an internal, deep-seated disease— the sin of self-centeredness. The only strategy that will be victorious in the warfare against social and other problems is an offensive directed not at a nation, or its institutions, but against the human heart! The point of attack is the state of being of man himself. The objective of attack is the conversion and transformation of man with the law of God written in his heart. If every policeman in America were a godly, Spirit-filled evangelist, more would be accomplished for law and order than all the guns and jails in the whole world. If every soldier in the world were a missionary filled with the spirit of wisdom and power from God, more would be accomplished for world peace and the betterment of society than all the wars of history have wrought. I tell you the truth. Think of it! What incredible wisdom Jesus revealed that day when He set forth the principle of the Kingdom—"Behold, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU!"

### **CROWNING THE KING WITHIN**

Men would rather crown Jesus King in Jerusalem, Israel or in London, England than in their own hearts. Let us suppose that Jesus is crowned King in the city of Jerusalem—suppose He returned in that same nail-scarred body; suppose He sat upon a throne ruling over the Kingdom of God on earth in the Holy Land, at Jerusalem. I can tell you, dear ones, that every airplane flying to the Middle East would be loaded with people going to see Jesus. Every mail-bag would be full of letters from those sick and afflicted, those in difficulty and trial, and gifts of homage to manifest men's gratitude and love. You yourself, let us say, are on one of those airplanes. And I do not doubt for one moment that even many who read these lines would be scrambling for tickets to Israel! The Ben-Gurion International Airport, when you arrive after your long flight, is blocked with planes from every nation.

After circling the airport for a dangerously long time you land, and board one of the multitude of tourist buses headed from Tel Aviv up to Jerusalem. Far as the eye can reach, the traffic creeps over the highways in an endless stream. You do not mind the scorching sun, the choking dust, the rude drivers, the elbowing crowds. You are in the Capital of the Kingdom of God on earth, and you will see Jesus! Yonder, at last, in the far distance, are the glittering spires of the Holy Hill, above the burnished temple dome beneath which He sits. But what is that dark seething mass stretching for miles and miles between you and the Holy City? They have come from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west, as you have, to look upon their King. They wish that His hands might be placed upon their head; that His arms might be thrown around them; that His eyes of compassion and love might be fixed upon them, and His voice of power fall into their ears. But it cannot be. You have come to have an audience with the King, but you will not see Him! They have been there for weeks, months, years, and have not seen Him. They are a meter or two nearer, and that is all. The thing is impossible. It is an anti-climax, and absurdity. It would be a social outrage; it would be a physical impossibility. If there were only one hundred million saints of God in the whole world, gathered out of all ages, and each scheduled a personal interview with Jesus; should Jesus spend only ten minutes with each; it would be exactly 1901.3 years before your turn would come, and then another two thousand years before your next ten minute audience with the King! And during all that time Jesus would not have attended to any matters in the entire universe other than these interviews twenty-four hours a day, unceasingly for millenniums! It should be obvious to every thinking mind that knowing Christ and crowning Him King and communing with Him and walking with Him must be upon some basis other than His individual, physical, appearance upon a material throne somewhere in the world!

So He says to all today who would crown Him in Jerusalem or in London or in any other place where He might be found, "It is very kind and earnest of you to come so far, but you mistake. Go away back from the walls of the Holy City, over the sea, and you will find Me in your own home. You will find Me where the shepherds found Me, doing their ordinary work; where the woman of Samaria found Me, drawing the water for the noon meal; where the disciples found Me, mending nets in their work clothes; where Mary found Me, among the commonplace household duties of a country village; where, since the day of Pentecost, all who have sought

Me have found Me— within their very own hearts." "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with Him. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that time ye shall know that I AM IN MY FATHER, AND YE IN ME, AND I IN YOU" (Jn. 14:19-20,23).

Would that I had language to express a truth so infinite! The visible incarnation of God in the physical man Jesus Christ must of necessity be brief. Only a small circle could enjoy His actual presence, but a great and glorious and universal kingdom like the Kingdom of God needed a risen and glorified King. "I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you...even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him: for He dwelleth with you (as Jesus), and shall be in you (as the Spirit). I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn. 17:7; 14: 17-18). It was expedient for the whole body of Kingdom subjects that He went away. He would be nearer man by apparently being further. The limitations of sense subjected Him while He stayed. He was subject to geography, locality, space, and time. But by going away in glorification He was able to return in mighty Spirit-power, the incorruptible river of God's divine and eternal life, to flow and flow and flow, age after age, unceasingly, unlimitedly and untiringly into humanity as LIFE. My soul shouts a thousand hallelujahs that He went away! And He has come again. The King of glory has come to His temple of living stones and is crowned in the throne room in the hearts of redeemed men, new creation men, the sons and daughters of the Most High God! Should Jesus be crowned in the flesh, it would no more bring the Kingdom of God to earth than crowning any of the other kings of the world. We are to crown the Lord, the Spirit, as King in every place in our being, outer and inner.

It was the humiliation of France, in the fifteenth century that her king Charles VII, was not crowned in the proper city, where former kings were crowned. Joan of Arc, burning with the high resolve to remove this dishonor, and have the king crowned in Rheims, emerged from obscurity, gathered an army, drove the enemy back from one point to another, until she dislodged him from Rheims. The king came then. The crown was placed upon His brow in the right place; and the fair maiden, Joan, bowed at the foot of the throne, the tears of joy streaming down her beautiful cheeks. Where are we to crown our King? We are to crown Him in the most sacred and authoritative chamber of our nature from whence proceed the impulses and propensities of our spiritual life. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." So then the Kingdom of God originates in the realm of spirit (heaven) and finds expression in the physical realm (earth). If you walk after the spirit you will live, you receive the crown of life, the crown which IS LIFE, the dominion of life out of your spirit. The authority of life is in the spirit, even the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. And this Spirit of Life is in YOUR SPIRIT, AND FROM THENCE HE WOULD BE CROWNED AND RULE IN LIFE OVER THE KINGDOM OF YOUR BEING. Ah, the thing of importance is that the King be crowned in the right place. We are to crown Christ as King in every place of authority in this earth, but first and foremost, in every human heart.

Many years ago a brother wrote of his visit to Westminster Abbey in London. "I remember how," he recounted, "when in the Jerusalem Chamber attached to Westminster Abbey, where the last revision of the Bible took place, the verger conducted us through a door, and down a dismal, low-roofed, winding corridor, bare and unadorned. He told us that the heir, or heiress, to the crown of Great Britain, in former years, had to spend some time in the chamber, and then pass down this dark and forbidding passageway, to the place in the great cathedral where the crown was to be received." So, precious friend of mine, when you conduct the King to the place of crowning in your nature, you may have to escort Him down a winding passageway, intricate with illusions, fears and wild distortions of the carnal mind, dismal with sin, sickness and weakness, bare and jagged with earthly consciousness and evil tendencies, on through the gloom and grime of corruption and death, to the most sacred altar of your heart. There crown the Omnipotent Ruler—the Spirit—and implore Him to arise and cleanse and purify all your entire nature every whit. Bid Him write His laws upon your very heart, so that it cannot beat unless it beat in conformity with the TRUTH and LOVE and RIGHTEOUSNESS and POWER and LIFE and VICTORY of the KINGDOM OF GOD'S GLORIOUS CHRIST! Then you will know the reality and dominion of the Kingdom of God within.

The word "kingdom" is derived from the two terms "king" and "dominion" —KING'S DOMINION. It exists wherever the dominion of the Christ rules and holds sway over the hearts of men. Christ is the great King right

now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible. He is establishing His Kingship in all its power within His elect in the earth. God's elect are the seat of His Kingdom in the earth at this present time. Though He has all power in heaven and in earth, He is not ruling anywhere in the measure that He is ruling in the hearts of His beloved sons and daughters who are being called to His Kingdom and His glory. He shall yet arise in power and in glory from that throne in His completed and perfected body—the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD—and reveal Himself as the great conquering King, initiating the mightiest of all campaigns, bringing deliverance to the whole creation, reconciling all things unto Himself, and then shall all know the glory of His Kingdom as every tongue confesses and every knee bows, and all in that day declare that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD. At the triumph of His Kingdom sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death all flee away to be remembered no more in the consciousness of creation.

He is the great King of kings and Lord of lords, crowned with glory and honor, and His Kingdom rules over ALL. And, praise His name, He is even now bringing forth in the earth a KINGDOM PEOPLE—the firstfruits of His redemption—who are discovering His Lordship over all of their lives. When all hell assails those who have been called in this day to His Kingdom, when the power of death all around crowds in upon us and would suffocate us, when the pressures of this world would frustrate and vex us, when our own soulish passions and emotions and self-will would drown us in a sea of carnality and ungodliness, HE THEN STANDS UP WITHIN US AS KING—in Kingly authority. When the outer man, the flesh, the carnal mind, mortal consciousness of this gross material realm, would tear us apart, frustrate our lives, suffocate our inner reality, and smash our sonship upon the rocks, HE IS THERE, the still small Voice, that deep, Inward Knowing. Let us learn of the real and eternal, and make way for the reign of the Spirit, the Kingdom of Heaven, the rule of His Truth and Love and Life within each one of us. Thank God, in every situation and circumstance of life HE IS PRESENT TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF, thus reigning as King over our domain. Not in heaven, not during the millennium, but right now "we see Jesus...CROWNED with glory and honor" within our own experience. Halleluah!

## **HOW THE KINGDOM COMES TO EARTH**

Yes—the Kingdom of God is within you. Do you yearn, as I do, to see the muck of television and the mire of movies cleaned up, politics made honest and honorable, sexual relationships sanctified, the divorce rate reduced to zero, education employed as an instrument to glorify God, and a thousand other glaring ills of society cured? There is only one way. The rule of God in the hearts of men will transform society in all its relations. The new order of the reign of God works from the inside outward for the renewal and transformation of every department of earthly existence. From the power of the Kingdom goes forth a regenerating power into art, culture, philosophy, politics, commerce, education, science, literature, economics and social programs, and when all these areas have been brought under the control of God's nature reproduced in men, the Kingdom of God has come in the earth.

None of these objectives can be attained through legislation or coercion, but only by regeneration and transformation. The principle is as clear as it is certain—the Kingdom of God is within you! When God reigns in a man's life, all of the relations of his life are brought within the sphere of the Kingdom. Your home should be a Kingdom home, with Christ influencing and controlling all its relationships and activities. Your business should be a Kingdom business, not conducted by the spirit and standards of the world, but after the spirit of divine love and righteousness. Your school should be a Kingdom school. Your church should be a Kingdom church, for the Kingdom is greater than the church. Your city should be a Kingdom city. Your state should be a Kingdom state. Your nation should be a Kingdom nation. Your government should be a Kingdom government. And planet earth must become a Kingdom planet. The outer, natural world must be brought under the dominion of the inner, spiritual world. If heaven doesn't come to earth then the Lord's prayer is never answered, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." That is happening to us right now as our bodies and souls are brought under the dominion of the life of the indwelling Spirit.

Out of the dominion of the spirit our souls are being saved and even this mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. The Holy Spirit is turning us inward. As we turn from the outer to seek the reality of the Christ within we discover that our goal in life is not to make money, accumulate things, or fulfill

earthly ambitions and pleasures. If that is our goal, then we need to set our priorities straight. You see, in the world within, that world which you are, there is no money and there are no things. There is no need for money and there is no need for things. The only need for money and things is in the world on the outside. But if we go out and try to seek that which is on the outside, then we have left the Kingdom. "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles (and the prosperity people) seek. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Mat. 6:31-33). The Kingdom of God is within you. The world of the Kingdom is that inner world of the spirit. There are two dimensions of "you"—the outer you and the inner you. Paul refers to these as the "outward man" and the "inward man". "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4:16). The outward man is the visible, tangible and fleshly. The inward man is the invisible man of spirit. The inward man is born of God. Some people hold the crude notion that should the outer man go by way of the grave the inner man would likewise perish—you would be gone, unconscious, non-existent, body, soul, and spirit, until the day of resurrection. No way! The outward man is of the earth, the inward man is from heaven. The outward man is from Adam, the inward man is from Christ. The outward man is born of the flesh, the inward man is born of the Spirit. God, Christ, and the Spirit would all have to be susceptible to death in order for the inward man to perish!

To choose or seek anything in the outer world, whether it be a job, money, relationships, or possessions, must be for the divine purpose of expressing the inward through the outward. Anything that does not fulfill that purpose has nothing eternal or of God-substance or life in it. It is void. It is vanity. It is temporal. It is death. So choosing a vocation is not for the purpose of making money, but to fulfill the will of God, to express His life and bless the world. The carnal mind says, "If I live for God and bless the world, then I get nothing for myself." But that isn't true—because the real world is not the one out there, it's the one within. The world within is one of love, life, light, joy, peace, grace, faith, righteousness and blessing. Therefore the inner world delights to bless all men on whatever level they are, asking nothing in return. The outer world, on the other hand, is one of selfishness, ego, pride, avarice, greed, stinginess, corruption and meanness. The resources of the inner world are unlimited, for they draw out of God; the resources of the outer world are finite. People who live only in the outer world feel they have a right to cheat one another, take advantage of one another, use one another and oppress one another. You can hardly trust anyone in the business world today, everybody is out for himself. They are not for the people they serve, they are in it for what they can get out of it, and they will lie, misrepresent, cheat or steal to come out on top. Men will do that to you because they believe that when they do that to you they are not doing it to themselves, because that's the way it is out in this world. They are living by the spirit of the world. They know nothing of the reality, power, purity, and glory of the inner world, so their perceptions in the outer world are distorted.

All our choices in the outer world should serve to extend the reality of what we are in the inner world. When we choose a job or any activity, we don't choose on the basis of its value in the outer world, we choose that which will serve as a vehicle of expression for the inner man. That's where peace is. That's where joy is. That's where fulfillment is. And that's where success is! "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you!" That's where the Kingdom is, that's where life is, that's where reality is, that's where heaven is. So many people work on their job just to make money, just to pay the bills and put food on the table. They don't really like the job and are miserable. That is what the outer world calls "making a living." But making a living is more than making money, for "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). To make a living means, first and foremost, to LIVE! It's making what you are live! It denotes quality of life, and the only life of quality is the inward man—Christ. "She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth," saith the Lord. You will know true joy when your inward man lives through your outward man, your inner world is expressed through your outer world. Matters not what you do outwardly, where you live, what your job is, what your responsibilities are—when your inward life is dominant all outer things are affected, sanctified, transformed, swallowed up. As sons of God we are not victims of either money, things, or circumstances. These are not able to take away our peace. They are unable to rob us of our joy. They cannot take our life. The Christ within is our peace, our stability, our reality, our substance. That, my beloved, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

When the mind of Christ has mightily conquered, the state of things is called the Kingdom of God. Where hearts are transformed, where man's mistaken identity is replaced by the knowledge of his sonship to God,

where communion with the Father is begun and deepened, there the Kingdom of God has come. The Kingdom of God brings a way of thinking and living that seems contrary to logic. It is not something you could have guessed. It breaks in. It startles. It overwhelms. It opens vistas so breathtaking that we can hardly stretch our minds and spirits to take it in. It is a new, vibrant, mysterious, revolutionary, dynamic, powerful life-style. Men and women today can experience the Kingdom of God in their lives. Anyone in this world who is willing to put on the mind of Christ and be joined in union with God can live in its power and glory everyday.

The seventeenth century English mystic, George Fox, penned these inspirational and instructive words. "The pearl of the Kingdom of God is hid in the field, and the field is the world, and the world is in your hearts, and there you must dig deep to find it; and when you have digged deep and found it, you must sell all to purchase and redeem this field. And there you shall know the merchant-man that makes the exchange, and there you shall know Christ in you the hope of glory, to save you and redeem you, the Immanuel, God with us. And there you shall know the woman that lost the piece of silver, and was seeking it without; but when the candle was lighted and the house swept, she found it in her own house, and then she did know the joy, and went and told her neighbors; and then she did know the day-star arise in her heart, and the day dawning, whereby the light shall be known that shines from the east to the west, and the word of faith in the mouth and heart, and the oil in thy lamp if thou enterest in with the bridegroom.

"The light shines in shine own heart to give thee the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, from whence it comes, and the anointing which abideth in thee shall teach thee, and as it cloth teach thee, thou shalt continue in the Father and the Son, from whence this holy unction comes, and thou hast received it, and here thou shalt know that thou needest no man to teach thee, but as the same anointing cloth teach thee, and the ingrafted word, able to save your souls, is in your hearts, and the hidden man of the heart which is renewed day by day is found there, and the meek and quiet spirit, which is with the Lord of great price, is found in thee, and the covenant of grace that brings salvation is in thy heart, and in thy mouth, to season it and thy words, and to teach thee to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and the heap of teachers set up by men's lusts in the world, that turn this grace into wantonness, and live wildly, and it will teach thee to live soberly.

"The pearl that hath been hid in the earth is found, the anointing within, the word within, the covenant within, the Christ within the inner man, and the morning star is risen, and the day is dawned, and the true light shines, and wisdom, which all the knowledge, understanding and wisdom that man hath cannot comprehend nor find, cries in the streets to the simple ones, that they may receive it, the wisdom of God, even the hidden wisdom within.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is seen, which is as a grain of mustard-seed which is within, and many have received it, and are become as little children, and they that be instructed to the Kingdom, they bring forth their things new, and their things old. And many are digging in the field, which is the world, which is set in their hearts, seeking for the pearl, and many have found it, and many merchant-men be exchanging, glory to God forever. So the pearl is within you. All people of the earth, come into yourselves, find the pearl in you, the precious pearl that has lain under the earth, and come out of your talk and profession in words, in which the Jews were, in whom the pearl was hid, that you may find the pearl in yourselves, and the Kingdom there within you. Though it be like a grain of mustard-seed, it is like leaven, it will leaven you up into a new lump; teachings, churches, notions without life shall wither, fade like flowers, wither like grass, be burnt up like stubble, sticks and chaff that has cumbered the ground. But the wheat is gathered into the garner, the lambs are leaping, the Father carries them in His hands, the babes born of the immortal seed by the word of God, the Father is known, and is worshipped in spirit and in truth. The word of wisdom will divide asunder your precious thoughts from your vile thoughts, your precious words from your vile words, and this word of wisdom will teach you in all your ways; the pearl in you come to know, the seed in you come to know, which seed is Christ, that inherits the promise and the Kingdom, which now is risen in thousands, who are come to be heirs of the promise, and heirs of God, and heirs of the world that has no end" —end quote.

Ah, yes, there lies buried within you the greatest of all treasures—the Kingdom of God. Discover that Kingdom today, my friend, draw from its wealth, suck from its life, receive from its power and you will become a new creation, transformed into the image of God. All that is true in God lies within that Kingdom, for it is the image

of God created in man from the beginning, now buried deep beneath the debris of the carnal mind and fleshly life. It is there and it is yours, for the taking. Only the earth, the earthiness of your own outer self, your own soulish emotions, your own carnal consciousness, needs to be removed for the image of God to be seen. It is still there within you no matter how weak, sinful, or undone you may feel, or how miserably you may have failed.

Anthony Schuller related his personal experience, which graphically brings this point home to our hearts. He said, "As a college student, I worked part time as a guide for a travel agency. I have enjoyed the privilege of traveling a great deal during the school breaks. One of the places that really captured my interest was Italy, where I toured many museums. While in Florence, Italy, I decided that I would make a distinct point of viewing the original statue of David, sculptured by Michelangelo, which I had seen in replica in southern California on numerous occasions. I really looked forward to seeing the authentic masterpiece. As the museum guide led us through the hallways of this fabulous place, I happened to glance down a corridor we were passing by. There stood a fabulous, huge chunk of crudely-shaped marble. It was an unfinished piece of sculpture, which Michelangelo had, for some reason, never completed. Flanking the sides of the hallway were other incomplete works of Michelangelo. I found myself suddenly distracted. Instead of rushing to see the famous piece I'd come for, I was being captured by these abstract works of art. There was something strangely fascinating about the unfinished, the "yet to be." The wonderment of the what if and the could this have been and the what might this yet become was intriguing. Suddenly the perfections that the statue David offered, the details that were hewn in the finest degrees, were overshadowed by the embryonic potential that lay dormant in these chunks of rock.

"I had studied art history in college. I remembered reading about Michelangelo's artful eye and how he could see the statue that he would create as he envisioned it, locked inside a piece of stone. Then he would begin to chisel away, embarking on his quest to unlock that piece of art from its cold and hard captor. That is what happened with that great piece called David. He simply released David who was entrapped within the giant piece of marble. And as I looked upon the unfinished pieces, they appeared bound and helpless and looked as if they were almost attempting their own escape. Some specifically looked as if they were trying to crawl out of the rock. Their shoulders were pressing forward and their chins and their heads were pressing outward, but at that point they were stuck. Only Michelangelo saw where the lines of the image ran; only he could release it. By chipping away the external, everything outside the image, the image could spring forth to be seen.

"That is how some of you may be feeling today. You may feel trapped in a cold, hard captivity of self and circumstance. But I have good news for you—God isn't finished chiseling yet. He is still creating and drawing out of you the good and the beauty that you have as a son of God. And he will do it one little piece at a time. Only God knows what tomorrow holds, but in it all we can be confident in this: that in the process of living, He is chiseling out of us the person that He wishes us to be. That person is in there, and He is creating someone, a special someone with unique characteristics. This is the journey we call life as we are chiseled for a purpose. He has taken us on as projects of art. Jesus, with His artful eye, is able to see what lies locked within us. And He is busy chiseling away to make us not what WE want to be, but what HE wants us to be—the image that He sees, born out of His own divine image" —end quote.

Another beautiful illustration comes from the pen of a precious sister in the Lord, Lyn Gitchel—and I love it! She writes, "These are days of computers, and we're going to refer to the computer a number of times in order to understand some of these things. So, for those who are not yet computer literate, here's a word of explanation concerning them. A computer consists of the part that has the screen—that's the part you can see what is going on. Then it has a printer of some sort or another, which is the part that puts the stuff down on paper. In between these is the hard disk, the 'brain' of the thing. The program that makes the rest of it work is loaded onto the hard disk. It's very important to note that the program is complete in itself and the fact a person does not work the program properly is not the fault of the program. It is complete, whole, lacking nothing. Like the redemption Jesus bought.

"Jesus was the 'format' for the program, and now the program is the 'Christ' program—to be like Him. It's important to see that the fact we are not functioning like Jesus now at this present time does not mean there's something incomplete about the 'Christ' program. It was always complete from the start, and still is. On the computer I use, I have two basic programs I use for the work I do. One I am completely familiar with. I know

every bit of it and can even work it instinctively while talking to someone else. This corresponds to the program of life you were raised with, the 'human' program. What you were taught by your parents, and what tendencies you inherited from them, coupled with how you were educated, join with your church background to form the program you are thoroughly familiar with living in. You know how to function in it and you know how to deal with the experiences it brings to you. Each one of us has a different background, but, to God they all amount to the same—the 'human' program. He calls it the program (law) 'of sin and death' because it all ends in the same way—with your death. And all humans will die; be sure of that!

"But I have another program loaded which is the most fantastic program I know of. It turns text upside down, inside out, mirrors it, shadows it, does all sorts of graded shading and stuff that is fabulous. The only problem is I don't know how to use it! I have the manual, a big, thick volume of some 216 pages, but I've never had time to study it and learn it. Sometimes I go into the program and mess with it a bit, but I become very conscious of how ineffective it is because plainly I just don't know how to do it. There's nothing wrong with the program, though. The potential is always there.

"The one I am familiar with is like the human program. We are all comfortable with that. Very comfortable. When God sent Jesus into the world, He sent Him to turn us around; to format a new program, the program of life—God's kind of life. Jesus insisted on calling Himself the 'Son of Man.' He did it over and over. Take Matthew's gospel for example: the expression 'Son of God' is used of Him only eight times, and every time it was someone else who called Jesus that. He never used it of Himself. Only in the gospel of John is it ever recorded that Jesus used this expression of Himself, and even then it was only a very few times. In Matthew's gospel, by comparison, the expression 'Son of Man' is used thirty times and every time it is of Jesus speaking of Himself. It's almost as if He was trying to emphasize His humanity over and over; that He was a member of the same race as everyone else around Him.

"Born of the Holy Spirit by a miracle birth, Jesus was still effectively human. Although He was 'in the image of God,' He still was limited to human means. He could only be in one place at a time, could see only as far as the human eye and hear only what a human ear could hear. He still could only function within the limitations of His human form. He was truly man—and because of this He alone was able to format the new program for man. What it amounts to is this: if He could live that way, so could anyone of the same race once the problem of the inherited genes of the Adam race was effectively dealt with. At the transfiguration, God shone the spotlight of His perfect holiness upon Jesus, and because there was no flaw in Him it shone right through Him. God determined this was His ultimate program for man. He looked down at the transfigured Jesus and said, 'This is my beloved Son...' or, in other words, 'This is the pattern; this is what I intended for man. This is the program that He will now exchange with them by His death.' This is borne out by the fact that Jesus discussed His 'decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem' at that time. The transfiguration experience was the demonstration of the perfect man—the man in the image of God that God had first created in Adam. The cross was the transfer of that state of perfect manhood from Jesus, by the exchange of the covenant, to the rest of the race.

"Most people, and most churches, accept the fact that the ultimate goal for believers is to become like Jesus. The question is not if but when. Many relegate it to the future and assume that after we die we'll get to be like Him. Let's forget that concept! We need to see it as a total plan for now, in this life. It was a man that God created in His image and it was a man that caused the problem. When the Adamses did it their way, they plunged the whole race into the sin problem. Jesus came along and, as a perfect man, exchanged His righteousness for our sin-programmed state. That was the covenant exchange He made through His blood as a sacrifice. The exchange has been made and His righteousness is now set to our account, just as our sin was to His. Now here's the question: Is it totally done or is there something God still has to do with us? Can we in fact ever expect to be as perfect as Jesus was? It seems a way-out goal for even the best human person, something our minds don't compute easily! Reason it logically for a moment. How much of your sin did Jesus take on the cross? All of it, or some of it? The answer is ALL, of course. So, if it was an exchange, how much of His righteousness did He make over to you? All of it, or part of it? The answer, believe it or not, is ALL, just as with the other.

"So the program of God that has been loaded on the computer disk of each of our lives is complete, perfect, entire, needing nothing. It is a program that potentially allows us to come into being 'a perfect man, the

measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' That's what it's all about—that we might become like Jesus. Exactly like Him. As human people, here and now, become like Him. If the completion was not to come until after death, then God would have failed in His plan. He created man in His image and intended him to be that way. Therefore, it is man that has to come into that image again to fulfill God's intention for the human race. Only after that can the human race go on to the next step in God's plan.

"Now, let's get this straight. The 'Christ' program is a program that is already loaded on our hard disks. Jesus formatted it and got it loaded for us. It is a program of INFINITE POTENTIAL. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him' (I Cor. 2:9). I mean, Jesus could heal the sick, forgive sins, cast out devils, raise the dead, walk on water, pass through hostile crowds, appear and disappear, and is seated at the right hand of God, just to name a few things. The program has infinite possibilities. It comes with a manual, the scriptures. Sometimes the manual is a little hard to decipher, but that's only because we are as yet unfamiliar with its terminology. If we stick with it, spend much time with it, work and work at understanding it, ultimately we will become familiar with it. But the fact that we are not there yet does not mean there is anything wrong with the program! It's perfect!

"Just as it takes time to learn to work in a new computer program, it also takes time to learn to walk in the new program God has set in your life. Technically He has turned you around from working in the program that leads in the direction of death and showed you the new one that is His life program, but we are so used to functioning in the old one that it takes time to learn the new. It's not necessary to get bent all out of shape when you feel you are not totally functioning in the way God wants you to. None of us learns to overnight. Each of us finds we revert to the old sin and death program from time to time. The important thing is not to let it discourage you. It's a slow but steady learning process that will continue all your life. That's what redemption is all about!" —end quote.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 14 HOW THE KINGDOM COMES

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART FOURTEEN

#### HOW IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD ESTABLISHED NOT BY FORCE

The history of every son of God will eventually be the story of a progression from the natural through the spiritual to the celestial; passing from the realm of darkness and death through the realm of quickening, change and transformation, to the fullness of stature and glory in the image and likeness of God; from the world of sinners through the realm of the Church to the power and glory of the Kingdom of God; from the brazen altar of sacrifice for sin in the outer court to the golden altar and table of prayer, praise and communion in the dim light of the candlestick in the holy place into the Holiest of all, where shines undimmed the more excellent glory of the undiminished majesty of God.

This brings us to an important question—Is the Church this Kingdom of God, or, is the Church part of this Kingdom? The Lord Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Like believers, the Kingdom of God is IN this world, but is not OF this world. It is not established by the world's methods. It is not moved forward by the politics of this world. It is not represented by the Constitution of the United States of America or of that of any other nation on earth. God's Kingdom does not contain a Republican or Democratic platform. It is established and maintained on a different basis from that of our world.

Again I ask the question—Is the Church this Kingdom, or, is the Church part of this Kingdom? Many proclaim that this present age is the "Church age" and that the coming age is the "Kingdom age," thus separating the Church from the Kingdom on the basis of time. The difference, however, is not one of time but of relationship and administration. For you see, the Church is a present reality and the Kingdom is likewise a present reality. If you say that the Church is not the Kingdom, I think you are accurate; but if you say that the Church is not part of the Kingdom, then you are wrong. May I illustrate. Texas is part of the United States, but Texas is not the United States. It just is not all of the United States either quantitatively or qualitatively. It pertains to the United States, and the federal government has an authority over the state of Texas, but Texas is not the United States. It has a different name, a limited area, and its own state government and its own state laws. It functions within the framework of the United States, but it does not function as the United States. Just as the laws and powers of the federal government supersede those of the state government, so does the dominion and rulership of the Kingdom—with its King-Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek — transcend the powers and ministry of the Church with its apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. The Kingdom order is: "Thou...hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on (over) the earth" (**Rev. 5:10**). "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (**Rev. 20:6**). The Church order is: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (**I Cor. 12:28**).

Now the Church is the very heart of God's program as He moves us toward His glorious Kingdom. Are you moving with Him? It is my conviction that God's great men of the past moved with Him. When John Knox said, "Give me Scotland or I die," he was praying, I think, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." When the Puritans came to this country to establish a place where they could worship God and propagate the gospel of Christ, they were saying, in fact, if not in word, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And there are times when you and I arise to that high level and say from our hearts on behalf of all creation, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven!"

The Kingdom, however, is never to be identified as the Church. Nowhere in the New Testament is such an identification made. The Kingdom is always prior to the Church. God is King. As King He has a Kingdom. John

the Baptist first announced the Kingdom among men. The Kingdom came into manifestation through Jesus Christ and He afterward created the Church. His disciples were first heralds of the Kingdom before there was a Church. They were sent to proclaim what they had seen and heard from Jesus of the rule of God. When Jesus sent the 12 and the 70 on their missions, He sent them as ambassadors of the Kingdom. They were an extension of His own ministry, and thus He gave them the "power of the Kingdom." Everywhere they proclaimed the arrival of the Kingdom and demonstrated the authority and rule of God with mighty signs, wonders, and miracles. Kingdom and Church are related terms, but they are not synonymous terms. The term "kingdom" is found about 160 times in the New Testament. The term "church" is found about 115 times in the New Testament. The Kingdom is the dynamic rule or reign of God and the sphere in which His rule is expressed. The Church is a body of people—the congregation of believers. The Greek word for church is ECCLESIA meaning "the called out" or "an assembly."

In **Matthew 6:33** Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." Often this verse has been used to stimulate "church attendance." "Put the Church first," it is said. The subject, however, is not the Church, but the Kingdom. Instead of thinking of people when contemplating the Kingdom of God—the rule or reign of God—dominion and royal power are the proper reference. All the Lord's people, His called out ones, constitute the Church and when any of these assemble in any place, even two or three in a home or on the street, you have a Church. But that assembly is not the Kingdom. Let me illustrate again. Every country has a government. The government is the "rule," "authority," and "dominion" of the nation. From that government proceed the laws and powers that regulate and control the society. The nation is composed of "people"—men, women and children. But the people are not the government. If a hundred thousand people in a city are gathered in a stadium for a ball game or concert you have a congregation of citizens, but you do not have the government. The government is something above and beyond the "gathering."

The government is thus a higher dimension than a mere congregation of people. In like manner, the Kingdom is the rule of God; the Church is a congregation of believers. The saints may "see" the Kingdom, "enter" the Kingdom, "receive" the Kingdom, or "inherit" the Kingdom, but being members of the Church does not make them the Kingdom. You do not "receive" or "inherit" the Church! The many sayings about seeing and entering into the Kingdom are not equivalent to entering the Church. You may enter a Church by walking into the midst of the believers, but one does not enter the Kingdom in that way. Every citizen of the United States has entered the nation, but only a few of them have entered the government. The Kingdom as the sphere of God's rule is invisible, not a tangible phenomenon in this world, whereas the Church is a visible body of redeemed men and women. There is never the slightest hint in scripture that the visible Church IS the Kingdom of God. All the analogies are different. The members of the Church may come under the rulership of the Kingdom, but they are not the Kingdom.

The Church of the living God must remember that it is not the whole thing; that the Kingdom of God is greater than the Church; that men must press into the Kingdom of God, through much tribulation we must enter the Kingdom, and through qualifying we may be accounted worthy of the Kingdom, but there is no need to press, suffer tribulation, or pay a high price to enter the Church. The Church is, after all, only an ecclesia, a people gathered out of sin and the world unto God through faith in Jesus as Savior. Just as the true Church births the manchild, so is our experience in the Church a prerequisite for entrance into the Kingdom. Is not this the very reason why the Holy Spirit testified to each of the seven Churches in the book of Revelation, "To him (in the Church) that overcometh will I give power over the nations...to him that overcometh shall I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I am set down with my Father in His throne." It is the processing of the Lord in the Church realm that qualifies one for a place in the Kingdom and the Kingdom is greater than the Church. The Kingdom can be the outcome only of a Church which has followed on to know the Lord, purged and purified, changed and transformed, growing up unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. The Churches on earth comprise forgiven sinners. The Kingdom of God comprises new creatures. The Church consists of all unto whom the righteousness of Christ has been imputed by faith. But not every one that saith "Lord, Lord," shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of his Father in heaven.

Great and powerful as the Church is, Jesus made very little of it, compared to the Kingdom. He said, "I will build my Church" (**Mat. 16:18**) and He mentioned it two times more in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew; that

is all Jesus ever said about the Church during His earthly ministry. He gave no "church" teachings; He answered no "church" questions; He told no "church" parables; He made no "church" promises; all He said and taught and demonstrated had to do with the reality of the Kingdom. In all the Gospel according to John the word Church is not once used. In all the Gospel according to Luke the word Church is not once used. In all the Gospel according to Mark the word Church is not once used. During the forty days between His resurrection and ascension the Lord never once spoke to His disciples of the Church, but on nearly every occasion when He appeared to them He opened the scriptures to them and spoke to them of the Kingdom of God. The Church idea, great and glorious as it is, is narrow and small compared to that of the Kingdom. We are a Church within the Kingdom, but the Kingdom is greater than the Church.

It is the Kingdom, and not the Church that breaks in pieces and consumes all the kingdoms of the world and of the increase of which there shall be no end. The fervent prayers upon the lips of holy and seeking men has ever been, not, "Thy church come," but "Thy kingdom come." Let your heart consider what I now say. Every man, woman and child who throughout this blessed dispensation of grace has trusted Jesus Christ as Savior and been washed in His precious blood has been numbered in God's great Book as members in His Church. We are now, one and all, in the Church of Jesus Christ. We do not need to pray to enter, seek to enter, press on to enter, overcome to enter, or meet any further qualification to enter. We are the Church, and only by faith in Jesus Christ and His salvation. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:41,47).

But those faithful and persevering ones who follow on to purge themselves of the corruption of the flesh; who fully partake of the divine nature, putting on the mind of Christ; who give all diligence to add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience God-likeness, and to God-likeness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness the love that is agape; to those who do these things the blessed promise is held forth of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet. 1:4-11).

The sun is setting rapidly upon this tired old age in which we have lived so long. The Church during this age has dwelt in the realm of limitation, of mixture, equipped only with the first fruits of the Spirit. As Paul by the wisdom granted unto him truly stated, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor. 13:9-10). The Church of the dispensation men call the dispensation of grace pertains to the "in part" realm. The Kingdom, on the other hand, is the realm of fullness, an abiding, triumphant dimension of life. "Revivals" are a characteristic of the Church realm. Fullness and permanence are characteristics of the Kingdom realm. God's purpose in His sons is to move us from revival to unmovable stability—from the Church to the Kingdom.

In praying for and seeking revival we develop a revivalistic mentality, which contradicts the purposes of God for this Day. When one examines revivals historically, he finds that when you live in the revival mentality you are like a person who gets "high" on a drug—you soon need another "fix". Revivals throughout history are recurrent activity—activity that returns from time to time. Revivals are those kinds of divine intervention, which bring about awakening, followed by spiritual declension and apostasy. It is a vicious, never-ending cycle. Awake, asleep. Awake, asleep. Alive, dead. Alive, dead. Delivered, bound. Delivered, bound. Refreshed, sluggish. Refreshed, sluggish. Filled, empty. Filled, empty. ~Revivals are oscillating in nature, swinging back and forth between two extremes. Furthermore, revivals are occasional and variable. They occur now and then. In and out, up and down, here and there, now and then, back and forth, awake and asleep—do you feel yourself getting motion sickness?

In the 1800's there was a revival called "The Great Awakening." As someone has pointed out, unfortunately it was followed by "The Great Asleepening." We don't need another Great Awakening so that we can have another Great Asleepening so that we can have another Great Awakening. What the world needs in this hour is not another revival. No revival has brought the ultimate triumph of God's Kingdom in the earth. No revival has brought the universal defeat of sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death. No revival has brought an end to war, strife, hatred, corruption, fear, tyranny, pain, hunger, or any of the other problems and curses that blight mankind. And no revival has ever brought perfection and the fullness of God to the Church! Ah, our prayer

should be, "Lord, don't send another revival!" Our prayer should be as our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come!" I am not a revivalist. I am a Kingdomite! I am a son of the Kingdom, an announcer of the Kingdom, a proclaimer of the Kingdom, an ambassador of the Kingdom of God. A Kingdomite is just the opposite of a revivalist. Instead of advocating and praying for a move of God that returns from time to time, the Kingdom Ambassador views the presence and rule of God as perpetual, constant, progressive—never vacillating and never retrogressing.

Our God is abiding and progressing from glory to glory, from realm to realm, from age to age—not sleeping and awaking. The Kingdom sons are builders who build a place for God to inhabit permanently— not a resort for Him to visit occasionally. I want to be a builder! Jesus said, "We will come and make our abode with him." What God desires in this hour is a place to stay, a temple to dwell in, a throne to sit upon, a nature to be formed in, a Kingdom to rule from forevermore. The focus in the New Testament is upon Christ and His Kingdom—not revivals. You don't read about revivals in any of the writings of the apostles. The word revival does not appear in any dictionary of Kingdom terminology. So far as the New Testament economy is concerned, revival is an unscriptural and extra-biblical concept. You won't find the idea anywhere! Jesus didn't promise revivals. The apostles never taught or exhorted or gave any instructions about revivals. Amazing, isn't it, how much of the language of Babylon we still speak over here on Kingdom territory!

## **HOW IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD ESTABLISHED**

GOVERNMENT means to rule (govern) thoughts or the mind. The suffix "meet" and the word "mental" are both derived from the Latin root meet. Both human and divine government are forms of mind control, human government is by various forms of control by the carnal mind, whereas the rule of God is by the direct control of the mind of Christ. The carnal mind molds and shapes the carnal man through fleshly passions, impulses, propensities and expediencies. The carnal mind also influences and controls the carnal man through outward agencies such as television, teachers, books, magazines, movies, advertising, laws, fashions, parents, peer pressures, etc. The mind of Christ molds and shapes the life of the sons of God by the inward law of life, by the living word of God, by the promptings and dealings of the Holy Spirit, as well as through the outward agencies of godly examples, instruction, counsel, manifestations of the Spirit, preaching, teaching, and the overwhelming presence and power of God.

I have written all these things that our hearts might be prepared for the truths that concern the establishment of the Kingdom of God. How is the Kingdom of God established? Let me first say how it cannot be established. When our Lord spoke of the Kingdom of God He said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Jesus had just told the disciples where the Kingdom is and how the Kingdom does not come. Before you can ever see the Kingdom you have to know how it's not coming—because the first thing we try to do is build it by the natural. I tend to be "conservative" in my political thinking where the politics of this world are concerned. But I must tell you there is something terribly wrong with what is known today as the "Christian Right." They are possessed of the notion that they can establish the Kingdom by political involvement, without the Holy Ghost. If somehow we can gain enough votes by the people—people of any religion, spiritual or carnal, saved or unsaved, moral or immoral, lovers of God or haters of God, Jew or Gentile, if we can get enough votes to kick this or that president out of power, to elect this or that congress, to send to Washington people of a particular political philosophy or party affiliation, to enact this or that piece of "godly" legislation, then somehow the Kingdom of God will come in America.

Furthermore, many hold the absurd idea that the Kingdom of God is America and that righteousness can be legislated through our branches of government. I tell you today that you cannot establish or demonstrate or walk out the life of the King or the Kingdom as long as you don't know how it's not coming. Jesus says that the Kingdom is not coming by observation—it is not a visible, tangible, external operation. The reign of the King is a peaceful reign. Yes, He comes to make war, but the warfare He makes is an internal battle, not an external conflict of bombs and bullets. The reign of the King is a reign of righteousness, but that righteousness is not established by external rules, regulations, laws, or any police action or military enforcement. Some have actually thought that the way to establish righteousness in the heart of a seventeen year old girl who is scared and frightened because she is carrying a baby that she doesn't know how she is going to pay for or care for—

some have honestly thought that the way to establish righteousness is to stick a placard in her face as she enters the abortion clinic and scream at her that she's a M-U-R-D-E-R-E-R! The King will never do anything that violates His character and His nature of LOVE. He came not to condemn the world, but to save it, and as the blessed Savior He doesn't go about screaming at people who are lost and frightened and hopeless. "Neither do I condemn thee," He whispered tenderly to the adulterous woman who under the law deserved to be stoned. The abortion problem will never be solved by demonstrations, intimidation, condemnation, arresting doctors or bombing clinics. Such activities are diametrically opposed to the Kingdom of God. They are religious carnality at its highest intensity. The spirit of wisdom and understanding from God must deliver us from our confusion about how the Kingdom of God comes. It cannot be established by force. It cannot be established by law. It will never be established by political action. It is impossible for it to be established by the will, efforts, or programs of men or of governments.

## **NOT BY FORCE**

How far can force go in this world? Is force the final word, the end of all argument, the arbiter of every dispute? Men have tried to answer this on a thousand battlefields. The answer is that force can go a long way. It is a mighty power. Jesus was crucified by force. Roman soldiers must have cynically laughed as they pressed His hands to the cross and drove the nails through His flesh. He was helpless before this overpowering might. Yet Christ had power to destroy those men's lives if He had the will. When He stood there with the cross in full view, He said to His persecutors that it was in His power to call twelve legions of angels. If that heavenly host which hovered about that Son could have once made itself manifest, O how they would have swept that doomed city, that accursed conclave of false priests, and those wretched, blind and filthy-minded heathen soldiers! How the breath of these heavenly angels could have swept the life out of them and swept them down into hell and the grave. But that is not God's way. That is not the mission of the Son or the sons. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."

Brutality has been the hallmark of mankind's turbulent and violent history. Man has no answer to the dilemma. But God has the answer! It was brutal force that nailed the firstborn Son of God to the tree—but the third day He arose triumphant from the grave! The account says that the soldiers who guarded the tomb "were like dead men"—they were like dead men before the might, the sheer might of this rising Life. Those soldiers and the irresistible force of Rome they represented perished with the hour, but this Man lives on, His might unfolding in ever-increasing splendor with the passing of centuries. He stands deathless — and invincible. The greatest might in the world is not brute force it is LIFE! As a groveling worm is transformed to become a butterfly, so our Lord was transformed from corruptible to incorruptible, from natural man to manifested Son of God. He arose in the celestial light of the glory of God, the Shekinah. He is not a reflected light, but the manifestation of the light which He Himself is.

His light is the light of life. It is the same glory that lighted the world in the beginning when the almighty Father said, "Let there be light," and there was light, and in Him was life, and His life was the light of men. Nothing can stand before the power of this light of life (which is love) and all things that are touched by its life-giving rays are completely transformed thereby. Resurrection life is the mightiest power in the universe. But it is not force—it is the quickening, transforming, creative power of life. That is the power of the Kingdom of God. God does not rule by the sword, by intimidation, by coercion, by armies, by slaughter and destruction. Oh, no! The world knows nothing of this power of life, for it abides in death and rules by death. That is the only way it knows. Men dead in trespasses and sins are blind to the power of life, so they turn to force to overcome evil. Anything gained by force must be held by force. You cannot fight the devil with his fire without getting yourself burned. They that use the sword shall perish by the sword, saith the Lord. We cannot by some alchemy get the gold of brotherhood out of the base metals of hate and brutality. The only possible way to get rid of the enemy is to turn him into a friend—the only possible way to turn him into a friend is through the transforming power of the light of life.

The Kingdom of God is within, for life is within. That is a principle so simple and yet so powerful that any child should be able to understand it. It is the birth from above that gives us entrance to it. But while this Kingdom is established within, it makes itself felt and visible without. Finding its subjects in us, it makes its laws be obeyed in all our doings. It takes possession of every department of activity, of every region of everyday life. These

external things, are they our doings? Our relationships with others, the way we do our work, how we spend our leisure, the things we seek after in life, are they not all outward expressions of our inner being? Then if the Kingdom of God be in us, it will find expression there. As it is impossible for any great earthly dominion to be solitary, uninfluential, but is effective, is imitated, and must mold others; so it is impossible for this Kingdom of God to be side by side with worldly influences and not change, alter, reverse, transform, or some way operate on them. As little is this possible as it is possible to carry a light through a dark room and scatter no darkness, but confine the light to the flame. "Ye are the light of the world." This is the manner of the Kingdom's increase, and it will grow until there is no room for any opposing dominion on earth. The stone becomes a great mountain that fills the whole earth. All powers and dominions shall serve and obey Him. The Son of God has brought this light of life into our lives, and the sons of God shall bring it to all creation, praise the name of the Lord!

When our Lord Jesus was ready to begin His great sonship ministry on earth, He was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Mk. 1 :12; Mat. 4:1). What a strange statement! The Holy Spirit drives the Son of God into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan, the arch enemy of all righteousness, a murderer from the beginning, the father of lies! Ah, but it was necessary for the Son to be PROVEN, made STRONG, to OVERCOME in these realms before proceeding on into His glorious ministry and the agony and death of the cross. Remember—Jesus was not only the Son of God, He was the Son of man. And being both He was capable not only of hearing from God, but hearing those things that be of man. So when we speak of that ancient serpent which is the devil and Satan. We are not talking about a beautiful and glorious fallen angel, but that mind which savors the things of man—the carnal mind. The carnal mind is the ground where the serpent crawls. The flesh nature is the dust that he feeds upon (Gen. 3:14). The apostle James put it this way, "Everyone is tempted when he is beguiled and allured by his own desire; the desires conceive and breeds sin, while sin matures and gives birth to death" (James 1 :14-15, Moffat).

The battle lay not with some mythical personage outside of the Christ. The conflict was within. The voice was an inner voice. The suggestion was in His mind, its power in His emotions and will. God speaks to us in our mind and spirit. Satan also speaks in our mind and emotions. There is no monster without. There are three things in this vast world which are not of the Father, and only three—the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; briefly, appetite, avarice, and ambition. These are the power of Satan. I do not think you will be able to avoid the conclusion that all the inventions, creations and contrivances of man are in existence to cater to these three things. It was with these three things that Eve was tempted in the garden. She saw the tree was good for food (the lust of the eyes), a tree to be desired (the lust of the flesh), a tree to make one wise (the pride of life), and the temptation was not from without but from within. How remarkably the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness parallel these three! Every temptation of the devil comes to us through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. There are no others. Not for Adam and Eve, not for Jesus, and not for us.

Let us consider for a moment the third temptation of Jesus. There is great wisdom, understanding and power in the truth I now set before you. By it we comprehend the ways of the Kingdom of God. For the third temptation, the devil took Jesus up on an exceeding high mountain —to the very heights of the dominion of men—and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. He saw what gave them their power and clearly perceived what made them great. He saw the fame and fortune that could be His by seizing the reins of the government of the world. And Satan said to Him, "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." When the Tempter came thus to Jesus he came as an angel of light, offering suggestions on how His messianic mission might be more quickly and effectively implemented and realized. He offered the kingdoms of the earth to Jesus if He would bow to the shrewd worldly wisdom the adversary outlined in His mind by which He could have used His sonship power to conquer the might of the Roman empire. I do not doubt for one moment that what tempted Jesus was a MASTER PLAN outlined by the carnal mind that seemed to promise success in the rapid and effectual establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Jesus is here confronted with the question: Shall I win the world through self-effort, by worldly methods, by military might, by force of power, and conquer it in order to bring it salvation? Does the end justify the means? Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon all faced a similar question. For they too did not merely have an eye to conquest. In the back of their minds, though naturally on a much lower plane than the divine and exalted level of Jesus,

was the desire for welfare and peace. They would ruthlessly overrun the people for their good! They would force them to be blessed, improved, prospered and happy! Any means were justified by the end. But the vision of Jesus is as clear as sunlight. He realized that the plan was no inspiration from His Father in heaven, and was therefore earthly, sensual, and devilish. To adopt it would be to "fall down and worship" the god of this world.

It is impossible to possess the world, or to conquer it by carnal means, even for God, without loss of purity, without using guile and hateful force, without trampling men's lives, killing, destroying, plundering, and locking up masses of men in prisons, which is equivalent to worshipping the very devil whom we intend to drive out. Matters not whether Hitler does it or whether Jesus Christ does the same thing riding out of the heavens on a white horse and with His armies from heaven ruthlessly and brutally smiting the kingdoms of the world! It is the same. There is not one iota of difference. And yet I tell you that this is exactly how millions of Christians conceive of the arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth! "Boy, we're gonna put that devil down, we're gonna blow the wicked sinners off the face of earth, we'll enforce the laws of God and set up the Kingdom of God in the earth." That is precisely the mentality of multitudes of Fundamentalists, Pentecostals and Charismatics. You cannot deny it. And if they were given the opportunity to do so, they would fall down and worship the very devil they seek to destroy! The serpent would have the last laugh.

Accordingly the clear and lofty answer wells out from the holy soul of every son of God as it sprang up from the soul of that firstborn among many brethren: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve!" In other words, God's business can only be done in God's way and by God's power! Here we can marvel at the loftiness of the Pattern Son. In an instant He passes through the sum total of the experiences that we encounter in innumerable succession in our journey into the fullness of God and to the throne of universal dominion: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve!" That is the first law of sonship. May God make this wonderfully real to the heart of every elect son of God.

So Jesus saw through the intoxicating visions and glittering prospects, which the devil conjured up before Him. He renounced worldly power—even the power that He might have used in a "spiritual way" for His purpose, the establishing of the Kingdom of God. Multitudes of Christians today have been deceived by this very temptation, as they seek political power within the institutions of this world, to further the cause of the Kingdom of God. They infiltrate the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, and get all involved in political activism, political action, parades, demonstrations, marches, voter registrations, clamoring for social and/or military action by our government in the name of justice and right, falling down and worshipping the god of THIS WORLD in their weak and futile efforts by such carnal means to establish the Kingdom of God in the land! What a misguided stupidity it is. Jesus understood the true nature of all things and He knew that the very substance of His message would be altered and falsified if the child were put under the compulsion of law or government to go back home to the Father. For then the prodigal would become a slave and the Father a tyrant. As we consider the call of God in sonship for this significant hour, let us look unto Jesus who is our Pattern and Forerunner. When He was tempted to merge the power of the Spirit with the methods of the world in order to bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth, He rose up from the place where he kingdoms of the world shimmered before Him, where crowns flashed and banners rustled, and hosts of enthusiastic people were ready to acclaim Him, and quietly walked the way of poverty and suffering to the cross. He walked the road where the great and the rich of this world will despise Him, but where He is the brother of sinners, the companion of the forsaken and lonely, the sharer of the lot of all who know not where to lay their head, the comrade of the insulted and injured, to whom He reaches out with the power of divine love. He chose to walk the way of the cross and of obedience to the ways of His Father, He who could have possessed the whole world in one bold stroke. And that is why the story closes with the angels ministering unto Him.

Did He stake His life on the wrong card, this Jesus of Nazareth? Did He make a bad exchange when in the hour of temptation He preferred the ministration of angels and the presence of the Father to the riches and honor of this world? If He had accepted the kingdoms of this world and their "glory" He would be forgotten today. He would have become a great king in history, buried in the history books of our schools. He would have become a venerated museum piece—if He had signed the pact with the devil. But because He learned obedience to the voice of the Father He has become our Elder Brother and our King, and therefore we too

know that this sonship is our destiny; with the crown and the throne and priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

If there is one lesson every son of God needs to learn it is this: One must not, yea, cannot, utilize the strength or wisdom of the flesh or the ways of the world to promote and build the Kingdom of God! This is the third temptation, the final test for every son of God. It is confidence in the flesh that motivates men to busily and craftily work for God rather than seeking the Lord until He works. If we don't reign in the Kingdom of God for another million years, we must wait in faith and patience for God to work. It is Self doing what only the Spirit can do; it is the Soul taking the lead, in the hope that the Spirit will second its efforts, instead of trusting the Holy Spirit to lead and to do all, and then waiting on Him. Oh, brethren, how we need to watch this! I would rather spend my whole life doing nothing while waiting upon God, than to do everything in the strength of the flesh, becoming a devil worshipper. All that is not of the Spirit is merely the carnality of man—soulish. It has no place or reward in the Kingdom of God.

In a certain Christian college there is a speech club called Ambassador Club. During each meeting of this club there is a question and answer forum during which the "Topic Master" can ask various questions of the members relating to current events, weather, human interest and other topics of his choosing, including subjects relating to the Bible. One day the question was: In the Kingdom of God what will you do first after you receive your resurrection body and have all power? The answers were many and varied, some good and some questionable. "The first thing I will do," clamored one freshman vigorously, "is to wipe out all the churches, destroy all of their buildings, pile all of the steeples into one big pile and burn them in sight of all the pagan people that are still alive. That will show them who is boss." Obviously this student didn't know much about what he was saying, because if he wiped out all of the churches he would be killing a great many people, for, after all, churches are people and not buildings.

Still another student had his mind made up as to how things should be run, and replied: "I will go into the ghettos and force all those lazy poor people on welfare and food stamps to go to work and earn their food, or else they can starve." Compassionate Son of God! Merciful Savior! What an example of false priesthood! At least Jesus created bread and fish and wine for the poor and famished to eat! Another outstanding example of things to come in the "millennium" was voiced by a junior, who stated: 'Since we will be ruling with a rod of iron, I will force all people to keep the Sabbath, and then all the rest of God's laws, and if they don't do as I say I will punish them and force them to obey me.'" Here, of course, was an answer born of a smattering of knowledge and an overdose of ego. Obviously not all the comments were as harsh as these, and a number were quite good and well thought out, but these comments do illustrate the attitude that many Christians have regarding the way they would rule and reign in the Kingdom of God. Just what is the attitude we should have of ruling the nations and all things? And what is the first thing you would do, precious friend of mine, should you wake up one fine morning a manifested son of God, a King - Priest in the Kingdom of the Father with all power and authority in heaven and in earth!

True peace and blessing will not come to this war-torn world by military might and power. True and lasting peace and blessing will come only by the overwhelming, transforming power of God's love through His sons of love in the Kingdom of love. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom into which God has called His elect, is not of this world. It does not have the same rules or values. It is not governed by the same principles. Jesus Christ is its champion, but He won the victory over all that threatens peace in a way not of this world. He did not overcome His enemies with superior firepower and sophisticated weaponry. Instead, Jesus looked into the faces of those who hated Him and overcame them by the love of God. He overcame evil with good. God has conscripted His elect into the advance army of peace. He is making us emissaries even now of that perfect Kingdom. He is cleansing us from the emotions of hatred, malice, condemnation, greed, lust, selfishness, ego, pride, bitterness, and rage—all the things that lead to oppression, strife and war. We are now in training and testing as the sons of the Kingdom.

The question is just this: How is this Kingdom to be administered? Let me say again how it cannot be administered. It cannot be administered by force. Men have tried that method. They have used fire and sword to make God's Kingdom come. Peter had that spirit when he pointed to the two swords the disciples possessed. Mohammed followed this plan when he gave men the alternative either of Islam or death. In the

early part of the fourth century, the monarch of the Roman Empire died, leaving the question of succession in dispute. The Roman general Constantine led his forces against his rival for the throne. Near a little river in northern Italy, at a place called the Milvian Bridge, the two armies encamped over against each other waiting for the coming day and the order to battle. Constantine, who had come into some minor contact with Christianity, that night made a vow. If he won the battle, he would become a Christian. It is said that he saw a vision in the night of a flaming cross in the sky with the Latin inscription, in hoc signo vinces ("by this sign conquer"). Constantine made a bargain with some power to join the church organization if he won his battle. Succeeding events indicate that the bargain was made with the prince of this world, the god of this age, the spirit which blinds the minds of men that they should believe the lie. Constantine was "converted." He was not born again.

Imagine the whispering that went around Rome. The Emperor had become a Christian! Out of the catacombs they came. Instead of being persecuted, they found themselves popular. Like a youngster among heavy drinkers, the church's head was turned by the wine of the world. The priests of the pagan temples had been paid from the purse of the Empire, but now Caesar was a Christian and the priests of God were paid by the State. Eventually the role was reversed—the persecuted became the persecutor and the awesome power of the sword was used to compel all the priests and worshippers of Mars and Venus to come to the Kingdom of God and be baptized. They were plunged beneath water, but their hearts were unchanged. Their pagan customs and rituals were accommodated into the church and "christianized." The church was married to the world, and flooded with unconverted religious sinners. The wanton harlot now staggered across the world scene, with whom all the kings of the earth have committed fornication to this day.

The Crusaders, spurred on by the eloquence of Peter the Hermit, committed the same blunder. The old Saxon and Gothic kings, who when they accepted Christianity themselves compelled their people to be baptized as well, followed the same mistaken method. But these people did not advance the Kingdom of God one whit. You do not make a man a member of this Kingdom by baptizing him, enrolling him among the adherents of a Church, or by calling him a Christian. A man may be saved by simple faith in Jesus, but one does not enter the Kingdom in that way. Men must have their hearts changed, their natures transformed. their allegiance turned. They must be willing to render glad obedience to their Father King before they become members of this Kingdom. If force was the method of His Kingdom then Charlemagne and the Roman Catholic Church during the Dark Ages were on the right track when they compelled men to accept Christianity and burned heretics for the salvation of their souls.

Force may increase the numbers of a sect, it cannot add one to the membership of the Kingdom. The sword may compel a man to change his name; it can never compel him to change his heart. Oh, no; it is not by the sword that God's Kingdom will come, not by a literal sword out of the mouth of the Christ nor in the hands of the saints. To all ecclesiastical persecutors Christ says, "Put the sword up into his sheath." Not by the sword is the Kingdom to come, but by the cross. This is the weapon we have to use in our warfare. Not the cross and the sword, as Constantine conceived it; but we are to conquer by the power of Love. For the cross means love—love at its best, love in the glory of sacrifice. The cross is the power of God. It is by the cross that men's hearts are broken, and their affection and allegiance won.

The Captain of our salvation is not General Joshua crossing the Jordan, but Jesus the Lamb of God upon the throne. Therefore He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, not on the war-like horse, but on the peaceful ass. And therefore He will yet cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and break the battle-bow; He will speak peace to the nations; and His dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. And such is the spirit too of all the sons of God! For, though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh; and therefore the weapons of our warfare are mighty before God to the pulling down of strongholds. The only sword that the sons of the Kingdom are permitted to wield is the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD.

There are different kinds of government but of one thing we may be very certain—the Kingdom of God is no dictatorship. It is no tyranny. A preacher once said that Jesus will one day come back to earth and force the people to be obedient and happy. Indeed! That, undoubtedly, is how he would reign if ever he got the chance! He won't. That is not how God reigns. God reigns as a Father, not as a despot. "our Father...Thy Kingdom

come!" The nature of God is entirely gracious in all His dealings with the sons of men. That is the way of our wondrous God and Savior. It is not by force, but through love. And in the end He will win. Love never fails. It shall be demonstrated before all principalities and powers that love will conquer every foe. In the days of His flesh the Lord Jesus could have easily consummated His Kingdom— He had the power to subdue every enemy, to vanquish every foe. Had He so willed He could have by a single word or look disintegrated the bodies of all who opposed Him so completely that not a vestige thereof would ever have been found by man! Then everything on earth would have been at His command. But would that have been HIS Kingdom? NO! Only in outward appearance—not in reality.

God is love; and love does not impose its will upon us, or enforce it against ours. Love woos and wins by a principle far higher than brute force. Should Jesus return to earth to enforce the laws of His Kingdom with carnal weapons all that could be accomplished would be the erection of larger and more secure prisons overflowing with ever-increasing masses of rebellious humanity. Force does not transform— it merely breeds contempt. Love transforms. Love changes the nature. Love wins the allegiance of the heart. Love forms an indissoluble bond. Love makes one. Love captivates the will. Love, though omnipotent, is very gentle. God reigns by infinite wisdom, power and love and the greatest of these is love. Love conquers all! And King Jesus came to earth to reveal that love and the Father's Kingdom.

The SPIRIT OF MIGHT which shall rest upon all of God's sons is not the same kind of might known by the people of this world; it is not the might of force, of marching armies, of clanging swords, of tanks and bursting bombs, for these exist only in the realm of carnal might. The might of God is spiritual might. If our eyes have been opened by the Spirit of God we will see that the nature of all our work in the Kingdom of God is spiritual. The power of the Kingdom is spiritual power, its citizens are a spiritual people, its ministry is a spiritual ministry, its authority is a spiritual authority, its dominion is a spiritual dominion, its laws are spiritual laws, its weapons are spiritual weapons, its priesthood is a spiritual priesthood, its sovereignty is a spiritual sovereignty. Many of God's precious people are no further advanced in their understanding than were the fleshly-minded Jews of Jesus' day. The work of the Kingdom is the work of rescuing men out of the power of darkness and driving out the satanic spirit that they may be gained for God. It is the work of imparting unto men the very life and Spirit of the Lord that men may be gained even more and more by God until He truly becomes "all in all". Thus shall the whole creation be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God!

Praise God for the exalted road that leads to Zion, no ravenous beast shall trod the path that the vultures eye has not seen. These are glorious days indeed for the army of God, a great people, there has not even been the like thereof unto the years of many generations. There is a mighty stirring in the spirit as the army of the Lord musters for battle. Truly the white horse is riding triumphantly through our land, conquering every enemy within, and announcing to us that He reigns in a voice of thunder from His throne. May He reign and speak through us even as He reigns and speaks within us in this great Day of the Lord! The weapon of the army of God is the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, the sharp two-edged sword of the living Word of God—a sword to smite the nations, not with the carnal force of merciless slaughter, but with the life-changing properties of TRUTH AND LIFE. The battle fought by the Christ of God is a spiritual warfare, combat between light and darkness, between spirit and flesh, between truth and error, between righteousness and evil, between life and death, between the customs and ways of this world and the principles of the Kingdom of God.

We are looking forward with great anticipation to God's Kingdom dealings with ALL NATIONS. Humanity is thirsting for these living waters from heaven! Let us not sell creation short. Arise, saints of God, and come away with the enChristed to the holy mount of God, the Kingdom of the Anointed, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Holiest of all, the throne of God in the sons of Zion. Can we not see how simple a matter it shall be for the sons of God to minister deliverance and life to a weary and suffering world? For these shall be OVERCOMERS in the fullness of Christ's victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Sin, sickness, or death shall have no more claim on them. They will be EVEN AS their Lord and Master when He walked upon earth and ministered among men. And more! We can easily understand, therefore, how the glorious gospel of Christ shall be proclaimed in power and great glory throughout the whole earth. There will not be a country, city, village or hamlet on earth that will be closed to this gospel of the Kingdom. Glory to God!

The day is nigh at hand when there will be no more "thick darkness," no more "gross darkness" resting upon the minds and hearts of earth's teeming billions. And at the close of that day, instead of growing darker, the

world will have reached the high noon of its "light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord," and its sun shall never set. The Sun of Righteousness is the arising of the glory of the Lord shining in His full strength and majesty, dispelling the darkness, bringing in the day of victory, life and blessing. This Day has already dawned upon us and shone in our hearts, but creation awaits its Day. There has been a dawn for us and, blessed be God! there shall be a dawn for all creation. The peoples of our planet will not remain in the icy clutches of an ever-deepening darkness until all hope is gone, until there is nothing but total darkness and death. No, light will appear—more light than the world has ever seen—at the manifestation of the sons of Light. The illuminating rays of glory will fill the earth, your earth, my earth, their earth, until all the shadows and darkness of night have been chased away.

All the carnal thinking of man, all the delusions of this gross material realm, all the doctrines of devils, all the superstitions, myths, folklore and fairy tales of religion, all the human creeds and dogmas, all human precepts by which men are taught to fear God rather than to love Him; all political intrigues, all humanistic education and institutions, all the myriad citadels of sin and vice and crime, are to be swept away, replaced by the glorious KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD AND HIS TRANSFORMING GRACE. The Sun of Righteousness shall arise and arise until there is no more night anywhere in God's vast universe. No man anywhere will be able to escape the glory of God in the face of God's Christ. WE ARE THE DAWN OF IT, the firstfruits, praise His name! "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the GLORY OF THE LORD is risen upon THEE. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but...HIS GLORY SHALL BE SEEN UPON THEE. And the GENTILES (NATIONS) SHALL COME TO THY LIGHT, and kings to the brightness of THY RISING" (Isa. 60: 1-3). "And the NATIONS of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it...for they shall bring the glory and honor of the NATIONS into it" (Rev. 21:24,26).

The manifestation of the sons of God shall utterly eclipse anything we have ever read in the Bible or in Church history! The River of Life has been flowing in the city of God, for truly "there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God." The river has sprung up within those elect saints who as a firstfruit have experienced the powers of the Kingdom of Heaven in the realms of the Spirit. But soon it shall empty into the mighty oceans of humanity, bringing life and blessing to a dry and parched wilderness where no water is. "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Isa. 43:19). Therefore, let us even now begin to rejoice in the NEW DAY, as the first rays of hope arise on the eastern horizon; let us arise to plant our feet on the Anointed Mount and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn! Hallelujah!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 15**  
**HOW THE KINGDOM COMES** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTEEN**

**TYPES OF GOVERNMENT  
NOT BY DEMOCRACY  
THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT**

I write today to the elect of God scattered abroad that our hearts might be prepared for the truths that concern the establishment of the Kingdom of God. How is the Kingdom of God established? Let me first say how it cannot be established. When our Lord spoke of the Kingdom of God He said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you." Jesus had just told the disciples where the Kingdom is and how the Kingdom does not come. Before you can ever see the Kingdom you have to know how it's not coming—because the first thing we try to do is build it by the natural. The spirit of wisdom and understanding from God must deliver us from our confusion about how the Kingdom of God comes. It cannot be established by force. It cannot be established by law. It will never be established by political action. It is impossible for it to be established by the will, efforts' or programs of men or of governments.

As we consider these thoughts' may God almighty grant that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. When John the Revelator beheld the Lord coming upon a white horse' followed by the armies from heaven' he saw a sharp sword going out of His mouth "that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron" (**Rev. 19:15**). In the midst of all the confusion and darkness of this hour the Spirit of God is calling out a people for His name. He is training them in the school of obedience and refining them in the furnace of affliction. He is stripping them of self-interest' draining them of self-will' plucking from their hearts all the deceptive ways of Babylon' causing them to abhor the vain efforts of the flesh. These are putting on the whole armor of God' these are dwelling in heavenly places' seated with Christ; these are the army from heaven that follows the Word of God into battle. From within, out of the innermost being, is arising a strong and mighty Word' the absolute truth about God and all things' beyond the superstitions' myths' folklore and fairy tales of religion, and by which every enemy shall be silenced. "He cast out the spirits WITH HIS WORD" (**Mat. 8:16**). This sin-weary world shall yet be governed by a glorious company of sons of God, every one in the image of Christ, every one a brother of Jesus Christ, every one infused with His life and invested with His authority' every one a son given "power to tread on serpents and scorpions' and over all the power of the enemy" (**Lk. 10:19**). The whole earth, as Eden was' shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it!

These sons shall be able to raise their voices in mighty declarations of authority. The authority is rooted in their own experience. By the understanding of the Almighty they shall have conquered the dragon of sin and limitation and death in their own lives. Then shall be fulfilled on the grandest scale ever the word spoken by the Lord, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover" (**Mk. 16:17-18**). Some people have thought this meant to be able to handle poisonous snakes without being bitten. Others have supposed it meant that IF you accidentally took up a serpent, as Paul did on the island of Melita, there would be no harm. But beyond all this, let me point out to you one of the meanings of the term "take up" in this passage. Not on1y does the Greek word AIRO mean to "take up", it also means to "take away." It may just as we'll be translated, "They shall TAKE AWAY serpents" not take up and handle them. The ENTIRE SERPENT KINGDOM SHALL BE REMOVED' TAKEN AWAY by these mighty believers; yea' they shall slay the dragon that is in the sea! And it begins now' on the personal level' in our own consciousness.

The Word of God comes riding upon a white horse, and the army of the sons of God follow Him, all riding upon white horses. What a scene! The horse is an animal that men ride. It's like a car— it's a vehicle. The horse in scripture is a symbol for THE BRINGING OF GOD'S PRESENCE AND POWER IN WARFARE. It signifies STRENGTH AND SWIFTNESS IN BATTLE (Isa. 2:7; 30:16; Jer. 12:5; 51:27; Eze. 38:4; Hos. 14:3; Joel 2:4; Heb. 1:8). "...I have taken away your horses (Strength)" (Amos 4:10). On the negative side, whenever the word horse is used in relationship with fleshly humanity it signifies human strength. Isaiah 31:1-3 informs us: "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots (that is human strength and human ability), because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong...they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!" Again, "Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are fleshly (strength), and not spirit." "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses (human strength and ability) and confound the riders on the horses (those who trust in human strength and ability)" (Hag. 2:22; Zech. 10:5).

On the positive side, wherever the word horse is used with righteousness, or divinity, or the Lord, or things heavenly, it means heavenly' divine or spiritual strength. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He cloth judge and make war...and the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses" (Rev. 19:11,14). That is, they followed Him in heavenly, divine, spiritual strength. In Habakkuk 3:14-15 the prophet, reminiscing about Israel's deliverance from Egypt, extols the triumph of Yahweh, exclaiming, "You pierced with his own arrows the head of the enemy's hordes...You have trodden the sea with Your horses, beside the heap of great and surging waters." The meaning is clear—You have trodden the sea IN YOUR DIVINE STRENGTH! Egypt had abundance of horses, swift and strong, but God had horses out of the spirit world. They represented the STRENGTH AND MIGHT OF GOD IN BATTLE. They signify the almighty POWER OF THE SPIRIT. With what simple words does the Holy Spirit teach us that the strength of the Spirit always exceeds and excels over the strength of the flesh! Thus, horses are symbols given to us that denote the nature and work of the anointing that rests upon the sons of God. Horses are figures of overcoming, invincible strength and power, signifying that wherever these horses go, WHATEVER IS IN THEIR WAY IS OVERCOME BY THEM!

When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven riding on a white horse He does not come alone. Even before the flood, Enoch prophesied of this appearing of the promised One, and said, "Behold the Lord cometh WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF HIS SAINTS (or, holy myriads of Himself) to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14,15). John saw, and writes, "The armies,-the ones in the heaven, were following Him" (Rev. 19:14). Christ Jesus is the Head and the Leader as He goes before; His holy ones follow in His train, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They are represented as armies. They come forth as a body of fighters. He has many under His command. The armies of the heavenlies are His, and He does battle with them, by them, through them, and as them, even "the called, and chosen and faithful." There is no infantry. There really is no cavalry, for all of the horses are white, and every one who follows Him is of exalted rank. It is an army of princes, a host of mighty dignitaries, kings and priests unto God. Moreover, they have no weapons, except the sharp two-edged sword that proceeds out of HIS MOUTH, which is the Living Word of God. They are dressed in white, for they are all righteous, cleansed by the crimson tide in which His cloak was dipped. He comes as Warrior, Judge and King, and they share with Him in the same character. They are warrior judges and kings with Him. They are clothed in fine linen, pure and white, which is the righteousness of the saints. They wear no armor. They are immortal and incorruptible and cannot be hurt nor stopped.

## TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

In the world there are a variety of types of government. There is the Republican form of government. A Republic is a state in which the rule is conferred by the people to a certain portion of the people, elected by the people to represent them. Our country, the United States of America, is a Republic. The sovereignty resides in our presidential' congressional and judicial representatives which we elect to represent us. Then there is Democracy. It is another form of government' which in its purest sense holds that the state should be held in the control of ALL the people. In a pure Democracy every issue would be decided by plebiscite (direct ballot vote). The United States and most other Western nations are called democracies because their

representatives are freely elected by the people and many issues are also decided by plebiscite. Not all Republican governments are democratic.

Totalitarian government is where one political party suppresses all opposition. Some examples of totalitarianism are Nazism, Fascism and Communism. In the days of the famed Robin Hood (A. D. 900-1300) we find the Feudal form of government. Feudalism was a system of government by lords who owned all the land. The people worked for the lord who owned the land and their lives were completely dominated by the lord over them. These lords' in turn' were themselves ruled by a more powerful lord or king of the country. Plutocracy is another power, which rules this world—the rule of the rich. In Plutocracy the wealthy class of people control the government and generally maintain their status by domination of the poor and by keeping them repressed.

And, of course, there is Monarchy. An absolute Monarchy is where the king has total authority. Many of the governments in Old Testament times were Monarchies. England originally was an absolute Monarchy whereas now it is a Constitutional Monarchy where the king or queen has limited authority by law, with the prime minister and parliament running the government. None of these forms of government is God's form of government. God's form of government is Theocracy—the rule of God. Theocracy is the government of the Kingdom of God and holds sway over all who have been given an abundant entrance into the Kingdom. It is the rule of a loving Father-King in wisdom' knowledge' and goodness.

If one were asked to define history in a single sentence' he would be wise to say, "History is an unbroken record of the failure of human government." Almost any form of government would be perfect' if the governors possessed perfection. The tragedy of human failure is resident in the fact that no government can be more perfect than the administrators thereof' who are generally no more perfect than the people they rule' indeed, in many cases less perfect. Never at any time has there been a nation composed entirely of righteous people' not God's ancient people' Israel, and not even the New Testament Church. Even during the Exodus, when the children of Israel had witnessed mighty miracles by the hand of God, and they saw His visible presence in the pillar of cloud and fire every day, and heard His voice from the mount of the Lord, the great mass of the people were either actively or passively unrighteous. When Moses was on mount Sinai, receiving the law of Yahweh, part of the nation of Israel was actively wicked, demanding that Aaron make them an idol god, the golden calf; most of even God's own nation passively followed them into lurid licentiousness, wildly dancing in naked frenzy around their idol, and only Moses and the tribe of Levi remained faithful to Yahweh.

## **NOT BY DEMOCRACY**

"I believe in the rule of the people, by the people, and for the people" I hear many people say. You do? No you do not. Not one person who reads these lines who is an intelligent, honest, God-fearing person believes in it. It is the most deceiving creed going. You say that you believe in the rule of the people, by the people, and for the people. You say that democracy is the most perfect form of government inspired by God and given to the founders of our nation. Let us contrast life under democracy with the atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, patience, kindness, goodness' faithfulness' gentleness' and self-control" (Gal. 5:22). My attention was especially drawn to this passage recently and so I began studying each of those words. I looked at the first word But. And, odd as it may seem that is a tremendous word here. I know that Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit of wisdom. Often he would write one thing, only to drive home his point with a punch line that began with a conjunction of but, or therefore, or so then, in his own way of saying, "on the one hand there its this, but on the other hand..." So as we look at this passage we may ask, "if the fruits of the Spirit are these, then what is Paul saying on the other hand? "

Well, what is found "on the other hand" is listed in the previous verse. Galatians 5:19-21' is what Paul called "the works of the flesh." This is what he writes: "Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy' fits of rage' selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like.," It is interesting to note that every one of the behaviors that Paul listed under the works of the flesh ARE LEGAL IN AMERICA TODAY! Go back and read the list again. These are all legal in America today—every single one. In fact' they are the most prominent

characteristics of our society here at the end of the century! They fill our streets, our homes, our schools, our businesses, the television, movies, magazines, books, and even the Churches.

You see, when America was founded, it was based upon something that is quite a contradiction to the principles of the Kingdom of God. It was based on freedom. Now, don't get me wrong, freedom is a very good thing. But it is, in and of itself, a contrast to righteousness. The laws of our land were established so that we could have the freedom to be able to do whatever we desire to do, go as far as we desire to go, be what we want to be, as long as it is not encroaching on another person's safety or well-being. Under freedom you have the liberty to do right, to do good, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. But under freedom you also have liberty to do wrong, to sin - lust, fornicate, hate, practice witchcraft, be an atheist, get drunk, curse, watch pornography, lie, cheat, misrepresent, worship devils, etc. The people in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, have come to understand this. It is an undeniable fact that crime of all kinds rises along with freedom. There is freedom for the fruit of the Spirit, but there is equally freedom for the works of the flesh. That is how "freedom" is!

Nobody, really, can tell us Americans, what freedom is. Is not this the land of the free? Nowhere in the world is there more freedom than we enjoy in this country, born out of a desire to be free. For freedom we live and for freedom we die; not only for ourselves, but for others as well. From countries where freedom simply does not exist, people, desiring to be free, have come to America, and even today it is clear that there is no end to the five hundred-year escape to freedom. Some come for freedom to manifest the fruit of the Spirit; most come to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. And something has happened along this road of freedom; not overnight, but slowly. Our desire for all the freedom and all the liberty in the world, has now—whether we admit it or not - brought us to the point where it is killing us! We have gradually turned from freedom to do good, prosper, and worship God, to freedom to do evil, with the result that we have become slaves of our own desires. We have allowed ourselves unlimited freedom in the pursuit of pleasure, the complete satisfaction of all our fleshly senses: the lust of our eyes, our feelings, our hearing, our tasting and our smelling. In the pursuit of pleasure we spend all our free time. We cannot get enough of our movies, television, magazines, parties, smoking, drinking, carousing, drugs, rock, and sex. Nobody can be allowed to spoil our pleasure! All of America's notorious ills have their root in the desire for freedom. The freedom we have in the United States is a wonderful system as long as we realize that this system is not a divine or godly system - nor is it even in the proximity of the Kingdom of God!

The kind of freedom we have in America is a spurious, deceptive, lying freedom. Men are slaves to those things they are free to do. Therefore, their freedom is bondage. The only true freedom in the universe is the freedom of the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed!" In Christ we are made "free from the law", because we are also "free from sin." "For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3:17). The hope of all creation is the liberty that is to be brought to all men at the manifestation of the sons of God. It is not the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor that heralds freedom for earth's teeming, oppressed masses. No, my brother, my sister! Rather, it is the body of Christ coming to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. It is my hope in this writing to awaken the pure minds of God's people to true understanding of freedom and liberty in the Kingdom of God. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious LIBERTY of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19-21). There is freedom indeed! Freedom from corruption, freedom from sin, freedom from fear, freedom from lack, freedom from pain and sorrow, freedom from limitation, freedom from sickness and disease, freedom from ignorance and error, freedom from death, hell and the grave. All that and much more is entailed in the "liberty of the sons of God" in the Utopia of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Let me ask you a straight question. Are the majority of the people in your city saints or sinners? I would not say that all men in El Paso are sinners, I would not say that all men in El Paso are liars, I would not say that all men in El Paso are on some level immoral, but I do not doubt for one moment that it would be safe to say that a good working majority are! And it would not surprise me one bit if the same is true in your city, county or state. Very well, do you want that majority to rule you? Instead of that you try to get a man who is not with the majority and is better than the majority. You want him to rule you, and not the majority.

You have been told that "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" is a divine form of government, given by the mind of the Lord to our founding Fathers. Where do you find that in the Bible? Nowhere. The issue is one of authority: is it from God, or from man? If God is the sovereign authority over all things, then His Word alone can govern all things. If the ultimate authority is man, then all things must serve man and bow down to man. The doctrine of "human rights" and "democracy" is the humanistic replacement for the rule of God by the Spirit. Man is regarded as sovereign - and that is humanism, pure and simple. All forms of government are needed in God's great demonstration of human incompetence. Little as we may like some of them, let us recognize God's wisdom even in their faults, and be thankful for the lessons that they teach. We speak of our present age of democracies as though they were something completely new. That is not so. Both Greece and Rome knew democratic and republican sway. Every form of government that political philosophers can conceive has been tried in the past - and found wanting. The evils of a democracy are perhaps fewer and easier to bear than the tyranny and suppression possible under other forms of government. Yet that man would be blinded indeed to conditions as they are, who said that democracy had given the earth a perfect government in our day and time. Americans have been fed the notion that democracy is the greatest, most superior form of government developed by man. The testimony of God is against that. The more one is ruled by God, the nobler he becomes, but the more one is ruled by man, the more base he becomes. Today, man's condition is a complete rejection of God's rule.

In his comments on Jesus, healing of the demoniac boy when He had come down from the mount of Transfiguration, George Hawtin has strikingly written, "It will not be necessary for me here to endeavor to convince anyone that the world is now struggling helplessly between the fires of tribulation and the waters of judgment. Listen to the news any day at any hour and what do we hear? More violence. More killings. More break-ins. More robberies. More conspiracies. More defrauding. More wars. More terrorism. More armaments. More uprisings. More rebellions. More air crashes. More earthquakes. More tornadoes. More volcanoes, more floods, and more mud slides. More drug abuse. And an ever-increasing number of children born either crippled in body or retarded in mind, and, worst of all, no good news anywhere. The poor' sad' distraught, demon possessed world, groaning and travailing in pain, is waiting for the sons of God to reach the glory and honor of adoption, waiting for the transfigured family of sons to say, 'Bring him to me.'

"Far away in the depths of my spirit I hear the voice of the prophet Isaiah, saying, 'And He will destroy in this mountain (the mountain of the kingdom of God) the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it, (Isa. 25:7-8). Oh what a song of joy there is going to be when the sons of God say, 'Bring him unto me! And the poor, drunken, staggering, demon possessed world will as the demoniac of Gadara be devoutly following Jesus, clothed and in his right mind' —end quote.

Let us now carry the thought of the contrast between democracy and the Kingdom of God a little further. Government of the people, by the people, and for the people is the most selfish thing in existence. Suppose I were to stand up and say, "I believe in the government of J. Preston Eby, by J. Preston Eby, and for J. Preston Eby" would I be selfish or unselfish? I would be a selfish brute. How many millions of selfish people are there in the United States? If that is a selfishness as applied to one man, then it is 265,000,000 times a bigger piece of selfishness applied to 265,000,000 people. The government of a man by himself and for himself is the most brutal, selfish thing that you can find. That is why in all our society we have so much "take" and so little "give". It contradicts the nature of God. It stands in opposition to the principles of the Kingdom of God in the Sermon on the Mount. It is the antithesis of redemptive love. God rules men out of His great heart of sacrificial love. In democracy men are always out to see how much they can get. Just ask any woman who has a man of that kind for a husband. "I believe" he says to his wife 'in the government of myself, by myself, and for myself. Now look out for yourself!" That is the kind of man he is. There is not a spark of nobility in that kind of man or in that kind of government. That is a false principle. You have been told that it is a grand principle. It is no such thing.

If you are going to have the rule of all the people you might just as well govern a family by the children, or govern a factory by the employees and apprentices. Government does not come from below, unless it comes from hell, and that government is Confusion - Babylon. It is true—you may have good government under democracy if you have all good people. You may have saintly government under democracy if you have all

saintly people. If the people were all ruled by God, for God, and the Voice was the Voice of an awakened and renewed spirit within, then God would rule. But it is not so. If you have mostly careless people, you will have careless government. If you have a majority of immoral people' you will have immoral government. If you have bad people' you will have bad government. If the people are corrupt, you have corrupt government. With carnal people you get carnal government and with sinning people - that is the kind of government you will have! All democracies in the end are government of sinners, by sinners, and for sinners.

Certainly that explains in simple to understand language the present corruption in both our nation and our government. The thing that needs changing in this dark world is the sinful heart of man. Out of this dread fountain there stems all that is wrong in human relations. God has filled this earth with every good and perfect thing that man can need. It is all good, just as He pronounced it in that long ago beginning. He has provided it in such abundance that there is more than plenty for all. It is the selfishness and lust of the hearts of the few which result in hunger, privation and want on the part of the many. There is beauty and grace in the entire creation, but the perverted heart of man twists these gifts of God into objects of lust and indulgence, violating the very purpose of creation. The builders of the New World Order each are erecting their gossamer structures upon a rotten foundation. Share the wealth, and in a few years the few will have it all back again. Reverse political trends and give power to the oppressed (as it was supposed to be under communism!) and they quickly become the oppressors! Pass laws enforcing goodness, ethics, and morality, and after a short time enforcement becomes lax and as the new generation arises they will throw off the yoke that they hate.

## THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

I tell you today that I do not believe in democracy - I believe in Theocracy. And I have no hesitation in telling you that old Abe Lincoln's prediction will ultimately come to naught when he said, "The government of the people, by the people, and for the people SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH..." Oh yes, it will! The word of God is sure: "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44). The Kingdom of God is a Theocracy. Do you understand what a Theocracy is? Democracy is the rule of the people. Theocracy is the rule of God. It is DIVINE GOVERNMENT. The word theocracy comes from two Greek words: THEOS, meaning God or divinity, and KRATEO, meaning to have power, to rule, to be chief or master of. It is not the rule of political bosses of any kind or degree. It is not the rule by votes. That would be the people's kingdom, not the Kingdom of God. Democracy cannot be the Kingdom of God or even a simile of the Kingdom of God, because those in the Kingdom of God are born of God, led by God and controlled by God.

Theocratic principles are at entire and positive enmity with democratic principles. In the Kingdom of God the people must not rule, or the Kingdom will go to the devil. There is no voting in the Kingdom of God. It is not a rule by military might. It is not a dictatorship. It is not parliamentary or congressional rule. It is not an earthly monarchy. It is not the rule of the proletariat. IT IS THE RULE OF GOD. IT IS THE AUTHORITY AND ACTION OF THE HEART AND WILL AND PURPOSE OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER WHO SO LOVED THE WORLD. We who stand for Theocracy believe that the gospel that the Church has given to it is the gospel of the Kingdom of God. That which the Christ came to establish was the Kingdom of God. Christ who came as Savior, is now reigning on high as King.

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven' Now is come salvation' and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ" (Rev. 12:10). The Kingdom of God is the authority of His Christ. The God who sits upon the throne is Christ. The Theocracy has become a Christocracy. Christ Himself is reigning. I may have a Christocracy today right here within my soul. I may acknowledge the Lordship of the Christ within that He may reign in my life, in my heart, in my will, in my mind, in my nature, and then as He reigns through me, a member of the Christ-body, I become part of that Christocracy. This is such a beautiful form of government: God reigning through His chosen. His love, power, righteousness, peace and judgments all flow through the priesthood that He has called and ordained. In the beginning when God created the first man and woman and instituted marriage, He established this form of government. It is for the home, it is for the church, and it is for the world, when the time is ripe for it. In Eden God shared His FATHERHOOD WITH MAN. When God called

Abram He shared His FATHERHOOD WITH HIM and made him the father of many nations calling him Abraham (Gen. 17:5).

What makes this order so different from a democracy is that the heads are not voted in, therefore they cannot be manipulated by the voters. The difference between theocracy and dictatorship is that no man has authority in himself, it is not a carnal authority and he cannot be a boss and demand servitude. But I would have you know that "the Head of every man is Christ... and the Head of Christ is God" (I Cor. 11:3). That is the precise order of headship in the Kingdom of God. In order for one to have and exercise the authority that belongs to the Kingdom' he must live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit. He must be submissive and obedient to his one and only Head' Jesus Christ. It is a spiritual authority' not a natural or carnal or organizational one. If one fails to walk in the Spirit and be submitted to Christ his Life, no matter how many men or pastors or apostles he may be submitted to, he can shout long and loud but the authority of the God will not be there.

The business of the sons of God is to establish the Theocracy - the rule of God in the midst of men. Only with the mind of the Spirit can we discern the rule of God. Paul speaks of it in Philippians 3:20 where he says, "For our conversation is in heaven." The Greek word here translated "conversation" is POLITEUMA—politics! Plainly he says, "Our politics are in heaven." Our politics are not out of the Democratic party, or the Republican party, or anybody else's political party—our politics are right out of the realm of the Spirit and Power of God. Our politics are the RULE OF GOD BY THE SPIRIT. In all of our life and relationships we have no other politics, no other agenda, no other authority, no other source of blessing to humanity.

Since the Church is a part of the Kingdom of God it was intended to function in the Theocratic Order. You see this so powerfully in the beginning, in the book of Acts. Notice how things were done by the Holy Ghost, by Theocratic principles. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them...they...being sent forth by the Holy Ghost' departed" (Acts 13:2-4). "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand upon him, that he might receive his sight. Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord' even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God" (Acts 9: 10-20).

All ministry in the house of God is of divine appointment, on whatever level it may be. Only the Holy Ghost can do these things. There is no such thing in the Kingdom of God as appointment to ministry by human authority or hierarchy. Neither is there such a thing as a self-constituted ministry of a man's own choosing. None but God can make or appoint a ministry of any sort or description. Even in Old Testament times Yahweh called Moses and appointed Aaron and his sons to the priesthood; and if a stranger presumed to meddle with the functions of those so appointed, he was put to death. Such was the solemn result - the awful consequence of moving out of the order of God's theocratic order. "Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God...and no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (I Cor. 12:4-6). "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him" "But God hath set some in the church..." "And He gave some apostles' and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and some teachers..."

This "church voting" is all nonsense. I should just as soon ask a flock of sheep to vote where the shepherd should lead them. I should just as soon expect an army to vote as to what general should lead them. What army would ever be able to fight successfully, if all its officers, captains, majors, colonels, brigadier generals, and commander-in-chief depended upon the votes of the soldiers! I should like to know what kind of an army

that would be. If I were on the other side, I should like to meet that army, because I would put it to rout the first thing. I should have no fear of an army where the soldiers elected their own officers and voted whether to go into the battle or not. If they are not pleased today, they put them down tomorrow. If the battle is going badly, they stop and take a vote whether to fight on. They would change about thirty times a month. I would know what could be done with them if I were on the other side. The devil does not give a snap for the man-made and man-run church systems of this world where your ministers have to preach to please the people, or else have the people butt them out of the pasture. Nice kind of thing that, is it not? Nice mess you have gotten yourselves into, treating ministers as if they were cooks. If they do not happen to season the doctrinal soup from the pulpit to your satisfaction, you say, "Go!" And they have to go. Nonsense!

In that harlot system, which calls itself the church, they have been applying democratic principles to what is supposed to be a theocratic institution. Every honest man must admit that the Church cannot be the Church of God if it is the Church of the People. That would be the people's Church, not God's. And that is exactly what it is. It cannot be the Church of God, because those in the Church of God are born of God, called by God' led by God, positioned by God, nurtured by God' and controlled by God. In the Church of God the people must not rule, or the Church will surely go to the devil. Therefore, it has come to pass that in these church systems, which have given up the rule to the people and to the devil, you have a most extraordinary condition of things. You have Theological Seminaries, which take young men from the universities and schools and make ministers of them by machinery, like so many sausages from a sausage mill. The consequence is that the denomination owns him from that time on. He goes from step to step' taking everything they say, swallowing it all, thinking as they think, acting as they act, and then at last he becomes their minister. How is he called? In many denominations it is about the same. They generally go upon the same basis that the people have the right to call the minister. Do you not know how the people call the minister? In the first place they have to think of the minister's salary. If they go about it the best way, the committee will say, "We will get a first-class talker, a charismatic man with eloquence and charm. He will attract crowds of people, fill this church, and boom the town. We cannot afford to have any but a polished man." The consequence is that they go to the wealthiest business tycoon in the church and say' "How much will you help us, Mr. Flesh-pot, to get a good minister?" He takes enough time to get the cigar out of his mouth and silently damn them, and then he begins to think. "After all, I cannot afford to let these fellows get just anyone, because I put \$50,000 into that church last year, and this town must have a man who can talk. Well, I will think about it." So he tells them he will think about it.

At last he sends off to some place where there is a promising young rising star, a fellow who is a go-getter and is talking away. He is pretty bright. Mr. F1esh-pot, who is chairman of the committee, and pays all expenses, brings the young fellow to town to hear him preach some trial sermons and see whether he is the man or not. The question then becomes a question of salary. The whole question of the call being from God is decided by the salary paid. That settles the whole thing. You do not expect it to be a call of God, if there is not more salary paid than you are now receiving. Mr. Flesh-pot, who has not a spark of spirituality or godliness in him, rules the whole thing. The committee must do as he says. As a result a man is chosen who praises society, who charms and entertains, who lives in the world, who walks after the flesh, who minds earthly things, who will not damage any of the interests of Mr. Flesh-pot or any of the other "pots" in the church, who will be very gent1e with sin and every carnal thing. A meeting is called and this man is put before them' and the people vote upon it. But the "primaries" have already been held and Mr. Flesh-pot's nominee must be voted for. What is the consequence? Dumb dogs in the pulpit! I would rather break stones in the street than to be a minister of that kind. And I would rather eat pork and beans three times a day than to be dependent upon any people for a "salary" as one of Babylon's hirelings, or be voted in by the people to anything.

Now I fully realize that the conditions are not quite that extreme in many Evangelical, Fundamentalist, Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations where the people love to think that they are true to the Word of God and are led by the Spirit. But I have been there—and I know, and you know, that self-pleasing, pride, fleshly zeal, political manipulations, financial interests, clout of those who have money and control the purse-strings of the church, and a great number of carnal considerations are always involved where the people call the preachers and control the ministry. The ministers of Babylon are hirelings, one and all, and the people usurpers of the Holy Ghost. I have found that the rule of the people in church affairs is a curse unutterable; that the minister loses his ability to walk in the Spirit, loses his sense of being a messenger of God, loses His capacity to function in the government of God, and becomes the mere mouthpiece of some wretched

committee or faction representing some miserable party that has attained supremacy in the church. They hire him as they would hire a cook, and kick him out when the cooking does not suit them.

Democracy will always produce, sooner or later, "man's man" and "man's plan" rather than "God's man" and "God's plan." This is true in all societies and on all levels where Democracy rather than Theocracy is practiced. Democracy in the church or Democracy in the United States government did not start in the Throne Room, will never have "rights" in the Throne Room. It has nothing to do with the Kingdom of God whatsoever. You see, I am undertaking the most unfashionable kind of thing. I am undertaking to teach a democratic people to embrace Theocracy; to exchange the rule of themselves, by themselves, and for themselves with the rule of themselves by God and for God. That is the route of sonship pure and simple. All who receive the call to sonship sooner or later become thoroughly undeceived by the carnal church system and flee from it as a plague, for it has the horns of a lamb, appearing harmless and good, but it has the voice of a dragon (Rev. 13:1 ).

It is the mind of Christ that will order and govern the world in the Kingdom of God. Every son of God will be imbued with the mind of Christ and from those holy omniscient minds the life and light and love and authority and glory of the Lord will flow forth with a power that will encompass the earth with transforming grace and fill it to overflowing with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. With great earnestness I pray that God will open your understanding, for it is of perfect truth that I tell you that no man can ever hope to reign in the Kingdom of Christ until his will has become one with the will of the Father. Were it possible for one man to reign in the Kingdom while still possessing his own will in opposition to the will of the Father, it would mean the destruction of the Kingdom with confusion, strife and rebellion.

Sons of God, God's Christ, are the instrument to bring the divine order of God into the lives of all men, for the Head of every man is Christ. The will of God on earth is in truth the Kingdom of God. God's Christ shall also bring the divine order of God into society, into all activities and institutions, until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. The story I read recently of the farmer who had a visit from the Christian holds much truth for us. It seems that the farmer had a visit from a young man who constantly remarked of the beauty of the farm in this manner. "God has just blessed you so much." over and over again the young man could not resist praising God over the great beauty of this farm. "God has given you so much in this farm", he would say. Being somewhat of a salty Christian, the old farmer finally spoke up concerning the zealous praise of the young Christian. He said, "Well son, it is true that God has blessed this farm. But, you should have seen it when God had it all to Himself!"

Ah, God could sovereignly and independently right every wrong and restore the whole creation to purity and soundness and beauty and incorruptibility in an instant with one sweep of His great hand if that were His plan. But God has a better plan! He is processing a people to bring His peace, His righteousness, the beauty of His nature, His glory and His will to all men and all creatures, beginning on earth, and extending to the extremities of the unbounded heavens. God has not chosen to bring forth the magnificence of Himself in creation independently and single handedly—the sons of God are the "farmers" He is raising up to establish the harmony of His purpose and the majesty of His Kingdom throughout all His domains. The first area of land that He has given us to work over' and bring forth a crop unto righteousness, is ourselves. Today God has chosen to bring His Kingdom to pass in all the earth through us. Plant wisely' water faithfully' cultivate carefully, my brother, my sister, that there shall be an abundant harvest of salvation and righteousness unto the ends of the earth.

Jesus Christ preached the good news of the Kingdom of God. He is Himself the King of this Kingdom and the sons of God are His joint-rulers. He is the firstborn of many brethren who are kings as He is King and priests as He is Priest after the order of Melchizedek. As George Hawtin has so eloquently written, "These are they who during their life on earth went unto Him without the camp of the world's denominations and systems, bearing His reproach, that they might be received and taught as sons of their heavenly Father. Long ago amid the shadows of earth they heard and obeyed God's call, 'Come out of her, my people, and be separate; and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty., In their obedience God became their Father. As a Father He instructed them, broke them free from the blinding traditions and doctrines of men. He rebuked them as any loving father

rebukes his children. He chastised them as a father chastises his son, for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? For if we receive not chastening, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons. As a Father He fed them, and He fed them on His Living Word of Life, they became partakers of the divine mind, the divine nature, the divine will. The mind that was in Christ Jesus dwelt in them and as it increased they were thoroughly transformed by the renewing of their minds. These are the kings, the priests, and the judges of His glorious and eternal Kingdom" - end quote.

God's Theocratic government will yet break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms' within and without. And He doesn't need your vote! You don't need to "believe" it to make it come to pass. It is not going to happen just because enough people "want" it to! No, it is happening and shall continue to happen in spite of all of us - the Kingdom is coming whether the world expects it or not! The world wasn't expecting Jesus two millennia ago. The world wasn't expecting the power of God that came at Pentecost. The world wasn't "believing" for the apostles to appear on the scene in the power and demonstration of the Kingdom of Heaven. The world didn't 'want' the Church to arise in the midst of the earth and overthrow all the gods and temples and priesthoods of the pagans. And the world isn't planning on the manifestation of the sons of God. As I listen to the ridiculous blather of politicians; weigh and compare the absolutely mind-boggling problems of this world against their sugar-coated promises, how THANKFUL I am that the security, prosperity, safety and protection of my family and our destiny do not depend on the feeble machinations of power-hungry men. Yes, THANK GOD for God's Christ, for His unfailing promises, for His answers to prayer, for His healing, delivering, miracle working power, for the wisdom of His ways, the righteousness, peace and joy of His Spirit, the understanding of His mind, the undergirding of His strength, the majesty of His glory, the authority of His Word, the inner stability of His substance, the love, purity, faith and might of His nature, the quickening, transforming power of His life—THIS IS THE POWER AND GLORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

I believe in the rule of J. Preston Eby by God and for God. Nothing else has any potential beyond this dismal realm of sin, death and the grave. If it had not been that God ruled me I would have gone to the devil long ago. I know just a little of my own heart, though it is abundantly true that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and the wise man wisely asked, "Who can know it?" Yet I know just a little of my own heart and I have seen enough in the little I know to realize that I would have shipwrecked on some benighted shoals of sin, shame, delusion or death were it not for the rule of God in my life by the Spirit. This is precisely why the Kingdom of God has to be within. The gospel of the Kingdom of God is the gospel Jesus brought the world. In every parable, in every simile in which He put His gospel before His disciples and the multitudes, He spoke of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of God is the whole aim and purpose of God's great gift to humanity. I proclaim to you today, as a minister of God, as an ambassador of His Kingdom that God's highest purpose in the earth is the establishment of the Kingdom—the Kingdom of God in every heart, the Kingdom of God in the home, the Kingdom of God in the workplace, the Kingdom of God between employers and employees, the Kingdom of God in the civic affairs of the city, the Kingdom of God in the government of the state, the Kingdom of God to rule in every nation and every land from sea to sea and from pole to pole. God has sent salvation to save us from the kingdom of men and of devils. The rule of men can never lift the world out of the abyss of hate and war and poverty and sickness and sin and sorrow and death.

The Kingdom of God has been despised and hated by every government, by the politician, and by all carnal and corrupt men and women. They all approve of a Kingdom that some day will come' but they want nothing to do with a rule of God that comes right now into their world and upsets and destroys the sovereignty of man. They always strive to separate God from government, God from business, God from education, and God from social services. They say you must not have religion in your politics, in your media, or in your business. You must let the devil rule the government. You must let the devil rule business. You must let the devil rule your pleasures. You must let the devil rule your schools. You must let the devil rule the press.

The day is coming when the devil will not rule any more in any of these places. The day is coming when there will be no more voting in America, no more elections, no more corrupt politics, no more national networks with their stars and superstar newscasters covering major conventions, no more convention halls decorated in bright colors, or delegates wearing loud-colored casual or sports attire, many with outlandish oversized hats. No more whoop-and-holler demonstrations, or thousands with balloons, like little children at play. No more political signs and placards, no more of the usual politics being played secretly from smoke filled hotel suites

away from convention halls —the jockeying for selfish advantage, political gain and coveting of power. No more polished speeches and lying orations promising everybody everything and delivering nothing.

The day is coming when the saints shall judge the earth; when the overcoming sons of God shall be given power over the nations to rule them with the iron rod of righteous dominion and transforming power; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers. Let all men know that it is the Almighty God who is the designer and architect of all the nations of the world. The time periods and localities in which nations flourish have all been pre-arranged by the will of Him who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11). The truth of this cannot be made any plainer than it is by Moses in **Deuteronomy 32:8**: "When the Most High divided the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Paul refers to this verse in **Acts 17:26-27**: "And hath made of one blood ALL NATIONS of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth' AND HATH DETERMINED THE TIMES BEFORE APPOINTED, and the BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION; that they should seek the Lord."

How plain it is that it was GOD who, from the beginning, set the bounds of habitation or the national boundaries of ALL NATIONS. These boundaries were established in relation to Israel and with a view to their being able to seek after the Lord. It is remarkable that the land of Palestine was originally reserved by the wisdom and goodness of the Lord for the possession of His special people and the display of the most stupendous signs and wonders. The theater was small, but wonderfully suited for the convenient observation of the whole human race—at the junction of the two continents of Asia and Africa, and almost in sight of Europe. From this spot as from a common center the reports of God's wonderful works, of His mighty power and awesome glory, of the glad tidings of salvation through the obedience, suffering, and resurrection of His precious Son, of the wonder-filled outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as the faithful disciples of Jesus were set ablaze by the life and power of their glorified Lord, might be rapidly and easily wafted to every part of the globe.

Yes, God set the bounds of habitation for all nations and planted Israel at the crossroads, to the end that ALL NATIONS should seek after the Lord. Out of Israel came the Christ; out of the Christ has come the Church, His bride (Eph. 5:21-33); out of Church shall come forth the manchild, the manifested sons of God, destined to bring blessed and glorious and ultimate deliverance to the whole creation that it might be fulfilled which God promised to father Abraham: "And in thy seed shall ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). ALL NATIONS shall be blessed! Some still don't believe it. Some tell me that only the Church is to be blessed, or only some people in the nations are to be blessed, or that the Kingdom has nothing to do with nations - only some invisible entity in the spirit realm. What a prospect! From the very beginning God not only designed the nations of men that dwell upon the earth; He also planned and purposed to bless them - each and every one of them in their totality! This speaks not of the blessing of Israel, nor the blessing of the Church, nor of the blessing of the saints of God within the nations, nor the blessing of spiritual people in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; it is THE NATIONS THEMSELVES that must come under the gracious hand of God in blessing and quickening until every part and form and fashion thereof has been raised up into the Kingdom of God. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

David, the sweet singer of Israel, intoned this hope in the spirit of prophecy: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among ALL NATIONS. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let ALL the people praise Thee! O let THE NATIONS be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt JUDGE THE PEOPLE righteously, and GOVERN THE NATIONS upon earth...yea, ALL KINGS shall bow down before Him: ALL NATIONS SHALL SERVE HIM" (Ps. 67:1-4; 72:11). It is obvious that all nations do not today serve the Lord, neither do all kings (rulers) fall down before Him. Communist China does not serve the Lord, neither do its rulers acknowledge Him. Iran does not serve the Lord. Iraq does not serve the Lord. Great numbers of nations do not today serve the Lord, and few of their rulers fall down before Him. But the day is surely coming when all nations shall be joined to the Lord and fulfill their obligations to Him as their Maker and Savior. If that day never comes, then I will have to tear my Bible to pieces and the Word of God will have to be relegated to the scrap heap of ancestral errors. But the promise is sure: "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for Thou shalt INHERIT ALL NATIONS. ALL NATIONS whom

Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things" (Ps. 82:8; 86:9-10).

Many precious "fragments" reveal God's ultimate purpose for mankind, when "ALL the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and ALL KINDREDS OF TIIE NATIONS shall worship before Thee, for the kingdom is the Lord's and HE is the governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:27-28). Almighty Father! "Thy Kingdom Come!"

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 16**  
**HOW THE KINGDOM COMES** [continued]  
BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART SIXTEEN**

**NOT BY LAW**  
**THE NEW MAN OF THE KINGDOM**

When our Lord spoke of the Kingdom of God He said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Jesus had just told His disciples where the Kingdom is and how the Kingdom does not come. Before you can ever see the Kingdom you have to know how it's not coming — because the First thing we try to do is build it by the natural. The spirit of wisdom and understanding from God must deliver us from our confusion about how the Kingdom of God comes. It cannot be established by force. It cannot be established by law. It will never be established by any kind of political action. It is impossible for it to be established by the will, efforts, or programs of men or of governments.

**NOT BY LAW**

In the United States today we have the Fundamentalist and Charismatic Christian movements whose burden it is to restructure government and society in the name of the Lord, not by spiritual regeneration, but by constitutional legislation. These are sincere Christians concerned for the social problems confronting the modern world who are being beguiled and deceived into accepting the premise that by partaking in the Babylonish systems of this confused world, they will be able to effect significant changes and bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. To those on the "religious right" that seems to be envisioned as a political government that will outlaw abortion, re-institute public prayer in schools and legislate Christian morality on the whole of society. It is their conviction that God's Word gives them a mandate to infiltrate and exercise godly control over all the political, social, educational and judicial institutions of the nation. They are convinced that the Bible gives us a divinely revealed pattern for social and political action.

But does the law of Moses give us a body of social, economic and political regulations which, when applied, will rescue our nation or any nation from its woes? If a serious problem exists in our society, can we scan the precepts of Moses for a solution? When we discover the Old Testament law to resolve a moral and social difficulty, is it an expression of the Kingdom Jesus taught to lift out the regulation as found in Moses and write it in the law books of our state? Some are claiming that this is God's method of establishing the principles and power of the Kingdom of God in our world today.

The Church goes out and protests abortion, they demand that the law be changed. The people of God go out and protest homosexual activities, same sex marriages, and a score of other moral issues, demanding that laws be passed based on the laws of God. They have the Old Testament mentality that thinks the way to make America a godly nation is to legislate morality. Let's force everyone to submit to our standards of right and wrong because we have this authority from God. That's what the Pope thinks, too. And it's what the Moslem Fundamentalists and the Orthodox Jews think. It's what the Serbs think. That's what Hitler thought. They all think they have authority from God to legislate their particular standard of righteousness and enforce it as the law of the land. With every law there is a punishment for breaking that law. Thus, those who would, in the name of Christ, legislate morality also are responsible for the punishments meted out to those who break the law. They thus become "bearers of the sword" and it brings Christians right back under the Old Covenant — an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth! And they can no longer say with the merciful Jesus, "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (Jn. 3:17).

All Christians who are out protesting abortion and pressing for legislation to ban it and other evils are condemners of the world. The spirit of sonship is not in them. The priesthood of mercy has not been raised up

in their hearts. The spiritual dynamic of the Kingdom of God has never been quickened in their consciousness. They would never be able to say to the woman taken in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." Instead, they would be carrying placards and petitioning the government for stronger laws against adultery. If they themselves did not hold stones in their hands to stone her, they would at least rejoice in the government's restrictions and be consenting to the stoning, as Saul of Tarsus consented to the stoning of Stephen. They would say, "Praise God, justice was done and a strong signal has been sent out to all our young people and would-be law breakers, that adultery is sin and punishable by death! This will put holy fear in their hearts and preserve the moral values of our nation." I do not hesitate to say that such an attitude is diametrically opposed to the spirit of sonship. It has nothing whatever to do with the Kingdom of God. It stands, in fact, in opposition to the Kingdom of God. It is a monstrous heresy and a religious delusion. It is spiritual treason.

People want to get all the pornography off the news stands. Am I in favor of pornography? Certainly not! Am I in favor of legislating it out of the land? If I am I become a minister of the law of the Old Covenant, not a minister of deliverance to creation. I tell you today, I will preach to somebody, I will proclaim the love and power of God to him, I will demonstrate the mercy and goodness of the Lord toward him, I will do everything within my power to touch that heart and change that life with the grace of Jesus Christ to experience the holiness of God, but I will not compel him by condemnation and law and punishment — that is not the way of the Kingdom of God. I am not a minister of the law, I am a priest of the Most High God. God is raising up His Kingdom from within men, not from without men. The sons of God are Ambassadors of that Kingdom that establishes righteousness in the earth by transformation, not by compulsion. Man's government is the instrument of the sword, not the sons of God. We are bound in the spirit to represent only the interests and principles of the Kingdom of God, never the interests or policies of the kingdoms of this world.

Preachers travel up and down the land with their Fingers pointed at sinners, picking out a new sin, the sin of the week, to preach against. Their whole message is that the media is ungodly, the government is corrupt, the New World Order is a conspiracy, the educational system is immoral, the abortionists, homosexuals, and others must be stopped, and they breathe out threatenings, hell-fire and damnation against the world from their perch high upon a crag on Mount Sinai. That's not God's way at all! Our heavenly Father calls us to assume a posture that causes the light of God to shine upon the just and upon the unjust. The way of the Kingdom is not human government. The way of the Kingdom is not trying to get everyone to agree on a law that forbids unrighteousness and godlessness. That is the way of man's government, they can only deal with evil by restraint. But that is not God's Kingdom economy. To reign in the Kingdom the heart of the Father in heaven must be raised up within us. Sin cannot be gotten rid of externally. The whole concept of the Kingdom as taught by the preachers today is absurd.

This may surprise some of my readers, but sons of God are not called to point their fingers at the evils of society. JESUS NEVER DID! God did not call us to crusade and announce, "Abortion is evil, you should not do it. There ought to be a law!" No, I do not condone indiscriminate abortion. No, I am not for drugs and immorality and crime. But God did not call me to condemn the world — to condemn either these social evils or those who practice them. The people of God must offer a solution to sin instead of preaching against it. And our solution is not more laws. History proves that laws solve nothing. Does our "war on drugs" remove drugs from the streets and school yards of our nation? Absolutely not! Did "Prohibition" eradicate alcohol and drunkenness from America? No way! God does not need the church to tell society that adultery, hatred, lying, cheating, stealing and killing are wrong. Too much of the message of religion is lambasting sin and telling sinners how evil they are and that they are headed for hell and damnation. I can guarantee you that in their deepest heart they already know that! God needs a people who can offer the solution — the love of God and the power of God to deliver, redeem and transform is the answer. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

You can get rid of all pornography, you can close down all the abortion clinics, you can close up all the brothels, all the adult book stores, all the nude strip-joints, and all the hell-holes of sin, pass a million laws against sin, send out the army in the streets to enforce them, and sin will still erupt in your very midst because it is the heart that is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Outward sins are merely an effect of the inward sin of heart and nature — they are not a cause. Man does not sin because he sees sin, he sins because it's a nature to do it. The fact is, I couldn't have been anything at one time except a sinner because as

long as I remained in the consciousness of Adam I would forever be in a consciousness of sinning. But once you begin to come into the consciousness of the Christ the whole concept of sinning becomes foreign to you. You become centered in a God-Christ consciousness which becomes the spirit motivating your actions, the law of life within. Christ within becomes the animating principle and power of your being unto righteousness. And this, precious friend of mine, IS THE POWER AND THE GLORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

Let me say it again — the laws of Moses have absolutely nothing to do with the Kingdom of God! With what divine genius does the Holy Spirit on the pages of God's Word proclaim the eternal truth: "**The law and the prophets were until John, but since that time the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it**" (Lk. 16:16; Mat. 11:13). According to Jesus the Kingdom involved such altogether new forces and such unparalleled blessings and realities, that all the works and provisions of former moves of God on earth paled by comparison. They were the words of God, but not the reign of God. They were the works of God, but not the rule of God. They brought men into contact with God, but not under the dominion of God.

Times without number I have heard good people rejoicing in some "godly" piece of legislation that is before congress, or in their involvement in the anti-abortion movement, or that Christians have gained positions on the local school board, or that the ten commandments are posted in a court room or school building. But consider this, oh tradition bound man! "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." May the Spirit of God make it powerfully real to all who read these lines that the Kingdom of God is not a kingdom of law — it is the Kingdom of Grace and Truth.

Righteousness cannot be legislated. You cannot turn America or any other nation back to God with laws or any kind of governmental authority. You can put prayer back in the schools, but they will be carnal prayers that will rise no higher than the ceiling. You can outlaw this and that sin, but it will not change the hearts of men one iota. What the world needs today is not laws or police action to establish righteousness — men must experience regeneration, transformation, a new birth from above. This is only effected by SPIRITUAL POWER. The Kingdom of God can only be established in the earth by the spiritual power that changes men and makes them new creatures in Christ Jesus. "Except a man (any man) be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," is what Jesus taught. Once a man is born again, truly born again by the Spirit of God, you need no laws to enforce righteousness upon him. Once a nation turns to the Lord it will change the government — but changing the government cannot turn men to the Lord! The so-called "Christian Right" in America today has the cart before the horse. They have the whole thing backwards. Their mission will fail. They cannot and will not bring America back to God through the ballot box. I tell you as a prophet of God that political action and organization by the religious people in the United States or anywhere else will not return the nation to its Christian roots and heritage. They are barking up the wrong tree. Only the mighty saving, delivering, transforming power of God can accomplish the work.

Let me illustrate. Suppose that there are two meetings going on at opposite ends of the city. Both are led by preachers. One is engaged in spiritual ministry. The power of God is moving and men are coming to Christ, broken, weeping, contrite, repenting, calling upon the name of the Lord, their chains of sin and darkness broken, washed away by the power of God, becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus. Saints are being strengthened, the ways of the Lord are being established in hearts, the plan and purpose of God are being quickened in the consciousness of those seeking the Lord. The other preacher is heading a political movement to enlist "Christian political activists" in the project of holding demonstrations, lobbying government to put prayer back in the schools, initiate programs to get kids off of drugs, outlaw pornography, nude dancing, adult book stores, etc. Now, which of these two preachers is acting as an Ambassador of the Kingdom of Heaven; which of these preachers is doing the work of the Kingdom of God; which of these two is causing the Kingdom of God to come upon men; which of these two is introducing men to the Realm of Heaven; which is reigning in some measure with Christ from His throne of heavenly power?

There should be no doubt in any spiritual mind. The soul-saving preacher is certainly moving in a dimension of the Kingdom of God even in this present "in part" realm, whereas the politically active preacher is trying by the energy of the flesh, by the principles of the kingdoms of this world, and by the methodology of the Law of Moses, to reform the carnal government of man. With the above truth gaining access and blooming in our hearts, let us prepare our hearts to now step beyond our present age to the more excellent glory of the new

order which is now at hand in the Feast of Tabernacles, the third day, the Holiest of all, the manifestation of the sons of God. Let us discard the silly doctrines, methods and programs of men and evil traditions inherited from the kingdom of Babylon that we may receive of God and become His sons and daughters. The glory of this hope hastens my step. It quickens my heart. It speeds my writing. It urges me to partake completely of Him, to crown Him my Lord and Head forever.

It is my deep conviction that the time appointed of the Father for the manifestation of the sons of God is nigh at hand. Sons of God shout it loud and clear! Let the earth know her redemption draweth nigh! The King of Love is coming! Hallelujah! The Deliverer is coming out of Zion, the whole Christ-body is being prepared, and the time is at hand. While the religious systems "play church" and the Christians "dabble in politics" trying to save the nation and the world, the royal heralds are going forth blowing their trumpets, proclaiming the message of the Kingdom in the power of the Spirit, preparing the stage for the appearing of the KING in a vast company of the sons of God — the King in the midst of the kings! What a glorious and mighty and exultant victory lies before us!

Now don't misunderstand me. I certainly am not opposed to good and godly laws in our land, nor to Christians exerting their influence for righteousness in society or government. That is all well and good and to be commended, and I praise God for it. **JUST DON'T CALL IT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.** It is not the Kingdom of God. It has nothing to do with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not good laws or religiously oriented politics in this or any other land. The Kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace, and joy IN THE HOLY GHOST." What is the difference? I will tell you!

When Christians exert pressure on carnal institutions and impose their will and standards on unregenerated men, you have just another function of human government. It may be better human government. But it is still just human government. But, when those carnal institutions are changed because all the people in them have been transformed by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost — then **YOU HAVE THE KINGDOM OF GOD!** You have now not a legislated righteousness imposed from without, but "righteousness...in the Holy Ghost." Ah, the former was imposed by the law of the statute books — the Old Covenant; the latter is the result of the laws written in the hearts of men by the Spirit of the living God — the New Covenant! The Kingdom of God offers the solution to both sin and death. The world needs the solution to its evils and sorrows, not another band aid. God is preparing a people to step forth upon the world scene in the all nature, wisdom, power and glory of God's Christ. **THIS IS THE POWER AND GLORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

This is why I have consistently refused to become involved in movements, or organizations, in campaigns, crusades, and whatever work is dedicated to "anti" something. If I become a militant moralist to fight the degeneracy in our midst, if I work myself to death screaming against the communists, if I labor day and night warning God's people and the nation against politicians, the Illuminati, the world bankers, the Trilateral Commission, the United Nations, the New World Order, and all the other conspiracy theories — will it deliver even one soul from the power of darkness and translate him into the Kingdom of God's dear Son? Will it lead to transformation and to the glorification of as much as one life rescued from the power of hell, and raised up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? The answer is abundantly clear. God's purpose for His chosen ones is to become a part of **THE STONE THAT IS CHRIST**, which is cut out of the mountain without hands. It is a Kingdom not of this world, out of the heights and depths of God. **BECOME WHAT CHRIST IS** — that is the goal, which He has set before us. In becoming what He is, we become a part of that **MIGHTY STONE** which shall smite the kingdoms of man and become **A GREAT MOUNTAIN** to fill the whole earth. Nothing less than that can satisfy the call of God upon our lives. There is nothing else we can do to correct the world's ills. It will not be healed through religious efforts or through political schemes. The only remaining hope for the world is for the Lord's elect to become **ONE WITH HIM WHO IS THE MIGHTY STONE**, which shall destroy all these kingdoms and become a great mountain that fills the whole earth. And when we have sought the Lord and have given ourselves unreservedly to Him, He will speak to us as He did to Isaiah: **"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles (nations) shall come to thy light, and kings (rulers, governments) to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1-3).**

## THE NEW MAN OF THE KINGDOM

Our world today needs the new men that Christ makes. New men are the key to everything else that must be renewed. Therefore the making of new men is the first priority of the Kingdom of God. Only by the making of new men can the Kingdom of Heaven come to earth. Our world desires better schools, a better press, better government, a better business world, a better economy, better living conditions, better social institutions, better communities. These desires are laudable, but they cannot be achieved with unchanged men. The earth and all things in it are defiled and are being devoured because man has transgressed God's laws, ordinances, and covenants. But we also know that no man can keep God's laws unless Christ dwells in him. The great truth is that the man in Christ does not keep the letter of the law, which is merely the outward husk of type and shadow, but he keeps the spirit of the law, which is the inward law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This results in the living expression of the nature and character of God in all things, not a keeping of external rules and regulations, which give only the appearance of godliness. Thus the righteousness of the law, and not its external forms, are fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. The answer to creation's deteriorating state is not to preach the keeping of the law; the answer lies in the living out of Christ, and in Him alone. When Christ comes to dwell in individuals, they will then keep Father's Kingdom laws of life within, and the whole creation will be preserved, touched, affected, and transformed. And unless He lives within individuals, it is a useless waste of time to urge them to keep God's laws.

At every point we are driven to the need for new men — a NEW CREATION. Through two world wars men dreamed and talked of the coming of a better world when the nations would lay down their arms and begin to build that better world. A half of a century has gone by since the last World War and it is not only the same old world, it is a much worse world. We cannot build a new world out of men with old dispositions, old attitudes, old hearts and old natures. The new world for which all creation groans and travails can only be fulfilled by new men with renewed minds, new hearts, and a new spirit.

The outward law of God is given to reveal to us the nature of God Himself. I will use one illustration from the Ten Commandments to make the point. When God says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," He is not simply trying to prevent us from enjoying the lusts of our flesh. He is telling us something about Himself — how He is. The only eternal, unchangeable, immutable, invariable, unalterable, firm, fixed, sound, solid, balanced, dependable, reliable, steady, steadfast, ethical, moral and totally trustworthy thing in the whole universe is — GOD! "Thou shalt not commit adultery" — it means that GOD HIMSELF is committed, reliable, true, dependable, faithful and trustworthy. He keeps His commitments. He keeps His covenant. He honors His word. He is faithful in all His involvements. He will not cheat on you, lie to you, deceive you, betray you, forsake you or fail you. He loves you and will take care of you, cherish you, nurture you, protect you, and cleave to you. He does not "chase skirts," He will not abandon you for greener grass on the other side of the fence. He is not adulterous, with a roving eye and a lying, cheating heart. He is love. He is good, He is faithful. He is persevering, and His nature is constant, abiding and unchanging. THAT IS HOW HE IS! When you understand the nature of one who is not adulterous in thought, desire or action, you understand something about the character of God. And that is how He wants us. His sons, to be! His law reveals His nature. Study deeply the laws of God under the Old Covenant and you will learn the heart of God. And when His law is written in our heart. His nature — how He is — is inscribed upon the tablets (genetic code) of our Inner Son.

This great faithfulness and unchanging nature of God is revealed with divine clarity in the words of the Lord through the prophet Hosea to backsliding Israel. Israel was the wife of Yahweh, and she had played the harlot, shamefully abandoning her Husband, and had wantonly lain with all the gods of the heathen as her lovers. Yahweh had entreated her again and again to return to Him and be a faithful wife, but she paid Him no heed and persisted in her abominations. A lesser being would have put her away. A lesser person would have been hurt, wounded, devastated, and said, "To hell with her." But not Yahweh! He pursued her into the dens of her shame, saying, "And now I will discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand" (**Hos. 2:10**). He spoke of chastisements, of judgments — loving corrections — He would bring upon her, but hastily added, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness (testing, purging, purification, brokenness), and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor (trouble) for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith Yahweh, that thou

shalt call me Ishi (my husband!)...and I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I shall betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. And I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know (be intimate with) YAHWEH" (**Hos. 2:14-20**). What a God! When His law says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," He is revealing His nature, His heart, to us that we know Him as He is, and be like Him.

What is called "nature" in man is called "instinct" in animals. For years debate has been underway amongst the modern-day scholars over whether instinct is real or not, or whether what appears as instinct in animals is really taught or acquired characteristics. For a long time no conclusion was ever really made. Then, not too many years ago, a scholar by the name of Dr. Maurice, decided that he wanted to conclude, once and for all, the lasting debate of instinct. He went to Johannesburg, South Africa, to study the strange behavior of the Weaverbird. It is the most amazing bird! It builds an elaborate nest out of reeds from the lake where it lives. It then lines the nest with silky grass. The odd thing about this nest is that it is completely enclosed, with the exception of a hole in the bottom. This hole is how the bird enters and exits the nest. How the bird keeps its eggs from rolling out of the hole, is a mystery. Why the bird does this, no one knows. Ornithologists have long wondered. Dr. Maurice thought that he could test the reality of instinct by taking two eggs from a weaverbird's nest in South Africa, bring them to America, and then hatch those eggs and raise the birds isolated from the others of their kind, never being exposed to this strange behavior. And that was what he did. He hatched those eggs, raised the birds, hatched the eggs from those birds and raised them, and did this until he had raised five generations of weaverbirds here in the United States of America. He then took the last generation of weaverbirds and returned them to their natural habitat in South Africa. And guess what? Those birds did an amazing thing. They went straight and built elaborate nests from the reeds by the lake, lined them with the silky grass, and tore a hole in the bottom. He proved that it was in their "nature" to do it! It's how they are. They are pre-programmed, acting out of their state of being. In just the same way the natural man functions out of the law of sin and death that dwells in his members. We think people choose to sin. We have had the mistaken notion that homosexuals are homosexual because they chose that lifestyle. Or we think that prostitutes are prostitutes because of choosing that lifestyle. But when we were born into this realm of sin and death we inherited a nature from Adam. Now I know that some deny that the carnal man is Adam, but it was by one man that sin was passed to all men, and the root of sin is found only in the Adam nature. The carnal man is ignorant and out of the way. He is a slave to sin and in bondage to death. He doesn't understand. He doesn't know why he acts as he does. He can't help himself! The only way out of that kingdom is by death and being born again into a new life in a new world. "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But when men and women are born again the law of God's very own nature is transmitted by the Holy Spirit into the genetic code of the Inner Life of every son and daughter of God! "As we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly."

There would never be a broken home, a heartbroken wife or husband, or deserted and destitute children if the nature of God was written in all men's hearts. There would be no bigotry, no hatred, no crime, no war, no evil or trouble anywhere on earth if the nature of God was written on all men's hearts giving them a heart in the likeness of His own and a mind as the mind of Christ. From the redeemed and transformed heart the law (nature) of God flows forth as a river of life. We still have those among us who thunder the letter of the law from Sinai's mount — but all such will change their tune if ever they stand with the Lamb of God at Calvary's hill, for there they find God removing His law from the external tables of stone to write them upon the fleshy tablets of the hearts of new born men, who no longer keep the law because they cringe in fear, but because the spirit of that law has become their nature, the law of life within them.

Can you imagine the United States Government passing one massive law that says, "WE FORBID ANYMORE CRIME OF ANY KIND." - and it worked! Impossible. Laws are on the outside; you read them; you think about them; and if you have any morality at all, you even try to obey them, at least when the patrol car is driving in your lane of traffic, or when anyone is looking who might report, expose, or punish you if you do not. Edicts of men are issued, but they cannot be imparted. You talk them, but few walk them. So laws cannot change the inner man; nor can the best of men follow the totality of any laws laid down in his behalf. That is why there is such torment and slavery under the law, for we have become aware now of what God defines as sin, yet we struggle with it nonetheless. But when the law is written in the heart no longer do men try to love God contrary

to nature, but now, possessing the nature of God, love, joy, peace and righteousness flow like a river from the heart. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God.

Herein lies the important significance of the great truth Jesus proclaimed when He explained where the Kingdom is and how it does not come. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show): neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." There are still those among us who imagine that Jesus is coming back to earth with literal armies to ENFORCE LAW AND ORDER. But should the Lord come to establish His Kingdom by force it could only result in a world full of immense prisons and unprecedented numbers of executions. It would demand a tyranny surpassing that of either Hitler or Stalin.

It is my deep conviction that social issues, economic issues, moral issues and political issues can be dealt with adequately only at the level of individual conversion. When the firstborn Son of God came into the world to reveal the salvation and Kingdom of God, He did not engage directly in any social welfare work, or attack directly the social structure of the existing society. Instead He gave Himself to the task of converting, remaking, transforming, and training of twelve apparently unimportant men. These men, filled with the Holy Spirit of wisdom, holiness, and power went forth converting, remaking, and transforming the lives of countless multitudes of men and women in every nation under heaven. They turned the world upside down and transformed the very moral and spiritual fabric of society from gross darkness to light and truth and holiness. And they did it by the power of the Spirit and the Word — plus nothing'.

As the sons of God destined to bring deliverance to the whole creation, dare we follow in the footsteps of HIS holy wisdom? The heart of any social, economic or political problem lies in the heart of individual men and women. New social structures and systems, new laws, new judicial systems, new political systems, new economic systems, can never solve the problem so long as the heart of man remains selfish and corrupt. Only when men pass over by conversion from self-centeredness to God-centeredness can the Kingdom of God become a living reality on earth. All of our external problems — race, nationalism, war, crime, poverty, oppression, sickness, death — all of these are but the external symptoms of an internal, deep-seated disease — the sin of self-centeredness. The only strategy that will be victorious in the warfare against social and other problems is an offensive directed not against a nation, or a governmental system, but against the human heart'. The point of attack is the state of being of man himself. The objective of attack is the conversion and transformation of man with the law of God written in his heart. What incredible wisdom Jesus revealed that day when He declared the fundamental principle of the Kingdom — "Behold, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS W-I-T-H-I-N YOU!"

On far-away Patmos John the Revelator penned the record of his vision: **"And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals" (Rev. 5:1).** John saw the book that is written within. He saw that new covenant that God would make with the house of Israel. That's what he saw. He perceived in spirit that which is being written within. He beheld the realm of the spirit. He saw where you find the performance of the new covenant — not in your own strength, not in your fleshly ability, not in your natural way, but by the Living Word within. He discovered that we would become living epistles, not of the letter, not of outward conformity to external laws, but of the spirit, the inward Law of Life. The reason the "word" of God has bound and killed more people spiritually than it has helped is because it has been legislated outwardly.

Men make godliness a law rather than a life. "God said!" they thunder from their pulpits high upon the craggy pinnacle of Sinai, and then lay an outward rule and observance upon the people — "Don't wear make-up, don't wear shorts, don't wear jewelry, don't cut your hair, don't go to movies, don't dance, don't smoke, don't drink, don't remarry if divorced, be in church every time the doors open, submit, pay tithes..." and on and on the list goes...don't, don't, don't, and do, do, do! And if you fail to keep their laws, rules, regulations, and requirements you will burst hell wide open, they threaten. They kill people with the letter of the Word, missing entirely the spirit, the compassion of God, the love of God, the heart of God, and the ability of God to grow men up into the stature of Christ and establish His will in each and every life. People have been forced to go to the world to find some mercy, some encouragement, some understanding, some answers and solutions, some help because they couldn't find it in the church, the preachers had no grace, no mercy, and no wisdom from the Lord.

Christian ministers of the grace of God LEGISLATING THE LAW! What an enigma! What a travesty! "But the Bible says!" you contend. You hypocrites! You don't even know what the Bible says! You know the letter that kills! You have never perused the pages of the blessed book, which GOD IS, the revelation of God in Christ Jesus — the spirit that gives life! The New Testament is not that black, leather-bound book we call the Bible. The New Testament, the true Bible, the Living Epistle of Christ is the law of His life written upon the fleshy tables of the heart.

Ray Prinzing shared the following story, which clearly illustrates the truth I now write. "A certain woman who had been raised under the bondage of the law of 'thou shalt and thou shall not' of a certain group, rebelled against it all and went her own way, and eventually became a slave to drink. In due time her past 'church acquaintances' came to her with more of their 'thou shalt not' to see if they could turn her away from her alcoholism. She already knew the futility of trying to quit in herself, and said to them, 'When God writes on my heart. Thou shalt not drink, then I will not drink.' Not long thereafter, GRACE sovereignly came to her, HE WROTE IT UPON HER HEART, and she was immediately delivered from alcohol. Christendom would impose their standard from without, HE WRITES IT WITHIN, AND IMPARTS THE ABILITY TO LIVE IT OUT! That is GRACE!"

Mankind does not need a new social order, a new political system, or a new set of laws. All mankind needs is CHRIST. Furthermore, the whole world needs a revelation of Christ of unprecedented proportions and unparalleled intensity, power and glory. Creation needs the manifestation of the sons of God. Creation groans with unutterable longing for the full manifestation of God in His sons. Sonship is the hope of the world and all creation! It is my deepest conviction that it is through the ministry of the sons of God that all nations will clearly and powerfully hear the Voice from the throne of God proclaiming with divine, heavenly authority, "Behold, I make all things new'."

The Kingdom of God brings a mighty change within humanity — the destruction of the Adamic creation and the establishment of the Christ within. This reality was accomplished by Jesus on the cross and through His burial and resurrection, but is made experiential in each of us through the present inworking of God. In one of his inspired writings along this line Paul Mueller says, "Only God can remove this 'man' from us. This is His battle, not ours! By the Spirit, we know the Lord is now focusing on this 'man' who is the cause of the manifestation of all evil and darkness. When once we are free of this carnal nature, there will be nothing within us that can respond to the devil's evil thoughts. Then the seed that we are shall be pure seed, identical to the Christ Seed, which shall be planted among men to establish the new creation of Christ in the earth. So shall the kingdom of God be manifest with power in all the earth, and then in the universe, that God may be all in all. And when this carnal, sinful nature is eventually removed from all mankind, Satan will have no place anywhere on this earth to plant his evil ideas and see them fulfilled. He will be a defeated foe! Then the cause of all the world's problems will no longer exist, and mankind will live the Christ Life with peace, joy and victory.

"The new order of the fullness of the kingdom of God will be free of the carnal nature, which is the man of sin, the real anti-christ. And God is now beginning this new creation order with you and me. He will no longer tolerate the evil that has been promoted in the world by the Adamic man. The Lord is not only revealing the manifestations of this evil 'man,' He also is going right to the heart of the matter. The Lord will take him out of us root, stock and branches, and eventually out of all others, so that he will never again trouble the world. The true interest and purpose of the Holy Spirit of God for His elect in this hour is not the results and effects of all the evil in the world, but rather with the cause of all evil. The Spirit of God is now dealing with the cause of all unrighteousness. And all who are in harmony with His Spirit are also in full agreement with the work of the Spirit of God for this great day.

"Babylon, Assyria, Palestina, Moab, Tyrus and others are only representative nations listed in the prophetic word destined to be judged. So also are Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, the Pope, Saddam Hussein and others but mere representatives of the carnal nature in man that seeks its own, carnal will. We know that all the evil designs of the oppressive dictators of the world also will be destroyed. Evil, carnal-minded world rulers may think they will gain sufficient power to take over the world, but they are wrong. Their plans will come to naught when God destroys the carnal nature in mankind. Because we are the firstfruits of the kingdom of God, which kingdom shall break in pieces and control all other kingdoms. He must begin that work with us. What a

wonderful hope! The purpose of God during the early years of Israel's history was to destroy the evil men and nations because of their sins and iniquities. But that did not eliminate the cause of all unrighteousness. As soon as one nation and its evil plans were destroyed, another more evil nation and people rose up to trouble Israel and the world. His judgments then were only superficial and outward, as nations and peoples were destroyed by war and other disasters. But His judgments today are inward, spiritual and absolute, for God is now dealing with His elect by His Spirit to remove from us the carnal, Adamic nature. In the past, God dealt with men and nations by punishing sin outwardly. Today God is dealing with His elect by cleansing us from within.

"Now, God is getting to the heart of the matter. The judgments of this present time will not be outward, literal judgments such as war and other calamities, as most think. The judgments of the Lord upon mankind will be moral and spiritual. What good can it possibly do to focus on the results of evil when God is dealing with the root cause of all iniquity? Must we kill the popes to eliminate all iniquity? Nonsense! Or should we wipe out all the suspected anti-christs? More nonsense! We must witness an all-out attack against the root cause of all iniquity, which is the carnal nature in all of us. And the Spirit of God is beginning now to deal with this carnal nature by removing him first from His elect. We are approaching the time of the harvest of the firstfruits. God is dwelling within us as a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29) to purge us of the carnal nature. This is the 'day' when all enemies shall be made His footstool. When He has cleansed us of the carnal nature. He will then send His consuming, fiery presence to cleanse others, each man in his own time and order. This is our Father's purpose in redemption and restoration now coming to fulfillment. And He is beginning this work with us.

"Evil rulers and despots rise up to become strong in military might and power. They think they have the power to take over the world, but they are mistaken. God has a plan already in effect by which He shall destroy the power of the carnal, Adamic nature that drives them, put them under His feet, and make them all subject to the dominion of His kingdom. And Father's great plan and purpose is now beginning to take effect as He reveals the seat of all iniquity within us, and commences to destroy this evil, Adamic man. The evil rulers and despots, the new agers and other political, governmental rulers may think they will usher in a new era of peace and prosperity, but they are wrong. God's plan is already in effect, and it does not include their carnal ambitions. He is beginning the new age of the dominion of His kingdom of peace and righteousness, and He is beginning it with you and me. It is within you and within me that His kingdom must begin. Therefore, He must remove this carnal nature from those of us who are the first fruits, or the infrastructure, of this most glorious and righteous kingdom of God. "Rejoice, saints of God, you have been chosen to begin the new world order of the kingdom of God! And that new kingdom order must begin with us. God must deliver us of the carnal nature, for we are the firstfruits of His kingdom, and that is what He is doing now. If you want to know what God is doing now in the earth, look to the realm of the Spirit, and not to the events of darkness in the world. Our calling is to flow with the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit and live in the Spirit! And the Spirit of the Lord is now dealing with the great cause and source of all iniquity, not merely with the many manifestations of evil.

"The kingdom of God is the expression, revelation and manifestation of all that Christ is. There is the body of Christ and there also is the Christ who is the Spirit. We are the body of Christ because we are anointed with the Spirit that Christ is. Christ is the Spirit, and He also is the Word! He is that Spirit force by whose power the earth, the heavens, and everything of it was created. It was all created by Him and for Him, and without Him nothing was made. Christ created all things by the Word that He is. He also sustains all things, keeping the entire universe in balance by His Spirit-power. He also shall reconcile all things unto Himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven (Col. 1:16-20). This is the same Christ who anoints His many-membered remnant to make us one body in Him. He fills us with Himself, with the glory that He is, that He might fulfill His purpose to manifest the fullness of the kingdom of God in the earth.

"Furthermore, every aspect of the kingdom of God is a revelation and manifestation of Christ. Christ, who is Spirit, is the creative, sustaining and restoring power of the entire universe. When we seek Him, we are communing with Him who upholds all things by the Word of His power. Christ is the Word of revelation truth that transforms us. From the beginning of the creation, through its violent upheavals and all during the six days of man's unrighteous dominion, to the ultimate and Final consummation when all things everywhere are reconciled to God, it will be Christ all the way. By His power, the creation will progress from the chaos of man's dominion to Christ the Alpha, then to Christ the Omega, the Christ of all fullness! From the beginning of

Father's purpose in creation to the end, when all things are restored and returned to the Father, it is Christ and His Spirit-power accomplishing it all for the glory of the Father" — end quote.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 17

## HOW THE KINGDOM COMES [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

### KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART SEVENTEEN

### THE LAW RESTRAINS EVIL THE PRIESTHOOD OF LIFE LAW vs. LIFE

In our last Study I wrote of the great truth that the Kingdom of God does not come by law or legislation — it comes by regeneration and transformation into the image and likeness of God. Some of us have surely noted in scripture that God does indeed use law to govern the unregenerate and ungodly. Paul states this as plainly as it can be stated in **1 Timothy 1:8-10**. "Now we recognize and know that the Law is good, if any one uses it lawfully — for the purpose for which it was designed; knowing and understanding this: that the Law is not enacted for the righteous — but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinful, for the irreverent and profane, for those who strike and beat and even murder fathers and strike and beat and even murder mothers; for manslayers, for impure and immoral persons, those who abuse themselves with men, kidnapers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is opposed to wholesome teaching" (Amplified Bible).

Let it be thoroughly known and understood that the law God has ordained to govern those outside of Christ is not God's law, but man's law. Every nation, every state and province, every city, town and community is regulated by the law of man. Under the Old Covenant the law of God was given to only one nation out of all the nations of the world, the nation of Israel. God's law was never given to any Gentile nation or people anywhere on earth. And that law was given to Israel only under the Old Covenant. The law given to Israel completely and forever passed away when the New Covenant was ratified by the blood of Jesus. It is no longer in effect for Israel nor has it been passed on to either the New Testament Church or the Kingdom brought by Jesus. "The law and the prophets were until John', since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it" (**Lk. 16:16**).

To these words of Jesus the apostle Paul adds his testimony: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for. The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (**Rom. 7:4,6; 6:14; Gal. 3:10-12,24,25**).

### THE LAW RESTRAINS EVIL

A man who keeps his bulldog tied to a fence has no right to brag that the dog has never bitten the mailman. How could the dog bite the mailman? If the owner wants to brag about his dog, let him set the dog free; then everyone (including the mailman) will know the dog's true nature. There you have the difference between the law and the Kingdom of God. The law merely restrains evil men (like the chain on the dog) from the ability to do their evil — the Kingdom of God transforms the nature so that men become righteous. Human government is an instrument of restraint, not a fountain of love and grace. It prohibits, forbids, restricts, regulates, sets limits, restrains, and, if it is not strictly limited itself, oppresses. The instruments of governments are sheriffs, police, marshals, bailiffs, detectives, guards, and soldiers. They use pistols, shotguns, nightsticks, tear gas, handcuffs, cells with bars, machine guns, cannon, bombs, and other assorted immobilizing and death-dealing weapons. Government is the enforcer of man's laws, it is not an instrument of the Kingdom of God. In itself,

this is no reproach against government. Men are given to wrongdoing, and it has been the considered judgment of the wise down through the ages that there must be a public force to maintain law and order by restraining and punishing those who do wrong. And God Himself has ordained it so!

A brother once wrote: "While I was pastor in a certain city, a man who had been a Christian for twenty years approached me after one of our services. 'I enjoyed your message,' he said with a smile, 'but I really need more hellfire-and-damnation sermons to keep me in line.' The man had been a believer for years, and yet he had not matured enough to take responsibility for himself. He wanted to be told what to do and when to do it. Is God pleased by such an attitude? Would the father of a twenty-year-old man be pleased to hear his son say, 'Dad, I need to be kept in line'?"

"As a teenager, I participated in a ministry to the inmates of the Louisiana State Penitentiary. During my visits to the prison, I became friends with an inmate who claimed to be a Christian. But each time the man was paroled he would immediately commit a crime and return to prison. One day I asked him why he couldn't stay on the outside. His answer astonished me. He said, 'I can't handle life on the outside, man. It scares me, all those decisions. No, back here they tell me when to get up, when to eat, and when to go to bed.' He had to have the restraint of law and order over his life" — end quote.

Learn this, O man, and you will understand a great truth. There are people in this world that must be ruled by law, and God has ordained it so. When God instituted His first law He said, "If you do not live by it, you shall die." You have to understand that the law of God began in that long ago beginning in the garden of Eden, for that is where the first rule was laid down and the first penalty for breaking that rule was experienced. God has still ordained that the world be ruled by law. The vast majority of men, at this time, must be ruled by law. The Lord has established in the world two orders of government, one order is for the lawless, the other is for the righteous. The order for the lawless is law, and the order for the righteous is the spirit. **"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners" (1 Tim. 1:9). "There is therefore now no condemnation — no adjudging guilty of wrong — for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death...for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:1-2,14, KJV & Amplified).**

Evil can be dealt with only in one of two ways — it must be restrained, or it must be remedied. Human government is ordained by God for the restraint of evil. **"Let every person be subject to the governing (civil) authorities. For there is no authority except from God; and those that exist do so by God's appointment. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed and arranged — in divine order. And those who resist will bring down judgment upon themselves — receiving the penalty due them. For civil authorities are not a terror to people of good conduct, but to those of bad behavior. For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong you should dread him and be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant to execute His wrath (His punishment) on the wrongdoer" (Rom. 13:1-4, Amplified).** Words cannot be plainer. Thank God for our judicial and law enforcement officers who restrain the wickedness and violence and injustice of the criminal elements in our society! That is precisely what God has appointed human government to do.

There are a great many people who must be governed by a strong hand without their consent. When it comes to the restraint and punishment of evil the governed lose their right to be governed with their consent. They remind me of a very clever cartoon of a little boy who disputed that point with his mother. He had been studying in school about the right of the governed under our Constitution to consent to all government above them, and it had gotten into his mind. He had stolen apples, and his mother had warned him, but it had no effect. So she was spanking him. The little man turned around and said, "Mama, I object. Our glorious Declaration of Independence says that all just government must rest upon the consent of the governed, and I do not consent!" There are a great many children who will not consent, and they have to be governed whether they consent or not. There are a great many people who will never, short of God's salvation, consent to do right. You have to govern them with a strong hand. We all need God to rule us one way or the other.

Government speaks of ORDER. Without government there would be only chaos. Do you know the difference between a mob and an army? The difference is discipline. Order is the difference. An army is orderly. An army moves in governmental order, under submission to chains of command. An army is controlled by an inward state of being. A mob is not controlled by anything. A mob gets out of hand, burning buildings, looting, lynching. There is no order, no inward law of responsibility. There is only one way to bring a mob under control — by the law, by force. They must be subdued by tear gas and bullets and carried away in paddy wagons. They must be restrained. If there is a remedy it must come later, through different means.

It is for this very reason that wicked men are shut up in hell, reserved under chains of darkness, awaiting a day of deliverance and release. God restrains wicked men until according to His purpose He can save them. With the release of the mystery of iniquity into the Adamic race, the wickedness of man soon became great in the earth, and by Noah's day we find that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). God allowed man's sin and violence to go a certain course for a certain length of time, knowing full well just how far He could allow man to express these evil inclinations, and just where to draw the line. At the appropriate moment the spirits of these wicked men were put in prison, as society today puts a criminal in prison; the flood swept them away into hell and hell restrained the Antediluvians from committing more wrath upon the earth.

But God only restrains until He can save! That is precisely why Jesus, after His death and resurrection, went to PREACH to these spirits in prison, the spirits of the men who had been disobedient in the days of Noah. To them He carried the word of reconciliation, showing not only that Christ had died for their sins, but that He was risen for their justification. If perchance our minds are numbed with the wonder of such a thought, let us consider the record of this great event from Weymouth's translation. "Christ also once for all died for sins, the innocent One for the guilty many, in order to bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit, BY WHICH HE ALSO WENT AND P-R-E-A-C-H-E-D TO THE SPIRITS THAT WERE IN PRISON, who in former times had been disobedient, when God's long-suffering patiently waited in the days of Noah during the building of the ark, in which a few persons — eight in number — were brought safely through the water" (I Pet. 3:18-20).

Despite the crafty and deceptive efforts of some to twist and explain away the plain meaning of this passage, it reveals that Jesus, after His death and resurrection, went and preached, not to men in the flesh, but to SPIRITS in prison; not to angels, not to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob or any of the other Old Testament saints, but to those men who had been DISOBEDIENT to the preaching of Noah in the days preceding the flood! And what did He preach to these long-departed spirits? Well, I Peter 4:6 certainly answers this question! The passage is only a few verses further on from the one under consideration, and as Peter continues speaking of the same subject we are informed, "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit..." The message is clear — though these were dead so far as their flesh bodies were concerned, and lived on only in the spirit, but not in the flesh, THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED UNTO THEM that they might be judged, or dealt with, the same as men who were alive in the flesh. Please notice, precious friend of mine, it was not doom or gloom or judgment or eternal damnation that was preached to these, but THE GOSPEL, the GOOD NEWS WHICH IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION, was PREACHED even to these spirits in prison, the disobedient ones!

It is written in the plainest of plain language. But there are some people who will not understand plain speech. They do not believe that Christ went down into hell to preach the gospel to dis-embodied spirits of wicked and rebellious men; they think He went somewhere down in the heart of the earth to rescue Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the Old Testament righteous people out of a place called Paradise and take them up to heaven. He may have done that, but there is not one shred of evidence for it anywhere in the pages of God's wonderful Book. The Bible nowhere says that. He went down into the lowest hell, and He was there on business! Wherever He went He did business for God. He went there to begin His new age deliverance ministry among a group of spirits that had been imprisoned there for two thousand three hundred and fifty years. He went and preached to the disobedient in the days of Noah, who were so bad that God could not wait for them to die, and another generation to arise, but in order to re-establish some order on the earth He had to sweep them all off the earth into hell. The fact that they remained there so long indicates the depth of their wickedness. They

were ignorant and rebellious and would not learn of God. They were hateful and violent and perverted and murderers, boastful and vile in the extreme, and would not obey any law of God or man. And, blessed be God! it was the Gospel that was preached to them, informing them of the death and resurrection of God's Son, who was given as a propitiation for them, and that God had faith in the blood of His Son to deliver them from the bondage of sin and death and hell into the glorious liberty of the children of God. There is no other reason to preach the Gospel (Good News) to anyone, anywhere! He led captive a host of captives. He brought under His dominion a vast company of men who had been captives of the devil, and carried them through the gates of hell to a glorious ascension into the realms of God's Spirit (Eph. 4:8-10). Hallelu-yah!

The law is done away in Christ. For the man in Christ the only law is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which makes us free from the law of sin and death. I said earlier that there are only two ways in the universe, in the wisdom of the Almighty, to deal with evil — it must be either restrained or it must be remedied. In Christ is found the eternal remedy. In Christ men are forgiven, cleansed, changed, transformed, and made whole by the power of His Life. But for every man outside of Christ the law remains. I say for those who do wrong, if they do not embrace God's government of grace, then the next thing to do is give them the law. This club is not administered by the sons of God, for the sons of God are not God's policemen, neither God's bailiffs nor His prison guards. Sons are not called to that ministry. I would have a real problem being a sheriff or a policeman. Jesus never administered the law. He never enforced any of its demands, nor inflicted any of its penalties. His whole administration was one of mercy, forgiveness, love and restoration. The sons of God are on the side of the remedy, not the side of restraint or punishment. I have no condemnation of those who serve in law enforcement. It is ordained by God! But sons have a different calling, a higher calling. Sons are always on the mercy and deliverance side, for that is the order of the Priesthood of Melchizedek which is the order of the Son of God. God has committed unto us the word of reconciliation and the ministry of reconciliation. But to human government God has committed the ministry of restraint. The law administration must in God's due time pass away before the all-conquering Light of Life. There will never be enough law enforcement officers to stem the present overflowing tide of evil in the world! This darkness can only be dispelled by the blazing light of God's Christ. And His light is now arising in His elect at this junction of ages to dispel the darkness. We may expect tremendous things from His bountiful hand during this new Day!

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF LIFE

As we follow on to know the Lord in this new and living way, it is with confidence that the Spirit of the Most High will direct our steps and open our understanding. We are at the point in history, at the breaking of the dawn of a new age, when only God can lead us step by step into the NEW ORDER He has prepared for us. No man but Jesus has trodden this way before. Only HE can teach us the path of sonship, and direct our steps on the highway to Zion, for there are no other manifested sons to lead the way. I do not say that the words of Jesus which are contained in the four Gospels are the only words that God has ever inspired; for I believe that God inspired all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world before Christ came. I believe that He inspired apostles and prophets and teachers after He came. I believe that God still inspires men and women who walk with Him in intimacy of fellowship and vital union today. I believe that inspiration is as continuous and perpetual as God; God's inspiration will never cease. **"There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8).** If I believed anything else, I should realize that I were talking in direct conflict with my own experience.

I desire to speak with perfect frankness, for I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not believe that God's elect today is bound either by the example of Jesus Christ in the flesh, or of the first twelve apostles, or of the New Testament Church. While Christ certainly left us an example that we should follow in His steps where the great principles of sonship are concerned, if you attempt to bind me to the exact modes of Jesus Christ and to follow in His example in all things, I will not do it. Jesus the Christ was born in a stable and laid in a manger, was He not? Am I to go away and have my next baby — my wife will never have any more babies, but if she had any more babies — am I to go away and hunt for a stable in which our baby is to be born? Am I myself disqualified from manifested sonship because I was born in a bedroom in a brick house in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania? Because my Lord Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh had no place to lay His head, am I to sleep in the open air on the mountain tops and out in the deserts, just because I want to follow the example of Jesus?

Because God by His boundless grace through many years enabled me to travel and speak in homes, halls, conference rooms and church buildings, am I going to say, "The firstborn Son spoke only on the mountain sides, and by the lakes; if the people are to hear me, they have to all come to the mountain." That is not it at all. We are to follow Christ in the same Faith, in the same Hope, in the same Love, in the same Nature, in the same Wisdom, in the same Patience, in the same Obedience, in the same Vision, in the same Relationship with the Father, in the same Power, in the same spirit of Forbearance and Mercy and Compassion for humanity, and with the same Courage in fighting sin and sorrow and death.

If you tell me that I am to follow the example of the apostles, I say No, I will not do any such thing. The apostle Paul, for instance, went away and shaved his head at Cenchrea for a vow. How undesirable it would be for me to go away and shave off the little hair that is left on my head just because I want to follow the example of Paul! The apostle Paul did a number of things I would not care to do. He rather boasted that he did not have a wife. There is no doubt that he was a widower, because he would not have been a member of the Rabbinical Council, and would never have been an official witness at the death of Stephen, consenting to that death, unless he had been a Rabbi of rank. A member of that Council must need to be a married man. I agree with some of the Bible scholars that the apostle Paul was probably a widower at the time he wrote the epistle in which he writes about the virtues of not having a wife. But I am a married man and have no leading of God and no desire to be otherwise. Am I to follow Paul, or the Spirit?

I am not going to follow in the footsteps of Peter, because I think we may learn a few things, and keep away from doing some things that Peter did. I hold, and I teach, and I will teach, that the example of even Christ Himself is not to be wholly followed. It is not as many as are led by what Jesus did two thousand years ago, who are the sons of God; but "as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God." We are not to have enforced poverty because Jesus made Himself poor. We are not to gather around us twelve disciples because He had twelve disciples. We are not to work at getting ourselves assassinated because He was hung on a cross by a mob. If we are LED BY THE SPIRIT to offer ourselves in a martyr's death, gladly will we do so; but we shall not seek it as a means of following in Jesus' footsteps. We are not to expect to have a ministry that lasts only three and one half years, nor to ascend into heaven before our disciples just because He did. We may never spit in the dirt and make clay to anoint a blind man's eyes. We may never go to a Convention and with whips chase out those who sell books and tapes (although I have been tempted!), as Jesus did those who sold doves and pigeons in the temple in Jerusalem. May I wax bold to add that there is not even any need to try to duplicate precisely the way the Churches were structured in the early days, or the way their ministries functioned. The order of sonship and the priesthood of Melchizedek are not concerned with orders of eldership, whether we meet in a home or in a conventional church building, how the chairs are arranged, nor even with orders of the so-called "five-fold ministry." It is not a priesthood after the flesh. It is an outflow of life after the Spirit. It does not concern itself with outward form; it breathes forth as an essence. Jesus wasn't a Son because He had twelve disciples, or preached off the bow of a boat. He was a Son because He manifested and ministered the LIFE OF THE FATHER.

In the religious systems the order, the method, the technique, the organization, the creed, the liturgy is all-important. And in the so-called "New Testament Churches" it is no different — they just have a little different system, one from two thousand years ago, they are trying to reproduce. But in the Melchizedekian Order THE ONE WAY IS THE LIFE OF THE LORD. We must live and move and have our being in the life of the Spirit. Forget the outward forms! This is why there are no patterns, no methods, no precedents of any kind established in the New Testament for the ministry of manifested sonship. Jesus never did the same thing in exactly the same way twice. When He healed blind Bartimaeus He merely spoke the word, "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole," and he received his sight. But when He healed the two blind men in the house He touched their eyes in addition to speaking a word. And when He healed the man born blind from birth He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and commanded him to go wash in the pool of Siloam.

So what is the best way, the right way, the sonship way to heal a blind man? No one can tell you — not even Jesus! What is the best way to preach the Gospel? No one can tell you, although the seminaries think they can! What is the best way to hold a meeting? Again no one can tell you. Jesus never had a song leader or worship director, never by singing, clapping, or worshipping "created an environment" for the Father to

manifest Himself in their midst. Yet, if you were to ask me what the right way is, I would have to say that I do not know. I really do not know what is the right way to do anything. I do not know the right way to meet humanity's needs, or solve the saint's problems, or bring people into the present truth. In the Bible you cannot find THE RIGHT WAY to minister or to do the work of the Kingdom. This is because the Kingdom of God comes by the dispensation of the Spirit. It does not come by outward observation — by forms, methods, or techniques. What ever you do in the Kingdom, what ever way you use, wherever you go, it must be by the Spirit. The Spirit is never traditional, predictable, or static — He is always original, always fresh, new, and transcendental. He may never repeat what He did yesterday, or the way He did it. In these last years, wherever I have gone, I have never paid any attention to the way. Regardless of the way people meet, or don't meet, or minister, or serve the Lord, or walk with God, it does not mean anything. The real question is: Are they led by the Spirit? Is there the flow of His Life? Is there the manifestation and quickening of Himself? What is GOD doing? And HOW is HE doing it? I look to see what God IS DOING, rather than trying to introduce some "order" for God to move in.

One of the most intriguing descriptions of the unique character of the High Priesthood of Jesus is found in Hebrews 7:17 wherein it is stated, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The order of Melchizedek is an order of "King-Priests." "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God...first being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that...King of Peace" (Heb. 7:1-2). There were the Levitical priests of Israel and they were of the Aaronic order. But when the Kingdom of God came through Jesus, the priesthood of Aaron was terminated and replaced with the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD. Jesus is a King-Priest after the "order" of Melchizedek. Aaron was made a priest after the law of a carnal commandment, but Jesus is made priest after the power of an endless (indissoluble) life (Heb. 7:16). The order of Melchizedek is the ORDER OF LIFE.

May the Lord have mercy upon all who cherish the hope of sonship that we may be delivered from anything other than the life of this priesthood. Christ Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, which is after the power of an indissoluble life. He is the High Priest of this order, and there can be no High Priest apart from a priesthood. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that the order of Melchizedek is the order of the Son of God. Just as the firstborn Son is the High Priest of the Melchizedekian Priesthood, so are the other sons of God the body of this glorious Priesthood of Life. They are kings who reign by life and priests who minister life. Of these it is written, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). It is this dual order of King-Priest that identifies these overcoming ones as pertaining to the order of Melchizedek. We must learn this one lesson that the Melchizedek Priesthood is known only by the OUTFLOW OF HIS LIFE. Then we will enter into the Holiest of all to abide there in His presence until we come out from His presence with the heavenly and eternal bread and wine to minister to creation's needs. The order of Melchizedek is not in any way related to so-called New Testament Church order. It is more than that, it is something of life, the order of life, the order brought forth by life, something living, vibrant, imperishable, incorruptible, immortal, celestial, divine, sovereign, transcendental. We are conscious that God is bringing something new and glorious into being. The church order has never produced one manifested son of God. God is bringing something into this earth that is far, far beyond anything we know. He is birthing a manchild, a priesthood, a kingship, a government, a brand new order. It will make right everything that has been wrong. It will make everything as God planned it to be. It will bring righteous judgment, it will bring mercy, and wisdom, and deliverance, and power and glory to creation beyond our fondest hopes and dreams or wildest imaginations. IT WILL SET CREATION FREE. The great contrast in the book of Hebrews is between the law and the order of Melchizedek. The Kingdom of God can never come by law, for law brings bondage, the consciousness of sin, and death. The Kingdom of God is the REIGN OF LIFE which brings deliverance, liberty, righteousness, peace and joy.

## **LAW vs. LIFE**

A dear sister in Christ, Michelle Sperber, has graciously given me permission to share one of her beautiful parables which speaks so eloquently of this Kingdom order and ministry of Life. She writes: "There was once a Kingdom down by the sea by the name of Peace. It wasn't a big Kingdom, but it was a happy one; and all the people rested in the Knowledge of Good. The King whose name was Teachable Spirit was married to Queen Tender Heart, and they had two beautiful girls. Harmony and Grace, and two boys, Trusting and Loyal.

"Every day Harmony and Grace would sing songs to the little ducks that would gather by the pool on the right side of the castle while Trusting and Loyal taught dancing lessons to the chickadees. Now when the chickadees heard the lovely songs, they were filled with so much joy that they would flap their wings so hard that they would exhaust themselves. New Vigor, Trusting's faithful companion, would transform them when they fell to the ground, and they would be enabled to learn the dance, which they yearned to do since Trusting, and Loyal began teaching. The dance was called 'Together.' The dance received such wide acclaim that all the animals of the Kingdom desired to learn it, so before long, every animal, big and small, came to Trusting and Loyal to be taught 'Together.' Even the fishes of the sea were compelled to leave their habitation to learn the new dance and everyone was empowered to overcome all natural limitations.

"But in the neighboring Kingdom, the mother of Teachable Spirit, whose name was Bondage Law, ruled. There was no singing or dancing in her Kingdom — only arguments and quarrels, sadness and misery. Her Kingdom was called Tyranny. No one who heard of it would dare pass through, for armed guards with iron teeth that could bite a man in ten pieces, prevented any from entering. Now, Bondage Law was very unhappy with her daughter-in-law, Tender Heart, and her grandchildren. Harmony and Grace, were a real disappointment to her. She plotted day and night how to change her family and most fervently, how she could kill Tender Heart.

"One day after consulting with Fear and Torment, Bondage Law visited her innocent family. She planned on overcoming Tender Heart having Fear and Torment as able task masters. When Bondage Law arrived at the castle, her son Teachable Spirit was out riding his horse. Easy Going. Fear and Torment took Easy Going by such surprise that he reared up and threw his rider to the ground. Teachable Spirit's neck was snapped and he died instantly. When Tender Heart, who was looking over the balcony, saw all that had happened to her husband, grief overcame her; and in that moment her heart left her. It was taken away by Sorrow and was brought into the darkest room of the dungeon. A black veil was draped over the now stone heart, which once was a vibrating, living one, while an invisible flashing sword prevented anyone from coming near it.

"A proclamation went out over the land that King Teachable Spirit was dead and that Queen Tender Heart's name had been changed to No Heart. No Heart, with the insistence of her mother-in-law, Bondage Law, who was at her side continuously, changed the name of the Kingdom to War. For you see, now that Tender Heart had lost her heart and name, Bondage Law ruled both Kingdoms of Tyranny and War.

"Now on the day of the King's death, a dove whose name was Hope was sent from the realm of the most high with the message that the Kingdom of Peace could be restored if the black veil was lifted. There was only one possibility that this could happen, for only the entrance of a king could cause the sword to cease flashing. The invisible sword would cut asunder anyone who was not a king. So the dove flew into the Kingdom of War that had every man now against each other, looking for one who could marry the Queen. There was no one to be found, even though those were the days that kings were such not because of what family they came from, but because of their nature. He who overcame his natural tendencies became a king.

"Hope saw that there was none on earth who fit the qualification but she remembered one in heaven whose name was Goodwill. Upon thinking of him and then calling his name, he immediately appeared. Dressed in the armor of charity, loving kindness, and meekness, he was ready to follow Hope into the neighboring land of Faith. It was in the land of Faith that an army could be prepared to do battle against the inhabitants of Tyranny. The plans were quickly made with General Integrity and Major Honor. All the overcomers were gathered together, mustered with Brave and Courage, the 100th Battalion's squad leaders. "They all marched under the Banner of Love, and because they had such power not a weapon was lifted against them — all enemies fled at their sight. The Hands of Glory came from the invisible realm to assist Goodwill as he boldly entered the dungeon. Goodwill rejoiced at seeing the Hands of Glory, for it was written in the Book of Books that only the Hands of Glory could remove the veil. In the twinkling of an eye, the black veil was lifted. The stone heart that had stopped its beating became a vibrating, pulsating giver of life again, immediately returning to its home in Tender Heart. A shout of victory came forth in one voice from all the inhabitants of the Kingdom. All were made whole again by this one act.

"Goodwill had compassion even on Bondage Law and because the Hands of Glory were with him, he had the power to change her name. 'Bondage, you shall no longer be Bondage Law, but you shall be called Law of

Life,' he announced with Forgiveness, his best friend. 'All those who need to be set free from the law of sin and death will be sent to you, Law of Life, and your Kingdom will be called Righteousness.'

"And it came to pass that one year later. King Goodwill and Love Fulfilled bore a son. It was Law of Life who inspired his name, Joy, and gave him a Kingdom. It was in the Kingdom of Joy that all three Kingdoms of Righteousness, Peace and Joy became one. An invitation was sent into all the world beckoning everyone to come to the Kingdom of Happily Ever After, and King Joy issued this one command: 'All passports must be obtained in the Land of Faith and upon arrival to the Kingdom, this proclamation shall be heard: "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH, PEACE AND GOODWILL TOWARD MEN! WELCOME TO ETERNAL LIFE!" — end quote.

Let it be thoroughly known and understood by every man and woman who names the name of Christ that the only purpose of the law is to give the knowledge of sin. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:19-20). The law imparts the knowledge of sin by contrasting the weakness of the flesh, what we are and do by human nature, with the pure and holy and righteous nature of God. The law is weak through the flesh, Paul said. Man is chained and locked in to the law of sin and death. Mankind doesn't have to learn how to sin, that's all he knows how to do. Mankind doesn't have to learn how to die, that's all he can do — you're born and you sin, you sin and you die. No one taught you how to steal, no one taught you how to fly off the handle and say ungodly things, no one taught you how to lie, no one instructed you how to be filled with lust and passion, no one gave you lessons on how to be greedy and self-centered, no one told you at two years of age how to claim your turf and kick and scream if anyone stepped on it. You're born with it. It's part of the make-up of the natural man.

The law has never, ever, saved any man anywhere from being a sinner. If by nature you are righteous, you need no law. Law is irrelevant to the righteous man. New creatures do not need old laws. On the other hand, if you by nature are unrighteous, the law can in no way help you. All it can do is proclaim your guilt and punish you. It has no power to make you obey.

Christians are always interested in what is going on in the world. They are always trying to legislate a righteousness of God upon those who don't even know God. But I have news for you. Legislation — that is, law — does nothing more than make sin exceedingly sinful (Rom. 7:13). God is not the one who is laying law on the world in this hour. God never did lay the law on the world. He only gave the law to His people Israel, and He gave it to them to teach them what sin is. The law never did and never could take away sin. The Lord brought the law to its result, its fulfillment, its completion, its conclusion and its end in Jesus Christ. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). We must understand that when Jesus came as the firstborn among many brethren He concluded the law. He met the law's every righteous requirement by the power of divine life, and Himself became the righteousness of God, available to us now by the spirit of sonship. New creation men are partakers of the nature of Christ, they are no longer natural men under law. If you are under the law you are not a son. If you are the son of God, you are not under law.

The problem the church world has today is that they are out trying to change the behavior of unregenerated men by laying the law upon them! Most Christians glory in death. They find death and condemnation glorious. For, you see, the law, even the ten commandments that people would like to see posted in every classroom, court of law, and government building, is, according to Paul, "the ministration of death and condemnation, written and engraven in stones" (II Cor. 3:6-9). But God has no law for the world in this hour. Oh, yes, there is still the restraining law of human government, but GOD by the ministration of His Spirit has no law for mankind. "For if that which is done away (the law) was glorious, much more that which remaineth (the Spirit) is glorious" (II Cor. 3:11). God is working with His people. His elect, His chosen. His seed that He has destined before the foundation of the world to become His sons. He has delegated all responsibility for law and order to the kingdoms of this world. The only law in His Kingdom is the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus! That is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God.

The church world today is following some really strange paths, trying to lay upon the world the law that God gave Israel under the Old Covenant, which law was never, ever, given to the world, and which was even less ever given to the Church, and which is now abolished. It is a gross stupidity, it is blatant idiocy, it is an incredible absurdity to try and establish the Kingdom of God by law! You see, rather than telling those who are getting abortions that we are working to get the law changed, we need to be preaching peace by Jesus Christ so that men will come to know the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Our business is to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and bring transforming power into men's lives. As sons of God it is not our business to legislate how much a man can drink, where he can drink it, how much a man can smoke, whether he can carry a gun, or to set penalties and punishments for any number of sins. These issues are somebody's business, they are just not OURS! Christians love to jump on these "legislative" and "political" bandwagons — but you won't find Jesus on any of them! Jesus did not come to lay the law on the world, God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Salvation — that is the business of the Kingdom of God. May all who cherish the beautiful hope of sonship say today with the firstborn Son, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business^" God does not send His sons into the world to tell the world what they can and cannot do, and what the penalties will be if they do or do not do it—He is bringing SAVIORS up on mount Zion, and it is by salvation that the mount of Esau will be judged and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 21), That is God's strange work.

Yet, there are brethren who insist that the Kingdom of God will be an age governed by the law of God. By this they mean laws given by Moses. At the very least they mean the Ten Commandments. Let us examine this theory. We shall suppose, for the sake of argument, that I have a friend in Central America who owns a large banana plantation. His name is Carlos. Carlos has raised bananas all of his life and has become independently wealthy with his enterprise. Now, let us further suppose that, because of our close friendship, Carlos decides that he would like to come and live near us here in El Paso, Texas. He purposes to sell his banana plantation in Guatemala and move to El Paso, where he intends to purchase a large tract of land — to put in a banana plantation! I warn my friend, "You cannot raise bananas in West Texas. We are in the middle of a desert and during the winter the night temperatures dip into the 20's. The bananas will die either from thirst or from freezing. There is no way you can have a banana plantation in West Texas!

My friend, however, is unconvinced and implacable. He has never been in a desert, nor has he ever in his life seen freezing temperatures. His entire life has been spent in Guatemala and his whole world has been bananas. He believes he can devise a way to make his project work. So he moves to El Paso lock, stock, and barrel. Soon he has purchased a large ranch nearby and the time comes for him to plant his banana trees. The trees do grow for a while, but the leaves are yellow and the plants stunted. Then, one fair October night, the final catastrophe strikes — the first fall freeze arrives in all its fury. The poor man walks out and views the devastation. His whole crop is a failure. All his toil has been for nothing. This year he will have NO BANANAS! Carlos, however, is an incurable optimist. After all, this is but one try, and perhaps next year will be different. But next year is not different; again he loses his crop and doesn't get even one banana. Now, let us suppose that Carlos plants a banana crop every year for fifteen hundred years and each year the result is the same — no bananas! Would he then, I ask, be justified in trying just one more time? The answer is obvious.

Thirty-five centuries ago at Mount Sinai, amidst flaming fire and quaking earth, God gave Israel the Law. Under the leadership of faithful servants of God, the nation of Israel at times seemed fairly enthusiastic in their effort to keep the Law and enjoy the blessings that it provided. Doubtless, in every generation there were individuals who endeavored earnestly to maintain their covenant relationship with God upon the basis of keeping the Law. But they all failed. To keep the Law was beyond the ability of any member of the fallen race! God knew this; but He wanted the Israelites to try to keep the Law, for He wished to demonstrate the need for a mighty change within their heart and nature. The Old Covenant failed, not because the law was faulty, but because of the weakness of the flesh. Israel lived as a nation under that Law for fifteen hundred years. And in those fifteen hundred long centuries not one single Israelite was ever able to perfectly keep that Law. Not one! Not one in fifteen hundred years! NO BANANAS! And now, O fools, and slow of heart to believe, you come to inform me that God will establish His Kingdom by PLACING THE WHOLE WORLD UNDER LAW! Hear it! Oh, my friends, hear it! "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God...for by the law is the knowledge of sin...for ALL HAVE SINNED, AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD" (Rom. 3:19-20,23). Have Paul

and I said enough to STOP EVERY MOUTH? The Law bore absolutely no fruit in fifteen hundred years. Would God now be justified in trying it one more time in the Kingdom?

Dearly beloved brethren, only the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has the power to make mankind free from the law of sin and death. Only as men are raised from the dead by the power of the everlasting Father who raised up Christ from the dead, can any man fulfill the righteousness of the law by walking in newness of life. Let us not be so stupid as to believe that the manifested sons of God will be dispensers and enforcers of law. The terrible truth is that the law is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, that mysterious tree in the very precincts of Eden that brings naught but the knowledge of sin and death to all who reach forth their hand to partake of it. But, thank God! there is another tree, the Tree of Life.

The wonderful Tree of Life in Eden was, as is said of Christ, "in the world" but "not of the world." The life-giving fruit of this Tree was accessible to man but had absolutely nothing to do with the realm of earthiness, for it was heaven's own divine life brought into man's world and made available to him. In the Tree of Life God invited man to Find Him as the source and center of life, that in union with Him God would be at once both the indwelling power of life and the environment in which man would live, and move, and have his being. By eating of the Tree of Life man would be full of light, abounding in heavenly wisdom and knowledge, fearful in power and dominion, ethereal as a spirit (Jn. 3:8) and shining in the image of God. As George Hawtin once pointed out, the fruit of this wonderful Tree would make men radiant with the resplendent glory of God as was Jesus, the last Adam, at the transfiguration, whose face shone as the sun and His raiment was as the light. The mighty power of this Tree would raise man up beyond any possibility of sin, corruption and death into the incorruptible and divine life demonstrated by Jesus when He arose from the dead in a body of glorification. In this Tree of Life the effulgent perfumes of the heavenly realm would be fragrance and life to man's nostrils. He would taste spiritualities and touch celestial things. The wisdom and power of God would be wide open to him and he would walk in the atmosphere and glory of celestial realms. The gates of that realm would never be shut by day or night. The heavens would be opened over his head and he would walk in the power and majesty of God Almighty.

This was the glory of the Tree of Life in Eden! Trees in scripture are often used to represent men, and the Tree of Life represents a wonderful person - one with ENDLESS LIFE, DIVINE LIFE, CELESTIAL LIFE. It is written of Melchizedek that he had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but abides a priest continually (Heb. 7:3). It states that "he liveth" (Heb. 7:8). And again it says that the order of Melchizedek is "after the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16). Furthermore, it is revealed that the order of Melchizedek IS THE ORDER OF THE SON OF GOD. Other scriptures confirm these mentioned, but I point these out to emphasize the fact that life is one of the chief signs of the order of Melchizedek. Therefore, it is my deep conviction that the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden represented the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD, and upon the disobedience of Adam and Eve they were banished from the Garden and Cherubim with a flaming sword which turned in every direction were stationed at Eden's gate to guard the way to the Tree of Life. In their unclean and corrupted condition they could not partake of that great Priesthood which both ensured eternal life and ministered eternal life. And thus it has been through long millenniums, the Melchizedek Priesthood has been guarded and kept secret and untouched until another Priest after the order of Melchizedek, even Jesus the Savior, should arise and clear the way for partaking of that glorious life. Of course, there are some qualifications and requirements, even now, for partaking fully of that blessed realm. The Spirit saith, **"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7)**. Not everyone eats of it, only those who are prepared to eat of it. The promise is not of eternal life shouting and dancing up and down the streets of Glory-land, but of attaining to the power and glory of THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.

Hebrews 7:11-15 tells us that we cannot be perfected by the Levitical priesthood. In the order of Aaron there was a continual succession of priests, one dying and another taking his place. One by one they grew old and died: the eye, often filled with tears, was closed; the heart stood still; the hands crossed meekly on the breast. Aaron died on Hor, and all his successors in mystic procession followed him. The office remained, but the occupants passed. That characterized the whole system; it bore the mark of change and weakness and death. It could not effect anything that was really abiding and permanent, much less anything that was eternal. And it was all because of sin. Every High Priest of the order of Aaron had to offer sacrifice first for his own sins, and

then for the people's. The whole inner life of the worshipper was what the system was, subject to sin and failure and decay.

Therefore another Order of priesthood must arise. Jesus is the High Priest of this new Order. The glorious statement is made that another priest arises after the similitude of Melchizedek who is made "after the power of an endless life." This brings us to what is implied by the word "endless." This is the Greek word AKATALUTOS which means INDISSOLUBLE. It was in the power of an indissoluble life that Jesus was constituted a priest after the Order of Melchizedek. As the writer to the Hebrews has pointed out, on earth Jesus was not a priest. He would have needed to be of the tribe of Levi in order to be a priest during the days of His flesh on earth, because that priesthood at that time was still in force. Nor could He at that time have been a priest after the order of Melchizedek! On earth His life was dissoluble, or He could not have died for us. Now His life has become "indissoluble"; and now He cannot die. The mystery of the Melchizedekian Priesthood is the mystery of ETERNAL LIFE.

Christ Jesus Himself is the Eternal One, who abideth Priest forever. His priesthood is unchangeable, for His priesthood is an everlasting one, ever living, ever active. What a contrast to all the Levitical priests, on whose graves this epitaph may ever be inscribed: "Not suffered to continue by reason of death." How different is our High Priest, after the Order of Melchizedek! Death tried to master Him; but He could not be holden of it. "He continueth ever." "He ever liveth." "He is a priest forever." WHEREFORE HE IS ABLE TO SAVE COMPLETELY THEM THAT DRAW NEAR UNTO GOD BY HIM. Save us completely! What a thought! Full salvation — spirit, soul, and body! Nothing left untouched, untransformed. It is by virtue of His QUALITY OF LIFE that He is able to start the work of redemption and also bring it to its completeness. Because He is of an endless — indissoluble, incorruptible — life. He can bring all that He ministers unto into this same endless and incorruptible life.

Praise God, the Melchizedek Priesthood BRINGS PERFECTION. Jesus lives in the Spirit as High Priest in the power of an endless life. And Christ dwells within us in the power of an endless life. Each work He does within us He is able to do in the power of an endless life. Nothing can stand before that transforming life. What hope this evokes within us! He breathes His own life into us. He works within us AS A LIFE, as our own life, so that it is our very nature to radiate the glory and power of God. His life as our life within us is the power that must triumph over all the powers of sin and death.

What a glorious path is marked out for us! THE SONS OF GOD ARE A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD. THEIR PRIESTHOOD IS AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEK. The High Priest of this Order has run OH before and entered the Veil into the Holiest of all. And We are running also and are entering that veil. Something marvelous, amazing and stupendous is about to happen, beloved, as we press on into God. God shall surely and truly usher us into the fullness of the Order of Melchizedek. Through His flesh we too shall enter fully the unseen and eternal realm of God and learn of its mystery. Having entered this realm, we shall deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. Therefore I say that the great Melchizedekian Priesthood Ministry will be functioning to the full when the priests of this Order have fully put on immortality and incorruption (I Cor. 15:53). This will be the great manifestation of the sons of God that all creation "groaneth and travaileth in pain" for (Rom. 8:18-25).

The Lord is in the process of bringing His overcoming remnant into THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE. It is greater than the forgiveness of sins, greater than the new birth, greater than Pentecostal power. It is greater than power to speak in tongues, prophesy, heal the sick, cast out devils, and do signs and wonders. It is greater than witnessing power, apostolic power, and even greater than power to raise the dead. Soon, very soon, those powers will no longer be needed because the manifested sons of God shall arise in the power of the Melchizedekian Priesthood which is the power of an incorruptible life, to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. A world is coming where there is no limited measure of the Spirit, no "in part" works and manifestations of power in the gift realm. There will be no need to heal the sick, cast out devils, multiply bread and fish, or raise the dead —it is an eternal realm where everlasting life will flow fully and freely to all creation. Death is not the grave or the coffin - DEATH IS THIS WHOLE REALM IN WHICH WE HAVE EXISTED EVER SINCE THE TRANSGRESSION IN EDEN. Mankind groans to be delivered, not merely from sin and sickness and trouble and the grave, but out of death, out of the DEATH REALM altogether.

We can only speculate what it will be like to be in the full power and glory of incorruptible life. God is moving to bring His holy remnant into the fullness where Christ Jesus now dwells. No Christian alive has ever come to this. There will be a full and complete severing from the earth realm, from the carnal mind, from fleshly passions, from lack and immaturity, from the death realm with all its claims. God wants a free, heavenly, celestial people right here on earth, a body of sons totally detached from all that is earthly, limited, and temporal. It is possible to move into a resurrection realm that places us beyond time, beyond the thinking and power of the world, beyond human nature, beyond the bondage of health, security, and death itself. Is that not the greatest power God can give to mankind — to make him an eternal, spiritual being in the very glory of God? And God's order to accomplish this is very simple — Jesus Christ; then His body, the manifested sons of God; and Finally all creation. Jesus ministers this power to us: we minister it to creation. THIS IS THE POWER AND GLORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 18**  
**HOW THE KINGDOM COMES** [continued]  
BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART EIGHTEEN**

**NOT BY POLITICS**  
**YOU CANNOT BUILD THE KINGDOM**  
**GOD RAISES UP MEN**

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 15:11).

The "seventh trump" is the last trump — the conclusion of God's great Kingdom process. The day shall surely come when the kingdoms of this world, the rulerships of this world, the government of the United States of America, the governments of Europe, the governments of Mexico and Central and South America, the governments of Asia, the governments of Africa — the kingdoms of this world, the kingdoms of all the nations in your World Atlas - ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST. They are all His now by ownership, as creations of His hand and under His sovereignty, but they are not His in a "Kingdom" relationship. There is a time in God's great Kingdom program when that truth is proclaimed out of the heavens: "The kingdoms of this world ARE BECOME the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." That means that whatever is true of any man who has "entered the Kingdom" will be true of all the nations of this world, including both their inhabitants and their governments.

Who is the Lord? Jesus is our Lord, for truly "God hath made this same Jesus...both LORD AND CHRIST" (Acts 2:36). Not only do the Kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, they also become the kingdoms of "His Christ". There are two items listed here as being involved in the rulership of the whole world. The whole world is to become converted to the dominion of OUR LORD and to the dominion of HIS CHRIST — His anointed ones, His body. Christ means "the anointed." "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you..." (I Jn. 2:27). "HE (Jesus) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Those who have received the anointing of the Spirit that rested upon our glorious Head and Lord, those who grow up unto maturity in Christ Jesus as the sons of God, form the corporate body of "His Christ". Let it be thoroughly known and understood that our Christ is the Lord Jesus, whereas His Christ is His anointed body which in union with Him walks in His spirit, hears His voice, puts on His mind, is transformed into His image, stands in His nature, power and glory, and does His will upon the earth. They are the sons of God. All nations, all the kingdoms of "this world," shall be brought under the Kingdom dominion of the Lord Jesus and His Christ. That is the immutable word of our infallible God!

Do you suppose that one fair morning some sons of God will show up in Washington, D.C., walk into the White House, the Capitol, and the Pentagon, requesting a meeting with the President, the members of Congress and the Joint Chiefs of Staff? When all are assembled the sons announce, "Gentlemen, the Lord has sent us here and we are now taking over the entire country of the United States of America in the name of Jesus Christ. We hereby dismiss the President and his cabinet, the Congress, all the department secretaries, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and all other officials of the Federal Government. You can all go home — we are in charge as of 12 o'clock noon today." Do you think that would fly in Washington? No — God has an altogether different plan. Our Lord Jesus Christ and His anointed body. His Christ, shall gain the government of the world by KINGDOM POWER — by the saving, delivering, transforming power of the Holy Ghost. We love America. We love China. We love Russia. We love all the nations of America, Asia, Africa and Europe and the far-flung islands of the sea. America will be a better nation when our Lord and His Christ rule it with a rod of iron. All the nations of the earth will be more blessed, prosperous, peaceful and righteous when the Kingdom of God rules in their midst. In fact, they will be totally blessed, peaceful and righteous! And that is on the agenda, my friend — that is God's Kingdom Program in the earth!

## NOT BY POLITICS

In our recent Studies on the subject of HOW THE KINGDOM COMES we have seen clearly that the Kingdom of God does not come by force, it does not come by democracy, nor does it come by law or by any other method of human government. In this Study we shall consider the great truth that the Kingdom does not come by any kind of politics. Jesus never once discussed with His disciples their relationship to the government of Israel or to that of Rome, or what kind of political system they should aim to set up as the Kingdom of God. Jesus did not institute any social reform, nor did He even suggest any political, judicial or legislative reforms. He sanctioned no dream of a renovated government, apart from personal spiritual regeneration. He did not denounce the Roman despotism. He did not interfere with existing customs and institutions. He did not directly attack governmental wrongs which certainly were rampant. He did not start a great crusade against the evils of those times. He let them alone. He did not intervene in the affairs of statecraft, because the customs, the habits of men, the laws and institutions of society are but the expression of the human heart. Put that right, and you make all things new. Get the Kingdom of God within men, and you will soon have it without. Righteous ways, righteous acts and righteous institutions will spring forth out of the hearts and lives of transformed men. That is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

More than a century ago James Lewis penned these penetrating words: "The establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth is slow work. It requires not that men should be busy with the affairs of other people, but that they should come first to themselves, and mourn over the meanness of their own nature and the vanity of their own life; not that they should crusade against the evils of society, but weep bitter tears over their own sins; not that they should fussily seek to put the world right, but get put right themselves. Whether the Kingdom of God does nor does not affect these external matters, we shall presently see. But directly it does not deal with them. It deals with the individual. 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation'; it is hidden, internal, spiritual. It is the establishment of righteousness in the human soul. It is the subjugation of the powers of man to the mind of Christ.

"Men talk of this kingdom as mystical, unreal. Let them try it for a month! Jesus Christ aspires to a sway such as no Caesar, Emperor, or Dictator, has ever been able to command. A rule of marching armies and clanging swords can do much. That grand Roman power was mighty. It could tax men and make them pay. It could stretch its scepter over distant provinces, and awe men into submission. It could say to one man, 'Go,' and he went, to another 'Come,' and he came. It could command the bodies, the time, the thoughts of men. It could send men to death, and even in his mortal pangs the poor gladiator must cry, 'O Caesar, dying, I salute thee!' One thing it could not do, even though it bound captives to its chariot wheels. There is a part of man's nature which coercion cannot reach; a path which the lion's whelps have not trod.' To that region man can retire, and say to all invading powers, 'Thus far shall you come and no further.' That is the region in which the Kingdom of Christ prevails. He will possess the heart of man. He will control the passions, and govern the will, and purify the motives, and mold the life of man. The whole nature shall be subdued to the quality of its Lord, and all the current of man's being shall turn to Him. The drunkard and drug addict shall deny his insatiable craving, the thief shall steal no more, the liar shall speak the truth, the immoral and perverted shall draw away from his lust, the slothful, lazy and opportunist shall devote himself to his work, and men shall be changed, captivated, charmed by HIS WORD. They shall prefer HIM to their chief joy!

"You will have noticed that His promises of help reach the deep, eternal cravings of the human heart. He has come, not to satisfy a craze, or gratify a whim, or minister to a passing fancy, but that men might have life. The power of the kingdom of God is the love of God in Jesus Christ. Our King comes to dwell with us, to be in us. His throne is the heart of man. It is not in word, in formularies, ordinances, creeds, laws, or governmental coercion. It is in power. It is the virtue of God in Christ Jesus which enters human weakness at the touch of faith. It is 'Christ in you.' Fling open, then, the gates of your soul. The Lord, strong and mighty — strong to deliver, mighty to save — waits to enter. Let the King of Glory in!" — end quote.

If you entertain the crude notion that reigning with Christ means sitting behind a desk over in Jerusalem with telephone at hand and television cameras running, you know nothing as you ought to know of that blessed Kingdom of God which is "not of this world" and which "comes not with outward show," but is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And I do not hesitate to tell you that when Christ comes in mighty power

to bring the triumph of His Kingdom into new and vaster dimensions on this earth through the ministry of that body of sons so painstakingly and meticulously formed under His hand of dealing throughout this present age, vast multitudes of Christians will MISS HIS COMING because it will not conform to the manner, purpose or result that they imagine it should be. Like the Jews two thousand years ago, these Christians will continue on with their religious games, singing, clapping, preaching, organizing, crusading, and waiting for a second coming and a kingdom that will meet their demands and fulfill their misguided expectations. Ah, we blame the Jews for their blindness and unbelief, and of making the Word of God of none effect through their tradition, but are there not vast multitudes of the Lord's people in our own day who are doing this very thing? The Jewish nation was not ignorant of the teaching of scripture concerning His coming and Kingdom — in fact, they were good "fundamentalists", anxiously expecting His arrival — but they had drifted so far from the Holy Spirit of God, that when the day arrived they did not know it because it took the Holy Spirit to reveal it. And as the Jews of old failed to recognize the coming of the Lord and His Kingdom in their day, even so a sleeping church today fails to recognize the signs and events that herald a new and glorious and fuller manifestation of that same blessed Person!

Arthur Eedle from England shared the following in an issue of his paper THE PROPHETIC TELEGRAPH. "If the testimony of many hymns and choruses is to be believed, then Jesus is due to receive a warm welcome on His return. In American terminology. He will be given a 'ticker-tape parade.' In Britain He will be received as on a day of Royal Coronation, with flag-waving and cheering, as He descends from the clouds with thousands of angels in His train. But will 'The Crowning Day' really be like that? Does the Lord intend to come in such a manner to receive the admiration of His people? A moments reflection should be sufficient to dismiss such ideas as totally out of keeping with the Divine Character. The image is born of human typology, how we as humans behave towards Royalty and VIP's. Well, not everybody, but most of us!

"In this brief writing we shall take a look at a few very important facts, in order to present an alternative picture of what the beginning of the Kingdom of God is like. It may take some by surprise. When Adam was First created, God was enthroned in his spirit. He received all his leading and direction from God. He looked to God as his creator and his provider, his director and his inspirer. There was no thought of taking things into his own hands. At the time of the 'fall,' Adam in effect took the throne from his spirit and placed it in his soul. But God would not sit on this throne. He would only take His seat in man's SPIRIT, not in his SOUL. Hence He departed from Adam. The Divine Life left him, and he became a creature subject to death. Whilst God lived within him, he would live forever, because God is immortal. But without the presence of God in his spirit, he became subject to death.

"The soul is the seat of self-consciousness, where SELF sits on the throne. That is why God will not share the throne. The spirit is the seat of God-consciousness, and only here will He sit. After king David's lapse from right living, he cried out to God, saying, '[Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a RIGHT SPIRIT within me](#)' (Ps. 51:10). He never asked for his soul to be cleaned, mended, or renewed, because he knew that his sins had flowed from SELF-ENTHRONEMENT in his soul. Here is the crux of the matter. There will be no street ceremonies, no flag waving, no herald running here and there, saying. 'It's here! Come and see!' Why? Because the Kingdom is INSIDE man, not for external observation (Lk. 17:20-21). God is looking for a reinstatement of His position in man's spirit. He says to us in effect, 'You cannot live without me. If you try to run your own life, and satisfy your own desires, it will all end in death. The only way in which you can enjoy life with me is to give me back the reins of government. My government is not oppressive, but gently and firmly persuasive, because I made you, and I alone know what is best for you.'

"All of us are born with Adam's legacy to self-rule. The throne has remained in the human soul ever since Adam sinned, and God does not live there. But each and every person who is enlightened to this fact, and who desires with a whole heart to be under God's government, can enter a new relationship with God. A right spirit is granted, and God begins to dwell there once again. This is not the end of the process, however, and it is important to see why. The majority in the evangelical world speak about two parties, the Christians and the Non-Christians. But this is an artificial distinction. To accept Christ into one's life is just a beginning, and there is a distinct possibility of God being subsequently dethroned. We have seen young people 'accept Christ' and be baptized, only to reinstate their own kingdom firmly in their souls within a short time. God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows that shall he also reap. He who sows to the flesh, will of the flesh reap corruption. He

who sows to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting (Gal. 6:7-8). Paul said to the Galatians, 'Are you so foolish? having begun in the spirit, are you now made perfect in the flesh?' (Gal. 3:3).

"God is looking for an initial commitment to Him, a 'conversion' experience. But He wants far more than that! He wants there to be a steadily growing Kingdom of God within. At our conversion we see the need for salvation and a state of 'NEW MANAGEMENT'. But our hearts are very deceptive. We have no idea just how much we still hold the reins. The Lord gradually engineers our circumstances to show us who is in control. Therefore there should be a gradual replacement, whereby self-will is exchanged for God-reliance. Jesus said that of Himself He was able to do nothing. His total reliance was on His Father and the Divine Direction He received. But don't misunderstand. Jesus chose to go that way. He allowed His Father complete control of His life, not as a puppet, but as one who was utterly convinced of the Right Way.

"God's sons are those who have, through many trials and testings, allowed God to take His rightful place in their spirits. They began with but a small reliance on God, but grew to allow Him something approaching total control. These are the ones whom God will ask to rule the coming world with Him, and under Him. Antichrist is said to rule in the temple of God, showing that he is God. What does this mean? It means that there are Christians who are all for God's ways, but struggle to retain their own rulership of their lives. Satan sits enthroned in man's flesh, in the soul of man that is not subject to God, but subject to human desire. All those who thus retain self-dominion are collectively the antichrist. Satan's kingdom is equally inside man as God's Kingdom. These facts need careful pondering by us all" — end quote.

### **YOU CANNOT BUILD THE KINGDOM!**

The Kingdom is coming. "Thy kingdom come." Only if we truly believe the Kingdom is coming can we pray that prayer. But primarily and fundamentally the Kingdom IS. "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." The Kingdom that is, is coming. Men speak of "building" the Kingdom of God, but in the truest sense the Kingdom it not built — it is. The Kingdom grows and increases from age to age and from realm to realm, but only because it is. The essential thing to be burned into our consciousness is that the Kingdom of God IS! "The kingdom of God IS righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The Lord reigneth!" His reign is a present reality and shall increase from age to age until all things are subdued unto Him.

Nowhere in the scriptures are we instructed that we are to "build" the Kingdom. We are told that we can "see" the Kingdom, "enter" the Kingdom, "receive" the Kingdom, "inherit" the Kingdom, and "proclaim" the Kingdom, but never build it. What is the difference? It is basic and profound. For if we are to build the Kingdom, then it is something that we bring into life, something that we produce. It is a structure that requires our effort to raise up. It is an institution that demands our ingenuity and work to establish. But the Kingdom IS. It is already in existence: it is a present reality, for it was prepared for us before the foundation of the world (Mat. 25:34). Men who go out and try to build the Kingdom always fail for they are trying to do something that cannot be done. Ah, yes, there is an increase of the Kingdom! But it is not the increase of effort, but of life. You can build a house, but you cannot build a tree or a fruit. Things that are built are constructed by an external power; they contain no life. But things that grow are produced by an inherent internal life and you cannot build them. The increase and manifestation of the Kingdom is not one of man's doing, but something of life. That is why the Kingdom of God is within you. It is the life of the Spirit bringing forth the image and glory of God in the lives and doings of men. Jesus speaks of those who are "disciples" of the Kingdom, "stewards" of the Kingdom, "scribes" of the Kingdom, "teachers" of the Kingdom and "heralds" of the Kingdom. But there are no "builders" of the Kingdom!

Many who have seen something of the promises and glory of the Kingdom of God have found it difficult to keep their efforts in the Spirit and cooperate with God to bless men and nations with the benefits and powers of the Kingdom. The result of their misunderstanding of how the Kingdom functions has time and again manifested itself in carnal and fruitless efforts to "establish" or "build" a visible outward Kingdom. While individuals and small groups of saints in the early days of the Church made claims concerning the "establishment" of the Kingdom in their day, this idea did not take on any great proportion until the time of the Emperor Constantine. Prior to that Christians were openly persecuted by the Roman emperors and were accorded no recognition by

the kingdoms of this world. The gospel was despised and rejected by an unbelieving and pagan world. This means that those who espoused the name of Christ suffered with Him because of their allegiance to His cause. As one has written: "So far as the great body of professed Christians was concerned, this entire picture of persecution and ostracism on the part of worldly kingdoms was suddenly changed by Constantine, who himself professed conversion to Christianity, in the year 313 A.D., this emperor put his signature to a decree reading, in part, 'Henceforth in perfect and absolute freedom, each and every person who chooses to belong to the practice of the Christian religion, shall be at liberty to do so without let or hindrance in any shape or form.' How the Christians must have read the lines with astonishment when they realized the implication of this change of attitude on the part of earthly governments! Just emerging from ten years of the bitterest persecution by Diocletian, they were now free to meet and sing and pray and read their scriptures in the open sunlight, anytime, anywhere.

"And this was but the first of other favors that were shortly to come to them. The historian records that 'Constantine ordered the state funds to be used to rebuild their churches, ruined in the previous persecution; he donated land by the acre, built new churches wherever needed in the east or the west — magnificent, costly structures. Christian ministers were exempted from taxation and became officials representing the government. Even laymen were shown marked favor in political appointments. Gift was piled upon gift, and privilege upon privilege. Decrees were issued exhorting the public to abandon their 'ancient superstitions' and accept the 'truth'. Complete and expensive copies of the scriptures were furnished to Christians by the state, replacing those destroyed by former persecutors. Could or should they decline these marvelous favors bestowed upon them? Should they decline to avail themselves of the wonderful opportunity thus afforded to proclaim the gospel of the Son of God to the large audiences now forthcoming because of governmental favor toward the church? Should they refuse to rejoice because now multitudes suddenly saw the light?' "The church had endured persecution — bitter, death-dealing persecution. Now the reverse was true and they were enjoying the favors of the state. Could they endure prosperity? What was to be their attitude toward this new development in the Christian experience? How were they to view the future? The great and sudden relief experienced by the lifting of the hand of persecution evidently had the effect that Satan desired it should, because the historical record shows that the great body of professed Christians at the time concluded that the days of waiting for the Kingdom had ended! One historical writer, in telling about this, says, 'When they were relieved of their persecution, and came into honor after having been so long reckoned the filth of the world, the cry was strait away raised up that the Kingdom of God had come. The Millennium had begun. The emperor was the visible favorite of God, the predestined over thrower of the powers of evil (by the sword, of course!).'

"Following the last session of the Council of Nicea in the year 325, Constantine made a splendid banquet, about which the historian Eusebius, a bishop and one of the guests, has left us the following account: 'The proceedings were sublime beyond description. The soldiers of the emperor's bodyguard were drawn up before the door of the palace with bared swords. The men of God, over three hundred bishops, some of them bearing in their bodies the marks of the last persecution, passed by them proudly into the interior of the palace. Some sat at the same table with the emperor. One might easily believe he beheld an image of the very Kingdom of God.'

"Following this, and amidst violent, stormy internal disputes, the nominal church multiplied, for the state was still friendly and the sons of Constantine improved on their father, for they not only favored the church system, but persecuted paganism! The professed followers of the Master quickly caught the spirit, and with even more ardent zeal than was manifested by the strong arm of the state. They, like so many others who are not willing to await God's time or God's way for the exercise of Kingdom powers, themselves took the law into their own hands. Professed Christian mobs tore down pagan temples, shattered their idols, burnt their libraries, and slaughtered their priests. There was no restraining them, so fierce was their faith and zeal for the alleged Kingdom of God.

"But the carnal mind was still 'the god of this world.' While the professed church as a whole entered into these revelries in connection with the establishment of a counterfeit kingdom of the Lord, there still remained a few true followers of the Master who did not share in this viewpoint and therefore did not enter into these unchristian activities. Concerning these the historian says, 'Some indeed during this century, were disgusted with the pride and arrogance of the clergy and aimed at spiritual simplicity and opposed the general trend; but

the only fruit of their labor was that they were branded with infamy.' Evidently this little flock of the body of Christ were branded as being anti-kingdom, even as it still is true of some today. When the devil offered the kingdoms of the world to our Lord, He declined the gift, choosing the way of the cross and the life of the Spirit, while carrying out the Father's plans which must precede the day when all the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. But what the Son of man refused, the nominal church, centuries later, accepted, and installed a Roman bishop at the head, who, in the name of God, received the headship of the kingdoms of this world. The great religious harlot was fully born, riding upon the beast. From thenceforth it was woe unto those who dared to be anti-kingdom.

"These abortive Kingdom efforts, however, were not limited to the large body of professed Christians who Finally became amalgamated into the Roman Catholic church-state system. When the Protestant movement got under way, Satan still was active both with the small and large groups of Protestantism and almost without exception these have fallen prey to this master-stroke of delusion. The Protestants, in separating from Rome, never completely passed out of the harmful shadow of the unauthorized kingdom. Many of the Protestant systems united with the state. Even today, most professed Christians confuse the present church system with the Kingdom, and when their hopes prosper or their activity is apparently blessed, and applauded by people in high places, they forthwith believe that the Kingdom of God must be here" — end quote (author unknown). Many other groups have made their own efforts at "building the Kingdom." Look for example at the Munzerites of the sixteenth century, who undertook to establish at Munster a theocracy or political kingdom of the saints; or the Fifth Monarchy men of the seventeenth century, who believed it was their duty to establish the Kingdom of God by force, and actually went through a form of electing at London Jesus Christ as Universal Monarch; or John Alexander Dowie who in the dawn of this century founded both the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church and the city of Zion, Illinois as a theocracy headed by himself as "Elijah the Restorer." Dowie ruled the theocratic community strictly and organized the Theocratic party, a political party to compete with the Republican and Democratic parties for control of the nation. This party ran in the elections in both Chicago and Zion City as the representatives of the Kingdom of God on earth. At the time of his sudden stroke and paralysis he was in the process of establishing theocratic cities in various parts of the world and proposed to purchase the entire city of Jerusalem from the Turks and turn it into a theocratic Christian city, the seat of the theocratic kingdom, in preparation for the return of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Dowie was but another in a long list of "kingdom builders" who imagined that they could "build" the Kingdom of God on earth. They missed altogether the profound and wonderful truth proclaimed by Jesus when He said, **"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (Mat. 13:31-32).** The Kingdom is not like a house, or an institution, or a government to be "built"; it is like a seed that is planted and by the spontaneous process of germination and growth becomes through the power of an indwelling life the expression and reign of God in the earth. It is not the work of man by force, law, or politics, but the sovereign work of God by the power of the Holy Spirit in and through yielded men.

For what purpose is God bringing us into sonship? Many will point to the scriptures and say we are being perfected and brought into the fullness of God so that we can rule and reign with Christ when He establishes His Kingdom on earth. I will not say that I disagree with this teaching except to point out that Christ has already established His Kingdom in the earth. The "man" who planted the "grain of mustard seed" which is the Kingdom in its inception was none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. But we need to be very clear as to what we have in mind when we speak of ruling and reigning with Jesus. The idea that the Kingdom will one day be established in the earth, after the pattern of the kingdoms of men, and that God's elect will assume outward positions of political and governmental power within its hierarchy is the same carnal-minded error that the people of Israel made when Jesus made His appearance among them. As a result they completely missed Him. How then shall we reign with Christ?

The first principle that must be very clear to us is that the power of the Kingdom of God is not political power — it is spiritual power. **"If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, T-H-E-N THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS COME UNTO YOU" (Mat. 12:28).** The Kingdom of God is that domain where God's saving, transforming power defeats all opposition, breaks down every wall, changes all that is contrary to God's nature, mind and will, and

brings men into willing submission to His authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the Kingdom of God. Where hearts are changed, where sin and error and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where the will and ways of God are raised up as reality and life in a people, where the mind of Christ rules out of union with God — there the Kingdom of God has come and is advancing. In the Kingdom it is no longer God ruling over you by sovereignty, but the life, mind, heart, nature, power, wisdom, knowledge, and will of God entering into you, becoming your very own reality. How plain it is to see that this is NOT what happened in the days of Emperor Constantine! The Kingdom of God is the power to transform. Its citizens are a holy people. Its kings and priests are all righteous, wise, and mighty through God.

What I have said before bears repeating — there is no greater truth than the truth that our Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom, our King is a spiritual King, its citizens are a spiritual people, its ministry is a spiritual ministry, its authority is a spiritual authority, its dominion is a spiritual dominion, its laws are spiritual laws, its weapons are spiritual weapons, its priesthood is a spiritual priesthood, its sovereignty is a spiritual sovereignty, its power is spiritual power, and its rulers rule only by the Spirit, praise His wonderful name! You do not "build" this Kingdom, nor do you exercise any kind of "political" power to further its cause. IT MUST BE DEMONSTRATED IN THE AUTHORITY AND MINISTERED BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST. That, my friend, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

## **GOD RAISES UP MEN**

In any kingdom there is order. It is very important for us to know that every kingdom has order. It has a king who is the ruler and it has the government which administers all the will of the king unto its subjects. When we have been born of the Spirit into the Kingdom Realm of God, we have been born into a divine, celestial order. Someone asks, "Well, how about organization? Are we born into organization? Doesn't the Kingdom have some type of organization?" No. We are born only into an organism, a living body, whereby we receive our identity, our life, our destiny from our heavenly Father. The Kingdom of God is a living thing. The organism is CHRIST, the image of God. To be born into the God family is to be born into the divine, heavenly order — the body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the Head of this body, the firstborn Son, the first manifested Son, joined now by that glorious company of sons who come into His image and likeness and are members of His body. The whole company of sons. Head and body, is THE CHRIST. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST" (I Cor. 12:12). The order of sonship is the order of the many-membered Son of God. And the order of the Son of God IS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The Kingdom of God, the Government of God, is not a method, system or organization. Any thing that is "organized" is not the Kingdom of God. There is one Christian movement that calls itself "Jehovah's Organization." It is not. God doesn't have any organizations. The body of Christ is not an organization, it is an organism. Organizations are systems — organisms are living things. God does not raise up or use organizations — He calls, ordains, prepares, equips, and uses MEN. God always begins His purposes with a MAN, and consummates His purposes in a PEOPLE. Under the Old Covenant the man was Moses, and the people was Israel. Under the New Covenant the man is Jesus Christ, and the people is the sons of God.

Many other men have also been involved in God's purposes throughout the ages. When the time had come for God to have a nation as His witness in the earth. He called forth Abraham out of his homeland to go into a strange land. There he was to bear a son, and that son would bear sons and someday God's nation would be born because God had His man — Abraham. When Israel, pressed beyond measure by Egyptian bondage, cried aloud for deliverance, God didn't form a committee to devise a plan. He raised up a man. Pharaoh, the cruel and ruthless lord of Egypt, was mastered by Moses. At the very hour when all that Pharaoh represented was tyranny and slavery, God was creating a mighty deliverer who would captain the forces of the Lord and lead them toward the Promised Land.

Israel cried hopelessly in the wilderness, wandered aimlessly, lost faith in divine intervention, and muttered agonizingly, "We die! There is no Promised Land!" God then strengthened the heart of His man, Joshua, to march across the Jordan which separated the desolate wilderness from the Promised Land of plenty. At

another time Ahab and Jezebel were out-maneuvered by the prophet Elijah, the thundering Voice of God. Crises have always produced the grandest of prophets. David and his mighty men brought deliverance to Israel from all their enemies that had been thorns in their sides from the days of Joshua. Rome met its master in Paul. He transformed its society for the magnificent glory of Jesus Christ the Lord. From the turbulence of the Middle Ages came Martin Luther. At a moment when religious life ebbed lowest, when spiritual light had all but flickered and gone out, God brought forth John Wesley to spark into being the revival that was to impact mightily Great Britain and the world.

So it has always been in the annals of divine history — time would fail me to tell of Gideon, who routed the enemy; of Samuel and the prophets who as God's instruments subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in battle, and put to flight the armies of the aliens. God has never judged a nation, met a crisis, delivered a people, manifested His power, accomplished His purpose, or ushered in a new age by organization. He has always matched the hour and need with MEN. When God moved to end that first wicked age of human experience He did not organize the Ante-diluvian Flood Control Association to accomplish His purpose. It was by faith that one man — Noah — "being warned of God of things not yet seen, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world" (Heb. 11:7).

No age in world history matches in crisis and potential tragedy the age in which we live. On any moral chart, on any graph of spiritual decline, on any meter of danger and peril, this age is the age horrendous. The age is catastrophic with dark predictions of terrorism, of nuclear war, atomic blasts, thermonuclear annihilation, deadly fall-out, or destruction of the earth by the sheer weight of over-population and pollution. Will God leave this age Voiceless? Will heaven fail to produce a Deliverer? He has never done so. He has always had His man. As Basil Miller once wrote, "When God has selected His man. He has ground that man and polished him through the cauldron of human need and suffering. And when the divine process was completed, the schooling finished. His lapidary stones for hewing character burnished His man to a bright hue. God freed His man from obsolescent dogma and creed, and armed him with multifold weapons of spiritual warfare. Then He lifted him forth to captain the forces of right, a thundering voice of prophetic power. In the darkest hours of human night there has always been a lighted torch in the hand of God's man."

So it is today. God has a Voice. God is preparing to blow a trumpet and rally the armies of the Lord. But this time it is not a solitary man. It is a many-membered man. It is a vast company of the sons of God. The manifestation of the sons of God is the hope of this dying age. Jesus was the seed planted at the dawn of this age as a preview of the Kingdom when Christ with His entire body of sons will appear in power and glory; and His many brethren are the harvest of that original seed to bring forth in the earth the completeness of God's Christ and the triumph of His Kingdom in all realms. The certain hope of a new age of progression into the unfoldment of God's Kingdom lies directly before us. The whole creation, that has groaned in travail and pain throughout the dark night of every dispensation from Adam, is soon to hear the joyous shout of the birth of God's new man-child for this hour. This man shall arise in the midst of the nations and will publish to all the world the glad news, "thy God reigneth!" And the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill all the earth as the waters cover the sea.

I do not hesitate to tell you that I have never been able to work under committees, organizations, systems, creeds, rules and regulations. Creeds are not broad enough, dogmas are too binding; organization, systems and rules are stifling and restrictive man-made instruments of carnality and death. Those called to the Kingdom in this hour are given an assignment, a commission from the God of heaven Himself. They are His ambassadors, representing His government. Their orders do not come from headquarters in some distant city, nor from committees, counsels, boards, or bishops. To heed the voice of men and change one iota of the assignment would be to betray the Kingdom of God. It would be an act of treason against the Kingdom of Heaven. Those called to sonship have come into contact with the Source of divine energy and power, of wisdom and knowledge, and there is no alternative but to obey the heavenly vision. Our charge is to pursue the course set before us by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, taking our place within the ranks of that vast company of saints out of all the ages in their mission of bringing the Kingdom of God to pass in all the earth.

The men who have been the molders of the world for God have all been men full of faith and the Holy Ghost. It requires no faith nor any Holy Ghost to carry on the ordinary program of the average church, for running a church these days is not unlike running a business or corporation. It is all method, system, charisma, public relations, professional skills and program. But faith and revelation cause men to venture into the unknown and develop a reliance upon the unseen powers of God. When there are no road signs of men's traditions marking the limits of achievement, when there are no precedents, when there is nothing to go by, as far as sight is concerned, and one steps forward with nothing but the word of the Lord birthed within, depending upon God's tremendous power, this externalizes the vision and demonstrates before all men the power and glory of the Kingdom of God.

All the great movements of God in the earth have been accomplished through men God has sovereignly raised up with a vision, a message, and an anointing of authority and power. He has never used an existing organization. The proof that the anointing is upon the man and not the movement, is that in every case as soon as the man passes from the scene the movement raised up by that man dies too. It does not in every case disappear from the earth, but generally it stagnates, becomes more organized, and in most cases declines either spiritually or numerically, and eventually disintegrates or becomes something altogether different from what it was formed to be. The leaders who follow just "do not have what it takes" — they are not the man God raised up and anointed with His Spirit!

The religious systems are always exerting themselves to devise new methods, new plans, new programs, new organizations to advance the work of the church and secure enlargement and security for God's work. This method sinks the man in plan and organization — he becomes a cog in the mechanical wheel. God's plan has nothing to do with organizational structures — God's emphasis is on men. Men are God's method! "There was a man sent from God..." The church world is looking for better programs; God is looking for better men.

You never heard of a prophet, priest, or king being voted for! Prophets are very uncomfortable fellows. They have a strange way that makes them, even when very young, extremely obnoxious to slow and unprogressive persons who love to be quiet and at ease, maintaining the status quo. Prophets care for nothing but for God and His word. His ways, and His will. That is how the Kingdom of God works. God rules in and through men who are totally yielded unto His Voice and His Spirit. If God has given us a revelation of His thought, and it is perfectly clear and spiritually sound, then what we have to do is not vote about it or even talk about it, but to do it, for it is His will. Men who sit around tables "voting" about what course they should follow, obviously have not heard from God! That is not the way nor the wisdom nor the power of the Kingdom. The will of God once revealed is not open to discussion. Jesus took no vote about His Kingdom activities. He formed no committees to study anything, nor any organization to carry it out. He was led by the Spirit of God and He ordained men who would be led by the Spirit, for **"as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).**

"There was a man sent from God whose name was John." The dispensation that heralded and prepared the way for the Christ of God was bound up in that man John. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." "The Word was made" — not made a book, not made a doctrine, not a program, not a method, not a committee, not an organization — but **"the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14).** God came in the form of a man, **"a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you" (Acts 2:22).** Jesus called twelve men as His apostles and gave them — not a plan, not a blueprint, not a system, not an organization — He gave them POWER. **"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me..." (Acts 1:8).** This vital, urgent truth is one that this age of organization and machinery knows nothing about. What the world needs today is not more machinery, not new organizations or more novel methods, but the PERFECT MAN. "Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, the Holy Ghost flows through men; and I hesitate not to tell you that the Holy Ghost will flow most fully and perfectly through God's PERFECT MAN, God's NEW MAN, God's complete CHRIST, God's Government of Kings and Priests after the order of Melchizedek, the manifested sons of God. The Holy Spirit does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men. He does not reveal His will and

His heart to boards and committees, but to men who walk intimately with God, men who qualify for the fullness of God. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

It is a great mystery, but it is a grand fact of truth nevertheless that Christ first reigns IN us that He may consequently reign THROUGH us. "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" (Mat. 25:34). "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (I Cor. 6:9-10). "Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD..." (I Cor. 15:50).

The word "kingdom" indicates the richness of the heritage of the saints. It is no petty estate, no banana republic, no happy corner in obscurity. I heard a good man say that he should be content with a cabin in the corner of Glory land or a spot just inside the gate. I shall not be! The Lord says we shall inherit a KINGDOM. We cannot be satisfied to inherit less, because less than that would not suit our character. "He hath made us kings and priests unto God" (Rev. 5:10) and we must reign forever and ever, or be as wretched as deposed monarchs. A king without a kingdom is an unhappy and unfulfilled man. If I were a poor servant, a servant's quarters would be a boon, for it would correspond with my condition and degree; but if I am made a son of God, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus; if I am made a priest and a king, I must have a kingdom, or I shall not have attained to a position equal to my nature. He who makes us kings gives us a Kingdom to fit the nature, which He has bestowed upon us.

Beloved, I beseech you to strive more and more after that which the Spirit of God will give you — a KINGLY HEART; do not be among those who are satisfied with the miserable nature of ordinary humanity or the childish hopes of the babes in Christ who throng to the churches which are merely nurseries for the birthing, care and educating of babes and which then stifle and threaten to suffocate the life out of these little ones with their own static creeds, lifeless traditions, and infantile programs. They eagerly look for mansions and harps and golden streets and wings and white nightgowns in that glory world above, unable to comprehend that such glittering diadems are only nursery toys to God's true kings; true riches are ETERNAL SPIRITUAL REALITIES; the true treasury wealth looks down upon the stars. Do not sell yourself short, ye sons of the Most High! Get a kingly heart — ask the King of kings to give it to you, and beseech of Him a royal spirit. Act royally on earth towards your Lord, and for His sake towards all men. Go about the world not as mean men in spirit and action, nor yet in false humility as paupers and beggars, but as kings and priests of a race superior to the dirt-scrapers who are on their knees, crawling in the mud after fleeting earthly riches and transitory worldly fame. What incredible loss shall be suffered by those who imagine that financial prosperity in this life is the sign of great faith, blessing and spirituality!

What the church world in general cannot comprehend is that the Christ does not rule alone but through a many-membered body. Man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God, is God's government in the Kingdom of God. I have met men who professed that they have no desire, no ambition whatever to rule and reign with Christ. It is enough, say they, to know that we are saved by grace and shall make heaven at last. In fact, I have been greatly criticized and abused by some for my hope of inheriting the Kingdom of God and sitting with Christ upon the throne of universal dominion. In the eyes of these accusers I am vain, conceited, self-righteous, presumptuous, heretical and power-mad, suffering delusions of grandeur because I cherish the beautiful hope of sonship and rulership in the Kingdom of God. But I do not hesitate to tell you that Christ Himself has graciously bidden us to overcome and share with Him in His authority over the nations and all things. He would both be King IN US and exercise His regal power THROUGH US. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). Such reward to His faithful followers is merely the tangible expression of the approval of God, and we may no more deny Him the pleasure of expressing that approval than we may renounce it once it is conferred. Someone has truly said, HE WHO DESPISES A THRONE DESPISES HIM WHO CONFERS THE THRONE. It was one of our Lord's rebukes to the Pharisees - "The glory that cometh only from God YE SEEK NOT" (Jn. 4:44).

As one has written, "God is exceedingly rich. He is like a successful business man who has an enormous amount of capital. God has a business in this universe, and His vast wealth is His capital. We do not realize how many billions, countless billions. He has. All of this capital is simply HIMSELF, and with it He intends to 'manufacture' HIMSELF in mass production. God HIMSELF is the Business Man, the Capital, and the Product. His intention is to dispense Himself to many people in mass production. Therefore, God requires such a divine arrangement, a divine management, a divine dispensation in order to bring Himself into humanity." Praise His name! As His kings and priests upon His throne the elect sons of God are the governmental arrangement by which and through which God dispenses Himself into His creation. For that reason the whole creation continues to groan and travail for the manifestation of the sons of God. What an opportunity to change things! What an occasion to bless and heal and lift and transform the world! It would be a crime against humanity, my beloved brethren, to carelessly neglect and thus despise, as Esau despised his birthright, the position of responsibility and opportunity to bless and restore creation proffered to us by the illustrious King of kings and Lord of lords! It would be a mean and despicable crime against humanity as well as God Himself to settle for a cabin in the corner of Glory land!

When you understand that God is dealing and working out His plan through ages, you have understood God's purpose aright. Is this age and the next the only ages that remain for this purpose to be fulfilled? By no means! God's purpose through His body is "that in the ages to come He might show (put on display) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). The message of this wonderful passage is just this: At this present time, in this age, God is showing (putting on display) the exceeding riches of His grace toward us through Jesus Christ. Jesus is God's revelation of His grace and kindness to the Church gathered out of the nations. That is God's purpose in this age. But in the ages to come WE ARE THE DISPLAY, THE REVELATION OF GOD'S GRACE AND KINDNESS UNTO CREATION. That which He has revealed to us in Jesus, and wrought in us through Jesus, will be displayed through us in ages yet to come that all creation by us may then experience His exceeding grace and kindness as we are now experiencing it in Jesus. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

There are three very definite stages that transpire in God's great plan of the ages. In this age the Church is being gathered out of the nations. In the next age all the living nations shall come, and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law (authority) shall go forth of Zion (the sons of God), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the bride of Christ). And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:2-3). All this shall take place when "the mountain (kingdom, government) of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains (strong kingdoms), and it shall be exalted above the hills (smaller kingdoms); and people shall flow unto it" (Micah 4:1). In the age and ages beyond that all creation shall be dealt with and brought into harmony and relationship with God until all things everywhere have been subdued unto Him and God becomes in glorious reality ALL IN ALL. This in a nutshell is God's wonderful plan of the ages.

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen (nations) for THINE INHERITANCE and the uttermost parts of the earth for THY POSSESSION," says the Messianic Psalm. Christ conquered, and He is conquering, and He is to conquer. I claim this earth for God, for He made it. I claim this earth for God, for the earth is the Lord's. The sea is His, and He made it. His hands formed the dry land. His power pushed up every mountain, and His fingers scooped out every valley. By His wisdom all things were established. I claim everything that comes out of the bowels of the earth for God, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" and "all the gold and the silver is His." I claim every man in El Paso, and in Miami, and in New York, and in Los Angeles, and in Hong Kong, and in Beijing, and in Moscow, and in Baghdad and in the whole wide world, and every man in their graves for God, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" and "it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves" and "He hath made all things for His pleasure." I am not willing to wickedly cede even one thing or one person to the devil, as do some, for the Christ came to reconcile all things and He is the Savior of all men.

I proclaim to you, as the minister of God, that the body of Christ is here in this world for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Our destiny is something more than being a little group of saved people waiting to die and

go to heaven. The body of Christ IS the Kingdom of God in this world and its King-Priests must reign until all things are under His feet. Because all the earth is His, God is raising up a Kingly Priesthood to reign in mighty spirit power over the earth, not to be little human dictators, or an external, political kingdom of laws and systems headquartered in Jerusalem or London or some where else, but with an outflow of life and light and love, touching God with one hand, and humanity with the other, bringing the two together, that God may indwell all men by His Spirit and live and rule in them in power and glory. The kingly nature in us is not to dominate over other men's lives, but to deal with and break the power of self-hood and rebellion and sin and the devil that men may be reconciled to God. Kings have power and authority, priests reconcile in compassion, mercy and love. But once the reconciliation has taken place, and Christ is enthroned in men's spirit, we deliver them up to God, even the Father, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. That is the principle of the Kingdom. We rule only to subdue men to God — THEN GOD RULES IN THEM. That is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 19**  
**HOW THE KINGDOM COMES** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART NINETEEN**

**THE KINGDOM OF LOVE  
DO VIOLENCE TO NO MAN**

God rules with a great, infinite and eternal love. He gives all His ability to His sons in love. Love is the foundation of His Kingdom throughout the universe. Love is the very essence and atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven. His laws, proceeding from His heart, win the love of all His subjects. The scars on His brow, in His hands, on His feet, and on His back are the insignia of love and show that when He occupies the throne, love sits on the throne and presides. He came to found an empire of which Rome, with her pride and tyranny, could never be the symbol. He came to win an allegiance that no legions in shining armor could ever compel. That empire is the empire of love and that allegiance the response that men can make to that which they know to be love and which, because it is love, commands their bodies by winning their hearts. So down this costly way of unreserved love Jesus came, His birth-chamber a stable, His cradle a manger, and His lot in life cast among the poor. He trod the pathway of misunderstanding, rejection and malignment, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore," the apostle says, "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

**THE KINGDOM OF LOVE**

The King of Love girds His people with gladness. He sows the whole earth with gladness and joy. The news, which is sent from His courts lifts the heads of all men. At the mention of His name our hearts leap for joy, and the coming of His presence among us fills us with exceeding wonder. The air is filled with music. He makes the morning break over the everlasting hills with rejoicing, and causes the evening to glow with the fire of His glory. He is the King of Love within our hearts!

Our poor, lisping, faltering tongues cannot proclaim the Gospel as we would like; but we have God's word that is true for the present time, and for all the times of all the ages: "God IS LOVE!" IS -unchangeably! IS-eternally! God is love in heaven, in earth, in hell! Wherever He is He can be no less than He is. "If I make my bed in hell, Thou art there," proclaims the Psalmist. God IS LOVE-everywhere! And the great practical consequence is for you and me to respond to that God and to that love, to become filled with that love, one with that love, the embodiment and manifestation of that love to all men in all realms. That is the supreme purpose of sonship. "Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I Jn. 4:7). And those who are born of God are the sons of God-THE SONS OF LOVE!

The best and most wonderful word in the universe is Love. For God is Love. And the best and most wonderful word in the inner chamber of our heart must be-Love. For the God who meets us there is Love. What is Love? The deep desire to give itself for the beloved. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev. 1:5-6). "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (I Jn. 3:1). "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (Jn. 3:16). Love finds its joy in imparting all that it has, to make the loved one happy and fulfilled. And the heavenly Father, who offers to meet us in the inner chamber-let there be no doubt about this in our minds-has no other object than to flood our hearts, and the hearts of all men, with His love.

But the spirit of love is not in you till it is the spirit of your life, till you live freely, willingly, universally according to it. It knows no difference of time, place, or person; but whether it gives or forgives, bears or forbears, it is

equally doing its own delightful work. The spirit of love does not want to be rewarded or honored; its only desire is to become the blessing and happiness of everything that needs it. The wrath of an enemy, the treachery of a friend, only gives the spirit of love an opportunity to be more triumphant. The rebellion of Adam but opened up avenues for mankind to experience and know the incredible depths of the love of God! God IS LOVE. And His SONS are of His own nature. The Sons of Love-what a blessed thought! And what a call-what purpose and responsibility! Little wonder, then, that the whole vast creation, sold under slavery and bondage to sin, sorrow, pain and death, groans in travail for the manifestation of the SONS OF LOVE!

Those who put on the mind of Christ see all men with the eyes of love, which are the eyes of God. How we see men and think and act towards them is a measure of the Kingdom in our lives. Perhaps you have heard the story of a stranger who settled in a town and asked his neighbor, "What are the people around here like?" The neighbor, a Quaker, replied quietly with a question, "What were the people like where thee came from?" The newcomer answered, "I have come from any town. The people there were very mean, dishonest, and unfriendly." The Quaker answered, "I'm afraid thee will find them all here." A third person who had overheard the conversation, joined in by remarking, "This surprises me, because I have come from the same town and I found the people there to be very kind, honest, and friendly." And the old Quaker, turning to him, said, "Thee will find them all here, too."

Kingdom love flows from us like the powerful waters of Niagara. It is a giving of ourselves without reservation or limitation. Kingdom love does not allow us to withhold part of ourselves-it requires us to give away ourselves completely Kingdom love does not stop to consider the worthiness of the one about to receive it. "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? But I say unto you, Love your enemies. bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: that ye may be the SONS OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mat. 5:44-46). Kingdom love is a "living sacrifice" that remains always upon the altar. This love is the expression of our total energies toward another without reservation, qualification, or hesitation. It is going the second mile-and the third, fourth, fifth, one hundredth and one thousandth if necessary.

Larry Hodges, in one of his SHOFAR LETTERS, has wisely asked, "Shall there be a people who will rule and reign with Christ who are not under the absolute dominion of Love? Shall there be a people who shall open and no man shut, and shut and no man open, who are not in perfect accord with Love? Shall there be a people claiming to be Love's true representatives who have not this Love in all its perfections? Shall the rod of iron be given into the hand of any other than Love's own children, the children of the resurrection? What people shall do and speak only what they see and hear their Father doing and speaking but that people that is under the absolute dominion of Love's rule? We may speak well and write much on 'Sonship,' 'Kingdom,' and whatever else we may wish to call this kingdom, but unless we love Love, carefully guarding its beginning flame, we are become as tinkling brass or a sounding cymbal."

The omnipotent power of God is not best demonstrated in violence, throwing thunderbolts and spreading devastation, but in self-sacrificing love and goodness. It is love (not tyranny) that never faileth, and with God (love) all things are possible. God is almighty, omnipotent. That is fundamental. But it is vital that all God's elect realize that His power is not something separate from His wisdom and His love. Jesus has made it abundantly clear that the power of God is not that of force, violence, or compulsion, but the power of love which "never faileth." "I, if I be lifted up (on the cross) from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Love is all-powerful and irresistible-divine power is simply love in action. The failure to distinguish between the omnipotence of force and violence and the omnipotence of love leads to the false ideas about God and His Kingdom that are so prevalent in the church systems today. It is the infallible answer to those who impudently ask, "If God is omnipotent, why does He not stop war, sin, suffering, and all forms of evil?" The omnipotence of love is something far grander and more noble than the omnipotence of force could ever be, though it is slower in operation. But the end of love's omnipotence is sure and abiding. Love never faileth! God so loved the world, and when love's power has been played out through the progression of the ages, love will win, will conquer all. Then all men will love God, not fear Him. What a plan! What incomprehensible wisdom!

Almost a hundred years ago Joseph Fort Newton, preaching in London, said, "Not until we see God as the Father of all souls-not simply 'like a Father,' as a Psalmist said, as if it were only a symbol, an analogy, an allegory, but the actual Father of men, as revealed in the life of Jesus-do we behold the highest truth. There is made known what love really is in its utmost sweetness of sacrifice and redemption. Love is social; it cannot live alone. Heaven was never a Hermitage. In that long-ago beginning God did not say, 'Let me make,' but 'Let us make.' Humanity could not worship and adore an Infinite Egoist. Such is the deep and beautiful truth of which the Godhead is the symbol, the truth of the eternal society. Older than our religion, older than the human home and the human family, it is a vision of God through the home as a family in Himself-Elohim. Love is creation. It cannot be inactive. It must devise order, goodness, beauty, joy. God does not love the world because He made it; He made it because He is love. Here lies the secret of the strange and haunting beauty of the world, and the eternal motive behind it. Love is also providence. It cannot be content with the joy of creation, but must follow and watch over what it has made with absorbing solicitude and care. Men of old seemed to think that God made the world, set it going, and sat on the edge of it watching it. But love is never idle, much less aloof, and it must stoop to share the lot of those whom it serves.

"Alas! many in our day, to whom it is not difficult to believe in God, the Creator, find it hard to believe in His loving care. Storms desolate the earth. Pestilence and famine fill myriad graves. Youth is blighted in its bud. Forever the cup of death is pressed to the lips of love. War, pillage, cruelty, and brutality might make human life a hell. There are heartless tyrannies that endure. How can one talk of the loving care of God in face of these facts? Why did not God make a thornless world and fill it with noble men, true women, and a race just, gentle, and generous? Because He could not do it. Character cannot be created; it must be achieved. It is not a gift, but an attainment-something wrought out amid trials and tears, as Polasek has shown us in his figure of a man finding himself and freeing himself by laboriously chipping away the stone in which he is imprisoned.

"Suppose a man were to have a family created for him in an instant-a wife, a boy, a girl sitting about a table in a lovely home which he never saw before. Would it be his family? Would these children be the offspring of the love and sacrifice and pain of his wife and himself No. He might learn to know and love them deeply, but they would not be his family because not created by his love, not nourished from his heart, and not sanctified by his thought, consideration and purpose. His wife, not having experienced the babe in the womb or the pain of childbirth, would be unable to value the children of the family as highly as she might. Omnipotence does not mean arbitrariness. What love cannot do God cannot do.

"There are methods love cannot use, acts it cannot perform, weapons it cannot employ. Divine love looks like weakness until we know what it really is, how it works, and the path it follows. The love of God is more than a mere indulgent good nature, more than an indiscriminate, mushy sentiment. It is wise, and therefore takes the long look; relentless, and therefore seemingly austere; ruling, not arbitrarily, not impatiently, but with inflexible purpose and educative discipline-permitting the prodigal to wander if he will, knowing, as he does not know, that riotous living leads to husks, and these to the coming to himself, and that to the painful and penitent return to Father's house and to the discovery of a love that would not let him be happy in exile! Oh, the wisdom of love!

"Of love is born the hope of immortality, and the love of God is its only sure basis and token of promise. What sunshine there is in that truth! The more deeply we love wife and child and friend, the more longingly we wish for immortality. Only men who know not love, who are lonely, disappointed, broken-hearted, devastated, bitter and hopeless desire the solitude and silence of death over life. Only miserable men cherish no hope of immortality! Again I say, of love is born the hope of immortality. The more deeply we love the more surely we may know that there is One who loves our loved ones and ourselves more than we do. Men and women, lay to heart the awful and wonderful truth that God loves each of us as if there were no other in the world, and all of us as though we were one child at His knee. And it is not only His obedient children that He so loves, but the vilest sinner and the most rebellious blasphemer. 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. 5:8). Yea, He loves me, even me, distinctly, separately, passionately, unconditionally, eternally-how can it be! And He loves you, each of you, with a love peculiar, particular, unutterably precious-loves you unto the uttermost, and cannot be happy without your love in return! Let us not ask ourselves whether we love God or not. Let us trust His love of us, trust it in our sorrows, our needs, our failures, our weakness, our sins, knowing that love never faileth-for God is love.

"What is this Reality which men call Christ? Perhaps we can best make it clear by asking our hearts one question: What is it that we worship? Is it mere Power? No! Power may awe us, crush us, command us, but never yet has it won the worship of the heart. Is it Knowledge? No! An infinite Intellect may invite admiration, but we do not worship Wisdom. Is it Vastness? Not so! Consider for a moment-and you will see how a cold, bare infinitude, so far from winning the love of man, strikes him dumb with terror. What, then, do we worship? Reverently let us say that, though God speak with the tongues of lightning, though He have all power so that He could remove mountains or hurl suns into space, yea, though He have all knowledge and understand all mysteries, and have not Love, we cannot worship Him. Only love can win love, and if God be not Infinite Love we cannot love Him, albeit we may cower before Him, trembling and afraid.

"Think it all through, up one side and down the other, and you will find that our ideal, our dream, our hope, that to which we pray, is no other than the Spirit that lived in Jesus, shone in His face, wrought in His works, spoke in His words, and hung upon a cross. The Spirit of Jesus in its strength, its gentleness, its august and wonderful humility, its incredible patience, its fathomless pity, its relentless love, its all-forgiving mercy, its victorious valor, its purity, its gladness-that is what is meant by God. Beyond that love it is not possible for any man to imagine anything more divine. The Spirit of Jesus is the ultimate Divine Reality so far as we can know it. Where the Spirit of Love is, there God is. Because that Love lived in Jesus in its fullness, richness, its unclouded beauty, He is the supreme revelation of what God is" -end quote. And, may I add to these beautiful words this thought-all the sons of God, who are the sons of Love, are the extension, completion and fullness of that supreme revelation of God unto creation. Hallelu-yah!

I once read the moving account of a woman seen constantly on the streets of Strasbourg in the fourteenth century, carrying a pail of water in one hand and a torch in the other. When asked what she was about, she would reply that with the pail of water she was going to put out the flames of hell and with the torch she would burn up heaven, "so that in the future men could love the dear Lord God for Himself alone and not out of fear of hell or out of craving for reward." A man comes closest to the Kingdom of God when he truly perceives the depth of truth proclaimed by that little lady so long ago! Is it not true that vast multitudes of Christians today serve the Lord either out of fear of hell or hope of heaven. It is the absolute truth. Anyone who dares to proclaim the beautiful truth of the restoration of all men to God and pins people right down to the word of God is immediately accused by the unthinking masses of teaching heresy, and is accused of teaching doctrines which give the sinner nothing to flee from, no reason for accepting salvation. Such thoughtlessness! These poor simple folks are merely admitting in this that they themselves have never yet had a revelation of the abounding love of God. Nor do they know and worship God FOR HIMSELF, apart from all other considerations of either torment or bliss. Should the preachers one day call a news conference and announce to the world, "Ladies and gentlemen, we have just discovered that there is no hell," I do not doubt for one moment that a great number of so-called believers would immediately tell God to "go to hell" and commence to live like the devil in the pleasures of sin. Those who use hell as the incentive to bring men to God are but admitting their shame in upholding a false gospel, which would attempt to scare men into the Kingdom of God. It never has worked. It never will. Oh, it does indeed scare men into the "church," but it does not bring men to truly know God. Christ leads and draws through love. Sometimes love disciplines and breaks, but it does not play games by "scaring" people into God! Fear is not the instrument of God to bring men unto Himself.

Is there a hell? Yes. But hell is not what salvation is about. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (**Rom. 6:23**). It is not written that "the wages of sin is hell." If the wages of sin is eternal torment in hell, then we must re-write the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We must make the Bible say that. if shot is what God meant. We must go back to the very beginning and make the Bible say, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely SUFFER ETERNAL TORMENT IN HELL" (**Gen. 2:16-17**). We must correct the word of God so that it says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall be eternally tormented in hell" (**Eze. 18:4**). **John 3:16** must be made to correctly read, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, hat whosoever believeth in Him should not be eternally tormented in hell, but spend eternity in heaven." If the wages of sin is the torments of the damned in hell, then **Romans 5:12** must be made to say, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and torment in hell by sin; and so the torments of hell passed upon all men, for that all have

sinned..." You will have to tear the Bible all to pieces and re-write literally hundreds and thousands of passages if you say that the wages of sin is eternal torment in hell!

"The wages of sin is death." It is not written that the wages shall be death, but the passage we have before us, penned by divine inspiration, states plainly that "the wages of sin IS death." "She that liveth in pleasure," the scriptures again says, "is dead while she liveth." "Dead in trespasses and in sins" is the way the apostle Paul expressed it. Death takes in this whole dreadful realm of sin, weakness, fear, sorrow, pain, heartache, rebellion, strife, war, sickness, torment, sadness, and trouble in which men walk without the peace and joy and transforming power of God in their lives. It is a sad and most horrible fact that there are millions and thousands of millions of people going about this earth who are the walking, dead. Dead to God! Dead to virtue! Dead to truth! Dead to reality! Dead to righteousness! Dead to peace! Dead to joy! Dead to promise! Dead to hope! DEAD!

Death is the wages of sin. But the gift of God is the life of the ages. Every man is on one side or the other; either he is now reaping his wages, or renouncing sin to receive God's gift. The gift is not heaven. The gift of God is not streets of gold, gates of pearl, or walls of jasper. The gift of God is not a cabin in the corner, or a mansion over the hill top. You will have to re-write your Bible again if you say that heaven is the reward of the righteous. Is there a heaven? Yes. But heaven is not the issue in salvation. The issue is life. It was this very truth that Jesus was making clear to us when He said, "He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." The issue in Eden was a matter of life and death; the issue in salvation and redemption is likewise a matter of life and death. Heaven and hell are not the issue.

Instead of preaching a false gospel to sinners, instead of holding up before them fancied horrors which they may escape, or a celestial Disney World which they may obtain, the true gospel tells them of LIFE MORE ABUNDANT, of the unsearchable riches of Christ, of the glory of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Who wants to remain a faltering mortal, when one may be quickened and made alive in God to become the very same manner of being as the One who created the worlds? Oh, that all men might learn God's one and only everlasting Gospel, the Gospel of Life and Light and Love-and then preach it! And BE it! Love alone can draw all men to Calvary's crimson fountain. Only a Calvary love can transform a world gone mad, and revive a sleeping church obsessed with her deliriums into a thing of beauty and praise and usefulness. And anyone who is lifting up to a lost and dying world anything or any one other than Jesus and His wonderful Love is simply living a wasted life and fulfilling a spurious ministry. The Love of God must be lifted up IN US. The sons of God are the sons of love, for GOD IS LOVE!

What consolation and understanding is inspired by the blessed knowledge that in spite of all the bluster and might exhibited by the kingdom of darkness, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! God is the King, and His power He rules over all. But, dear one, if you will examine the basis of that Kingship, the Kingship of the Lord from the beginning of the world, you will find that it rests on God's Creatorship. He is Lord of the world and men and rules and overrules in all their doings because He is their Creator with divine plan and purpose for their destiny. But God wants to be King in and by Jesus Christ-that is to say, He wants to be King by virtue not of His power, but of His love. He wants men to reverence and obey Him not because they are afraid of Him, not because they are out-witted and out-manuevered by Him, not because they cannot help themselves, and even because He promises them a Glory World above, but because they love Him. It is reconciliation, fellowship, union, participation, oneness with man that the heart of God is after.

Let us meditate deeply upon these words: "Our Father...Thy Kingdom come." Whose Kingdom is it? Ah, it is "our Father's" Kingdom. Not the Kingdom of the Lord God of the Old Testament, not the Kingdom of Yahweh, but the Kingdom of our Father. Of our Father it is written, "God is love." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." In other words, God so loved the world that HE BECAME A FATHER! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed up us, that we should be called the sons of God." "Who hath delivered us from the rule of darkness, and hath transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son o/His love." Oh, what words are these! The Father's Kingdom is a Kingdom of Love! It is the Kingdom of a Paternal Love! It is a Kingdom of Beloved Sons! It is a Ruling Celestial Family! Yahweh's Kingdom was a Kingdom of power. Yahweh was a God of war. But God wants to be King not because He is Creator, not because He is Sovereign and can ruthlessly control everybody and every thing. He wants to be King because He is FATHER. He desires

men to be obedient to Him, not because He has omnipotent power and can do anything He wants and have His way with men, but under the sweet constraint of love. God has been King by His position as Creator since the world began; God was King in Israel by the omnipotence of His hand; but now He will become King by the position of Father. It is for this Kingdom that sons are instructed to pray-for the event in which all men everywhere shall realize what God's Fatherhood means, for the circumstances in which men's hearts shall be so touched by God's love to them in Jesus Christ, that out of the response of their own hearts they shall return from the far country to Father's house and out of a pure and genuine affection will render Him a willing and glad obedience.

The message which beams from the cross of Christ like the blazing rays of the noon-day sun is one of SACRIFICIAL LOVE-REDEEMING LOVE. The truth of love in Jesus Christ was that He loved without retaliation for evil, a love that suffered long, even to the agonies of the cross, and then was kind enough to pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And I declare to you that regardless of what other sins those wicked men may come into judgment for, they will never stand in the judgment condemned for killing the Son of God, for HE AND HIS FATHER FORGAVE THEM! This truth of the love of God in Jesus Christ must also be true in us, the younger sons of God. Jesus did not love people because He loved Himself, as it was under the law. It was the Father's unconditional and all-surpassing love flowing through Him, surging as a mighty river out to humanity, overflowing redemptively, so that He could say, "Let your love for others not be based on love for yourself, but on what is true in Me: If the Father could love Judas through Me, and love Peter through Me, and the people that crucified Me. then let the Father's love so find expression through you."

In years past we have sung a chorus that goes like this: "His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundaries known unto man; for out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again." This is a lovely chorus and I love to sing it and I say it is true. In Jesus Christ, there is NO LIMIT to His love, NO MEASURE TO HIS GRACE, and NO BOUNDARIES to His power, for He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and His mercy endureth throughout all generations and ages. If I say that there is one sin, one condition, one creature, one place, one age or group of ages unto which His love and His grace shall not reach then I LIE and know not the truth. Jesus loved His friends, He loved His enemies, the man who betrayed Him, the man who denied Him, the mob that cried, "Crucify Him!" and the men who nailed Him to the cross. There just was no limit to His love! You could never find a place where you could say, "So far would He love, but no farther." Is that love true in us? Or do we say, "Well, I will only stand so much, I will only forgive so long, I will only trust so far, and that is the end of it." It is God's purpose that His love should find no limit in us, His grace no measure in us, and His power no boundary in us. This is the first mark of sonship.

God is preparing a people who, when they stand up and say, "God is love," are not talking about God's love in heaven, or God's love in Jesus; no, they will be expressing the love of God in their own person. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." Everyone likes a verse like that. But how many would like a verse like this: "God still loves the world so much that He would like to give His sons, right now." We do not like that. We like to be sons if God will keep us, if He will bless us, if He will take us to His bosom and not let us go. But what does God do with His sons? Why, He GIVES THEM! He thrusts them out into all the sorrows, tragedies, troubles, sicknesses, pains, strife, hatred, rebellion and death of this world. Jesus said, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." What did Jesus also say? "This is my flesh, my B-O-D-Y, which I GIVE for the life of the world." If we are His body, then will He not give us for the life of the world? "Oh," someone says, "I do not like the kind of religion where I do not get something, sacrifice is asking too much." Well, my brother, my sister, that is how it starts, by receiving, but it must not end there. We must come to the place where God can give us, where we can lie down and become a channel, a river -- the River of Life poured out into humanity!

This truth might well be illustrated by the children's story of the sun and the wind. In the little make-believe story, the sun and the wind discussed which of them was the strongest. The wind said that he could prove that he was the strongest by blowing the coat off of a man who walked on the road below. So the sun slipped behind a cloud and Mr. Wind started blowing until the man thought a tornado had come up. But the harder the wind blew, the tighter hold the man took on his coat. Finally the wind saw that he could not blow the man's coat off, so he gave up in defeat. Then it was the sun's turn to try. The sun came out from behind the clouds and

smiled kindly on the old man. Presently the warm loving rays of the sun caused the man to pull off his coat. The sun had proved that the power of love and kindness is stronger than fury and force!

Love never fails. Sons don't say, "I've had enough!" Perhaps you've said it too. Maybe you're a parent and you've told your kids that you've "had enough." Perhaps you're a teacher, and today was one of those days when you sent a student out of the classroom because you'd "had enough." Or perhaps your spouse has betrayed you once too often; you've "had enough" and this can't go on. Or perhaps one of your workers showed up late once too often, and you had to let him go. Or perhaps your neighbor had another wild party late into the night, playing his loud music, disturbing your sleep, so you called the police or "gave him a piece of your mind." You'd "had enough" and couldn't take it anymore. Love, however, divine love, can never say, "I've had enough!" If God had had enough, the United States of America wouldn't be here today, and neither would you or I.

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us" (1 Jn. 4:12). Where is God? The question is as old as humanity. And people's answers range all the way from "God is everywhere and in everything" to "God is nowhere and in nothing,." In fact, the question can be shortened and made even more significant: Is God? The beloved apostle John gives us an "object lesson" to demonstrate the reality and the presence and power of God, saying, "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us." John is saying, "Do you want to know where God is? Do you want to see God? Do you want the whole wide world to see God so that they can know that He exists? Then, with divine love, love each other and all men and the whole world will see and discover God in it." If we love with that wonderful, God-initiated, self-giving unconditional love, people will say, "So that's where God is! So that's how we know that God is!" It's an object lesson that makes God impossible to miss! Creation will respond as the Roman soldier at the foot of the cross responded to the love of Jesus, "Truly these are the sons of God!"

Divine love does not only love the lovely, divine love does not only love the brethren, but every man. Divine love suffers long not only with our loved ones, our wife or sweetheart, our parents and our children' but also with our offensive neighbors, our difficult associates, the stupid, hateful, slothful, disobedient, wayward, rebellious, unlovely, and our persecutors. Love suffers long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy; is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. Love is not conceited, arrogant, or inflated with pride; it is not rude, and does not act unbecomingly. Love does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or complaining or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it-pays no attention to a suffered wrong. It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are faceless under all circumstances and it sweetly endures everything. Love never fails-never fades out, becomes obsolete, never is destroyed by anything, and never comes to an end. THIS IS THE POWER AND THE GLORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

## DO VIOLENCE TO NO MAN

"And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man..." (Lk. 3:14). Love will affect every attitude and action toward men on both the personal and corporate level. I have no hesitation in telling you that I have been a "conscientious objector" to war all my life because from a small child I could never believe that the spirit of warfare with its hatred, killing, and violence is compatible with the love of God or the spirit of sonship.

Oh, yes, we have our excuses and a thousand reasons are given to go forth and kill and maim and destroy by warfare. "The government requires me to do it," we say. That's reminiscent of that other time-honored cop-out, "The devil made me do it!" "I must defend my country and our liberties," we explain, "we have an obligation to our families, our communities, and our nation to defend ourselves." So we wield the sword, fire machine guns, and bomb villages and cities into oblivion, blasting thousands, yea, millions of innocent men, women and children out of this world, and call on God to bless! What strange beings we Christians are who profess to follow in the footsteps of Him who said, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Lk. 9:56). I tell you today that no son of God is sent into this world to destroy men's lives, but every son

of God is sent into the world to save them. No son of (god, no brother of Jesus, is sent into this world to destroy even one life, but to become a saviour for all men.

War is not a matter of one soldier against one soldier. It is now a war of guns and bombs and germs and chemicals and land-mines against soldiers and mothers and children and babes. Any way to intimidate the foe! Scare and blast loved ones out of the fox holes into hell or heaven-that is the way to win. We little realize the awful depths into which the spirit of warfare carries us. As one wrote of a certain war: "I had to aim carefully at the straw roof and only succeeded at the third shot. The wretches who were inside, seeing their roof burning, jumped out and ran off like mad...surrounded by a circle of fire about five thousand people came to a sticky end. It was like hell, the smoke rose to incredible heights, and the flames reddened the setting sun."

War is still ruling our world and it is not spiritual; it is carnal, political, and devilish. As ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven we pledge allegiance to a higher Kingdom than any of the kingdoms of this world. We cannot fight carnal warfare because we are ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador is a representative of another country or person and he is not subject to the political laws of the country where he abides. The King whom we represent has commissioned us to "love our enemies," to "bless and curse not," and "see that none render evil for evil to any man." We are to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering." "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." How directly opposed are these to the rules of war! Under the Old Covenant Yahweh required that His people Israel should go to war and fight and kill, but that covenant has been done away and we are under the New Covenant whereby the law (nature) of God is written upon our hearts, and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God.

Well has Philip Mauro written, "War is an instrument of the god of this world. War stems from greed and political intrigue. Preparing the soldier for war is a godless procedure. Hate is drilled into him. He is taught every trick there is to kill. This must be so for war is a dirty business. War differs from ordinary murders only in that it is on an enormous scale. Every invention and contrivance that men can devise, every deception and stratagem to which they can resort, every cruelty and atrocity which they can perpetuate, are elements of warfare. Hence it is not merely a questionable proceeding-not merely a thing which it is perhaps better to avoid-war is the thing of all things that is farthest removed from the spirit and work of Christ. It is the work of the devil to destroy. War is the great all-inclusive, sum total of everything that is devilish. When General Sherman tersely said, 'War is hell,' he uttered a truth. Heaven is peace. Hell is war. Let us look the ugly fact squarely in the face, that the man who enlists (or is drafted) commits himself in advance to the perpetration of every unnamable atrocity that war is held to justify. He repudiates his individual responsibility to God and man, and pledges himself blindly, by an oath and under penalty of death, to obey the commands of his officers, whatever they may be and to whatever work they may send him. If we then are to go forth and kill our fellowmen, whose lives shall we take? Shall we slay the unsaved, to whom we owe the gospel of Christ? If not those, then are we to slay our fellow saints to whom we owe our love and service? War and the gospel are as far apart as the east is from the west, as far as hell is from heaven..." -end quote.

If fighting and killing on carnal battlefields is right for the sons of God, then the Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek, the priesthood of grace, mercy, love and salvation is wrong; if the gospel of love, even for our enemies, is right, then war is wrong. Jesus showed us clearly that the life of sonship is completely independent of every earthly tradition, custom, and requirement. The life of sonship belongs to the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven which we are to seek first of all. Jesus came to preach the Kingdom. That was His gospel. That was His one and only purpose. There lay His one and only allegiance. All the things that were spoken in the sermon on the mount pertain to the Kingdom which we are entering. Just as the law of Moses given at Sinai was the Constitution of the government and nation of Israel, so the sermon on the mount is the Constitution of the Kingdom of God. All the blessed truths set forth in the Sermon on the Mount are to be fulfilled in us **"that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 5:45)**. These are the principles that govern the lives of God's sons and all who live and walk in the Kingdom, just as surely as the Law of Moses governed the dispensation of the law. The Kingdom is the realm of sonship. It is the realm of the will of God. It is the realm of the nature of God. It is the realm of the mind of Christ.

The principles of the Kingdom of God are set forth with divine clarity in the Sermon on the Mount, where the spirit of sonship is revealed. While living here on earth, our Lord was extremely kind. He picked up little children and blessed them. He healed all who were suffering with pain. While relatives were weeping over dead loved ones, he raised four of them to life again. The Savior of ALL men said to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more." His KINDNESS made an evangelist out of that immoral woman at Jacob's well. Because Jesus really loved the weak, helpless creatures whom He had created, He wept over them, prayed for them and taught them continually. Can you imagine for one moment that Jesus, even if commanded by the government of Israel, would have taken up the sword and slain thousands of Romans to liberate His people from the cruel, pagan yoke of Rome? Think of it! Even when Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, in defense of the Son of God, Jesus stooped and picked up the severed ear and healed it back on the man. He then turned to Peter and reproachfully said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." If you can believe for one moment that Jesus, drafted or not, would have gone out to slay men in defense of His country, then you may also justify the sons of God in this hour fighting and killing in defense of their homeland. The issue is really just that simple. "What would Jesus do?"

Except for those religious Pharisees, Jesus never spoke one cross word to the unconverted masses, Israelite, Roman, or otherwise. He was very tender and kind in all His dealings with men. His approach to them was very gentle, delicate, and considerate. Surely, then, we are safer in His hands than anywhere else! The things He has in store for every one of us are far greater than we could plan for ourselves. He will do us only good, and never evil. Does God expect His other sons to be different than His Firstborn? Jesus has taught us, "But love your enemies, and do good...and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be THE SONS OF THE HIGHEST; for HE IS KIND UNTO THE UNTHANKFUL AND TO THE EVIL, BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER also is merciful." In this instance Jesus plainly says that if we desire to be the SONS OF THE HIGHEST, we must be merciful as He is merciful. THE HIGHEST IS MERCIFUL TO ALL.

The question follows: Why should the Highest be merciful to the evil and the unthankful? The answer is clear—that the evil one and the unthankful one may come to know the mercy and goodness of God! They would never know that mercy in any other way. If Jesus teaches us we are to be kind to those who mis-use us, reproach us, attack us, curse us, and make themselves our enemies, then what kind of a God and Father would He be, whose words Jesus taught us, who would HATE HIS ENEMIES and cast them into merciless eternal hell to burn forever? If such a thing were to be, then God would require us to be better than Himself! Jesus teaches us that we are to be merciful and kind, to bless and do good to all who are enemies. Do we then have a Father whose nature is entirely opposite to ours? Impossible! The sons of God are sent, as was the Son, to reveal the nature of our Father to all. If we see a God that loves only those that love Him, or who defends Himself, and attacks His enemies, banishing them to eternal damnation, torturing endlessly those that curse Him, meting out eternal vengeance upon those that hate Him, and shutting up all mercy from those who persecute Him, then we have a God who establishes His Kingdom in the same spirit, and along the same lines, and by the same methods as the kingdoms of this world. But we are commanded to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to those that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us—THAT WE MAY BE THE SONS OF OUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust...BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT (Mat. 5:38-48).

Sons of God are instructed to love their enemies and not to resist evil (Mat. 5:39). In so doing they proclaim the nature and principles of the Kingdom of God which is the nature of unconditional redemptive love. We are not to fight with our enemies, either personal or national—even if they attack us. God is not preparing His sons to be warriors carrying carnal weapons to establish His Kingdom on earth. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, for they are spiritual weapons of faith and power and love. There is abundant historical evidence that the early Christians considered themselves citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, ambassadors of the spirit of Jesus, and as such refused to be conscripted into the military service of the Roman government. They objected to war as carnal, political, and immoral.

God is raising up in the earth a Kingdom of Priests—as SAVIOURS shall they come up on Mount Zion! It is impossible to love all men while hating some men. And in the "war machine" of the nations it is impossible to

go into battle with the "right frame of mind" unless your superiors have instilled in you a sense of outrage, anger, hostility, and hatred toward the enemy. It is not possible to be in preparation to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption while going out in the world's war machine to savagely blow men to bits for whom Christ died. The irony of war is that there are in most cases soldiers who are Christians on both sides. These men, saved, perhaps baptized in the Holy Spirit, members of the body of Christ, who are to love and care for one another, and esteem one another, as Christ does us; and who supposedly are endowed with a divine and heavenly love for all men, march out on the battlefield of carnal warfare at the command of their worldly governments and unregenerated politicians-and BLOW ONE ANOTHER'S BRAINS OUT! Brother shoots brother, and brother bombs brother-each sometimes in the name of Christ! Ponder the fact. In international wars over the past 2,000 years, professing Christians have killed professing Christians by the/- millions! I do not hesitate to tell you that it is one of the most ridiculous contradictions in the world.

In that blessed day when the mountain of the house of the Lord is established in the tops of the mountains it shall come to pass that "many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:1-4). The spirit of that blessed day must first be perfected in those who are destined to rule with the Lamb from mount Zion; the swords and spears in our own hearts must be turned into acts of mercy and blessing to all men of all nations now.

When men come to mount Zion they turn their weapons of destruction into instruments of blessing for their neighbors. The characteristic of the holy mountain is the Lamb-sacrificial, redeeming love. The only sword carried by the Lamb is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Sons who stand with the Lamb on mount Zion have surrendered their right to be the aggressor, the destroyer with the sword. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These have the mind of the Lamb, the spirit of the Lamb, the nature of the Lamb. They are rendered defenseless before their enemies, armed only with the power of redemptive love. They can no longer fight any man or any nation with words or attitudes or actions of murderous rage, let alone with weapons that maim, kill and destroy. They come under the rule of the spirit of the defenseless Lamb who is the Savior of the world. The sons of God belong to a spiritual Constitution. Their foes are spiritual, for they wrestle not against flesh and blood. Their armor is the armor of God and their sword is the sword of the Spirit.

I am reminded of the story of a missionary who was trying to explain Christian living to the chief of a primitive and warlike tribe. The chief was very old, and he listened patiently. "I do not understand," the old man said at last. "You tell me that I must not take my neighbor's wife or his ivory or his oxen." "That's right," said the missionary. "And I must not dance the war dance and then ambush my enemy on the trail and kill him." "Absolutely right," replied the missionary. "But I cannot do any of these things anymore," the old chief said regretfully. "I am too old. To be old and to be Christian-they are the same thing!" We may be amused at the old chief's logic, but the solution is plain. He did not do those things because he could not- we do not do them because we will not!

It is time to evaluate our Kingdom walk. The ascended Christ stands at the doorway and bids us set our eyes toward the world above and listen for His voice. We came from that higher world, we are sent as ambassadors of that higher world; let us seek first the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us think, listen and watch for those things of the higher world. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Do not fill your minds with the things of this dark and dying age. Conspiracies, government actions, politics, foreign policy, taxation, terrorism, all are topics of great interest and fleshly appeal, but they are all related to the world of darkness and not that of the higher world of the Kingdom. They are all earthly things that Barabbas would involve himself and others in.

I first learned this beautiful truth from a good and holy man, my natural father. It was his earnest conviction that Jesus taught that a child of God and citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven is required by the Holy Spirit to walk out the principles of the Kingdom in the totality of life. He believed in what he termed "non-resistance" and saw the

basis for this principle in the sermon of the mount and in the words of Paul: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath...therefore if shine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12: 17-21).

Under the law we have a right to harm someone who has harmed us. It is fair and just to retaliate when someone attacks us. The walking out of these Old Covenant principles range from sibling pinches to international war. If someone takes advantage of me, I have the right to take advantage of them. If someone files a lawsuit against me, I have the right to file a counter suit. If someone swindles me in an agreement, I have the right to swindle him back. In every case it is an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. If a nation launches missiles against us, we have a right to send missiles back. "You have heard that all of this has been said," Jesus declared, "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU!" Ah, now we are on Kingdom territory! And what is the higher law of the Kingdom that Jesus brought? "Resist not evil...don't retaliate...don't sue anyone...if they take your car let them have your truck also...if they force you into a bad situation, fulfill what they require and more!"

My father lived by these principles. On more than one occasion he was attacked by men who had sworn to kill him because of the gospel. They came at him with bricks and two-by-fours and brute physical strength, and my father was a small man. He fearlessly stood his ground and spoke only the words, "I love you!" Their arms stopped in mid air and they dropped their weapons. On one occasion the scene was less dramatic, but the Holy Ghost was on my mother. As she spoke in tongues and turned the car around, my father was able to jump in and make his escape. He would never resist evil, never retaliate, never manifest any fear, antagonism, anger or animosity. And he was never injured! God was powerfully with him at all times.

In the 1940's my father joined himself to one of the Pentecostal denominations. When he was being examined for ordination to the ministry in this denomination he told the brethren, "There is something I must let you know. I am a conscientious objector. I do not believe a Christian has any right in the spirit of Jesus to resist any evil or go to war to fight against any enemy of our country." He explained in detail his views on this matter. The brethren said to him, "But, brother Eby, what if a thief or rapist entered your house at night with the intent to rob you, or to molest your wife and children, or ven to kill you-what would you-what would you do?" He answered, "I would call on God and God would congeal him in the doorway and he would be unable to do us any harm. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, they are mighty through God." "But," the brethren pressed, "what if everyone believed as you do? What if no one would join the armed forces to defend our country? What if our enemies attacked us-what would we do?" My father responded, "My dear brethren, if everyone in this country believed as I do, there would be so much of the power of God in this nation that our enemies would not be able to attack us!" "Well, brother Eby," the brethren said, "we don't agree, but we do admire your faith." They ordained him. My father was a small man, only five feet, one and a half inches tall, but he was a man of courage, fearlessness, conviction, and a man of faith and power with God. He lived, breathed, and walked out what he perceived as true in God. And it worked! God was with him. He was an example of the power of the grace and love of God to overcome all evil with good. That, precious friend of mine, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

Lorain and I have two sons and one daughter. We are blessed that all of them are walking with the Lord and with us in this Kingdom word. I tell you today that we are willing to see any or all of them offered up for our Lord Jesus Christ. We are willing to see them suffer privation, ill health, persecution, pain, or even death for the cause of Christ and His Kingdom, should the Father lead them in such paths. Lorain and I have made great sacrifices (though we did not consider them as such!) through the years in order to fulfill the call of God in our lives. And we are now willing with joy to have our children suffer that and even greater things in the walk of this Kingdom. We would not hinder one of them from following the Lord to any of the far-flung mission fields of the world-even to give their lives there for the gospel. We would be willing to see them die for Jesus-but we are NOT willing to see them die on any battlefield of any nation of this world. We are not willing to see them carrying guns or driving tanks or flying bombers to take the lives of men for whom Christ died. We are not willing to see them blowing to bits men to whom we have been called to bring the Kingdom of Life and Light and Love. I am willing to see my sons and my daughter pay whatever price necessary to deliver creation from the bondage of sin, sorrow and death-but I am not willing to see them, at the whims of carnal politicians, blow

men away into hell and judgment. The sons of God must be preeminently the SONS OF LOVE. You cannot love and maim and kill at the same time. The very thought is an absurdity, a horrible blasphemy. "For God so loved the world..." And so will all who are called to sonship! That is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 20 ENTERING THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART TWENTY

In an earlier article of this series I wrote concerning the difference between seeing and entering the Kingdom of God. Permit me to rehearse those thoughts for a moment before proceeding further into the supernal glories that lie before us upon our entrance into the full inheritance that belongs to each and every son of God in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Kingdom of God means different things to different people, according to their understanding. This is only natural, because of the many figures under which the idea was presented by Jesus, and also because people are at different stages in their progress along the way to the Kingdom, which means that they have attained different degrees of growth as children of God in the family of God. What a familiar topic the new birth is! How many thousands of sermons have been preached about it! But how many have perceived the true purpose of the new birth? Jesus said that one must be born again in order to "see" or "enter" the Kingdom of God. The reality He presented was the Kingdom! The purpose of the new birth is not to get us into the church or to some far-off heaven somewhere. The purpose of the new birth is to enable us to enter the Kingdom. I fear very few who fill the pews of the churches today have this conception of the new birth—that thereby God has infused into us His very own divine life so that we may be able to partake of His Kingdom.

Here we find Jesus laying down the preliminary requirement for an understanding of the Kingdom, as well as entrance into the Kingdom. When men come into the world, they are born outside of the Kingdom of God, and they cannot see into it. They may go round and round it, and examine it from the outside, and pass an opinion on it. But they are no judges. They are not seeing what they are speaking about. For that which is born of spirit is spirit, and that which is born of flesh is flesh; and flesh cannot see into the realm of spirit. Fleshly men can only give an uninformed and unenlightened criticism about something spiritual that they can neither see nor understand. Therefore the critical value of a natural man's opinion on spiritual matters is nothing. His opinion is simply ludicrous—he is talking about a thing that he has never had experience with. If I am to partake and participate in the Kingdom of God, then I need to possess a life other than the life I have by nature. I must be born again into a higher realm. I must receive the life of God, the life of the Kingdom, for not unless I possess His life can I begin to enter into and explore and experience the realities and powers of His Kingdom.

**"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3).** Everyone with spiritual understanding knows that the words "see" and "know" are identical in their spiritual meaning. When I tell a friend something he did not see before, and I am trying to get him to see it, all at once there passes over his face the illumination that indicates understanding. He says, "Preston, I see it." What does he mean? He does not mean that he sees anything with the eye of flesh. He means that he "understands" or "knows" it. How many times a day do you say, "I see!" So Jesus is telling us that apart from the new birth a man cannot understand, comprehend, or know the Kingdom of God. It is better to know the Kingdom of God by the spirit than to see with physical eyes any "age" or "external government" that might be called the Kingdom of God. Here is the mighty power of the New Creation: it sees what others cannot see! It sees, amid the thousand things natural men see and are guided by, something infinitely greater and more real—it SEES GOD. No wonder it leads a man to think and act differently from other men. On everything it looks at, the bright light of eternity is shining. The depths it perceives are infinite. The heights it beholds are immeasurable. The truth it understands is without flaw or error and is eternal

Seek to walk in the light of HIS countenance. Seeing the INVISIBLE will make it easy to forsake this world and do the will of God! The heavens are shut up from the natural man. He cannot see eternal things. He hears only the lower sounds of earth. But you see beyond all this into the very heart of God, into the depths of His great plans and purposes, and the "whys" and "wherefores" of all things since the creation of the world and unto the consummation of all ages. You see the Kingdom of God! Far away in the depths of my spirit the perfumed

breezes of the Kingdom of Heaven sweep over my being until my very soul weeps for joy and laughs for gladness. I write to you today of a realm of reality that is wonderfully real, solid, awesome. Jesus Christ intends for us to actually enter into the Kingdom of God here and now, and to begin exploring it in its height and depth and length and breadth. "Get thee out of thy country...unto a land that I will show thee," the Lord commanded Abraham. Just as on any earthly adventure, we must be willing to be surprised. And we will be, for "eye bath not seen, and ear bath not heard," what God has prepared for us.

To "enter into" the Kingdom is, as we should readily understand, more than to "see" it. Moses stood on the heights of mount Nebo and saw the Promised Land, but he never got into it. God kept him on the other side of Jordan, although he was the leader of God's people, because of his disobedience. In this realm of entering the Kingdom we discover the Kingdom realm as a gift. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk. 12:32). God is a giving God. Because He is love, He would have to be a giving God. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (Jn. 3:16). "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him? ' (Mat. 7:11). "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). To His footstep followers today the Lord says, "Fear not, little flock, who already has the gift of eternal life; fear not, little flock, who already has bountiful gifts from the hand of the Father; fear not, little flock, who already has possession of the gift of the Spirit of God. It is now the Father's good pleasure to give you more yet than you have. It is the Father's good pleasure to GIVE YOU THE KINGDOM!"

The Kingdom of God is not being offered here to the world. It is not being promised to the natural man. It is not being offered to the religious people in the church systems. Here it is being promised to the "little flock" who are already earnest and steadfast followers after all that God has. "My sheep know my voice," Jesus said, "and a stranger they will not follow." You are a sheep of His pasture if you are following hard after God, if you are following on to know the Lord; and it is to you that He gives the Kingdom. The picture here is of the shepherd leading his flock out of the sheepfold down the dusty road until he suddenly comes to a gate. The shepherd goes up to the gate, unlatches it, swings it open, and leads the entire flock into a lush green pasture. The sheep enter and begin to graze and enjoy the fresh green field, which has not been trampled down by the heavy feet of other flocks. Jesus says. ~ It is my good pleasure to lead you down all the dusty roads of spiritual experience until I bring you to the secluded, reserved, select, appointed green field of God's Kingdom.

At this point the Kingdom of God is a gift. The offer of the Kingdom is not predicated upon any self-effort or any good work or religious exercise. You cannot buy it. Nothing you have can be traded for it. All the education, position, fame or fortune you can amass will not gain you admission. The offer is made, the call goes out, but God will not force the flock into that Kingdom. If this Kingdom is entered it must be entered by a heart desire that will make us seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. The earnest, effectual desire of our hearts as followers of God's Christ will bring us into this Kingdom that God is giving to His flock. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray as John taught his disciples to pray, the very first petition that He taught them was, "Thy kingdom come!" They were to ask the Father with a sincere desire and a deep and intense yearning in their heart to let the Kingdom be made available to His flock for entrance. This characterizes the people who receive it. Let not the careless and unconcerned think that they shall have any part in the Kingdom of God and of Christ. Those to whom the Kingdom has no value will miss it just as did the Pharisees and scribes in Jesus' day. They rejected the Kingdom when it was offered, and it can still be rejected today.

Jesus plainly taught His disciples and the scribes and Pharisees that He had brought the Kingdom of God to them. He spoke to them of its beauty and glory, of its principles and powers, of its ways and potentials. But the Jews continued to reject it. Therefore, Jesus told them that because they counted themselves unworthy of the Kingdom of God, God was going to take it from them, that is, they would not be permitted to enter into it, and God would give it to a nation, even a people, "worthy of it." He would give it to a company called His "little flock," the body of Jesus Christ. Jesus spoke many parables about the acceptance or rejection of the Kingdom of Heaven. One such parable was about the man who went out into a field and began to plow. Half way down the furrow it became very hard. He gave up the task and returned home. Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:62). If you are of the little flock you have put your hand to the plow. You have already begun to plow a furrow for God straight towards the

Kingdom. Have you grown weary and looked back to decide that the carnal house of religion and religious systems is easier and more secure than the field of the Kingdom of God? Has the pressing of your way into the Kingdom seemed so hard you have compromised with the imperfection of the church realm and rejected the Gift of God?

In my years of ministry I have had occasion to reflect upon this saying of our Lord. Some people come to the hard work of pressing into the Kingdom only under painful duress. Once the price of entrance becomes clear to them, they drop the plow and turn back to the beggarly elements of religion, joining themselves again to the programs and activities of a church system in a lesser realm. They are not yet ready for the Kingdom. They refuse to enter into the Kingdom. In contrast are those who find themselves unable to leave the Kingdom walk. They are drawn irresistibly to the transforming and creative process going on within them, and thoroughly understand that there is nothing in the church systems of man for them anymore. Nothing could entice them—not blessings, nor programs, nor fellowship, nor activities, nor personalities, nor needs, nor preachers—to turn from their quest of the Kingdom. **THEY HAVE REACHED THE POINT OF NO RETURN.** No looking back! The hook is in their jaw. They can do nothing else, so help them God.

If we are the elect of God in this hour, there is a call within us, and deep calleth unto deep. I tell you, my beloved, there is something within me, an inner compulsion, and I know that I have set my face as a flint and cannot turn to the right hand or the left from my journey into God's fullness. I can't go back to the world—the world has nothing to offer me; it is all vanity and vexation of spirit. I can't go back to religion—religion holds nothing for me anymore; it is an abomination. I can't even go back to Pentecost, back to the Holy Place—for the veil has been rent and I have tasted of the powers of the world to come. There is no turning back because my heart has turned to the Lord. As the apostle says, "When it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away...and we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:16-18). For some in this hour the veil has been rent and we have found an entrance to behold the transcendent glories of that land that lies before us. By the blood of Jesus we have been granted the opportunity to enter into the Kingdom of God.

Sometimes, when the pressures and processings come, when the dealings of God are deep and heavy upon us, when the going is especially painful or difficult and saints complain of its demanding nature, I ask, "Could you stop this inward work if you wanted to? Could you find an exit and escape the demands of His purposes in your life?" The answer comes back, "No—I have no choice but to fellow on to know the Lord." For these precious souls the glory and honor of the Kingdom of God is close at hand, and there is no longer any question of dropping the plow and turning back.

One more and more comes to know what it means to walk in the Kingdom as he follows on into deeper and deeper measures of God's dealings and further separations unto His purposes. As we become ONE WITH GOD the world does not understand what has happened; but they know that a separation has taken place between us and them that is more than bodily separation. Although we are living and moving among them, and they see us at our earthly tasks and daily living, they realize that we have mounted up beyond them and their understanding. In this connection a brother in Christ some time ago sent us these meaningful words: "Yes, this is an holy calling—and it involves much separation, often from our friends, religious realms, and everything and everybody that would hinder the upward climb into the hill of the Lord, that we might stand in His holy place. The flesh will cringe at the aloneness of the walk. The mind will question as to why it must be so. But the spirit within will continue to draw us onward without the camp, bearing His reproach, while we are loosed from so many hindrances and infirmities. **IT IS A DAY OF REVELATION**—and little did we know what things were hindering our spiritual progress until suddenly we found that God was stripping something from us, and though we wept at the time, and would have retained it if we could, nevertheless being yielded to the will of God, we relinquished our grasp, and found to our amazement that we received a new measure of freedom. And how many things we hold so dear, but they are actually a weight upon us, rather than a help."

Many times it is most grievous and perplexing to those who do not know the Lord, as well as to those Christians bound in the religious systems, who cannot understand the workings and separating processes of the Spirit of God, to have one who is near and dear to them in the flesh, separated from them in the Spirit. Though the body with its personality is still in the home, office, or business, it is as though the loved one were not there. In such cases, how often do they who are watching the lives of those who are entering the Kingdom into the

Kingdom realm of God, entreat them that they will return; that they will again be unto them as they once were. When an apprehended one has entered into this experience, he has counted all things but loss, and suffered the loss of all things, that he might WIN CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM. Truly, HIS DRAWING leaves us no choice but to FOLLOW ON that we might KNOW HIM in all His glorious and eternal reality! **"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Mat. 10:37-38).**

As we follow on to enter into the righteousness, power and glory of the Kingdom of God, earth and friends and religious things fade away in the exceeding brightness of our vision of God's great purpose in us. Our eyes are fixed with a steadfast gaze upon Him who has gone before us, opening up the way into the fuller glory that lies BEYOND THE VEIL. Those apprehended to be conformed to the image of the Son of God and to share the glory and authority of His Kingdom, have been caught away in the Spirit and set in the ranks of the chariots of the Lord, even among the company of the overcomers who shall come forth in the name of the Lord to rule and reign and conquer and bless until all things have been subjected unto God. The purpose of the Church is to form the body of Christ; the purpose of the Kingdom is to restore all things, in heaven and in earth, to God.

I mentioned earlier that the purpose of the new birth is to give us the life of God which is the life of the Kingdom of Heaven. As this life is perfected and raised up in us, the Kingdom of God is established within us by life and as life. There are very special dealings of God within each of us in relation to the development of that life. Our elder brother, Jesus, put it this way: **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn. 15:1-2).** Every branch that beareth fruit—He purges it! The purpose of purging, or pruning, is to effect a concentration of the life. When all the branches of the vine are permitted to grow unrestricted there is a resulting debilitating or weakening of the life. It is like diluting a chemical—the more water you add, the weaker it becomes. The nourishment and vitality of the vine are sapped by all the multitudinous branches, shoots and tendrils, and utilized to keep them alive and bearing abundance of foliage rather than being channeled into producing fruit. Thus, with the excess branches and shoots cut away, the life becomes more concentrated and stronger in those remaining, and the clusters of grapes become more rich and full. In like manner it is necessary that our natural tendencies, actions and desires, with all carnal religious activities and exercises, must be cut away, that the virtues and powers of our Lord be wrought and manifested in us. When Jesus speaks of "bearing fruit" He is not talking about "winning souls"; rather, He is speaking of the formation within our lives of the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these are the underlying nature of the sons of God who reign in the Kingdom of Heaven!

It has been my experience that God not only prunes away the sins of the flesh and the emotions and tendencies of the soul, but a great deal of religiousness—religious activities and those involved in them—as well. There was a time years ago when we made the circuit, speaking for the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship and various organizations and movements within the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms. Our desire was pure—to share the present truth of sonship and the Kingdom of God—to inspire and bless and challenge any and all possible to the deeper life of the Christ within. Here and there we found an elect few who had ears to hear, but for the most part it became evident that we were "spinning our wheels." Then, one day it dawned on me! Our word was not producing fruit in those places. Oh, they were delighted to have brother Eby come by and share his testimony, even minister a revelatory word, and prophesy over some people, with the laying on of hands, momentarily satiating the intense craving in a few hearts for a richer diet of spiritual fare. But after I left, nothing changed! There was no fruit. There was no heightened vision, no going on in God, no raising up of the Kingdom of Heaven within. These merely took the word we ministered, diluted it with their own shallow church program, and used it to further their own kingdom on a lower plane. Ah, they enjoyed drawing life from us so long as it didn't require them to bear Kingdom fruit! As long as our ministry could be used to increase their branches and put on many beautiful leaves—the manifestation of life without fruit — we were welcome in their midst. But what they were doing was "sapping" the life out of us to enhance and embellish and strengthen their own babylonish system! Suddenly the voice of the Spirit thundered authoritatively in my ear, "Enough!" And the celestial husbandman did a pruning work. He pruned from my life a RELIGIOUS REALM that will draw life but will not bear fruit of that life. God does, indeed, prune people from us! "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He TAKETH AWAY: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The doom of the unfruitful is: They are TAKEN AWAY. There are multitudes today who loudly profess to be in Christ who yet do not bear fruit of the Christ life. Though they are branches of

Christ, and His life in them produces abundance of foliage, God will cut off their life-supply that they may be seen to be dry ones.

Those called to this high calling, who shall rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom in this great Day of the Lord, are being separated from all that binds them to a lower order, that they may enter into the fullness of His life. Many people find it a lot easier to be one with the babylonish religious systems, where the crowds are, than to become separated to go out beyond, leading the way for others to follow. How I rejoice that God is now calling a people—sons of the Kingdom—separated ones—to a realm beyond the norm or religious activity, beyond the programs and promotions, beyond the sensationalism and handclapping, beyond the revivals and conventions and seminars, into the new and seemingly strange paths of HIS LEADING. The prunings are not easy, friends and loved ones and brethren do not readily understand, especially the preachers and organizations set upon holding you within their pews and coffers. I do not doubt for one moment that many of these programs are being used of God on some level, in spite of the worldly methods and fleshly techniques, to touch many lives with salvation, healings, and blessings. We are thankful to our heavenly Father for His blessing on every plane where He chooses to work, but when the call comes to leave behind the outer court of salvation and the holy place of the baptism in the Spirit in order to ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, those called to be kings and priests unto God come aside to prepare for the glory soon to be revealed, to make ready for the next great move of God in the earth!

The message is clear—there are things that others can do, but which you cannot do, when you begin to enter into the Kingdom. Religion today has become big business. It is one of the biggest and most lucrative businesses in the whole world. More than one preacher, supposing that gain is godliness, has become a millionaire over the past few decades, not because he was anointed by God, but because he was a TERRIFIC PROMOTER. Through clever speech and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive they have beguiled innocent people, pretending that they were the great power of God. By craftiness they obtain the names of tens of thousands of the Lord's precious people to whom they monthly send their high pressure pleas for financial help to further grandiose programs which are not the plan of God at all, but merely the product of an imaginative, scheming, grasping and greedy mind. Untold millions of dollars have been extracted from innocent, humble saints to build huge cathedrals, church buildings, office complexes, radio and television networks, outreaches, and missionary programs that are more of a curse than a blessing. Some time ago David Wilkerson was asked, "What do you think about American religious broadcasting, especially Christian television?" His reply: "They should shut it down. Turn off all the cameras. Release all these men from all the pressures we have put them under. They should be stripped from their heroic robes, all of their glamour, and be taken outside from all the lights. Then they should go back to the 'mountain' and be broken before God. Let God bring them back, as He chooses, in a purified form. It's all become flesh, absolute flesh..." And though some will be offended by my words, I do believe that those who truly hunger and thirst to enter the Kingdom will hear, believe, and obey when I say that those who feed upon those polluted tables are no better than the preachers that spread the tables! If you want to hear the voice of the King of kings in this hour, turn off the so-called Christian television, and fall upon your knees in holy brokenness before God until you receive a word directly out of the heavens.

We have passed through a time of great darkness. But thank God, the first rays of light of a new day are painting the eastern sky! Thank God, a few of His chosen ones have arisen to behold the glories of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn. But the popular churches are still lost in dreams. They have not awakened. They know not of the dawn. And the Word describes them and their shepherds in very uncomplimentary terms. The heads of the churches are called "the drunkards of Ephraim" (Isa. 28:1-4). Then in Isaiah 29:9-11 we are told, "they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your heads...hath He covered. And all vision hath become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed." And when these drunken shepherds spread tables for their flocks, instead of those tables being loaded with good wholesome spiritual food, the prophet says, "ALL tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is NO PLACE CLEAN" (Isa. 28:8).

But we who are of the Day, who are not lovers of the drunkenness of religious teachings and promotions, nor sleepers of the night, have a higher heritage. "We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others" (I Thes. 5:5-6). We who have received the love of the truth are heirs to a higher calling.

We have privileges, and we have duties to perform. We must be about our Father's business. It is time to forsake the shame and error, and time to look up, time to arise and shine. The day is at hand. The night is far spent. We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean" (Isa. 52: 1). Because the church today has not received of God's enlightenment, we find Christians in the pathetic state of darkness. Because Christians today, whether baptized in God's Spirit, or not, have stopped far short of God's fullness, and are still spiritual babes, they, with few exceptions, do not discern the things that pertain to the Kingdom of God. Their human minds comprehend the natural side of things, but deep spiritual realities are veiled from their view. They have not arisen above the mists of night. But the Day which we have now entered calls for all who will to awake, and to go forth, beholding the more glorious scene of an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Do you know that one reason God's children do not hunger and thirst after righteousness and follow on to apprehend the Kingdom of God, is because they have not taken the steps that went before? With the things of God, there is a progression just as there is in any school; and if we do not take the first steps, we shall not take the last steps. Every lesson we skip or neglect, we shall have to go back and learn before we shall be able to go on; for every advance step is a foundation for the next advance step. The reason that many of God's children have never advanced into higher realms in the Spirit is because they have not taken the steps as they came to them. They have not perfectly endured or appropriated that which God called them to pass through, in order that they might reach this place of perfection and glory and power in Him. Some of God's people try to leap into the full strength and dominion of the Kingdom in one grand leap; but if they have this experience granted them, it is only when they have taken the first steps of enlightenment, understanding, cleansing, pruning, judgment, obedience, and overcoming. Ah, the way of entering the Kingdom is by steps!

There is a passage in **Daniel 7:18** that says, "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." Here it says that we shall take the Kingdom, and sometimes we think this means that we are to take the Kingdom by exercising the authority; but before we can do that, the Kingdom must first be given to us, we must be able to enter into it, strong enough to possess it, and worthy to inherit it. If we try to take it before the authority is given to us, we are usurpers, not inheritors, and are guilty of spiritual treason. If I tell you that I intend to give you my car, but you come and take it before I give it to you, you are a thief. If you worked for a large business concern and the president of the company mentioned that he had intentions of making you vice-president: if you took over the vice presidency before he actually gave it to you, you would be a usurper—and probably would be fired! Although God has promised us the Kingdom, and is leading us into it step by step, we still do not have all the authority, power, or glory of the Kingdom. Sometimes we try to exercise authority that we don't have and it doesn't work. Some may be offended at me for saying this, but if you are honest, you will have to admit that it is so. When we really have the authority, when it has been given to us, and we have laid hold upon it, it will work, not just sometimes, but all the time. Either we have it or we don't, and if we have it it will never fail. May God in His great mercy forgive us if we are trying to usurp something we haven't yet possessed. I don't want to be a usurper—I want to be an inheritor! My deepest desire is to be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God.

## **OBSTACLES TO ENTERING THE KINGDOM**

A new movement can always benefit from having a few rich and famous converts. So it must have been exciting when the rich young ruler approached Jesus to talk about his possible involvement in the Kingdom. No doubt Judas already had his pledge envelopes out, and I can just hear Simon Peter exclaiming, "Wow, this guy is future board-member material!" At the beginning of His ministry Jesus had said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust cloth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust cloth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal" (Mat. 6:19-20). On another occasion He said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! The record states that the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again, and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mk. 10:23-25).

Don't misunderstand — Jesus was not opposed to money. His mind of omniscient wisdom understood the eternal truth that a person could hold on to wealth all the days of his life, but the only true and eternal

treasures, which are in the Kingdom of Heaven, could only be obtained by doing the will of the Father in heaven. The will of the Father is Kingdom business, and it yields Kingdom dividends in the realm of the spirit. So be careful, Jesus warned. Don't get involved in the wrong treasure hunt. He knew that people get obsessed with earthly things. After a while little else matters to them, or, as Jesus put it, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." It is true that Jesus says merely that it is hard for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom—hard, but not impossible! Wealth tends to make a man self-sufficient and independent of God and arrogant and presumptuous towards others in that he learns that money will purchase him any special privilege he wants. He becomes trapped in a mesh of values where everything has a cash value attached to it. "No man can serve two masters," Jesus said, "you cannot serve God and mammon (money)."

It is so very difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom because the Kingdom of Heaven is THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT. The Kingdom operates within the economy of spirit, not the methods and systems of the flesh. To enter into the Kingdom a person must allow God to perfect the spiritual dimensions of his personality. The perfecting of the spiritual life requires the utmost attention and the expenditure of much time and energy. The heart and the determination must be turned from the things and circumstances of earth and placed in heaven. Material wealth, with its attending demands and responsibilities, also requires the utmost attention and expenditure of prime time and energy. Therefore, either the spiritual life of the Kingdom must prevail and the pursuit of material gain must yield, or else the pursuit of material things must prevail and the development of the spiritual life of the Kingdom must suffer. NO man can serve both of these masters at the same time. The wealthy person often finds most of his pleasures and resources in the material realm. To enter the Kingdom of Heaven is, for the rich, very, very difficult. To make the seeking of the Kingdom the prime consideration of each day is virtually impossible. That is why the Lord counseled the rich young ruler to sell his many possessions, give the proceeds to the poor, and to "take up your cross and follow me."

Just recently I came across this article. Hear what it says. "In 1928, a group of the world's most successful financiers met at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. The following were present: the president of the largest utility company; the greatest wheat speculator; the president of the New York Stock Exchange; a member of the President's Cabinet: the greatest 'bear' on Wall Street; the president of the Bank of International Settlements; and the head of the world's greatest monopoly. Collectively, these tycoons controlled more wealth than there was in the United States Treasury. And for years, newspapers and magazines had been printing their stories, and urging the youth of the nation to follow their examples. TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER, THIS IS WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THESE MEN: The president of the largest independent steel company, Charles Schwab, lived on borrowed money the last five years of his life and died broke. The greatest wheat speculator, Arthur Cutten, died abroad, insolvent. The president of the New York Stock Exchange, Richard Whitney, served a term in Sing Sing Prison. The member of the President's Cabinet, Albert Fall, was pardoned from prison, so he could die at home. The greatest 'bear' on Wall Street, Jesse Livermore, committed suicide. The President of the Bank of International Settlements, Leon Fraser, committed suicide. The head of the world's greatest monopoly, Ivar Drueger, committed suicide. All of these men had learned how to make money, but not one of them had learned how to live." And, may I add, not one of them had laid up even one copper cent of treasure in the heavenlies!

Our Lord's only concern for the rich young ruler was that this ruler seek for those things that were truly valuable, the priceless treasures of the mind of Christ, the eternal wealth of the will of the Father, and the imperishable riches of the nature and power of God. Still this disciple-candidate was unable to act on what he heard. The Bible says he was sorrowful. Think about that! The dictionary defines sorrowful as, "full of sorrow, disappointment, regret, grief." Why was the young man sorrowful? Ah, the record states, "For he had great possessions." By the spirit of wisdom and understanding from God we can see how undiscerning and unwise he was!

Yet, among the Lord's people I have heard it said that if we really focus our energies on the Kingdom, we will become rich. Or another way of saying it is that prosperity is a sign of God's blessing. The more affluent a brother or sister in Christ is, the more they must be seeking the Kingdom or applying the principles of the Kingdom. The reasoning goes like this: God has promised that He will bless His children if they are faithful to Him and have faith. Since kings live in extravagant palaces, sons of God have the right to live luxuriously to demonstrate that they are indeed the "King's Kids"—members of God's Royal Court. Children of a king should dress and eat in royal fashion. They should have the best jobs, live in the finest homes, drive the most

expensive cars, and enjoy all the amenities of life. Just follow Jesus, we are told, and we will be successful in almost everything. Just walk in the Spirit and we will rise to the top of the ladder. Have faith in God and we will win more beauty contests, hit more home runs, make more sales, and receive more awards!

My beloved brethren, does this not contradict the words of our Elder Brother and Forerunner that a rich man can hardly enter into the Kingdom of God? Have these reprobates in the modern "prosperity message" never read the inspired admonition of our beloved brother Paul, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: FROM SUCH WITHDRAW THYSELF. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition For the love of money is the root of all evil which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, Decease these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called..." (I Tim. 6:3-12).

Oh, would to God that all who name the name of Christ would learn what it means when Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." As we move from "things" to seek the reality of Christ's Kingdom we discover that our goal in life is not to make money or accumulate things. If that is our goal, then we need to set our priorities straight. You see, in the world within, that world which you are, that world where Christ dwells, that inner world where the Kingdom of God is found, there is no money and there are no things. There is no need for money and there is no need for things. The only need for money and things is in the world on the outside. But if we go out and try to seek that which is on the outside, then we have left the Kingdom. If we love the world, the love of the Kingdom is not in us. The Kingdom of God is within you. The world of the Kingdom is that inner world of the spirit. There are two dimensions of "you"—the outer you and the inner you. Paul refers to these as the "outward man" and the "inward man". "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4:16). The outward man is the visible, tangible and fleshly life of you. The inward man is the invisible man of spirit. The former is of earth, natural, carnal, and mortal; the latter is of heaven, divine, spiritual and immortal. The former is the first Adam, the latter is the last Adam—Christ.

Within that inward man is the power of all things. The law of the Kingdom is that he who makes the Kingdom of God and the righteousness of God his first and chief concern will have all earthly necessities supplied in the overflow. Care for God's essentials, and God Himself will care for your incidentals. First seek the bread of heaven, the water of life, the robe of righteousness, and the peace, joy and power of the Kingdom, and the Lord of the Kingdom will see to it that you shall not lack earthly bread, water, raiment, or any good thing.

All our choices in the outer world should serve to extend, express and demonstrate the reality of what we are in the inner world. When we choose a job or any activity, we don't choose on the basis of its value in the outer world, we choose that which will serve as an expression of the inner man. That's where peace is. That's where joy is. That's where righteousness is. That's where the power of God resides. That's where the only fulfillment is. Because that is where the Kingdom is, that's where life is, that's where reality is, that's where the true riches are, that's where heaven is! So many people work on their jobs just to make money, to pay bills and put food on the table. They don't really like the job, and are miserable. That is what the outer world calls "making a living". But making a living is more than making money, for all the men in that outer world are dying, and what they are actually doing is MAKING A DEATH! Their emphasis is on laying up store for old age, making out the will, and seeing that the funeral is paid for. That is not life! The Lord of the Kingdom has taught us the truth of the Kingdom in this sublime word of wisdom: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). To make a living means, first and foremost, to LIVE!

It's making what you are live! It denotes quality of life, and the only life of quality is the inward man—Christ. You will know true joy, peace and power when your inward man lives through your outward man, your inner world is expressed and revealed through your outer world. Matters not what you do outwardly, where you live,

what your vocation is, what your responsibilities are—when your inward life is dominant all outer things are affected, transformed, swallowed up. As sons of God we are not victims of either money, things, or circumstances. These are not able to take away our peace. They are unable to rob us of our joy. They cannot take our life. The Christ within is our reality, our stability, our substance, our all. And that is what we are seeking. We are seeking incorruptible and immortal realities and powers. We are seeking the Kingdom of God. And that is why a rich man can hardly enter into the Kingdom!

While I have written of the perilous danger to those who pursue the wealth of this world, there is an abomination more dreadful than this right within the ministry of that which professes to be the Church. There is no shortage of men and women seeking gold and glory in the name of the Lord. The land is overflowing with them, those seeking their own gain and each staking his own claim. Within the past decade or so, two of the most famous international television pulpитеers have been exposed and their vast financial holdings have been publicized. They had millions of dollars invested in their personal homes and property while they begged and pled for money from the widows and the poor. They lived sumptuously while multitudes of those who supported their grandiose programs were living as paupers. And things have not changed one whit. Where are those who are true ministers of God and blessers of creation rather than those who gather money? Where are those who are building God's Kingdom rather than their own? Where are those who truly feed the sheep? Where are those who are not lifted up with pride? Where are those who are not puffed up with their own importance? Where are those who do not exalt themselves? Where is the preacher who doesn't seek to ingratiate himself to the one with the expensive clothes and the luxury automobile?

Where is the weeping before the altar? Where are those who refrain from using the world's methods to conduct God's business? Where are those who do not charge for the gospel, even if it is only a price on their tapes or books? Where are those who do not have a ministry for sale? Where are those who have not taken unto themselves the gold and the glory? Where are those who are not displaying flesh in their manmade schemes and promotions? Where are those of a broken and contrite spirit? Where are those with the meekness and purity of the Lamb? Where are those who have not brought the spirit of the world into their midst? Where are those who do not put their picture on every page of their magazine and their name on everything they do? Where is the beauty and glory of the message of the Kingdom of God without the Hollywood extravaganza and showmanship? Where is the worship in the beauty of holiness, in spirit and in truth, rather than musical entertainment? Where are those who approach God with reverence and godly fear and do not treat the sacred things as though they were part of a carnival? Where are those who have laid hold of God? Where are the humble? Where are the pure in heart? Where are those who are being conformed to the image of the Son? Where are those who are putting on the mind of Christ? Where are the prayer warriors and the intercessors? Where are those who love and treat the poor, the elderly, the senile, the maimed, the feeble minded, the illiterate, the sick, the homeless, the diseased, the widow and the orphan, and those in prison as their own flesh, yea, as the Lamb of God Himself? Where are those who proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom without the slightest motive of financial reward? WHERE ARE GOD'S TRUE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE HOUR? Of this you can be certain—these will not be found within the halls of the harlot religious systems, nor will you see them on the Christian television networks. You will find them only among God's faithful remnant that has heard the Spirit's call to come out of that great city Babylon and, forsaking all, have gone unto Him, without the Camp, bearing His reproach, separated unto Him alone.

No one can deny that religion today is BIG BUSINESS. Some of the best known "born again" Hollywood personalities, should you inquire about engaging them to give their testimony at a meeting, will send their business manager over with a contract guaranteeing them several thousands of dollars for their forty-five minute appearance; and if there is no contract, there is no "ministry". This is not ministry—it is BIG BUSINESS. And the Judge standeth at the door. The local Christian Bookstore has become quite a showcase for what is called "Christian bric-a-brac". They are crammed full of every imaginable trinket, plaque, statue, poster, and artifact that they can sell with a religious flavor. Christian music albums now cost \$8.00 to \$12.00 apiece. The country is swarming with those who call themselves Christian speakers, musicians, bands and singers who CHARGE an admission fee to their seminars and concerts. Verily, I say unto you, the ticket prices are an abomination and a stench in the nostrils of a holy God and a spike in the hand of our dear Saviour who freely and sacrificially gave His all for us and to us. There is no Biblical or scriptural foundation or precedent whatsoever for SELLING THE WORD OF GOD—be it a Bible, a music album, a sermon, book, tape, trinket, concert, seminar or any other thing. It was just such abominations that led the firstborn Son of God to enter the

temple in Jerusalem and, weaving a whip of cords, violently drive the money changers and those who bought and sold sacrifices from His Father's house. Methinks it is TEMPLE-CLEANSING TIME AGAIN!

The only person who can enter the Kingdom realm of God is the one who elects to come on God's terms and in God's way. The word of God reveals hindrances to entrance into the Kingdom. Another obstacle to entering into the Kingdom is the noxious weed of fleshly religion. When Jesus spoke to the self righteous Pharisees and the blind, mix-guided chief priests and elders of the Jews, He delivered to them this stinging rebuke. **"Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mat. 21 :31-32; 23: 13).**

The damning sin of the Pharisees was that they made godliness a law rather than a life. "Moses said!" they thundered from their station high upon the craggy pinnacle of Shari, and proceeded to lay upon the people the heavy burden of 613 commandments that must be meticulously kept according to the elaborate and extrapolated interpretations of the rabbis. I must point out that self-righteous religion is as old as the Garden of Eden. In the mists of that haven blest paradise, when the first woman and man stretched forth their inquisitive hands and furtively took of the forbidden fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, the eyes of them both were mysteriously opened to discover their own nakedness. To be naked means to have ones flesh exposed. Only the knowledge of good and evil could have caused them to realize that their flesh was exposed, and that knowledge never came to them as long as they walked in life. It was, in fact, a forbidden knowledge. There were only two trees—the tree of life and the tree of law - the knowledge of good and evil. God's purpose for man is that he live in life, not after law. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth (life) came by Jesus Christ.

By means of the law "the eyes of them both were opened," but, alas! to what a sight! When they departed from walking in life it was only to discover their own nakedness. They opened their eyes upon their own condition, which was **"wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (Rev. 3:17)**. By the law is the knowledge of sin, the scripture teaches us. Suddenly "they knew that they were naked"—they knew that their flesh, their fleshly nature, was now revealed, bare and exposed — sad fruit of the tree of knowledge. No sooner does a man discover his nakedness than this knowledge gives rise to the impulse to make an effort to COVER the nakedness. Thus, in the case of Adam and Eve, the discovery of their nakedness was immediately followed by an effort of their own to cover it—**"they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons" (Gen. 3:7)**.

This is the first record we have of man's attempt to remedy, by his own device, his condition, but this was not the single act of Adam in the Garden, it is truly the act of each of us, yes, OUR VERY OWN! The Spirit must make it very real to your heart, dear reader, that Adams effort to cover his nakedness was not a mere physical act, not even a moral act, it was a RELIGIOUS ACT. Our spiritual understanding of what transpired in that Eden of long ago will afford us wonderful instruction as to the character of human RELIGIOUSNESS in all ages. In the first place, we see, not only in Adam's case, but in every case, that man's effort to remedy his flesh nature is based upon the sense of his nakedness. He is shocked and shamed by his own sense of nakedness, so that all the "works" that follow are the result of this consciousness. This can never avail! For just as it was GOD who clothed man with life before his disobedience, now it must be GOD who clothes the man in his state of nakedness.

And this, let every man know, is just the difference between the walk in the Spirit of God and human religiousness. When you "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and "walk in the Spirit" you are wonderfully clothed thereby as you eat of the tree of His Life. There was no sense of nakedness so long as they lived by the tree of life. And though it is a great and deep mystery, what happened to Adam happens to us. What he was we have been. His experience is our experience. Ah, child of God, may the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God give enlightenment to your mind that you may comprehend of a truth that what happened to Adam in the Garden IS EVEN NOW HAPPENING TO EACH OF US. Every man from Adam to this day has been naked—his fleshly nature has been exposed— and, at some time, in some manner, has been busily engaged in weaving together his very own fig-leaf apron to try and cover his nakedness. No one wants to appear as what he is, even though he is a thief, an adulterer, a murderer, a liar, or a religious hypocrite. In an effort to appear

other than he is he sews together very wide leaves of the fig tree, to gloss over his true condition; that is, he tries every device he can, including multiplied religious works, rules, regulations, dress codes, good deeds, and a thousand others, to gloss over his true condition. Much fleshliness is still exposed, but the more gross manifestations are partially and temporarily concealed by his apron of fig-leaf works. But all the garments a man may devise to hide his nakedness become mere "spider's webs" when the blazing light of God's presence and glory shines upon them. Fig-leaf righteousness is so shallow, limited to outward observances, religious exercises, ceremonies, rituals, appearances, works, regulations, do this, don't do that, go here, don't go there, eat this, don't eat that, drink this, don't drink that, which make a show of righteousness in the flesh but leave the nature unchanged, the mind untransformed, and the will of the Father undone.

The miracle of what God has done through Jesus Christ ravishes my heart. I am enthralled beyond measure that by faith He has clothed me with the robe of Christ's righteousness. The first thing God does is to strip away all the artificial, man-made coverings, and presents His own glorious covering, the slain Lamb. "For Adam also and for his wife the Lord God made long coats (tunics) of skins, and clothed them" (**Gen. 3:217** Amplified). We would be hard pressed to understand the deep mystery of these "skins" with which the Lord clothed the sorrowing pair were it not that the scripture informs us that at that precise point in history GOD SLEW A LAMB FOR OUR COVERING. Christ, the Lamb of God, was "foreordained before the foundation (disruption) of the world" (**I Pet. 1:20**), and He is "the Lamb slain, from the foundation (disruption) of the world" (**Rev. 13:8**). And that Lamb is the atonement (Hebrew: covering) of God for us, typified by all the Old Testament atonement sacrifices, and He is our only robe of righteousness. Interesting that the Lamb was slain not merely for the sinning man and woman, and not only for the naked man and woman, but for the man and woman CLOTHED IN FIG LEAVES! The "skins" of covering from the Lamb were given to replace the fig leaves of man's self-effort, and not only was the man himself brought to the cross, but all his self-made religion of works as well! Ah, yes, the cross shall deal not only with sin and nakedness; it shall deal as well with our fig-leaves!

How vain have been our strivings about externals and our insistence upon carnal technicalities that we in ignorance deemed so very important! How often the spirit within me has been grieved as I have listened to brethren wasting their time contending over baptisms, communion, foot washing, meats and drinks, holy days, dress codes, long hair, short hair, women preachers, prayer veils, and petty doctrines of every kind, and when they were through with their pietistic wrangling, they had accomplished nothing but to prove that they knew everything about the dead letter of the Word and absolutely nothing about the mind of Christ or the life-giving Spirit! Men do not need any external ordinances, ceremonies, rituals or regulations. They need CHRIST AS LIFE! It was not the gospel, but the Old Covenant "which stood in meats and drinks, and divers washings (baptisms), and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation (change). But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands (not anything you can produce externally)..." (**Heb. 9:10-11**).

Fig leaves! Fig leaves! Fig leaves! Cursed covering of man's own devising! And any man with eyes to see can see the flesh shining brazenly through it in spite of all the intricate design and superficial appearance of life. Oh! how men try to conceal the corrupt flesh underneath, and indeed they may partially hide it from men, but the fig-leaf apron can never screen a man from the eye of God. But, blessed be the name of the Lord, God has reserved to Himself a people who is completely different, a people who is wholly HIS, a people who dwells in the light which Christ Himself is, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, sanctified by His Spirit, obedient to their heavenly Father, and clothed in the GARMENTS OF LIFE, even the righteousness of God's Lamb by the Spirit of resurrection from the dead. There is no doubt in my mind that this is the people that shall be granted an ABUNDANT ENTRANCE into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 21 POSSESSING THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART TWENTY-ONE

#### THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE

Canaan-what volumes the name speaks to us! Many are the songs written about Canaan Land, yet the masses of believers entertain the mistaken notion that Canaan is a type of heaven-that bright glory world above with streets of gold, walls of jasper and gates of pearl. This cannot be, because the great mark of Canaan was that the land had to be conquered and that God gave such glorious victories over enemies. There is warfare in Canaan. There are giants in Canaan. There are hoards of enemies in Canaan. The battles in Canaan make the experience in the wilderness look like a Sunday School picnic. The possession of Canaan was for victory and through victory. The children of Israel crossed the Red Sea to escape the enemy. They crossed the Jordan to conquer the enemy! Canaan speaks to us of the realm of the Kingdom of God. If we are going to possess the Kingdom, we are going to have to fight for it. The powers that are there will contest every foot of it; as soon as we start to possess our inheritance in God, we will come face to face with them, and we will find they are not easily defeated. We are no threat to them until we begin our march to possess our inheritance.

Multitudes of Christians are settled upon their lees-they are satisfied with knowing the joy of sins forgiven and hope to make heaven their home at last. There is no desire in their hearts to attain to anything of value in the Kingdom of God or to any position of responsibility and usefulness. It is said of Israel, "**They despised the pleasant land**" (Ps. 106:24). Canaan was a land of fruitfulness, of heights and depths and beauty and glory and power, a type of the Kingdom of God; but some of the people thought it would cost them a great deal to possess it, and they would rather go without it. I have read of certain Spaniards that lived where there was a great store of fish, but they were so lazy they would not exert themselves to catch them, but begged of their neighbors. Such sinful sloth is upon the masses of Christians that fill the pews of the church systems in this hour, and though the Kingdom of Heaven be offered them, yet they will not yield to the leadings and dealings of the Holy Spirit to possess it. They have only some faint wishes or desires. "**The soul of the sluggard wisheth, and hath nothing**" (Prov. 13:4). Men could be content to have the Kingdom of Heaven if it would drop as a ripe fig into their mouths, but they have no desire to pursue it, and their unsanctified hearts would abuse, misuse, prostitute and profane it were it given into their hands. We cannot have the world without labor, or any success or position or rank or responsibility or recognition without applying ourselves, and do we think to have the Kingdom of Heaven without paying the price?

Paul shows us how God's people under the Old Covenant, ransomed by grace, and set upon a course of divine privilege and opportunity, were called to win the prize of their calling, and missed it. They were delivered out of the hand of their enemies by the blood of the Lamb. They were visibly under God's protecting wing, and led out of Egypt by a mighty hand. They were set under the cloud of Yahweh's presence. All were led out of Egypt by a door miraculously opened, and miraculously shut. Pharaoh's claims upon them were forever cut off by the Red Sea. They had bread sent down from heaven as their daily supply. They had water given them by grace, out of the rock smitten by the rod of law and judgment. The water, after once bursting out of the rock known of old as Jacob's Pillar, continually followed Israel in their wanderings through the desert (1 Cor. 10:4).

Israel then was led as one family by God's appointed leader, and all were blessed alike and all promised alike. Must they not, therefore, all alike receive God's approval? Far from it! "**But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness**" (1 Cor. 10:5). The whole body of Israel received the same great privileges, and were set at the same starting line. But did all win the goal? Nay, they became "castaways," or were disapproved of God. God was not well pleased with Israel. Their privileges did not so place them under grace, as to put them beyond responsibility, and the call to obedience. The Lord displayed His disapproval of them, for they never gained the prize of their calling. What was that calling? An entry into the

land that flowed with milk and honey! The possession of all the riches, beauty, resources, expansiveness, fruitfulness and power of the land! That was the object set before God's rescued ones. "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8). They were His people ransomed by blood, numbered by hundreds of thousands, and yet out of the delivered out of Egypt by grace-only two entered the land of promise, when it became a question of their believing God, obeying God, and possessing their possession! Among the number of the excluded were Moses the servant, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. God was not "well pleased." The proof was visible enough; they never entered the good land.

When God told the children of Israel to go into the land of Canaan, He said, "I have given it to you." In a little while He added this striking admonition, "Go in to possess it." These were potential terms. In the divine and sovereign council of heaven God had already deeded the land to them, but they were not qualified yet to possess it. The land was full of giants, and walled cities, and fierce armies, which required a struggle for its possession. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," our beloved brother Paul has told us. The simple meaning of the word "tribulation" in the Greek is pressure. Ray Prinzing has mentioned how we are pressured on every side, but as birth pangs it is pressing us into His Kingdom, pressing us out of self's aspirations, pressing us into the plan and purpose of God. Through intense pressure, great distress, much trouble and suffering, strenuous effort and fierce warfare we enter the Kingdom-this realm of spiritual reality, fullness, glory and power. The Kingdom is obtained through much pressure and steadfast discipline.

When Israel came to the end of their wilderness journey and arrived at the Jordan River, it was a time of new beginnings. The old generation of disobedience and rebellion passed away in the wilderness. And now a new generation camped at the Jordan, and was preparing to cross over into their Promised Land of Canaan. It was the end of one era and the beginning of a new day for the nation. Joshua would now lead the new generation of the people of Israel across the Jordan and conquer and possess and inherit the glorious land given to them by God. Wonderful things were to take place when Israel set foot in their Promised Land. Although Israel would face great and strong enemies when they entered Canaan, the Lord promised that He would drive out all those enemies from before them. He further said, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be. There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon" (Deut. 11:23-25).

The covenant of the old Land of Canaan is our example to prepare us to enter the new and greater "land" of the Kingdom of God on earth. These words of Paul Mueller are so very significant for us all at this present time. "The Psalmist said, 'The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever' (Ps. 37:29). Not only shall the saints inherit the earth, but they shall inherit the land. This land is a special place reserved for the elect. It is the place that corresponds in type to Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, the place of David's throne. It is the glorious realm of spiritual Zion, the "land" that corresponds to the Holiest of all in the tabernacle or house of the Lord. That place, or land, is a land of the incorruptible and immortal glory of the presence of the Lord. From that "land" the saints shall rule and reign with Christ in incorruptible bodies, with incorruptible minds, the mind of Christ.

"O that the wonderful spirit of revelation would enlighten us to the grandeur of these promises of God! The wisdom and understanding of the Spirit is being given to us. We are growing up to know the hope of our calling, and to see the glories that are reserved for us in the realm of Spirit. Only as we are enlightened by the spirit of revelation can we possibly comprehend the marvelous truth of our inheritance in Christ. When we fully understand that Christ is our inheritance, the things of earth will indeed grow dim. The world and all things of it will lose its attraction, and we will run with patience the race that is set before us. Our glorious, risen Christ has already set down the footprints, the steps, into the glory that is reserved for us. He has pre-destined our walk unto His fullness. He has set aside an inheritance for us that makes the things of this world look like the paltry dust and ashes that it is. Compared to the splendor of the incorruptible and immortal Christ of glory, all else is corruption. He has reserved Himself for us! He has set aside the Holiest of all, the place of His greater presence, for the holy remnant who are now growing up into Him. What an inheritance! The steps to that glory are there. Walk in the Spirit and the way will be made clear" -end quote.

Consider, precious saint of God, how vast and rich the land is! The land is unsearchably great, unlimitedly rich. The dimensions of the land are the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth of the Kingdom of God. The land is all the riches and the glory of Christ Himself. Many saints have no desire to attain experientially to the fullness of Christ Himself. They are more interested in a mansion over the hilltop, or a cabin in the corner of glory-land, or some such foolishness. The land is peace, joy, righteousness, incorruptible life, wisdom, knowledge, power, dominion and glory. All this is ours as children of God, but only as we grow up into Christ and put on Christ do we become mature and arrive in the position to assume this responsibility of possessing our possessions. We are talking about the full stature of Christ within ourselves, not gold bath tubs in heaven. By a mature understanding and a divine faith we see the way to enter the land and take possession of all the riches and glory of full sonship to God.

Why have we not, then, fully possessed our land? The thing that kept Israel out of their land was a heart of unbelief. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 4:1-2; 3: 19). You remember how those that spied out the land of Canaan brought back an evil report. On the one hand they said that the land was exceptionally good, but on the other hand they said that it was impossible to enter. The people were giants, they said, and the cities fortified and great. They asserted that Israel could never conquer the land, and if they tried they would be utterly defeated and devoured.

Ah, how often that wily devil of unbelief speaks the very same things within us! He says, "Don't talk about overcoming every enemy. Don't talk about walking in the nature of God. Don't talk about coming to perfection-nobody can be perfect in this world. Don't talk about conquering death-everybody dies until the rapture. Don't talk about being manifested sons of God-it is enough to join a good church, pay our tithes and be faithful Christians. Don't talk about becoming exactly like Christ-nobody can measure up to Him. Don't talk about putting on the mind of Christ. Don't talk about ruling and reigning with Christ-it might go to your head. Don't talk about being kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek-that is too high for you. All of these things are good and wonderful. But it is absolutely impossible for you to possess them. "

I do not doubt that even while some have been reading this message that devil of unbelief has whispered such things in your ear! "You cannot possess the land, you cannot attain to the high calling of sonship, you will never stand among the manifested sons of God because you are weak, you are now old and feeble; you can't preach or teach the Word; you are beset by physical ailments and disease, silly of you to think of overcoming sin and death; you have already failed so many times to please your heavenly Father; God never answers your prayers, anyhow; you have no church or fellowship, no one to encourage and strengthen you; you have too many problems and hang-ups; you are young and inexperienced, others have walked in this truth for years; your own home is out of order, you are bedeviled by a carnal, opposing spouse and unruly, rebellious children; don't ever think you can enter the good land of the Kingdom-it is far beyond your ability. You can never make it!" The little devil of unbelief lurking within the carnal mind in each of us is just waiting for the opportunity to inject his deadly venom and deliver to us the evil report- "You are not able to go up and possess your inheritance!" Never believe him!

"The inhabitants are giants," he will tell you. "and the cities have walls that chariots run upon. You will be defeated and you know it. You will go by way of the grave at last. You will miss the unveiling of the Kingdom glory in the earth, you will not be a member of God's overcoming, conquering army." All this is an evil heart of unbelief. It is a heart occupied by the evil one; so it is called an evil heart. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, saith the Lord! We must ask the Lord to deliver us from the evil heart. We must take our stand with Joshua and Caleb and proclaim by the faith of the Son of God within us that WE ARE ABLE TO GO UP AND TAKE THE LAND! We must have faith in the power of His resurrection within ourselves. The mighty power of God within us is able to do exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think, above all that we dream or imagine. God will do the work as we follow on in patience, faith and obedience, even as He did for Israel of old. "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." That is the confession of the heart of faith born of God. The Lord has promised it, but we must possess it. He has given it, but we must experience it. It is our portion, but we must take it. The fullness of the Kingdom is not presently our possession, but HE will cause us to take it, HE will enable us to possess it. Our

heavenly Joshua, Christ Himself in us, is taking the lead in His army; He will go before us; He will fight the battle for us. All we need is such a vision. Joshua received such a vision, and thereby the faith and assurance that God was with him. And armed only with that faith, trust, and obedience he possessed the land!

The generation in the wilderness consented to the spying out of the land-no doubt they really enjoyed the grapes and the figs and the pomegranates the spies brought back-but they refused to enter in and possess the land. It is all right, this same unbelieving, veneration tells us today. to be baptized in the Spirit, speak in tongues, heal the sick, prophesy, be slain in the Spirit and do some miracles-these things are all right. They relish the firstfruits of the Spirit that the spies bring back, the little sample of the richness of the land, but they do not want to hear about Christ appearing in glory in the saints, or the manifestation of the sons of God. And as for people conquering death and by-passing the grave -- that is definitely not for God's people today. True, God has it for us, it is part of our inheritance, but we dare not try to lay hold upon it today. That will take place, automatically, at the "rapture", or in the first resurrection "at the last day"- not now. We cannot possess the land, the walls are too high, the giants too tall, and the people too strong. The armies of the enemies have iron chariots. I low utterly ridiculous to suppose that we can overcome such obstacles!

Oh yes, you can be filled with the Spirit, teach a Sunday School class, move in the gifts, get into prosperity-but you cannot be conformed to the image of the Son, defeat Satan, conquer sin and death, and ascend the throne of God to rule and reign with Christ over the nations and all things. You can sneak in and seize a cluster or two of grapes from the valley of Eschol, but it is positively absurd to try and take the whole valley of Eschol! You can get some healing for your body, you can receive an occasional word of wisdom or knowledge, you can get deliverance from habits and demons, and overcome everyday weaknesses and sins- but you cannot have the mind of Christ replace the carnal mind, you cannot be perfect, you cannot put on the nature and character of God until you are sinless, you cannot put on incorruption and immortality, you cannot be caught away in the Spirit as were Philip and Elijah, you cannot rule and reign in the Kingdom, you cannot be a manifested son of God-today. We don't mind tasting the grapes of Eschol, but DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT MARCHING IN TO CONQUER THE WHOLE LAND!

It should be obvious to any thinking person that this is the mind-set of just about all Christians today and the teaching of all the preachers and churches. Of course, many churches don't even want their people to taste the firstfruits! The whole issue revolves around this question: Are we going to settle for the "earnest" of our inheritance, the "down payment" of the Spirit, or, are we going to arise from the dust and rocks of this great and terrible wilderness and follow our Joshua across the Jordan to lay hold upon, and enter into, and possess fully, ALL THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF THE LAND GOD HAS GIVEN US? Together we can praise God that there is arising a new generation that has heard the trumpet call. Moses the servant of God is dead, the old-order ministry is passing away, and a people is gathering in preparation to follow their heavenly Joshua into the fullness of the glory and power of the Kingdom of God. And there shall be a glorious victory! For God has promised the land is ours if only we can hear His voice and obey. There are only two real enemies-fear and unbelief. But God has promised, "Be strong and o a good courage...! will not fail thee, nor forsake thee..."

## **THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE**

When our blessed Lord came teaching the Kingdom of God throughout the province of Galilee, He made it abundantly clear that possessing the Kingdom is not an easy thing. It is not so difficult to see the Kingdom, as Moses saw the Promised Land from the heights of mount Nebo, but to possess the Kingdom takes a definite effort. Jesus spoke of this when He told the Pharisees, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk. 16:16). It is doubtful if any of those who heard these words had the remotest idea of the effort involved in possessing the Kingdom. Let me put it this way. It takes an added effort after you have already put forth an effort! Like a sprinting race, it is that final thrust at the end where the contender puts forth all of his complete energy. He will press forth with all the strength he can muster to win the race. In like manner it takes running, pressing, and even violence in one's effort to take the Kingdom.

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Mat. 11:12). Some say that this is a negative statement that Jesus is not talking about the

necessity of taking the Kingdom by violent effort, but that in the hour when the Kingdom was announced many carnal people sought by the violence of carnal effort to seize the Kingdom for their own ends. These words of Jesus in Matthew are, however, a sequel to the words written by Luke. Matthew says that since the days of John the Baptist, the Kingdom of God suffers violence-and the violent take it by force. Luke says that since John the Baptist the Kingdom is preached, and men press into it. Each of the Gospel writers expresses in his own words the thought given by Jesus. The backdrop to this is the conquest of the land of Canaan, the Old Testament type of our possessing our inheritance in Christ. No one can dispute that when Israel went in to possess their inheritance that the land of Canaan suffered violence. Ah, yes! they pressed their way into the land and violently took it by force. That is the picture the Holy Spirit has drawn of what it means to take the Kingdom!

These words-suffers, violence, violent and force-are all related words with much the same meaning. They picture vital energy and activity used in forcing or crowding oneself into something. To interpret these words of Jesus one needs to know the location of the Kingdom of Heaven. Violence can only happen where an adversary is located. Surely, up in God's eternal heaven, there is no violence, as Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Today we know that the Kingdom of God is within you (Lk. 17:20-21). Can we not see by this that the Kingdom of Heaven can suffer violence only within the life of the believer where both the Spirit of God and the spirit of the adversary function, where the spirit and the flesh indeed war with one another, where the mind of Christ and the carnal mind both exert themselves to control. I am sure that Jesus is not referring here to armies or physical violence. The violence He is talking about is violence that is done to SELF-the fleshly nature, the carnal mind, the human will-which wars against the life of God and prevents one from entering into the Kingdom. Sometimes we must be violent in our own land, with our self, with obstacles within and without, in order to possess the promised Kingdom.

Never forget, beloved that it is possible to enter and possess the Kingdom of God while we live upon this earth right now. To possess the Kingdom within ourselves is going to take a mighty effort. The spirit of this world, the spirit of your own natural mind, resists you. The Greek word that is used for "presseth into it" is a strong word. It is the word that is used for storming a city and forcing an entry. It could be translated, "Everyone forces his way into it." One writer, commenting on this verse, said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is not for the well-meaning but for the desperate." In a violent sense we must fight our way through every adversary and possess the land of Christ within our world. In this way we take the Kingdom of God by force-violently. Possessing the Kingdom is no Sunday School picnic. It means resistance, opposition, contention, struggle, confrontation, engagement, assault, attack, conflict, fighting, battle-WARFARE! I can assure you, precious friend of mine, no one ever drifted into the Kingdom, no one ever stumbled into the Kingdom, and no one ever possessed the Kingdom by accident or unawares. To possess the Kingdom is something that demands effort and which takes everything of mind and heart and spirit that a man can muster. To possess the Kingdom requires a victory and a triumph and a conquest. We must struggle and battle our way in, just as the Allies did in Europe in the second World War. All this is very difficult, and the natural thing to say is that we can never do that by ourselves. Nor can we! But the King who leads the battle is right within us to enable us to do the things which by ourselves we could never have done.

Another possible rendering of the Greek in this passage would denote not so much "to force an entrance" as into a besieged city, but to "seize hold of" and carry off as plunder. It suggests the picture of a prize just coming within reach, which the bolder spirits immediately capture, without waiting for a signal. This would make the passage read: "The law and the prophets were until John; since then, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken forcibly, and the violent drag it towards them." The thought here is that the coming of John the Baptist marked the beginning of a new era. In former times the Kingdom had been merely prophesied and foreshadowed; now it had come so near that men could hasten their possession of it by a strong and mighty effort. They were no longer to wait passively for the Kingdom (God will bring it in His time), but hasten it by their own faith and action. Its powers were already manifesting themselves in the mighty works of the firstborn Son of God, and the nature of its new righteousness was powerfully proclaimed by Jesus. The great Day had drawn so near that a strong and united faith might break down the remaining barriers. Men might "take the Kingdom by force"-might "drag it towards them," and see its full realization in their day!

Jesus believed that the Kingdom could be apprehended by any who had the vision and the faith. To that end the work which He laid on His disciples was not that of passive waiting, but that of actively seeking the

Kingdom. By hungering and thirsting after it, by lifting their hearts to it with earnest desire and invincible faith, they were to hasten the day of its coming forth. The blessed firstborn Son of God Himself became the example and prototype of an all-conquering faith, revealing by His nature and His mighty works, by His authority and dominion over all things, by His death and triumphant resurrection, the accessibility of the Kingdom to every son of God. He taught men to cry out to God, "THY KINGDOM COME! THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN!" And this is the message for those who have received the call to sonship in this significant hour at the end of the age. We are now in the days when decisions are being made and portentous events are in the offering. Some people are making conscious decisions by proclaiming, "I will follow the Kingdom and I will pursue it like a dog pursues a fox." When a hound chases a fox, he never gives up. He may lose sight of the fox, but he still has its scent. Even though we may not have the Kingdom in sight, we will not give up either because we know by faith that the Kingdom will come to pass in a people that presses violently into it-but, blessed be God, we have the scent and we will follow on!

The marginal reading of one Old Version is even stronger-"the Kingdom of Heaven is gotten by force and they that thrust men." You cannot win a good place in God's Kingdom without a fight. I tell you I shall employ FORCE to possess the Kingdom. It will not be the force of bullets. It will not be the force of guns. It will not be the force of numbers. It will not be the force of personality. It will not be the force of organization and promotion. I ask God to give me the mightiest force of all-the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. Holy ones are looking down upon us and they are saying, "Rise up, and take the Kingdom!" A great cloud of witnesses from all the centuries and all the ages is looking down upon us from the battlements of that unseen realm of spirit as the final battles of God's sons are fought for the possession of the Kingdom territory of God. The last contest for the dominion of this earth is heating up. The supremacy of God's Kingdom over every other kingdom and power is now to be asserted, without earthly weapons of war, but with the spiritual weapons of prayer, faith and the power of God.

By the army of God the claims of the Kingdom of God are to be enforced; for all that is within us, and all the world, must bow to the supremacy of God's Christ and the will of the Father in heaven. The weapons of the Spirit are infinitely more potent than all the guns that ever were fired, than all the battles that ever were fought, than all the bloody fields that ever were won; for the Holy Spirit's conquests are made without any of the weapons of men. They are made by a power greater than these. The Kingdom of God is gotten by violence-by taking sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death by the throat, and saying, "You shall not rule this earth! Nor shall you rule this earth that I am! I am the Lord's! The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof!" That is the only way the Kingdom of Heaven will ever be won-by violence, by those who know how to thrust men with the sword of the Spirit, a two-edged sword that is sharper than steel.

The kind of faith God is looking for in His sons is tenacious faith-the faith that embraces the promise and will not let it go. That is how Jacob became Israel-"I will not let you go until you bless me." This is a warfare. The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force. I have never received anything from God beyond mere merciful blessings that came easy. It has taken asking, seeking, knocking, and pressing violently through until the victory is secured. Babies can't get violent. But even they can cry until you act! Children aren't sent out to war. The immature do not possess the Kingdom. The spiritually lazy do not become sons of God. Salvation is free. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, with all of His gifts, is free. And that is where all the children of God stop. But nothing beyond that is free. Everything else in God costs. And the Kingdom of God will cost everything you have.

In order to gain this Kingdom we must aim high. There is an interesting passage of scripture in **Judges 3:31**. "And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel." One brother, in commenting on this verse, said, "Not failure, but low aim is the crime! This has been the opinion of all the people who have greatly influenced this world, but it has not been the opinion of those who have not. Is it yours? It was certainly the opinion of Shamgar."

It is probable that many who read these lines have never heard of Shamgar. Except for the one verse quoted above, there is no other mention of him in the whole Bible, but that one single verse speaks volumes! Shamgar was a most remarkable man, and a type of all those who refuse to be hindered from possessing the Kingdom. Shamgar must- be understood in the light of his time. In those days the Philistines had conquered Israel and

were oppressing them ruthlessly. They had disarmed the entire population of Israel, systematically confiscating all the swords and weapons of war and removed them from the land of Israel. Then to make sure that Israel did not organize any resistance to their tyranny, they also deported all the blacksmiths so that not only did they not have weapons, but they lacked the skill and ability to produce them. The people were despondent and felt absolutely hopeless in the face of their oppression. They had lost faith in themselves, but had also lost faith in Yahweh. The situation, indeed, seemed beyond remedy! What could they do? The Philistines were a strong and numerous people with powerful weapons of war and a well trained army.

Enter a man named Shamgar. Shamgar was not a king, nor a general, nor a sergeant. He was not even a private. There is no record of him ever having been in the army or having any military training or experience. Shamgar was a farmer, a very good farmer, no doubt, but only a farmer. He broke a yoke of oxen and used these oxen to plow his fields. At that time this required great boldness and tenacity because when crops were planted, and after much investment and toil, the harvest finally arrived - then the Philistines would sweep down and carry away the crops. The whole land lay in desolation, the roads were overgrown with grass and weeds, the villages were ghost towns, because the people were hiding in the walled cities where they had at least a modicum of safety. The land was helpless before the Philistines.

Shamgar was not satisfied to accept this state of affairs and so he went out, plowed his fields with his oxen, and planted his crops. When harvest time arrived six hundred Philistines armed with flashing swords swept down upon this one farmer. The only weapon at Shamgar's disposal was an ox goad. An ox goad was usually made from the limb of an oak tree. It would be from eight to ten feet long with the bark stripped off and a sharp iron point affixed to the tip. It was used to jab the ox when he tried to get out of the furrow. On the other end of the goad was a flattened piece of metal that was sharpened for the purpose of scraping the dirt off the plow as it collected. Not a very sophisticated weapon of war! But it was all Shamgar had in addition to his fierce determination, his seething resolve, and his violent passion. This situation would not stand! One thing Shamgar was efficient in-the use of an ox goad. In the hands of a man who had handled one from his youth, it could become quite lethal. So when these six hundred Philistines swept down upon Shamgar, he decided that he had had enough; and that he was going to do something about it.

Excuses would have come easy. There was only one farmer with an ox goad and there were six hundred soldiers with gleaming swords. What could any man do without a sword? There was no way to resist such a formidable foe. The best thing to do would be to hide and just let them have the crops. But that kind of reasoning was not to be found in Shamgar's heart. Shamgar had a deep and profound faith in God. He also had a compassionate concern for his people, and for his own dignity as an Israelite and a child of God. Armed with this resolve, he determined to take a stand at whatever the cost. He stood in his field and as the Philistines came upon him, he grabbed that ox goad and began to swing it! There must have been some astonished Philistines. And the battle that ensued became the battle of all battles in the annals of military history. There were skulls cracking all over the place. That mighty oak limb with its iron tip on one end and its flat iron on the other was whirling like the propellers of a helicopter. They must have thought that they had come upon a hornet's nest because they were getting it from all sides. No one could even get close enough to Shamgar to thrust him with a sword! They were jabbed and cut and pounded on. When the dust settled there were six hundred dead Philistines scattered through the fields. Then there is that remarkable little phrase that says it all: "He also delivered Israel." What a warrior Shamgar was! What a mighty man of God! His popularity soared so high that the people made him a Judge. He was the third Judge that delivered and ruled the people of Israel.

From this farmer in ancient Israel there rings through the centuries and millenniums a message for each of God's elect in this vital hour at the end of the age. The first lesson has to do with the crime of low aim. Most Christians never really try to accomplish anything significant in the Kingdom of God because they never really set any high goals. They are satisfied to set their goals low or to set no goals at all and then they generally hit them very accurately. It does not take too much aim to hit the target when there is no target. The target of most Christians is to die and go to heaven. That is not a hard one to miss! It takes no vision, revelation, purpose or violence to die and go to heaven! That has nothing whatever to do with the Kingdom. Being filled with all the fullness of God, conformed to the image of the Son, putting on the mind of Christ, laying hold upon manifested sonship, overcoming death, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption, and bringing in the Kingdom-

ah, those are goals that challenge! Those are goals that have the power to change the world and alter the course of history. Kingdom goals! If you have no Kingdom goals in your life you will never possess the Kingdom. Jesus never preached about dying and going to heaven. He said, "Seek ye first THE KINGDOM OF GOD!" It pains me to say it, but I am certain that many in this hour intellectualize the wonderful truths of sonship and the Kingdom of God, but their hearts are not set on those goals; they have another set of goals that are unnamed, undefined, but very real which control their affections and thus, their lives.

One of the tragedies of life is that many people live their whole lives without ever finding out what they were here for. If they had only known what they were supposed to do they might have done it. But like the faithless Israelites of old, they just wander in the wilderness for forty years. They wander through thirty, sixty, eighty years of life never really knowing where they came from or where they are going. They never see what the purpose of God is in their lives. They have no sense of divine destiny. Like the animals, they eke out a meager existence in their little insignificant and meaningless world of earthly things and carnal pursuits. They never breathe the rarefied air of the heavenlies, or catch a glimpse of the heights of Zion, or taste the powers of the Kingdom of God. It reminds me of a baseball player wandering around inning after inning, and after the ninth inning, finally finding out what the game was all about. If he had only known! That is the way with the church world today. They don't know what the game is all about! They have no idea whatever of what is really going on. But those who have heard the sounding of the trumpet, and received the call to sonship and the Kingdom, are expecting great and mighty things from God! And wonderful and glorious things are happening in their lives in God's today!

Shamgar had a goal. Shamgar had a vision. Shamgar had a hope. Shamgar had a purpose. Shamgar was stirred to radical action, to violent movement. Shamgar's goal was to get free from bondage and to free his people from bondage. It was a high and noble and lofty goal. It was not just an idea in his mind. It was not just an intellectual belief or a theological position. I suppose that every Israelite in Israel secretly nursed the same goal. But Shamgar set his affections upon that goal. Shamgar sought first that goal. It became a burning passion in his heart. Shamgar found the wisdom of God as to how to attain that goal. In spite of all the obstacles and limitations, he trusted God that somehow He would use him to bring that goal to pass. He was going to take a stand and he was going to do it now. He would press his way in, and take the victory by force. He would act violently. And he did it! He delivered himself and his people, and they made him a Judge in Israel. He was just a lowly farmer, and all alone, but they elevated him to the head of the nation. This man who had never done anything but goad an ox became the leader of God's nation on earth. Why? Because he would not take "No" for an answer! And by the grace of God he did it! Advancement is from above. And God blessed him.

These words of brother Paul Mueller are so very pertinent here. "The great issue now before the sons of God has to do with our entrance into the Kingdom of God. This is not a question of our salvation, but of our approach to the throne realm of God's Kingdom where we will eventually rule and reign with Him, making all the blessings and benefits of His dominion available to others. We believe that it is of paramount importance for all sons of God to be vitally concerned with our entrance into that Kingdom realm, thereby making our calling and election sure. Jesus spoke to the people and admonished them: **'Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able'** (Lk. 13:24). Since the Lord has revealed the value and importance of entering into His rest, the word strive has not been in our vocabulary. However, when searching the true meaning from the original, we find this word comes from a Greek word meaning to struggle. Strong's Concordance gives three examples of this word: (1) to compete for a prize, (2) to contend with an adversary, (3) to endeavor to accomplish something. With this understanding, we can better comprehend its use and application in our lives. The root word from the original Greek is AGON and indicates a place of assembly where a contest is being held. Therefore, we might picture ourselves as sons of God struggling to compete for a prize, contending with our adversary, and endeavoring to accomplish something within the great arena of the universe where we are being observed by the whole creation. Because we are aware that all creation is anxiously awaiting that attainment unto full sonship, and that their full release and deliverance depends upon the manifestation thereof, we will strive in the Spirit, not after the flesh, that we might attain to that prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" -end quote

This striving, this pressing, this violence, means that the myths that spiritual warfare is gentlemanly, that you enter and possess and inherit the land essentially unscathed, that it costs relatively little, that all you have to do

is believe and confess, that violent men no longer need to take the Kingdom by force-these myths must forever end. The hour is late, the day of unveiling is at hand. Only an unreserved commitment, only an indestructible faith, only a radical thrust will birth this manchild of the ages and herald the dawn of that blessed age when the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, and all peoples and all nations shall come and walk in the light of the Lord, and there shall be no more curse anywhere forever. Sons of God-let us arise with courage and boldness and give ourselves to the task!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 22 INHERITING THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART TWENTY-TWO

### HEIRS OF GOD INHERITING THE KINGDOM QUALIFICATIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

"In whom we also have obtained AN INHERITANCE, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11).

Having read these words from our beloved brother Paul, three questions only concern us. What is this inheritance? To whom does it belong? How do we obtain it? In order to answer the first of these questions, we are naturally concerned whether the inheritance is worth possessing. If we should be promised an inheritance of a million dollars, I am sure there are few of us who would not become considerably excited. Our interest would be stirred. Our hope would be aroused. If there were conditions laid down which must be fulfilled before we could inherit, we would look carefully at those conditions. We would not risk the loss of our inheritance through indifference or willful disobedience.

Stop to think what a million dollars could do for you if you had it! It could do much, but there is just as much, and more, that it could not do. The power of money to do good and to give happiness is strictly limited. To mention just a few things that it cannot do: It cannot give you an untroubled conscience or peace of mind. If you are sick it can buy you the best medical care, but it cannot guarantee to make or keep you well. Does it give security? After a fashion, yes; yet, those who have it anxiously wonder how long they can keep it, or they may blow it all in just a few months. A thousand hands are outstretched to grab it, by fair means or foul. The ways in which it may be lost or destroyed are too numerous to mention. Nor can it stave off death or prolong life. Its enjoyment is limited strictly to this present world, which is passing away, and it is the matter of only a few years. Such is every human inheritance. We do not despise it for its limited present value. We would simply look at it dispassionately in its true light, in order that we might appreciate the more the words of the hymn writer,

We Christians should ever consider What Christ hath so gloriously taught; For He who hath made us His children Would have us retain in our thought How little things earthly do merit, Lest we who the Kingdom inherit, The heavenly prize leave unsought.

"Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified and made us fit to share the portion which is the inheritance of the saints in the Light. The Father has delivered us and drawn us to Himself out of the control and the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1:12-13) (Amplified). This beautiful passage sets forth the great truth that as saints God is preparing us to receive that which the Spirit identifies as "the INHERITANCE of the saints." What is the inheritance, which is ours as children of God? Do you really know? Of course most Christians have always heard that the grand purpose of our salvation is that we might escape hell and make heaven our home when we die. And most believers accepted this concept without question. But have you ever stopped to prove it for yourself? Did you ever look into the promises of God to see whether it really does say that "heaven" is the inheritance of the saints?

We have surely read these inspired words of instruction: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:3-5). Let me draw your earnest attention to seven wonderful truths revealed in these words of the apostle. (1) We have been, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, begotten again unto a living hope. (2)

This living hope is the hope of an inheritance. (3) This inheritance is incorruptible. (4) This incorruptible inheritance is reserved in heaven-the invisible realm of the Spirit-for us. (5) Until we fully receive our inheritance we are kept by the power of God unto the inheritance-preserved so that we can appropriate it. (6) The inheritance is salvation-full and complete. (7) This full salvation is ready for us-already prepared for us and appointed to us-and shall be revealed in the last time.

Blind to the true nature of our inheritance and the plan by which God is bringing His elect into it, many of the Lord's people make ignorant and unscriptural statements regarding it. For instance, speaking of a departed saint who has passed from this life, they say, "He has gone to his reward." Where does the Bible say such a thing? Nothing could be further from the truth! It is not death that qualifies one to receive his inheritance, but rather, the raising up of one's entire being INTO THE RESURRECTION LIFE OF CHRIST. The hope is a living, quickening hope. It is secured for us by the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. This living hope has been given to us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And "heaven" is NOT the inheritance. The inheritance is merely "reserved" in heaven for us. That is, it is reserved, laid up, retained, earmarked, allocated and proportioned in the realm of the Spirit for us. It is available and accessible in the Spirit. It is there for us. Let us say that you have \$50,000.00 and all of it is in a checking account at First National Bank. The money is all yours-but it is kept, held, reserved, retained, earmarked, allocated and proportioned for you in the bank-until you write a check on it. The check is a claim on the account and by that claim you gain what is "reserved in the bank" for you. You don't have to live in the bank or even go to the bank in order to spend the money. And you don't have to go to some far-off heaven somewhere in order to receive or live out of your inheritance in the Kingdom of God. Faith is our claim upon the inheritance "reserved in heaven-the realm of the Spirit" for us! It is not paid at our death, for it is Jesus who died to give it to us, but is paid upon our claim.

Furthermore, the inheritance is reserved for us, ready to be revealed, that is, paid, "in the last time." Make no mistake about it-the "last time" is not a date on the calendar! That is where so many "end-time" teachers go wrong. They think the last time is a date, so they are always trying to figure out the date, setting dates for the coming of the Lord, the beginning of the great tribulation, the dawn of the millennium, or the manifestation of the sons of God. I do not doubt for one moment that our present age is rapidly drawing to a close, perhaps the new age has already dawned, but that is not the issue here. The Kingdom of God is not an age. The Day of the Lord is not an age. The last time is not a date on the calendar. The last time relates to the people of God entering into and possessing their inheritance! The last time is the finish, the completion, the consummation of our experience in God. It is when we have grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. It is when we have fully put on the mind of Christ. It is when we have gone on to perfection. It is when we have attained unto a perfect man. It is when we have been filled with all the fullness of God. It is when Christ has been raised up within us in all the glory and fullness of Himself. It is when we have spiritually developed into a mature faith, hope, and love. It is the third day, the third feast, and the illumination, life, and authority of the Most Holy Place. It is a time, not on the clock, but in the development of Christ in us. It is not the end of the age that brings the manifestation of the sons of God-it is the manifestation of the sons of God that brings the end of the age. Therefore let us take heart as saints of God, for growth in Christ is far more accessible to each of us than the unknown dawning of a chronological age! The truth and fullness of the wonder of it all only begins to dawn upon our ransomed souls when the spirit of revelation shines with penetrating power upon the eyes of our understanding enabling us to see into the magnificent working of the divine and heavenly scheme.

## HEIRS OF GOD

An heirship always implies an inheritance. If we are made heirs of God, we become partakers in the inheritance left us at the death of the Testator. It comes with the divine sonship, and is ours because our Lord died. In the epistle to the Hebrews, we read of the method whereby the inheritance of the Lord was secured for us. "How much more (than animal sacrifices) shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He (Jesus) is the mediator of the New Testament (covenant, will), that by means of (His) death...they which are called might receive the promise of eternal INHERITANCE" (Heb. 9:14-15).

Notice how the writer tells us that through His death, Christ became the mediator of the New Covenant. And those who are called into this new covenant relationship as sons of God, are given the promise of eternal

inheritance. The writer goes on to say, "For where a testament (will) is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator (the one who made the will)" (Heb. 9: 16). Nothing is more certain than this! A will is worth nothing until the person who made the will has died. This is how our eternal inheritance has come to us. The Lord Jesus loved us-and He died! Now our inheritance has been made sure. Thank God, that there might be no question about our inheritance, that none could rob us of it, that we might be assured of receiving it, Christ arose from the dead to become the executor of His own estate! I have read accounts where an executor squandered an estate and the heirs were cheated out of their rightful inheritance. This cannot possibly happen to the sons of God for Jesus Christ ever liveth to make sure the inheritance goes to the RIGHTFUL HEIRS.

But there is a truth deeper and more wonderful than this. As the ocean includes the seas, the bays, the straits, which, though known by separate names, are parts of its majestic and all-embracing fullness, so is there a dimension of HIS INHERITANCE that encompasses all that is ours in Christ. In the law of the Old Testament priesthood, "the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them. I AM THY PART, and THINK INHERITANCE, among the children of Israel" (Num. 18:20). It was a very satisfactory arrangement for the pious priest. He could not own any land in Israel. But he could well dispense with the olive yards and vineyards, the cornfields and homesteads of Canaan, if he might have GOD HIMSELF as the strength of his heart, the source of his supply, and his portion forever. And the Psalmist eagerly caught at the thought, gladly surrendering all portion in this life, if only he might be "satisfied" with God (Ps. 17: 15). "The LORD is the portion of MINE INHERITANCE and of my cup: Thou maintainest my lot. Yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Ps. 17:5-6).

Ah, our inheritance is God Himself! That is the inheritance of the kings and priests of the Kingdom of God. Not golden harps. Not golden streets. Not walls of jasper or pearly gates. Not a cabin in the corner or a mansion over the hilltop. Not wings and a white nightgown with which to flit about over the Elysium hills of glory. There is something deeper, more inward and rapturous-the possession of God. HEIRS OF G-O-D! Not merely heirs of the things of God, but heirs of God Himself. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! Heirs of all the communicable glories of the divine nature and power. To know Him, to explore His being, to live on His fullness, to discover new tracts and continents in the "terra incognita" of Godhead, to see His glory, to be changed into His image, to receive His authority and power, to be filled with His wisdom and knowledge-this is "the heritage of the servants of the Lord." Glory to God!

Beloved, you and I have been given an inheritance in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has left us a title deed to His very own wisdom, righteousness, nature, glory and power. Of course, Jesus lived in absolute poverty while on this earth; He owned no land, no vast estate, no great herds of cattle, no store of gold or precious stones, no account in the bank. But He willed to us riches greater than the diamond mines of South Africa, greater than the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, greater than the gross national product of the United States. Jesus gave us an inheritance that makes us far richer than a Rockefeller, Bill Gates, or any Middle Eastern oil sheik. It is the inheritance of all the riches of His very own life and glory! Once you understand the value of this inheritance you will count everything else in your life and in this world as mere rubbish. You will seek after it with all your mind, strength and heart, and be a glad and willing heir to His legacy. The most important thing we can seek God for in this life is the value of our inheritance in Christ-and it's waiting to be claimed!

## **INHERITING THE KINGDOM**

We are learning what it means to be a son of God, realizing God's great plan and purposes involved. One of the most important rights of sonship is that of inheritance. Heirship depends entirely upon our relationship with God. When we were born again, born of God, we became children of God and consequently heirs of the Almighty Father. This is an aspect of the great and wonderful purpose of God in redemption. Inheritance is also concerned with law and nationality-one inherits in the country of his parentage and according to the laws of that land. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God human beings have to be born again-of the Spirit. The Kingdom of God is the realm or land of our inheritance, and that great land is entered into by birth. It is there in the land of the Kingdom of God that we are able to see, enter, possess and inherit Christ as our All-in-all.

Having been separated and set apart for the Father's work in His Kingdom, we are then given our inheritance, which is the Kingdom of God. That is the condition of the will-the full inheritance is given only upon our

reaching maturity. Upon reaching spiritual maturity the Kingdom of God is our rightful inheritance. Then the Lord says unto us, "**Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**" (Mat. 25:34). When Father set forth His plans and purposes in the beginning, He determined to give His Kingdom to His sons when the time was ripe for it. According to the Amplified Bible, we are to receive the Kingdom of God as our own! And that is exactly what it means to 'inherit' the Kingdom! After we have learned all the lessons of our walk in Christ, after we have endured our share of the sufferings of Christ, we are then fully qualified to receive our rightful inheritance in the Kingdom of God. We shall then have no worldly or personal kingdoms of man. We shall own no other kingdom but the Kingdom of God, which becomes our very own.

How little does the wailing infant, over whose cradle hangs the photograph of his father's vast estate, understand of the inheritance to which he has been born! The old homestead, the far-spread lands, the immense business enterprises, the enormous investments, the accumulated wealth, the prestige of fame and prosperity and power—all these things are his; but years must pass ere they can be truly realized or appreciated. And how little do most earnest and zealous and saintly children of God conceive of that inheritance which is ours so soon as we become the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. As a matter of right all God's nature and power and glory and wisdom and dominion is ours the moment we are born into His family; as a vast tract of land, filled with woods and rivers and oil wells, belongs to the heir at the moment of birth. But, as a matter of fact, we shall never occupy all until we have grown up into the maturity of Christ. His gifts are for His children, but His inheritance is reserved for His full-grown sons. We are urged, therefore, by the apostle Paul, to press forward from the gift-realm into the inheritance-realm! **'Therefore it is said...He bestowed gifts on men. His intention was the perfecting and full equipping of the saints, that they should do the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body, that it might develop until we all attain...at really mature manhood—the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection—the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ, and the completeness found in Him'** (Eph. 4:8,12-13). Together we can praise God that He has brought us to that day!

Here is a scene with which we are all familiar. The car is humming along the road. Suddenly there's a sputter, a fruitless pumping of the gas pedal and then a full halt. You're out of gas! Hundreds of thousands of motorists have that experience each year, and I must confess that it has happened to me a few times, too. The problem is not technological. The basic problem is usually human error—either a failure to plan ahead or heedless attention to an obviously depleted gas level. That failure to plan ahead is common. Although the motorist is aware of the distance to be traveled and of the gas performance of his car, he sets out without adequate fuel. Closed gas stations or long distances of remote highway on which there are no service stations spell trouble. Simple preparation would have averted the dilemma, but after some inconvenience the destination will likely be reached. The Kingdom of God is another journey that might not end up where we would like it to. Unfortunately many Christians are content to drift aimlessly with no thought of whether they are prepared for the journey of journeys. Often they are prepared for the wrong journey, and therefore miss the Kingdom. They are getting ready to fly away to heaven instead of preparing to inherit the Kingdom of God!

There are four classes of people in relation to the Kingdom of God today. There are those who see the Kingdom. Then there are those who enter the Kingdom. After that there are some who press in to possess the Kingdom. And finally there is a people that inherits the Kingdom. It is one thing to see the Kingdom, but quite another thing to inherit the Kingdom. To see the Kingdom is vision. To enter the Kingdom is exploration. To possess the Kingdom is appropriation. And to inherit the Kingdom is to fully and permanently utilize and exercise all of its riches, abundance, position, responsibilities and powers.

Those who inherit the Kingdom are the ones who sit with Jesus upon His throne and rule with Him; those who only enter the Kingdom enjoy its blessings and benefits and they serve Him, not reign with Him. They are citizens and subjects of the Kingdom, not kings and priests. Those who enter the Kingdom will be a great multitude, as John the Revelator saw them... **"After this (the sealing of the 144,000) I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell**

among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 7:9-10,15-17).

It should not be difficult to understand that those who sit with Christ in His throne occupy an altogether different position than those who merely enter the Kingdom and serve Him before the throne. "To him that overcometh shall I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). Those who inherit the Kingdom and reign with Christ upon His throne are a select and chosen people, especially prepared for this position, a small number in comparison with the "great multitude" serving Him before His throne. The requirements for those who inherit the Kingdom are much higher than for the ones merely entering the Kingdom and partaking of its wondrous blessings and bounteous benefits.

Some who read these lines are familiar with the visions of Annie of Argentina. In one of her visions she recounts, "While I was with Him in the wonder and glory of His invisible world, He showed me His own entering into the possession which He gives them. He explained that there were two distinct times of tremendous importance in which there could be an entering into one's possession. Now, before the storm or later, after the storm. Those who entered their possession before the storm became His elect ones, with a far superior place and development. In them the perfect will of God was brought forth. Occupying a place very near to Him, they became the instruments of God in His workings. Those who entered their possession after the storm were perfected upon a definitely inferior plane." I believe the "storm" represents God's dealings in judgment. Those who now gladly submit to all of Father's dealings and chastisements upon His sons become qualified to occupy a place of intimacy with Him and share His glorious throne. Those who, though His children, must be dealt with in judgment in order to bring His will into their lives, occupy a lesser place in His Kingdom, a place of serving rather than reigning.

The Kingdom of God is something we inherit. Jesus Christ of Nazareth has already inherited the Kingdom of His Father and now sits upon His Father's throne. And, like a multimillionaire Father, He has written His will, designating each one of us as potential inheritors of His vast, unlimited estates-called the Kingdom of God! Paul says that we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8: 17). Yes, heirs- not yet inheritors! All creation is waiting with eager anticipation for the heirs to become inheritors, for all shall be delivered and blessed in the overflow of their glory and power.

Paul Mueller has written, "Obviously, there is a difference between entering the new land and inheriting it. As soon as Israel entered their Promised Land of Canaan, they were to appoint judges 'in all thy gates' (Deut. 16: 18). If their judges rendered righteous judgment and observed many other principles of righteousness and obedience to the law and word of the Lord, Israel would then inherit the Promised Land of Canaan. This truth applies to this new land of the Kingdom of God on earth as well as to the old land of Canaan. In entering our Promised Land of the Kingdom of God on earth now, we are beginning to experience a new and different set of tests and trials that qualify us to LIVE IN and INHERIT this land of promise.

Jesus explained the high calling of His disciples, which was to inherit the Kingdom of God and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. He said to them, 'Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations (testings). And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' In speaking to His disciples as He did, Jesus fully recognized the trials and testings they had gone through with Him. Jesus said because those disciples remained with Him all through their adversities and trials-being literally put to the proof through those difficult times-they would inherit the Kingdom. This establishes a pattern for us also. The early disciples were appointed to the Kingdom as a result of the tests and trials they endured and by being obedient to the work of the Spirit within them. Even so do we inherit the fullness of the Kingdom of God by being tested and tried. We are entering the Kingdom 'through much tribulation' (Acts 14:22). If our testings are increasing, it is because Father is pressing us into the fullness of His Kingdom with greater haste and intensity. Because we are proven by experience to be true, faithful and righteous, we shall eat and drink of Him at His table in His Kingdom. We shall also sit with Him on His spiritual throne to judge the world in truth and in righteousness" -end quote.

That the hope of honor and glory may be fastened firmly in our spiritual minds let us examine more closely this principle of inheritance. When a titled person dies, the heirs inherit all that is his: the family crest, the property, the land, the fortune, or possibly even a great mass of debts. What I am saying is that sons and heirs inherit everything pertaining to the title of their father. Even in life all children inherit genetically something from their father, such as his nature, life, love, care, and daily provision. But how much of his wealth they will each receive, a wise father will determine by their individual capacities for profiting by possessions. He will not bequeath a mansion to a son who loves only nature and prefers to live in a shack on the creek bank, nor will he leave a million dollars to one who has no appreciation of the value of money and would squander it all in a short time. And he most certainly will not give the family business into the hands of an irresponsible, reckless, and lazy son who has never prepared himself for assuming such responsibilities.

This practical principle also operates with the Lord in the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven, for Jesus has taught us that "The kingdom of heaven is as a man who was about to take a long journey, and he called his servants together and entrusted them with his property. To one he gave five talents (probably about \$5,000), to another two, to another one; to each in proportion to his own personal ability. Then he departed and left the country. He who received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he gained five talents more. And likewise he who had received the two talents; he also gained two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came and brought him five more, saying, Master, you entrusted to me five talents; see, here I have gained five talents more. His master said to him, Well done, you upright, honorable, admirable and faithful servant! You have been faithful and trustworthy over a little; I will put you in charge of much. Enter into and share the joy-the delight, the blessedness-which your master enjoys. And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, Master, you entrusted two talents to me; here I have gained two talents more. His master said to him, Well done, you upright, honorable, admirable and faithful servant! You have been faithful and trustworthy over a little; I will put you in charge of much. Enter into and share the joy-the delight, the blessedness-which your master enjoys.

"He who had received one talent also came forward, saying, Master, I knew you to be a harsh and hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you had not winnowed the grain; so I was fearful, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is your own. But his master answered him, You wicked and lazy and idle servant! Did you indeed know that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather grain where I have not winnowed? Then you should have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I could have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has shall more be given, and he will be furnished richly so that he will have abundance. And throw the good-for-nothing servant into the outer darkness (a realm of loss outside the Kingdom); there shall be weeping and grinding of teeth (in sorrow at being denied the power and glory of the Kingdom)" (Mat. 25:14-30).

Christians as a whole have very faulty ideas concerning ruling and reigning with Christ, and the structure and administration of the Kingdom in general. They imagine that by sheer grace they will be caught up into heavenly realms of power and glory. But the Spirit of God teaches us clearly that "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7). The whole passage (Rev. 21) mentions three classes in relation to the Kingdom-first, the unconverted, who have their part in the lake of fire-the purging, purifying fires of purposeful, redemptive judgment; second, saved peoples with God dwelling among them, children of God who have an entrance into the Kingdom to receive of its blessings and benefits; third, heirs and sons inheriting all things.

George Wylie once gave the following illustration, which beautifully makes the point. He said, "In entering the Kingdom you are just being there, you have a place in the Kingdom, you are a subject of the Kingdom: but to inherit it is something else. This might help you to understand it better. I live in Canada, and am a Canadian subject. Many times I cross the border between here and the U.S.A. When I cross the border I have entered the United States, but I am just a visitor there, I am not even a citizen of that country; but I have entered it when I left Canada and crossed the border. As I travel around the U.S.A. I meet many people who are citizens of the land; they belong there, but I am a foreigner, nevertheless I have entered that country and enjoy its hospitality. But if in some way I inherited the country, I could go to the White House and say to the President,

'Now Mr. President, you kindly get out of here, I am taking over this nation, for I have inherited it.' So you see there is a great difference between entering a place and inheriting it.

"When one enters the Kingdom of God, he is there, he is a citizen, a subject of that country. But when one inherits it, he is not just a subject of the Kingdom, he is the owner, the controller, the authority, the power, the government! This is something greater than merely entering into the Kingdom and enjoying the blessings and rights of citizenship. The qualifications for entering the Kingdom and those for inheriting the Kingdom are altogether different" -end quote.

That this great honor and glory to which Christ is now bringing us through many trials, testings, and sufferings, is predicated upon our overcoming in them, cannot be disputed in the light of what He further states in chapters two and three of the book of the Revelation. Oh, let us give earnest heed to these tremendous statements! **"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" (Rev. 2:26-27).** **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).** **"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7).** It is the son who is the heir of the heavenly glories-not simply any child of God you may meet on the street or in a church meeting. Let not carnal, self-willed, immature Christians imagine for one moment that it will be given to them to reign with Christ without first having shed their carnal minds and put on the righteousness, knowledge, wisdom, obedience, and maturity of the Son of God.

God only commits Kingdom authority and power to those sons who have reached the spiritual stature of maturity. The scriptures refer to this as the "adoption". Paul speaks of this adoption when he says, **"Having predestinated us unto the ADOPTION OF SONS by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph.1:5).** To understand the various New Testament references to adoption, we must first have some background to show how the Oriental customs in this regard differ from our own Western concepts. Here in the West, adoption is the taking of a child from one family and making it the member of another family. The Greek word for adoption is HUIOTHESIA. The first half is HUIOS, the common noun for an adult son. The latter half is THESIA, meaning a placement or an installation. In Israel, as in many Eastern countries, after a male "child" had come to full age and had been instructed and trained and had proven through obedience that he was able to assume the responsibility of the family name, wealth, and power, then the father held a public ceremony where some of the families and neighbors in Israel gathered together and the father publicly placed his boy as a "son".

Jesus, in His relationship to His heavenly Father, passed through these two stages, as the prophet points out. **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..." (Isa. 9.6).** Consider these statements: (1) a CHILD is BORN (2) a SON is GIVEN. Jesus fulfilled the first when He came into the world as a babe. The "child" was born in Bethlehem. But thirty years passed before the "son" was given at the Jordan river.

When Jesus was twelve years old the revelation of who He was came to Him, but even then **"He went down with them (Mary and Joseph), and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them...and Jesus increased in wisdom and (spiritual) stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:51-52).** After passing through thirty years of spiritual development under the dealings of His Father, learning His ways and complete obedience, in a public ceremony at Jordan, with multitudes of the families of Israel present with John the Baptist, God declared His Son's SONSHIP: **"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am WELL PLEASED!" (Mat. 3:16-17).** From that day forward Jesus assumed the responsibility of His Father's name, wealth, and power, and God's SON became manifested to the world, glorifying the Father in word and in deed. That is when the Kingdom of God came among men.

The proclamation of adoption gave the son certain privileges not enjoyed by him before this time. These privileges are important to all who have received the call to sonship and will teach us much about our own adoption as God's sons if we think upon them. First, the son at the adoption ceremony was given the right to

use his father's name. He had the power of attorney and could buy or sell and do business in his father's name. Secondly, at this time the son was given his inheritance, all the wealth that the father would entrust to him. It was at this time that the prodigal son came to his father to request of him all the portion of goods that belonged to him. Thirdly, and of tremendous importance for our consideration, the son was promoted to equality with his father! None of this was his by right of birth, but only as an attainment received following years of growth, development, discipline, schooling, testing, and experience. Ah, at this present time we know in part and prophesy in part and our spiritual life and ministry is limited to that "measure" given to us as the children of God. But the Spirit witnesses around the world, by incontrovertible witness and testimony, in dreams and visions, through the mouths of holy prophets and apostles, and by the spirit of wisdom and revelation to many thousands of saints, that the hour is wonderfully close at hand for the adoption, the placing, the manifestation of the sons of God, the full, complete, qualified, prepared, body of that firstborn Son. What a day this is for us, and for the whole creation that groans and travails for deliverance!

The implication of such a marvelous event as the manifestation of the sons of God is staggering to the imagination, and it is small wonder that the immature and careless Christians know nothing at all of it even as the day of manifestation draws nigh. But the implication it holds not only for those who have received the call, but for the entire creation in the age and the ages to come, is beyond expression or even imagination. Jesus Christ, the lonely carpenter of Nazareth, the first manifested Son, who challenged death, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, cast out devils, wrought mighty signs and wonders and miracles, and had power over the laws of nature and all things, was but one man placed as the Son of the Almighty Father in heaven; but what glory it will be when the entire family of sons is placed by adoption and stands up in the earth to do the works Jesus did and even greater works than those!

Earlier I mentioned that an adopted son shares equality with his father. Suppose you are driving down the street and pass a store with a sign out front that reads, BROWN AND SON HARDWARE-what does this suggest to you? Naturally, it suggests that Mr. Brown is the owner of the store and that Mr. Brown has a son who is partner with him in the business. But it further suggests that this son is grown, that he has reached the age of maturity, experience, and responsibility where he can be taken into his father's business as a partner-as a mature business man! You certainly would not expect, upon entering the store and asking for the son, to be presented to a ten year old boy or an infant in a playpen! Nor have we ever seen a sign across the front of a store that read: BROWN AND CHILD HARDWARE! This, then, is exactly the difference between a child of God and a son of God. A child is born, but a son is developed. Since we have been born of God we have God's nature, the divine nature. But we must grow up into God's character and ability! That is what it really means to be a manifested son of God!

So many Christians today are satisfied with merely an entrance into the Kingdom realm of God where as children they can enjoy the many blessings and the wonderful benefits of God's mercy, goodness and kindness. Their eyes are blind to the higher purposes of God, and any efforts to lead them on to higher ground are rebuffed and resisted by a human reasoning that asks why one should waste time on "deep things" when they are already saved and "on their way to heaven." But the new birth, while it is the most astounding miracle of the ages, is, nevertheless, but the birth of a mere spiritual infant. There are many further steps that must follow this birth if one is to come into all the glories and the full heritage which is prepared for those who follow on to know the Lord. The life of God is a free gift of unmerited mercy and favor. But heavenly attainments of spiritual wealth and power and glory and usefulness are given to those who grow up unto the **"measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"** (Eph. 4:13). There is great glory, wisdom, power, and responsibility awaiting those who grow up to be God's sons. Let us press forward unto SONSHIP!

## QUALIFICATIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

God's Kingdom is a body politic. And there are two parties: God's righteous government, and the opposition. The opposition has been trying for six thousand years, by any and every means, to gain control of the government. But it has been a disheartening battle. The Word says, **"The government shall be upon HIS (Christ, Head and body) shoulders...of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever"** (Isa. 9:6-7). Because this rule can never diminish or cease, every apparent victory of

the enemy, in the end, has turned out to be a defeat. Of course, God planned it that way from the beginning for our learning and development in the Kingdom.

Out of God's own mouth proceeds the assertion, "I have created the waster to destroy" (Isa. 54:16). We gather from this passage that God has created the negative realm for a specific purpose, to serve as a backdrop for the positive realm. That purpose is stated in the opening words of the above quoted verse: "I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an INSTRUMENT for His work." The "smith" that "bloweth upon the fire" is also the one who heats the furnace seven times hotter! "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you" (I Pet. 4:12). Our trials and testings are associated in the Word of God with the ministry of Satan. You never thought of Satan having a MINISTRY? Meditate deeply upon the following passages and I do not doubt that you will see how it is that God Himself sends the adversary into our lives to accomplish that work which can only be done by adversity, trouble, temptation, processing, trials and testings. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be TEMPTED (tested, tried) OF THE DEVIL. And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Mat. 4:1-3). "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, THAT YE MAY BE TRIED...be thou faithful...and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, THAT HE MAY SIFT YOU AS WHEAT: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Lk. 22:31-32).

A friend has written, "God is constructing a temple, made of living stones, through which to manifest Himself throughout the ages to come. Satan was created as a chisel and hammer to be used in the construction of this building. The living stones that are even now being placed in this temple have been chosen, says the Lord, in the 'furnace of affliction' (Isa. 48:10). God, however, is mercy; God is love; God is compassion. He is a healer, not a destroyer. It was, nonetheless, necessary that an oven be heated in which to purify the gold—a furnace in which the wood, hay, and stubble were to be burned—but God, in His nature of love and goodness, could not perform the necessary affliction. It was for this reason that He created AN INSTRUMENT that was capable of performing this essential action in the lives of men, for in Satan God literally created a chastening rod. If we can realize that behind the acts of Satan is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes' (Ps. 119:7). Praise God! When we begin to see the good that comes from the assaults of Satan in our lives, we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and the depth of the wisdom of His great mind. He is truly a God of power and might, and all things are in His hand and by His design— even this adversary whom we call the Devil."

The human race fell to the deception of the opposition at the very beginning. But instead of that being a victory for the adversary, it turned out to be a blessing for the human race. For now, not only will all men be restored to what was lost by the fall, but those who are called and chosen are translated to the heavenly realm, to a position as far removed from a perfect Edenic state as the east is from the west. The opposition even went as far as to crucify the King, the Lord of glory. But that seeming defeat for Christ's cause was a signal victory, for on the third day the crucified One arose from the tomb, thus breaking the sway of death and delivering all who were in bondage from its clutches. Because He arose, so shall every son of Adam arise. "The hour is coming, in the which A-L-L that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth..." (Jn. 5:28-29). The Kingdom of the righteous One has not yet been brought forth in all its fullness and perfection over the earth. We are passing through a period of preparation in which those who have proven themselves faithful to the rightful King and His cause, are being sealed, and now joyfully await the day when, upon the full manifestation of the Kingdom, they will be raised to great honor and power and majesty, to reign as heavenly kings over the earth, to bring life and light and love to all mankind and to all worlds and all creatures throughout the endless vastnesses of infinity.

Faithful adherence to the principles of the government is the one and only condition laid down by which men attain to these positions of honor. But through the ages the opposition has been trying to overthrow the dominion of the Kingdom of God and to gain the ascendancy by enlisting the supporters of the government in his own cause. He enlists them and leads them to work against their sovereign Head by confusing them concerning the principles of the government. Those who thus follow the adversary are rebels, traitors,

unfaithful servants. They can never come to honor. That doesn't mean they can't be saved- it means that they forfeit their place in the government of God. They have betrayed a sacred trust in that which is considered least: they have been faithless in a few things. Thus they have proven themselves unfit to be entrusted with more important matters. I have seen brethren who received the call to sonship take the word of the Kingdom and prostitute it with the ways of religion and the methods of the flesh, for financial gain, for a name, for a following, to build a little kingdom around themselves, to control men's lives, or simply because they lacked the faith and consecration to walk out the principles of the Kingdom of God. They can never, with the faithful, be made rulers over many things. And such is the sad state and condition of the church in general of the present day.

The Lord has, in mercy, allowed the least faithless of the popular church systems to declare enough of the gospel to lead a few to the Saviour. Some of these receive and teach a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit, with gifts, and healings, and blessings and miracles. But from here on, practically everything that is taught is nothing but defilement and shame: nothing but the traditions of the elders, and the lies and deceptions of the adversary. Oh, that we all might now leave our delusions and press on toward perfection. My God, lead us onward and upward to "be no more children, tossed to and fro, carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15). Adult spiritual perfection alone will win the prize incomparable at the end of the race. And that perfection can be attained only by leaving the popular crowd: by seeking the Lord who is our life, and by trusting Him to take us all the way in to His crucifixion, and then into all His glorious fullness of resurrection life and light and glory. Let us die to all that defiles. Let us awaken to righteousness and truth and reality.

From out of the masses of the redeemed our Father in heaven is even now calling and preparing a people to inherit the Kingdom of God, a people that has learned through the processing's of this Day to let the mind of Christ dwell in them. They live and act out of that perfect, holy, wise, glorious mind. From the hosts of the redeemed He is raising up a company of kings and priests to share His glorious throne and dominion. Even now they are reigning over a few things, and soon they shall be given dominion over many things. By the spirit of revelation these have been quickened to the knowledge that they are integral parts of Himself-all the sons of God elect according to the purpose of Him from the very foundation of the world. Oh, with what incredible faithfulness and omnipotent power our heavenly Father has with His chastening rod and His tender mercies molded the vessels of glory appointed to His Kingdom! Ah, my brother, my sister! Strip for the race! Let nothing impede your progress now. Cast off every weight and the sin which so easily besets us, looking unto Jesus, who is both the author and the finisher of our faith.

Just as there are certain things which are essential prerequisites to inheriting the Kingdom of God, so there are certain things which are hindrances and barriers and which stop a man from inheriting it. Certain of these barriers we must already know for they are the opposites of the things that are the qualifications for the Kingdom. Just as the childlike, the forgiving, and the serving spirit are all necessary passports to the Kingdom, so the proud, the bitter, and the selfish spirit are hindrances and barriers to the Kingdom. The apostle Paul, earnestly contending with the carnality of the saints in the church at Corinth, speaks to believers about such a mundane thing as suing each other at the law. He admonishes them in the love of Christ that it is a shame for them to do this. He is trying to persuade them that this is not something the elect of God should be doing. They, like Jesus, should be willing to suffer loss rather than fight and contend with one another over earthly things. How can we rule and reconcile all things in mercy and love, if we demand our rights and use the law against those who wrong us today? That very spirit is contrary to the principles of the Kingdom! It will keep you off the throne of righteous judgment, my friend!

By the wisdom given to him by the Lord, Paul writes, "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous (believers) shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:7-10).

The above list is not pleasant, but it needs to be published. These things remind us that the principles of the Kingdom must be laid in our everyday lives. It is easy to relish the deep teaching of the Kingdom, and revel in the hope of the glory that is coming, but the nature of holiness and love and perfection must become expressed in every word and deed of those who call themselves the sons of God. We may not be subject to the grosser sins of the flesh, but there is also selfishness, anger, jealousy, idle words, faultfinding, condemning, dissension and a hundred other personality traits that defile the Kingdom. There is a Kingdom of God to which we must give answer every day of our lives. There is an eternal Kingdom of power and glory to be "inherited" or lost. There is an eternal issue to all of life. It has its terminal point in the eternal Kingdom. There is something then at stake-vitally and desperately at stake. It is our inheritance, our place, our usefulness, our reward, our very future in the government of God!

A passage in Galatians says essentially the same thing: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). Do you know any Christians who do such things? Do you practice these things yourself? If you do, then you can be assured that you will not inherit the Kingdom of God. You will not enter into the glory God has prepared for you. You will be ruled "disqualified". Disqualified for the Kingdom! Ah, you will be saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but will forfeit your opportunity to rule and reign with Christ. This is not judgment and condemnation I am preaching today- this is the solemn truth and wisdom of God who is raising up kings and priests who shall REIGN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS! Only the righteous can reign in righteousness!

In God's Kingdom today there are great spiritual rewards. There is joy unspeakable and full of glory, and righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost. But there is a Kingdom of life, of incorruption, of immortality, of universal rule and dominion, of almighty power and glory that lies just before us. But we will never know it or taste it unless we lay aside what is keeping us from entering in. The exhortation of the first perfect Son of God reaches us even today, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Lk. 13:24). This is referring to how a pack animal, in order to go through a narrow opening in the gate of a city, first had to have its baggage all unloaded. It was only after being thus disencumbered that a beast of burden could squeeze through. The sad reason that some who have heard the call to sonship do not enter into the Kingdom is that they are unwilling to rid themselves of all the baggage that is keeping them from the will of God. They are hanging on to many things, fleshly or religious, being afraid to let go of them and trust God to be all to them. Many believers have barely gotten the aroma of the rich enjoyment of Christ that is available to them today. They stand in the Outer Court, or in the Holy Place, and never enter into the Most Holy Place, into the very presence of God, into the fullness of incorruptible life, glory and power, because they are attached to an outward, organizational, ceremonial, ritualistic, creedal, emotional, sentimental and works-oriented religious realm. Let us lay aside the weights and the sin which so easily besets us and run the race. If there is something that is keeping you from inheriting the Kingdom, cast it aside. Do not be encumbered, my beloved, so that you cannot fully enter in to inherit your promised land. The Kingdom of God lies waiting before us. The door is open, and all who hear the call may enter in. Let me say boldly that no one is too weak or too feeble. The ones who do not enter are simply unwilling. No matter what your state or your condition, you can turn today to the heavenly Father, the Father of mercies, the Father of glory, and He will strengthen you, nurture you, and empower you to inherit the everlasting Kingdom. Arise, and enter in!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 23 INHERITING THE KINGDOM [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART TWENTY-THREE

### THE POOR IN SPIRIT CORRUPTION DOES NOT INHERIT

We are learning what it means to be a son of God, realizing God's great plan and purposes involved. One of the most important rights of sonship is that of *inheritance*. Heirship depends entirely upon our relationship with God. When we were born again, born of God, we became children of God and consequently potential *inheritors* of all that pertains to our Almighty Father. One inherits in the country of his parentage and according to the laws of that land. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter into the Kingdom of God human beings have to be **born again**-of the **Spirit**. The Kingdom of God is the realm or land of our inheritance, and that great land is entered by birth. It is there in the land of the Kingdom of God that we are able to see, enter, possess and inherit Christ as our All-in-all.

Sometimes when a person inherits money or an estate, conditions are laid down which must be fulfilled before that person can receive his inheritance. That principle is also true in the Kingdom of God. For instance, one of the conditions in the Kingdom is that the full inheritance is given only upon our reaching spiritual *maturity*. Another condition is *overcoming* the world, the flesh, and the devil. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7). To be poor in spirit is yet another condition for inheriting, as Jesus taught, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:3). We must also undergo a mighty change in order to receive our inheritance, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50). Only those who possess the spirit of ministering to and serving their needy brethren and the groaning creation shall have any inheritance in the Kingdom, for it was to those who saw the Lord hungry, and gave Him food; who saw the Lord thirsty, and gave Him drink; who saw the Lord naked, and clothed Him; who saw the Lord sick, and visited Him, and in prison, and went to Him; it is to these that the King says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mat. 25:34-46).

There are four classes of people in relation to the Kingdom of God today. There are those who see the Kingdom. Then there are those who enter the Kingdom. After that there are some who press their way in to possess the Kingdom. And finally there is a people that inherits the Kingdom. To see the Kingdom is vision or revelation. To enter the Kingdom is exploration, as when the spies went in and spied out the land of Canaan. To possess the Kingdom means appropriation, as when Joshua led the children of Israel to conquer the land. And to inherit the Kingdom is to fully and permanently utilize all of its riches, abundance, provisions and position; and to fulfill all of its responsibilities and exercise all of its powers, as Israel did once the land was fully possessed. That is the power and glory of inheritance in the Kingdom of God!

### THE POOR IN SPIRIT

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:3). It seems strange to say that the poor in spirit inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; rather it would seem that the rich in spirit should inherit the Kingdom! There is a great depth here that can only be plumbed by the wisdom of God. The things of the spirit are always contrary to the logic of the natural mind. Only when we are willing to reject our minds and our wisdom does God draw nigh to us and give us light, true light. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

It is in that glorious sermon called "The Sermon on the Mount" that Jesus reveals this great truth. The Sermon on the Mount announces the laws or principles of the Kingdom of God. The giving of the Kingdom of Heaven to the poor in spirit sets the tone for these laws. To be poor in spirit does not mean to be lacking in spirit, but

indicates an attitude of heart. The Greek word used for poor is PTOCHOS. It is one of two words for "poor" in the Greek language. While the other word, PENES, is used to describe one who has fewer possessions, and has to work hard for a living, the word PTOCHOS describes the man who has absolutely nothing at all. It means a pauper or a beggar. It has connections with the root word PROSSEIN which means to couch or cower. It describes the poverty of one who has been beaten to his knees. To be "poor in spirit" is to become like Jesus, who "made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. 2:7). For, "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor (pstchos), that ye through His poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8 9).

Ah, we cannot come to be taught of God feeling within ourselves that we are understanding, we are wisdom, we are power, we are creators, we are kings and rulers, or that we have anything that commends itself to God. We must be **poor** in spirit, **poor** in attitude-unclothed of self. The word "spirit" is used many times to describe an attitude of heart or a state of mind. If we say of someone, "He has a good spirit," we don't mean that he has an holy angel or a well-mannered ghost living inside of him. We mean that he has a good attitude, disposition, temperament, personality, demeanor, and expression. The beatitudes are just that-attitudes of being. They are the BE-ATTITUDES, the very attitudes the sons of God must **become**. Jesus said in effect, "The attitude of a poor person is the same attitude that will help you to inherit the Kingdom of God." But He does not mean by this that we are to be spiritually destitute! We must realize that we are the "branch" dependent upon the Root and the Vine just as the firstborn Son testified of Himself, "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. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn. 5:19,30). It follows then that the poor in spirit are actually the rich in spirit!

Poor in spirit means "renounced in spirit." Yielding up everything of self- selfishness, self-assertiveness, self-interest-that we may gain Christ. One Greek scholar has said that poor in spirit comes closer in the Greek to mean "teachable in spirit." Ah, that hits the nail on the head! "Blessed are the teachable in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Have you ever observed one who knows everything (in his own estimation), how far from happiness and fulfillment he really is? Being rich in his own eyes he is extremely impoverished, for no one can add of their wealth to him. The poor in spirit are poor enough to receive-they are receptive in spirit, willing to break old habits and ways and thought-patterns and mind-sets and take new ones. Right on the threshold of the Kingdom of God we encounter an act of renunciation from the deepest depths of our being. This is just the opposite of the sociology and psychology being taught in the colleges and universities. In many schools they teach "self-assertiveness," "take," and "realize." But the Kingdom of God will not sanction such concepts. To be happy and blessed you must be poor in spirit, renounced in spirit, teachable in spirit, pliable in spirit, and receptive in spirit. Receptive to all that God is, to all that God does, and to all that God is saying by His Spirit. You must be pliable in the Master's hands at all times and in all situations. You must have an ear to hear, and a heart to respond. You must know and think and be nothing of yourself. You don't just belong to the Kingdom, and you don't bring anything to the Kingdom. But the Kingdom is yours! All the resources of the Kingdom are at the disposal renounced-poor-teachable-pliable-receptive. The Kingdom is within you, and it also reaches to the lowest hell and beyond the farthest star. All the powers of the Kingdom are centered in you, not in your self, but in Christ your life. "It is no longer I, but Christ that liveth in me." That is the glory of the poor in Spirit!

The saintly **George MacDonald** has beautifully expressed the truth in these inspiring words: "The poor, the beggars in spirit, the humble men of heart, the unambitious, the unselfish; those who never despise men, and never seek their praises; the lowly, who see nothing to admire in themselves, therefore cannot seek to be admired of others; the men who give themselves away-these are the freemen of the Kingdom, these are the citizens of the New Jerusalem. The men who are aware of their own essential poverty; not the men who are poor in friends, poor in influence, poor in acquirements, poor in money, but those who are poor in spirit, who feel themselves poor creatures; who know nothing to be pleased with themselves for, and desire nothing to make them think well of themselves; who know that they need much to make their life worth living; these humble ones are the poor whom the Lord calls blessed. The gate of the Kingdom begins to open to such a man.

"Whatever such a man has attained to, he straightway forgets; it is part of him and behind him. His business is with what he has not, with the things that lie above and before him. The man who is proud of anything he thinks he has reached, has not reached it. He is but proud of himself, and imagining a cause for his pride. If he

had reached, he would already have begun to forget. He who delights in contemplating whereunto he has attained, is not merely sliding back; he is already in the dirt of self-satisfaction. The gate of the Kingdom is closed, and he outside. The man who does not house self has room to be his real self- God's eternal idea of him. He lives eternally; in virtue of the creative power present in him with momentarily unimpeded creation, he is. How should there be in him one thought of ruling or commanding or surpassing! He can imagine no bliss, no good in being greater than some one else. He would lift every man to the embrace of the Father. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they are of the same spirit as God, and of nature the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs" -end quote. Awesome!

## **CORRUPTION DOES NOT INHERIT...**

The apostle Paul by the wisdom of the Spirit given to him, said, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (I Cor. 15:50).

If there is one lesson we are learning from all the sex scandals, unethical conduct, fraud and financial shenanigans coming out of the government in Washington it is the lesson of the depravity of the human nature and the corruption of the carnal mind. The carnal manifestations that have come out of the religious systems over the past couple decades are not one whit better than the events in Washington or what is transpiring in the vilest section of an inner city. We are disgusted with the fleshiness and corruption on every hand, and I am sure I get an "Amen" from many who read these lines. Corruption of one kind or another has destroyed the Lord's people as well as His temple **except for the holy remnant**. Corruption cannot **inherit** the Kingdom of God! Therefore there must be a mighty victory over corruption in the life of every one who cherishes the beautiful hope of sonship. We must be changed!

The perfect example we have been given of one who has been changed into the full glory of the Kingdom of God is Jesus. He is the first Son to overcome the dominion of corruption, and He is our example. As Jesus conquered by the Spirit of Life from God, so is it given to every one of His younger brothers to overcome in this day. To be changed, we must be cleansed and purged of every vestige of the carnal mind and every work of the flesh. Our omnipotent Lord who lives within us is completing the work He began when He saved us by His grace. He is bringing us to completion and perfection by manifesting the power of the Kingdom of God within us. Christ is reigning in mighty power upon the throne of our lives, by the Spirit. When He has completed His cleansing, purifying, transforming work within us, we shall be fully prepared for the last trump transformation- the redemption of our body. Paul wrote to the Romans, telling them that the whole creation travaileth in pain together for deliverance from the **bondage of corruption**. But I must remark that the corruptibility of "flesh and blood"-the body-is but an infinitesimal part of the great and dreadful **realm of corruption**.

The Holy Spirit, speaking through the apostle Peter, has given us these blessed words of divine understanding. "According as His divine power has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having **escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust**" (11 Pet. 1:3-4). The Amplified Bible renders verse four, "By means of these He has bestowed on us His precious and exceedingly great promises, so that through them you may escape from the **moral decay, rottenness and corruption** that is in the world because of covetousness (lust and greed) and become sharers of the divine nature." And J. B. Phillips has beautifully translated, "It is through this generosity that God's greatest and most precious promises have become available to us men, making it possible for you to **escape the inevitable disintegration** that lust produces in the world and to share in God's essential nature." Corruption is thus far more than the aging process in our mortal bodies which eventually leads to physical death and dissolution.

The word corruption is from the Greek PHTHORA meaning "to destroy by bringing into a worse state or inferior condition." According to Romans 8:20-21, the whole creation, animate and inanimate, is subject to the bondage of corruption. Corruption is so universal and absolute that it was formalized about one hundred years ago into a fundamental law now called *The Second Law of Thermodynamics*. This law states that "all systems, if left to themselves, tend to become degraded and disordered, and deteriorate." Physical systems, whether watches or suns, eventually wear out. Organisms grow old and die. Instead of life and growth there is decay and death. There is no permanency in anything physical. This universal law of the cosmos is diametrically

opposed to the theory of evolution which supposes a progressive improvement and refinement of living organisms.

From the very heart of events from the dawn of creation this law of corruption has been manifested in the things that are made. The fall of Adam into sin, separation, sorrow, pain and death, is the very first sad example of the law of corruption. Man has ever been the object of God's solicitude and care. Man came from the hand of God created in His image and likeness, crowned with glory and honor, and given dominion over all the works of God's hands. Gradually, however, subjected as he was to this gross material realm, formed of the dust of the ground, the cycle of his career turned downward from his high plane upon which God had placed him, until he reached the depths of disaster. The race of Cain was a filthy, perverted race; they were hateful and violent and they were murderers. They were boastful and vile in the extreme, and would have nothing to do with the God that made them. They were the offspring of a murderer who slew his brother. They filled the earth with their lust, violence, and evil, until even the righteous line of Seth was corrupted and they were so bad that the scripture says that "their thoughts" and all the "intents of their hearts" were "only evil continually." They were so bad that God could not wait for them to die, and another generation to arise, but in order to re-establish some order in the earth He had to sweep all of them off the earth into hell.

Noah alone, out of all the families of the earth, was perfect in his generation and found grace in the eyes of the Lord. His uncles and aunts were not righteous. His brothers and sisters were not righteous. His cousins and nephews and nieces were not righteous. They were all corrupt. How do we know this? They were all swept away in the judgment of the flood! Only eight souls out of an entire civilization were spared. Righteousness started afresh in the earth with Noah and his seed. But this did not help, for man's one obsession and inborn trait all through the centuries has been rebellion and backsliding and faithlessness. And so again God made a new provision. So far, His saints had freely mixed with the world. But now He purposed to segregate them from the world. He purposed to remove them from the idolatrous influence of the ungodly. And so, beginning with Abraham, He began this segregation. He called Abraham out from the world and promised him a land, an inheritance. When once in this land, his seed were to destroy completely, even to the last man, the heathen who dwelt there. "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: but thou shalt utterly destroy them."

Here was a truly remarkable and wholly new provision. For in Egypt God took His church and made a nation of them. And then He led them out of Egypt with many infallible signs and wonders and miracles. He divided the sea for them: the same sea in which their enemies perished. He gave them a tabernacle and sanctuary, patterned after the true Sanctuary on High, and there He condescended to have His very presence dwell among them continually. He gave them a perfect set of national laws written by the finger of God Himself on stone. He showed them His power. He fed them with manna from heaven. He preserved their clothing and shoes throughout the whole period of forty years of wanderings in the wilderness. And yet, in spite of God's manifest love and care, their very first act, when Moses left them to go up into the mount of God, was to make a golden calf and fall down to it! Talk about corruption!

Read the account of their sojourn in the wilderness. Read the accounts of their idolatry after they entered their own land. Yes, the first thing they did upon coming into their promised land was the exact opposite of what God commanded them. Instead of destroying their enemies completely, they began making covenants with them. No wonder God says concerning them, "But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments...and my sabbaths they greatly polluted" (Eze. 20:13). No wonder God says, "I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof...they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord" (Prov. 1:24-29). And friend, human nature has not changed one particle in all the years. Believers as a whole (the popular church) are just as wayward and rebellious now as they ever were. God's church has ever been "a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face" (Isa. 65 2-3). And it was not to the fleshly Israel of old, but the New Testament Church that the Lord Jesus sent this piercing rebuke, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee...remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. I know thy

works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Obviously, the law of corruption was still at work!

Let us go on. God intended that His saints, as long as they obeyed Him and walked with Him, should be masters of the earth. They were: that is, until God, because of their sins and backslidings, had to cut them off. He was very lenient with them. He made more than one new provision following their rebellions from Him. He gave them every consideration and every opportunity to reign over the earth. For did not He tell them that if they would hearken unto Him, "thou shalt be blessed above all people"? (**Deut. 7:14**). "And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour" (**Deut. 26: 18-19**). "If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God...the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth" (**Deut. 28: 1**). Ah, here was great provision made which would enable God's people to dominate the whole world! And they did enjoy that heritage of power and honor for a time. Consider the Patriarchs, and Job. Consider Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, of whom God witnessed that they were very great. And then consider king David, and consider king Solomon in all his glory, a glory so resplendent that even the Queen of Sheba witnessed, "Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and, behold, the half was not told me: the wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard" (**I Kings 10:7**).

But then there came a change. A new order was introduced. For, in spite of all of God's provisions and blessings, His people went from bad to worse. And here is the result, foretold by Moses in the wilderness. He told them that if they would not keep God's commandments then, instead of being masters of the earth, "the Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before shine enemies...thou...SHALT BE REMOVED INTO ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH" (**Deut. 28:15-25**). Of all the physical proofs of the inspiration and infallible accuracy of the prophecies of the Bible, there is no proof that can compare to that great sign of signs which is the NATION OF ISRAEL. In 721 B.C. the northern house of Israel was carried into captivity into Assyria and consequently disappeared from the page of history so suddenly and completely it was as though the land of their captivity swallowed them up. Historically, however, the ten tribes escaped their captivity and through various migrations became scattered throughout the continent of Europe, just as the Lord had said.

The house of Judah finally experienced the same fate. Some thirty-five years after Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, the wrath was poured out. Jerusalem fell, and great was the fall thereof! Signal, terrible, and unparalleled was the Jewish war, ending with the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Roman general, Titus. It needs a pen dipped in fire and in blood to write the story in its true colors! The sufferings and miseries that overtook the Jewish nation in that age, are all but indescribable, the very record of them is appalling. And they have been scattered for two millenniums through all nations just as the Lord said. In this sordid picture of the unceasing degeneration of the human race, as well as God's own people, we receive the unimpeachable testimony of the universal LAW OF CORRUPTION. Ah, my beloved, if you think corruption refers only to the mortal body, you are badly mistaken. It runs much deeper than that. Science states that "all systems, if left to themselves, tend to become degraded and disordered, and deteriorate." God puts it this way: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (**II Tim. 3:1-5**).

Oh what a stormy sea the world has sailed from Adam's transgression until now! What indescribable travail the earth has seen under the curse of bondage to corruption! And not just man, not alone the earth, but the whole creation was made subject to this vanity and it is the whole creation that now groans with a sort of universal travail, waiting for the sons of God to reach the glory and honor of adoption, waiting for the transfigured family of sons at last to speak the wonderful words of life and deliverance. In the throes of corruption all things are propelled by the swirling momentum of the downward spiral to destruction, utterly helpless and powerless to invent any method of preventing the ultimate catastrophe.

The dark foreboding and terror of every creature and all things is not unlike that of the victim of punishment by the Hohenstaufen house in Germany. One of the methods of punishment, it is said, was to incarcerate the

victim in a luxuriously appointed room. Instead of feeling any special remorse, he was rather delighted with his lot. In a day or two, however, the prisoner realized his illusionment. He noticed, as he arose each morning, that the walls had slightly contracted. At first he could scarcely conceive of it. He examined the space closely and found his fears verified. He watched the movement very closely, and sure enough, they were gradually contracting. In oiled and silent grooves these heavy metal walls were gradually drawing closer and closer. He was startled, and placed all manner of objects to check the oncoming tide. But it was all in vain. The walls were irresistible in their progress. It dawned upon him that this beautiful luxurious room was a deceptive snare.

When he realized that this comfortably and beautifully furnished room was to be his death cell and the place of his doom, invariably cold perspiration poured out of his temples and he cried out frantically for help. But no response came. The metal walls simply gave back a hollow echo and continued to draw closer. When the furniture had been demolished by the pressure and the walls had come so close he could not do anything but stand upright, he placed his back to the wall, and bracing himself with his hands and feet, he tried with one superhuman effort to withstand his doom. But the walls were not to be gainsaid; they were not to be denied of their prey. Finally the walls crushed him to death. Is this not the sense of every man who beholds the ravishing power of corruption in his body? As old age appears, with its multiplied physical weaknesses, degeneration, ailments and limitations, they feel themselves crowded to the wall and think they are daily approaching their fatal and final end. Unable to make any further resistance, they passively submit themselves to the inevitable and slip away quietly from this world. Behold in this, my friend, the awesome power of the BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION!

The crumbling ruins of ancient civilizations buried beneath the swirling sands of ages bear silent testimony to the unrelenting power of corruption. Proud empires which like the towering mount Everest dominated the lives and fortunes of multitudes of men and vast stretches of global real estate, have disappeared from even the memory of those now dwelling upon the earth. In the afterglow of a thousand battlefields, in the shattered dreams of kings and world conquerors, in the light of treachery, moral decay, and spiritual bankruptcy, the word of God standeth invincibly true. Mighty empires and nations that with the vaunted pride of wealth, commerce, education, refinement, and disciplined armies controlled the souls of men have all eventually fallen and crumbled to dust beneath their own weight, becoming like the dust of a summer threshing floor and the wind blew them away.

The universe itself is no less subject to the bondage of corruption. As a recent article in Discover magazine reported, six or seven billion years from now the sun will begin to die, but it will not die alone. When the sun runs out of hydrogen fuel at its core and begins burning the hydrogen, helium, and heavier elements in its outer layers, it will swell tremendously, expanding out to earth's orbit. In its death throes it will swell into a red giant star, engulfing and incinerating Mercury, Venus, and Earth. Life on earth-if indeed any still exists-will surely end. A like fate awaits every star and planet in every solar system in all the two hundred billion known galaxies that make up the universe. Everything is winding down and burning out. In the light of this solemn knowledge let us reflect again upon the Holy Spirit's sacred message of hope and deliverance, "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself **shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption** into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, **the redemption of our body**" (Rom. 8:19-23). Lift up your heads and rejoice! O creation-the sun will not burn itself out, the earth will not be incinerated, the universe will not collapse, the myriad worlds scattered through space will not pass away, because the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption **into the glorious liberty of the sons of God!** What a word! What a hope! **Universal deliverance from the bondage of corruption! The reversal of the Second Law of Thermodynamics!** No wonder the earnest expectation of all creation WAITS FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD! Hallelujah!

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. The message is clear-we must be changed! That is what it means. Mortal flesh and corrupted blood cannot inherit the Kingdom realm of God. As long as our bodies remain in the vile form they are now in, they cannot inherit that

eternal sphere. "Neither cloth corruption inherit incorruption." Standing alone these words sound as though that which is corruptible is beyond hope. The body of corruption would go to the grave with no hope of resurrection or change forever. And it would mean exactly that were it not for the qualifying message that follows. "Behold, I show you a mystery...**this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:50-54).**

No one can deny it-we must be changed, spirit, soul, and body! Only by a mighty quickening of divine life can soul and body inherit the Kingdom. The apostle does not say that the body cannot inherit the Kingdom, merely that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom. The word of God has made it very clear that our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself," (Phil. 3:21). The vile body of flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom, but the changed body does indeed inherit the Kingdom. Oh, the mystery of it!

Very few of the Lord's people understand the great truth that there are **two bodies**, but the truth is that "there is a NATURAL BODY, and there is a SPIRITUAL BODY" (I Cor. 15:44). Many seem to think that the spiritual body will be the natural body changed or transformed. But that is not what the apostle tells us. It is not said that there IS a natural body, and some glad day after while there SHALL BE a spiritual body. No! "There IS a natural body, and there IS a spiritual body." There IS! Both bodies are a present tense reality. The natural body is the body of the outward man, whereas the spiritual body is the body of the inward man. That is why Paul in another place assures us, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4: 16). The outward-man has a body and that body is perishing-we all know that! But few understand that the inward-man also has a body that is renewed, being raised up within us, day by day. The outer-man body is the flesh and blood body inherited from Adam. The inner-man body is the glorious resurrection body of Jesus Christ inherited from Him. Just as the outer-man body is not given to us "ready-made," but following conception in our mother's womb is gradually **formed** over a number of months, and continues to be formed for years until we reach adulthood; so the inner-man body is not given to us "ready made," but subsequent to our begetting as children of God the spiritual resurrection body of Jesus is formed in us by the life of Christ raised up in us, progressively fashioned as we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." And just as the outer-man body is from earth, so the inner-man body is from the Lord from heaven. The first is a natural and earthly body; the second is a spiritual and heavenly body.

The inner-man body is the spiritual body. The inner man body is our house from heaven. So the apostle continues by showing how it is that the inner-man body exists even if the outer-man body is dissolved or passes away. But God's highest purpose is that the outer-man body **be caught up into**, and **swallowed up** by, the inner-man body. Hear what the Holy Spirit would teach us in these words of wisdom and understanding: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (the outer-man body) were dissolved (dies, decays), we (still) **have** a building of God (the inner-man body) eternal in the heavens. For in this (the outer-man body) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven (the inner-man body, the Christ body): if so be that being clothed (having the inner-man body) we shall not be found naked (a dis-embodied spirit). For we that are in this tabernacle (the outer-man body) do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed (not have any body), but clothed upon (with the inner-man body), that mortality (the outer-man body) might be **swallowed up** of life (the inner-man body). Now He that hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the firstfruits of the Spirit" (II Cor. 5:1-5). The only way for corruption to put on incorruption, and for mortality to put on immortality is for the outer-man natural body to be swallowed up **into** the inner-man spiritual body so that the two BECOME ONE-the mortal made immortal by the resurrection body of Jesus Christ formed within the inward man. That is precisely why Paul says that we are not burdened to be unclothed, that is, to die and put off the outer-man body, but we are burdened to be clothed upon, that is, to put on the inner-man body **over top of the outer-man body**, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Oh, the wonder of it!

Our bodily change and full salvation is promised by our Lord. We ourselves, along with all creation, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY. This honor of adoption, which means the redemption of our outer-man body, the universal Adamic body, belongs to all the sons of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit within us, as Paul also explained, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus

from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN (MAKE ALIVE) YOUR MORTAL BODIES BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU" (Rom. 8: 11). And now, already, praise be to God, we "have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be GLORIFIED TOGETHER" (Rom. 8:15-17). This, then, in some small part is the honor and glory for which the sons of God seek-the glory of incorruption and the honor of adoption. How glorious is the race now set before us! How marvelous and wonderful is it all! Blessed be the Lord who hath called us unto **His Kingdom and glory!**

The Kingdom of God is the realm of incorruption and immortality! And we cannot fully inherit that which is immortal while we are in a mortal state. We must be changed! We must put on incorruption! We must put on immortality! The only way we can inherit the fullness of the Kingdom of God with our whole being is for us to be changed. Although we began in some small way to see the Kingdom when we were first born again, and through the experiences of Christ began to enter into the Kingdom, and now by faith and obedience are beginning to possess our land, the fullness of the Kingdom can only be inherited by being changed into the incorruptible, immortal, imperishable, eternal life of Christ. The corruption of these mortal bodies and carnal minds cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. If we are to rule and reign with Christ in His incorruptible throne of glory and power, we must be changed into His image and likeness. Nothing short of the divine nature can handle such glory and power without prostituting it.

Let me make very plain that all who are now entering and possessing the Kingdom have indeed already **escaped corruption!** That will sound incredible and unbelievable to many who read these lines. But I must point out that corruption is not the same as mortality, although these terms are often used interchangeably by religious people. They do not bear the same meaning at all. Corruption and mortality are not two ways of saying the same thing. On the one hand, mortality is the state of being liable to death. On the other hand, corruption is the process by which death works. We are mortal because we are corruptible, but we are not corruptible because we are mortal. In physical terms we can illustrate it by saying that the aging process is corruption, whereas mortality is the condition that underlies the aging process, and the final result of the aging process.

The Word of God does not tell us that any man has fully escaped **mortality**, and indeed none has except our Lord Jesus Christ. **"Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto..." (I Tim. 6:14,16). The apostle Peter does tell us, however, that the saints of God have been made partakers of the divine nature, "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Pet. 1:4). Having escaped! Having escaped corruption! Having escaped the very corruption that was brought into the world by lust, by the lust or desire of mother Eve when she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired (lusted after) to make one wise..." (Gen. 3:6).**

What does this wonderful word mean to us? Where and when and how have we escaped the corruption that is in the world? Ah, my beloved, corruption is the process of dissolution that leads to death, the downward spiral by which all things in the universe are being reduced to a worse state or inferior condition. All organisms age and grow old. All food spoils. All mountains erode. All mechanical things wear out. All societies break down in moral decay. Every kingdom and empire weakens and finally collapses. Every spiritual movement, historical and current, eventually stagnates and goes into apostasy. Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse. Suns and stars burn out and self-destruct. There is a universal law of corruption, the bondage that enslaves every visible and invisible thing of the cosmos. The movement is always down, down, down.

And that's how it was in my life until that blessed day when Christ appeared and I was born again by the **incorruptible seed** of the word of God that liveth and abideth forever. A divine and incorruptible life was injected into my reality and in that wonderful moment old things passed away and all things became new. By that heavenly and divine intervention my course was changed, my direction reversed, my movement turned up-side-down. Instead of continuing the downward journey, I commenced an upward climb. And now I can truthfully and joyfully testify-I am no longer getting worse-I AM GETTING **BETTER!** Oh, yes! **I AM GETTING BETTER!** I am now learning of Christ. I am growing up into Him in all things. I am putting on the mind of Christ. I am receiving His chastisements and experiencing His dealings. I am tasting the powers of the world to come.

I am apprehending His righteousness, peace, and joy. I am eating His word and drinking His life. I am overcoming sins, weaknesses, unbelief, problems, fears, and obstacles of every kind. I am putting off the old man, and putting on the new man. Daily, continually, progressively, unceasingly, from glory to glory I AM BEING CHANGED! No longer am I being reduced to a worse state and an inferior condition-I am now being transformed by the renewing of my mind into a **better state**, into a **superior condition!** I have escaped the irresistible downward plunge-I have escaped CORRUPTION! Oh, hallelu-yah! I am now incorruptible-on my way up instead of down!

This truth of incorruption is far too important to be passed over without earnest consideration. The wonderful truth is that incorruption leads to immortality. This corruptible must put on incorruption before this mortal can be empowered to put on immortality. That is the precise and significant order in the Word of God. God's purpose in man's redemption is not to just deliver us from the penalty of our sins, but to re-create us, to make a new creature of us, a new kind of man in the image of Him who created us. Having been molded and fashioned after the image of the first man, we have now begun to put off that likeness and to put on the image and likeness of the second man, the Lord from heaven. We must put off the image of the earthly, and put on the image of the heavenly; we must be changed from the natural, earthly, living creatures we first were to be re-fashioned as spiritual, heavenly ones. This is not an option, it is a must; it is not discretionary, it is mandatory if we are to inherit the Kingdom. So the scriptures declare, "And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." My! what a purpose this is. It staggers the imagination to contemplate such a change; but change we must if we are to inherit the promises.

Incorruption is the process of man's "fall" being REVERSED! If one is watching a program on his VCR and decides to stop and rewind it to see a scene again, he is simply reversing what he has previously seen with his eyes. It is comical sometimes to watch the people running backwards, and bodies rising from the ground to the roof of a building. You can see a vase that was smashed into a thousand pieces put together again, or a car that wrecked, back up and become as it was before. Whatever you saw was restored to its beginning by passing through the motion in reverse. And this is exactly what incorruption is: THE FALL OF MAN IN REVERSE! It means a progressive rising up again into that oneness in God that man knew in his bright beginning. The order of Adam first being alive, then sinning, then becoming more and more vile, and finally dying, is put in reverse. From that death we stand up again in the spiritual life of Christ within. Then we proceed to obedience, overcoming, and transformation into the image of God-and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is **death!**

When we were first begotten of God our bodies were not "changed" or made "immortal" at that time, but when that birthing of God's Spirit took place the life of Christ **began** to be raised up in us. In that blessed moment the ego of old Adam laid down in us and died, while the new creation man was conceived within the womb of our flesh. Corruption **put on incorruption!** Truly the resurrection had dawned within our bosom. But our outer-man bodies saw no change. The spirit within, which first died in that long ago Eden, centuries before Adam's body died, has been quickened by the Spirit of life from God and caused to stand up from the realm of separation and death. We have experienced the resurrection of our spirit, and now there must follow the resurrection of our soul. We have experienced the standing up again of our spirit, and now the awakening and rising up of our minds, emotions, wills and desires into the mind, emotion, will and desire of Christ is taking place. Through the process of incorruption all the spiritual faculties that were lost in the fall of Adam are being restored to the elect by the operation of God. All that was lost shall be regained. It is more than merely coming to life again, it is the orderly restoration of the totality of our original state of being including all the mighty spiritual faculties, capacities, abilities, and all wisdom and knowledge. Such awesome powers do not belong in a mortal body, nor would we want an immortal body apart from those powers! That is why God has arranged that the final, ultimate, crowning event of this restoration will shed itself in the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY. At that blessed moment we shall have fully inherited the Kingdom of God!

The spiritual world of the Kingdom of Heaven is a world with which we become familiar as we walk in the Spirit of God and experience more and more our union with the Father; a world so wonderfully real that all who once have had their eyes opened to it beg to remain within its celestial precincts, never more to return to the lowly estate and level of the natural man. It follows of necessity that man's being, because it is unsuited to the spiritual world, must be changed by the power of God. A bird would need a mighty change to be able to live

under the water, or a fish to live in the air; but the Lord promises a much more striking change to those who are predestinated to be manifested as the sons of God with power.

With what anticipation do we wait for this glorious manifestation! Meantime we are taught to believe: "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body..." This is not meant merely for revelation, to be left for the future; for the full development of our life in sonship we must seek to enter into it and appropriate it. We do this as we learn to triumph over death on every level. We do it as we learn to look to Christ as the Lord of our body, claiming its entire consecration, securing even here and now victory over the terrible dominion sin has had in the body. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (**James 1: 1 S**). We do it as we allow the powers of the coming age to possess us, and to lift us up into a life in the heavenly places, to enlarge our hearts and our hopes, and to anticipate here and now, the things that have never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Sons of God! Seek after *incorruption* and *immortality*. Let this be the crown of your life in sonship. Do not seek immortality in your physical body first, or only, apart from incorruption in your thoughts, emotions, desires, ambitions, will, purposes, hopes, dreams, attitudes, and actions. Seek to live an incorruptible life, to walk an incorruptible walk, as that which will lead you to glory and immortality. Nothing will prepare you for immortality more than faithfulness in every step of putting on the MIND OF CHRIST. The experience of His power to make you holy, spirit, soul, and body, will quicken you to a power that shall not cease its work until the sin that causes death has been abolished in your being. As you seek to experience within yourself to the full, the power of HIS TRANSFORMING LIFE, your heart will be enlarged to see the position the sons of God have been destined to occupy in the universe, as having all things made subject to them, and you shall for your part be fitted to live worthy of that high and holy calling! Can you not see how it is that incorruption **leads** to immortality? Immortality is the ultimate end of the process of incorruption, just as human maturity is the end of the process of physical and emotional development.

This glorious realm of immortality that lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death belongs to the sons of God, but, blessed be God! it is likewise the hope of ALL CREATION. The creation itself shall be delivered from the **bondage of corruption** to begin its journey into the spiritual dimension of immortality in the Kingdom of God. Creation is not groaning for another revival, nor for another evangelistic campaign, nor for another healing campaign, nor for more gifts of the Spirit, nor for more apostles, prophets and teachers, nor for more signs, wonders and miracles, nor yet for 144,000 flaming evangelists just like Jesus when He walked the shores of blue Galilee. For two millenniums we have had revival after revival, healing upon healing, signs and wonders and miracles in abundance, New Testament Churches with their five-fold ministries, and none of them have ever brought forth the fullness of the Kingdom of God on earth, nor has even one of them or all of them together ever delivered the creation from the bondage of corruption! The creation continues to groan in its bondage and we ourselves, groan within ourselves, as we wait for the disclosing of our sonship - the redemption of our bodies! It is not another "patch-up" job we want, not a re-run of previous moves of God, but a full and complete and eternal deliverance from the whole dreadful realm of limitation, imperfection and death!

Jesus is the first of the firstfruits of this glorious victory. The sons of God are the firstfruits, redeemed from among men (Rev. 14:5). All creation is the harvest that follows. It was necessary that after having lived in the flesh and overcome all things, Jesus should be resurrected Himself by the power and glory of the Father, that He might be able then to minister even that resurrection life to a firstfruit company; that they, in turn, apprehending all that pertains to that life, might be able then to minister it to the rest of creation. For this creation waits expectantly!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 24 EXCEPT YOU BECOME AS A LITTLE CHILD

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART TWENTY-FOUR

The eighteenth chapter of Matthew begins with these words' "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus' saying' *Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And* Jesus called a little *child* unto Him' and set him in the midst of them' and said' Verily I say unto you' except ye be converted' and become as little children' ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore sha11 humble himself as this *little child*' the same is *greatest in the kingdom of heaven*. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name' receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones...it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck' and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to *that man* by whom the offense cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee' cut them off' and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into eonian fire. And if shine eye offend thee' pluck it out' and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye' rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that ye despise not one of these *little ones*; for I say unto you' that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep' and one of them be gone astray' cloth he not leave the ninety and nine' and goeth into the mountains' and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it' verily I say unto you' he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of *these little ones* should perish', (Mat. 18: 1-14).

The subject of this wonderful passage of scripture is WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? There are two characters in the divine drama. You find these two all the way through this teaching of Jesus. The two characters are directly involved in the answer to the question' "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" Of these characters one is a child. The other is a man. The child is the greatest in the Kingdom. The man is so offensive that he ought to be drowned in the sea. These are the two characters - the *child*, and the man. The issue between these two is who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

There is no need to inquire who would *aspire* to being the greatest in the Kingdom. The very thought brings to mind the mother of the disciples' James and John. It was she who came to Jesus with her sons' and kneeling' worshipped Him and asked a favor of Him. Jesus asked her' "What do you wish?" She answered Him' "Give orders that these two sons of mine may sit' one at your right hand and one at your left hand' in your Kingdom." Ah—what an audacious' ambitious and enterprising mother she was! Out of her fearless mother's heart of love she was moved to seek the very highest positions in Christ's Kingdom for her two beloved sons. Jesus did not flatly deny her the request. He did not tell her that her sons could never be the greatest in His Kingdom. Jesus simply replied' "You do not realize what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink and to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? You will drink my cup' but seats at my right hand and my left are not mine to give' but they are for those for whom they have been ordained and prepared by my Father" (Mat. 20:22-23).

Perhaps you think as I have thought' that there was a bit of selfishness' perhaps even a liberal dose of ego, a spirit of "power grabbing," and the desire for recognition and advantage on the part of this mother. But is the desire to be greatest in the Kingdom a wrong desire? Is it unethical or unspiritual? Is it a selfish' vain, conceited, power-mad, un-Christlike' reprehensible desire to be the greatest in the Kingdom? Not by any means! If your desire to be great in God's Kingdom is a grasping after greatness for *greatness ' sake*— to make a name, to acquire a following, to dominate men's lives' to control events' to issue orders and call the shots - then you can forget it. You will never be great in the Kingdom. Recently a sister shared with us about a man in a certain church who used to get up and say he'd be so glad when the sons were manifested' because then that neighbor of his would find out he was dead wrong about the boundary line between their two

properties! If such childish carnality lies at the root of one's desire for greatness in the Kingdom, matters not how persistently that one pursues it' it will escape him. It will be denied. God will never commit His almighty power into the hands of petty' self-serving bullies.

On the other hand, the blessed Holy Spirit gives us the qualifications for greatness in the Kingdom. He tells us what the spirit of greatness is. He reveals the nature and character of greatness. He delineates the marks of greatness within a man. He also assures us that there exists such a position of greatness in the Kingdom, and it is available to any who will pay the price. The Lord Jesus refers on a number of occasions to those who are *least in* the Kingdom. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called *the least in* the kingdom of heaven, (Mat. 5: 19). He also speaks of those who are *greatest in* the Kingdom. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is *greatest in* the kingdom of heaven, (Mat. 18:4). There is that potential within each of us of winding up down the road somewhere in either of these two categories—the *least in* the Kingdom, or the *greatest in* the Kingdom.

Not a few saints are like the man who told my father one time, "I just want to make it to heaven. If I can just make it inside the gate, I shall be satisfied. My father, a Pentecostal minister, responded, "I hate to disappoint you, my brother; but that space *just inside the gate* was taken up a long time ago!., Some people look forward to a "cabin in the corner of glory-land,' while others will be satisfied with nothing less than a "mansion over the hill-top., But there is a hope far greater than these, cherished within the hearts of a people who know the Lord in deeper measures. There is a place in the Kingdom, in the government of God, in the authority and dominion of the Christ, where the sons of God shall be empowered to be a blessing to every people and nation, yea, to all the vast creation of God forevermore.

Abraham Lincoln tells a marvelous story about a blacksmith who took a long, round bar and stuck it in the coals until it was red hot. Then he put it on the anvil where he hammered it flat to make a sword. When he was finished, he was most unhappy with it. So he put it back in the red hot coals and decided to broaden the flat part out a bit and make a garden tool. He tried that, but it didn't please his fancy either. He put the bar back into the coals. He rounded it a bit again and then shaped it into a horse-shoe. This effort also failed miserably. As a last resort, he put the bar into the coals one last time. As he removed it from the hot fire, he wondered if there was anything else he could make from it. Deciding that there was nothing, he merely stuck it into a barrel of water. As it sizzled, he said, "Well, at least I made a fizzle out of it., God doesn't want to make a fizzle out of you, my beloved! His purpose is just this: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a special people, that you should set forth and display the virtues and excellencies of the wisdom and power of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, (I Pet. 2:9). These words are meant for you. You are God's special people! You are a chosen generation! You are kings and priests, a royal priesthood! You hold in your life the power to shape the world and human history, to bring in a new order that shall alter the course of all creation! Do not settle for the fizzle - pursue the vision God has birthed within your spirit!

God is raising up a kingdom of priests, a kingly priesthood, to bless all the families and nations of the earth. This is the of the promises given in the long ago to that mighty man of faith, Abraham. How great were the promises made to Abraham! There were seven great and exceedingly wonderful promises given to him, enumerated in chapter twelve of Genesis. The first was, "I will make of thee a great nation', The second was, "I will bless thee., The third, "I Will make thy name great., The word name carries with it the idea of honor, authority, "nd the character of the individual. God was saying to Abraham that He would make his honor to be great; his authority was to be great and even his character great. I will make thy name to be great. The fourth promise was, "Thou shalt be a blessing.,' The fifth' "And I will bless them that bless thee." The sixth' "I will curse him that curseth thee., Then the seventh was' "In thee shall ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED." Not the families of Israel' nor the families of the Church, but ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH. In these precious promises God caused Abraham to understand that he was the beginning of something that was to be world wide and all-inclusive' not some insignificant local affair.

God promised Abraham that He would bless him. And when Melchizedek came out of the celestial realm that day, HE BLESSED ABRAHAM. Then the Lord said, "Thou shalt BE a blessing...in thee shall ALL families of the earth BE BLESSED." Hear it! Abraham was blessed...to BE A BLESSING! With reverence and godly respect I now tell you that you' dear reader of these lines' are included in these wonderful promises. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not' And to seeds as to many; but as of one, and to

thy seed' WHICH IS CHRIST" (Gal. 3:16). God made this promise, even this covenant, with two people only—with Abraham' and with the seed of Abraham' who was also God's Son' Jesus the Christ. With Abraham and his singular seed—WHICH IS CHRIST. God not only made this covenant with a man' Abraham' but He made it with HIS OWN SON. God had a witness in earth and a witness in heaven that He had made a covenant that through Abraham and His Son every family and nation would be blessed, and it was confirmed with an oath so that it could never fail. Oh, the wonder of it!

**"And if ye be Christ's' THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE" (Gal. 3:29).** Never have words more pregnant with promise been uttered. Today' now' we are heirs according to that marvelous promise God gave to Abraham and the Christ. We are heirs of every one of those seven covenants that God made with Abraham. We can take them all individually and apply them to ourselves and to the whole body of the Christ. They are both individual and corporate. To Abraham God promised a seed which would come to bless the whole earth' a seed through whom each and every person ever to see the light of day would be delivered and blessed. We see that seed begin to form in the preparation of a nation chosen and separated unto Himself. Long centuries afterward we behold Jesus of Nazareth, anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, walking the length and breadth of that favored nation showing forth among its people the wondrous glory of His Father. God's infallible word declares Him to be the direct seed of Abraham according to the flesh, but the Son of God with power. Truly He was the promised seed, the seed of Abraham and the anointed Son of God, "thy seed which is Christ.,,

To the apostle Paul it was given to reveal how we, the elect redeemed of this age, are MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR OF CHRIST, so that we are the Christ body as Jesus is the Christ Head. The Head and body together form one Christ, the temple of God and the habitation of the Most High' for **"As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST, (I Cor. 12:12).** It is through this many-membered Christ that the promises to Abraham and his seed shall be gloriously fulfilled in their totality. All families and all nations of the whole earth shall be blessed!

**"Even as Abraham believed God...know ye therefore that they which are of faith' the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture' foreseeing that God would justify the nations through faith' PREACHED BEFORE THE GOSPEL UNTO ABRAHAM' saying' IN THEE SHALL ALL NATIONS BE BLESSED" (Gal. 3:6-8).** In this passage we see that God one day did some preaching. The almighty God with infinite care and wisdom laid the plans for the magnificent work He would do through Abraham and his seed. Then He told Abraham to attend a preaching service He was going to hold. Abraham was the congregation. It makes no difference where the service was to be held. God was the preacher and it would have been very wonderful to have been in the service. As God began to preach' He brought forth the Gospel or the GOOD NEWS and it was this: ALL NATIONS were to be blessed in Abraham!

It is the infallible proclamation of the omnipotent God—all the families and all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. Certainly they have all been kissed by God's wonderful sunshine and have drunk in the refreshing rain from heaven' but that is not what God is speaking of. He is pointing to a great manifestation and outpouring of God's grace and glory that still has not occurred—a time when God will speak to all, reveal Himself to all' redeem all' transform all and bless all. Not individuals' not the Church, but the NATIONS! A great and mighty move of God shall yet come in the earth that few men have even dreamed of' when the younger sons of God' the Christ body' having fully grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ' shall be manifested in all the fullness of the nature' wisdom' power and glory of God. In that day the whole creation shall be lifted from the bondage and night of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8: 1 8-23). What an exceeding great potential and responsibility is laid upon us in the promises to Abraham which we share!

A millennium after God blessed Abraham to make him a blessing' the word of the Lord came to the remnant of Abraham's seed, proclaiming' "And it shall come to pass' that as ye were a curse among the heathen...so will I save you, and YE SHALL BE A BLESSING: fear not, but let your hands be strong,, (Zech. 8:13). Hear the heart of God in this statement: "Ye shall be a blessing., How important punctuation is! Should someone put a question mark behind this statement it would read, "Ye shall be a blessing?" And looking at ourselves, none of us are very important people in this world, we are just common, ordinary, mostly uneducated people; laborers, plumbers' farmers' electricians' mill workers' office workers' store keepers' barbers' housewives' mechanics'

etc. The great ones of this world would look askance at us and incredulously query' "YE shall be a blessing?" But we know from the Lord God Almighty who made us' called us, revealed Himself to us' and has been actively training and preparing us through great and terrible dealings' that we shall be a blessing, indeed. So we put an exclamation mark at the end of the sentence, not a question mark. "YE SHALL BE A BLESSING!" I am sure that all of the Lord's elect' who follow on to know the Lord' cherish the precious promise that we are apprehended of God to be a part of that promised seed that shall bless all the families and nations of the earth. As we daily view the desperate needs about us' of fami1y and friends' of the sinful, sorrowful, needy, sick and dying, oh! how we WANT to be a b1essing! To be a blessing - what a promise that is! What hope is contained therein! But you don't just walk up to someone on the street and announce, "I'm your Blesser., First, we must BECOME. You shall BE... To "be,, bespeaks a state of being. God is teaching us, preparing us, training us to truly BE blessers. We can only bless when we have BECOME THE BLESSING.

The Order of Melchizedek is an ORDER OF BLESSERS. In this divine Order there are no curses, no negation to be uttered, no vindictiveness, no judgment, but there is a ministry of blessing. This is far more than a doctrine to be received, a formula of words to be repeated, or a claim to be made; this is an expression of unconditional love and unrestrained compassion that flows from our spirit toward others until all the families and nations of the earth have been touched and healed and quickened by His all-conquering love.

I must mention the principle of the Melchizedekian Priesthood and the seed of Abraham in respect to blessing. We know that Melchizedek *blessed Abraham*. God had said to Abraham, "I will bless thee...and thou shalt be a blessing...in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed., First Abraham was blessed, and then he could become a blessing. Blessed to BE A BLESSING! Oh, may the Spirit of God somehow burn this truth indelibly into our hearts. But there is also the realm where men bless in order to be blessed, giving in order to receive, giving and receiving again according to how they have given. "Give, and it shall *be given unto you*., "Blessed are the merciful, for *they shall obtain mercy*., "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are "hereunto called, that ye should INHERIT A BLESSING., This is all true, and most "faith,, and "word,, people dwell there. But when the Holy Spirit begins to reveal that higher Order of Melchizedek within your spirit, a vast transforming change begins to take place in your understanding. Gone forever is the desire to give in order to receive, to be merciful so that in some future time you might receive mercy, or to bless with a view to being blessed. Henceforth we begin to see things as God sees them, and from this high and holy vista our purified desire becomes only to BE BLESSED that we may BE A BLESSING. It is not giving to receive, but *receiving to give*.

In the Order of Melchizedek ALL THINGS ARE REVERSED. Truly there is a changing, a reversing of all principles and laws in the *new order* which is being birthed in the sons of God. Our old ideas, teachings, conceptions, and desires are being upset and overthrown, and our old theology and methodology acquired in the religious systems of Mystery Babylon are fast flying out the window. The Spirit of the Lord quickens the yielded minds of those who wait before Him in this hour, the elect is being led in new and strange paths of the divine order of the Most High. So fear not, beloved child of God, to let go of the teachings and practices of yesteryear, for those were but the swaddling clothes of your BECOMING in God. God's apprehended ones are now moving into a dimension where there is higher understanding higher laws' and higher reality. It must ever be kept in mind that every dimension functions by laws of its own, and so it is with the Melchizedekian Order. The first order of this sacred realm is BLESSING.

A divine work of transformation is now taking place within our minds. God is not dealing in this hour with outward manifestation' but He is probing deep into our being' to change the attitudes' thoughts' and desires of mind and heart. Thank God He is stripping away the masquerades and facades, purging and purifying, that we might be conformed to His image, changed into His mind, a partaker of His nature. We are challenged with our own development unto spiritual maturity, and therefore we have received a commandment to bless—not that we might receive anything in return - for we cannot truly bless another until it proceeds unselfishly and unmixed out of a pure heart—a genuine desire that they be blessed. oh' for that purity of spirit, that complete deliverance from the "seed faith,, mentality being peddled by the money hungry preachers of this evil day that continually urges the people to give in order to get and to bless with the motive of being blessed a hundred fold in return. May the blazing heat of God's holy fire so transform our minds and hearts until every action can be thoroughly WITHOUT GUILF, no ulterior motive for whatever this might return to us for our own gain.

I do not hesitate to tell you that giving to receive again' planting with a vision to reaping a harvest' is a true principle in God, and it will work for you on that level' but it is not the law of the Order of Melchizedek. It is the law of a lower plane. Increase is the law of the realm of limitation, of want, of need, the in-part reaching forth to acquire more. But the priesthood of Melchizedek pertains to the realm of the unlimited, of His fullness, after the power of an endless or unbounded life. The priests of this order minister not from a sense of THEIR NEED, but out of the realization of HIS FULLNESS. This transformation of mind and attitude must take place in every son of God. These sons shall not do the will of their heavenly Father in the childish hope that He will reward them for it; but such lift up their voices in one accord with that blessed firstborn Son, saying, "Lo' I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I DELIGHT TO DO THY WILL, O my God: yea, Thy law is written in my heart, (Ps. 40:7-8).

Ah, my brother, my sister, is it your heart's desire to be a blessing? God is creating within us the insatiable desire to be a blessing, not only to our precious brethren, our children, our family, our friends, our neighbors, our city, state and country—but to be a blessing to the whole earth and to all creation. I want that. Oh, how I desire it! Now here is God's promise: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: FOR ALL THE EARTH IS MINE: and ye shall be unto me A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5-6). I have often characterized this verse of scripture as the GREAT DIVINE SANDWICH. A sandwich is two slices of bread between which is placed meat, fish' cheese' or the like. Three items are necessary to make a sandwich' the two outer items—two identical pieces of bread— in between another' and different' item. Such is the structure of the scripture passage just quoted. There are two statements of like nature surrounding and enclosing another and different kind of statement. Notice the two outer statements: (1) ye shall be a PECULIAR TREASURE unto me above all people (2) ye shall be unto me a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS' and an holy nation. Then, "sandwiched" in between these two wonderful promises is this remarkable word: FOR ALL THE EARTH IS MINE.

In the light of this scripture I would like to reaffirm something which the world at large' and many Christians' seem to have forgotten: THIS IS GOD,S WORLD! "Every beast of the forest is mine' and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry' I would not tell thee: for the world is mine' and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 50:10-12). Moses said' "Behold' the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God' the earth also' with all that therein is" (Deut. 10:14). God said to Job' "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine" (Job 41:11). And David said' "The earth is the Lord's' and the fullness thereof; the world' and they that dwell therein', (Ps. 24:1). I will be the first to admit, however that this world doesn't look much like something that is owned by the great and good God! I look out over the world today and see demons stalking through the lands' with literally billions of people held in the prison houses of the dense darkness of false religions' worshipping idols' and devils' and the gods of superstition' tradition and fear. I look out over the world today and I see the spirit of strife and hatred and war, thousands dying daily at the hands of terrorists, and in bloody revolutions on earth's battlefields. I look out over the world today and I see nearly two billion people still enslaved under the iron heel of godless' atheistic communism. It doesn't look much like God's world' but IT IS!

I look out over the third-world nations today and I see poverty and squalor and ignorance on an incomprehensible scale, millions of people starving to death, pitiful little children with protruding eyes and stomachs bloated from malnutrition, without hope in the world. I look out over the industrialized nations of the West today and I see untold millions of people bowing before the gods of humanism, secularism' and worshipping before the shrines of the gods of pleasure, sex, perversion' and debauchery. Fornication' adultery' and homosexuality are all a big joke, just something to laugh about on the sitcoms and glorified by Hollywood and the media. One thousand Americans are infected with venereal disease - not every year' not every month, not every week, not every day—but every hour! Ah, it doesn't look much like a world that belongs to God, but IT DOES!

I look out upon our land today and I see millions of our children spaced out on drugs, angry at the world, hostile to parents and all authority, and out-of joint with society. I see that evil teachings, incredible in their filth and degradation, have crept into our public schools on every hand, while God, prayer, and the Bible have been thrown out and openly ridiculed. I see a giant crime wave sweeping across our cities, rape is out of control, murder is commonplace, and no one is safe on our streets anymore. It doesn't look much like a world that is the property of God, does it? But IT IS!

This present evil world is hideously marred by SIN. Let us make this thing more personal. Go with me to yonder hospital, and listen for just a moment to the cries and moans of the sick and suffering. See the red eyes wet with tears, and think of the bleeding hearts behind those tears as they carry that loved one away. Go with me to yonder prison, and see the young lives blighted and shriveled with sin' caged up like wild animals. Follow me now to yonder asylum' and listen to the unintelligible jargon of those poor' pitiable souls with their distorted reason and deranged minds, and the very walls seem to whisper the word—Hell! I can't really imagine how much a million is. A dollar a day since the birth of Christ would total only three-fourths of a million dollars. I can't imagine the suffering of a million people, let alone a billion or six and a half billion. Yet' that's the reality of today's world. Famine' storms' i11ness, fear' oppression' exploitation, poverty, hopelessness, sin and death, all that is the daily lot of billions of people. Doesn't look like a world that is owned by God, does it? But IT IS! I believe that God passionately loves the world. It is my deep conviction, born of communion with my heavenly Father, that God now loves all lost men. There are lost men in jails and prisons and insane asylums. They are in saloons and brothels and in death and in judgment and in hell, and God loves them all. He still remembers them and remembers His Son on the tree, suffering and dying on their behalf. And in the redeemed body of this resurrected and glorified Son He now prepares with infinite wisdom and care a Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek, a SON COMPANY, a KING COMPANY, a PRIEST COMPANY, to restore mankind into the image of God again. "Because all the earth is mine, ye shall be unto me a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS!,, Ah, that is the "divine sandwich,, - One piece of bread is the promise, "Ye shall be unto me a special people.,, The second slice of bread is the promise, "Ye shall be unto me a roya1 priesthood.,, And the meat in between is the reason and purpose for the special people and the royal priesthood - BECAUSE ALL THE EARTH IS MINE! The earth, the world, and all they that dwell therein belong to God first because He made them, and second because He redeemed them.

In Romans 8:20 Paul, moved by inspiration, states that the whole creation groans for this "priesthood.,, I took the liberty of putting "priesthood.,, in there, but that's exactly what he's talking about. The whole creation groans for the manifestation of the sons of God for "the creation itself *also* shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God,, (Rom. 8:21 ). I see it. I see something stirring in the atmosphere. I see a people being taught of God, purged, purified, processed, perfected, overcoming, taking on the mind of Christ, transformed again into the image of God, taking their rightful places—sons and kings and priests unto their God! This people has received a vision of what they are destined to be in God, of what they are being prepared to do for creation. The message of the hope of sonship and the kingdom is going forth in power in this hour and circling the globe as multiplied thousands of the Lord's elect people are heeding the call. God is removing from the hearts of these the foolish desire to "fly away,, to some far-off heaven somewhere' as He unfolds within their ransomed spirits the beautiful PURPOSE He has in His firstfruit company. The reality of a ful1 and complete redemption in spirit, soul, and body' to be revealed in the sons of God, is so very near that we can see, hear, smell, taste and touch its powers.

Because all the earth is His, God is raising up a Royal Priesthood to reign in mighty spirit power and authority over the earth, not to be little human dictators, but with an outflow of life and light and love, touching God with one hand, and humanity with the other, bringing the two together, that God may indwell men by His Spirit and live and rule in them in power and glory. The king1y nature in us is not to dominate other men's lives, but to deal with them in judgment and mercy to break the power of selfhood, rebellion, sin and the devil, that men may be reconciled to God. Kings have power and authority over every enemy' priests reconcile in mercy and love. But once the reconciliation has been effected, and the Christ is enthroned' we shall deliver men up to God, even the Father, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. That is the law of the Kingdom. We rule only to subdue men unto God—then GOD RULES 1N THEM. That is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God! Oh, beloved, come, let us now open our hearts wide to Him. Come, and as we reverently consider this glorious ministry and its life-flow to all the families of the earth, let us yield ourselves unto God that He may work His wondrous work in our lives, that we become in nature and power His ROYAL PRIESTHOOD in the earth! The manifestation of the sons of God is nothing less than the full manifestation of God's fully developed and empowered body of king-priests after the Order of Melchizedek. Those apprehended unto this ministry are indeed A PEOPLE FOR A PURPOSE. If you desire to *be a blessing* in the ultimate of what that means, then you desire to be GREAT IN GOD'S KINGDOM! It is really very simple and powerful. The greater you are in the Kingdom, the greater your potential to *be a blessing*. You see, the President of the United States has a greater capacity to do good for people than does the local sheriff or the checker at Wal Mart. The higher you rise in this world into positions of ability, accomplishment, prestige, influence, finance and power, the greater your

capacity to do good. If your heart is right, if your motive is pure, it is not wrong to desire to be the greatest in the Kingdom, for with that position comes the authority to bless. If I am least in the Kingdom I will not be nearly as effective on behalf of creation as the greatest in the Kingdom. To whomsoever much is given, much is required, and to whomsoever little is given, little is required, saith the Lord. The one who receives little of the Lord in the Kingdom can bless but little. When one's desire for greatness is rooted in the true purpose and the divine nature of greatness, then greatness is a legitimate aspiration. It will not be denied. The spirit that produces greatness is the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ who, though He was rich, became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.

Now let us return to the two characters in our story. One of them is a child, who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. The other is a man, referred to as "that man,,, and that man is so offensive that he should be drowned in the sea. Now here is the mystery of the parable. Both of those characters are in you and in me. The man - who is so offensive and despicable that he ought to be drowned - you look at that man every morning in the mirror. He is the natural man, the *soulish* man who understands not the things of the spirit. He is the *outward man* who is perishing and the *carnal-minded man* who is enmity against God. This natural, soulish, carnal-minded, outward man is hostile to the spirit and offensive to the little child of the Kingdom. This man is self-centered. The characteristics of his nature are self-indulgence, self-appreciation, self-love, self-motivation, self-defense, and self-preservation. On the other hand, you need not look in the mirror to meet the little child who is the greatest in the Kingdom. This child cannot be seen with the natural eye. You must look deeper, into the very deepest part of your being; past the body, and on inward past the soul, into the very spirit itself—there you will find the child of the Kingdom' the inner son' the seed of life, Christ in you. The little child is the *spiritual man* having the *mind o/Christ* and bearing the *image of God*.

The issue is just this: WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? That's a loaded question, but when you ask Jesus you are going to get the right answer. "And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." The word converted means *changed*. Unless we are changed' Jesus says, and become like little children; unless we step out of the ego of the soulish man, and step into the humility of the Christ who humbled Himself and was made of no reputation' taking upon Him the form of a servant' and becoming obedient even unto death, we will have no place in the government of God. If we want to have a part in God's ruling government to bless the nations, we must humble ourselves and become like this little child. And if we do, not only will we be a member in God's government, but we can be the very GREATEST in that government. What a proposition that is!

That is just the opposite of man's ways. How many people today would vote for a child to be President of the United States? We don't want a child in the White House! We want a person of stature' a graduate of Yale or Harvard' a lawyer' business tycoon' or politician with experience' knowledge and skill. But Jesus says, "I'm forming a government. This government will be an international and universal government over all things. The blessings of this government will be life more abundant' with love' joy' peace' and righteousness upon all men everywhere. And the required prerequisite' the one and only qualification for participation in this government is to be *changed* and become as a *little child*. There is no position open to any who fail to meet this criterion. The implications of such a revolutionary concept is staggering to the imagination' and it is no small wonder that the carnal mind is totally void of the capacity to understand a principle so transcendental and sublime. But the implication it holds for those who meet its demands is beyond comprehension or even imagination. One thing must be very clear. Jesus did not say' "Be *childish*." He said' "Be *child-like*."; There is a whole world of difference between *child-ish* and *childlike*. "Except you become *like* a little child."

Now, what does it mean to be *childish*? Children can be self-centered, selfish, and ungrateful; sometimes they throw temper tantrums, demanding their way; they may even bite and scratch when they're angry; they don't always think before they act; their bellies often control their behavior. Further' their eyes are often bigger than their stomachs; sometimes they take more than their share' and other times they take what doesn't belong to them. They can be disobedient' and with a face that could win an Academy Award' they can deny doing all of the above! Such behavior is childish. And how remarkably each of these characteristics reflects the behavior of nearly all of the governments of this world! In II Timothy' Paul describes childish people: selfish' irrational' immoral' manipulative' impulsive' crude' and cruel. Worst of all' they are without faith in God. Obviously Jesus

would never say we should become childish. Such people have depraved minds and will be promptly rejected by God for any position of rulership in His Kingdom' for they cannot be His sons. Some terms that equate with childishness are immaturity' lack of experience' knowledge and understanding. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child"" the wise man said.

On the other hand, what are the characteristics of *child-likeness*? Doubtless many of Jesus' listeners wondered how a person that was grown could become like a little child again' how one could throw away his knowledge' his experience' his habits' his ideals, his established accomplishments and become like a little child' and start out afresh to acquire a new store of ideals' principles and values. Many doubtless felt it was well nigh impossible' and many did not wish to try' for they did not wish to give up their pet desires and ways and their proud positions. To become like a little child was to become humble' as one who knew nothing and possessed nothing. Pride and self-seeking and every soulish attribute were to be put away. To become like a little child meant a revolution in the life and thought of the individual. Yet it was an absolute essential for rulership in the Kingdom of Heaven! Child-likeness speaks of innocence' lowliness of mind' humility, unconditional love' trust and dependence; a child freely forgives' is unbigoted' teachable' inquisitive' impressionable' and pliable. Children are active wide-eyed explorers of ever-expanding horizons. They express simple' uncluttered feelings, thoughts' opinions, ideas and truths. The attitude of the little one who is greatest in the Kingdom is an attitude that sees all men through the eyes of God, which are the eyes of love. The little one sees Christ in every man' is ever ready to believe the best about every person' and rejoices not at an evil report' but discerns the purpose of the Father in every thing.

This reminds me of the testimony I read once of a preacher in England many years ago. He wrote: The simplicity of childhood in regard to the things of God often shames us now. There rises to my mind as I speak one sweet little incident of a fortnight ago, which did me great good. It was during a time when I was passing through a not very serious controversy, but which had found its way into the papers, and into the home of a certain clergyman of the Church of England. The father and mother were speaking of this incident over the breakfast-table. Their only child, a little girl' was present; she had never seen me, she had only heard my name from her father and mother' who are my friends. Presently in her childish treble, she asked whether Mr. Campbell was in trouble. They said, "Yes., "What is it?., "Oh, they are saying he is a bad man." "Is he a bad man?" she asked. Her father very stoutly and courageously answered that he was not; whereupon the little girl slipped down from the table and went away. They did not seek her or follow her. Presently she returned, and climbing back into her chair at the breakfast-table, said, "It is alright., "What is alright, my dear?., "About Mr. Campbell. I have told God about it. So that's settled., I think I can presume far enough on the tender-heartedness of fathers and mothers to say that when the letter of the parents of that child reached me, telling me of the incident, somehow I did feel as if it were alright. - end quote.

What, then, are the qualities of the child-like spirit? First of all, there is the *humility of the child*. It was really that which was uppermost in Jesus, thought when He told the disciples that they must become as little children. "Whosoever therefore shall *humble himself* as this little child...., These disciples looked on Jesus, Kingdom as a kingdom of this world and they were always concerned about who was going to have the biggest jobs and the highest places in it. A little child is not interested in position and prestige and rank. He is not interested in getting the seat of honor at a feast or the first place at some important political function. He would not be in the least worried if he did not get a seat on the platform at a public meeting. He just does not think of such things at all because he does not think of *himself*. It is only people who have a high idea of their own importance who speak and act like that, vying for place and position. A little child, even a child celebrity, does not think himself important. Humility is always the sign of a really great man.

A second trait of childhood is *guilelessness*. The little child has not learned the slippery arts of a deceptive life. He has not become an expert in the craft of contriving schemes of ambition and advantage' and then throwing over them the aura of innocent simplicity. A child does not try to lead a double life, or appear as that which he isn't. It is not to children, but to adults, that the apostle writes: "Putting off all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envying and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby., (I Pet. 2: 1-2). A third trait of childhood is *teachableness*. How readily and implicitly a little child believes everything its parents or its teachers say! It waits not to doubt or debate, but unhesitatingly accepts every statement as truth. It will try anything it is told with all the fervor and diligence it can muster.

A fourth quality of the child-like spirit is *unconditional love*. The little child makes no bigoted calculations about the profit of living on terms of friendship with anyone. It does not reason itself into a state of friendship, and say, "I ought to love: therefore I will love." Race, color, creed or station matter not to a child in choosing friends. Children often love and adore even abusive parents. They love the unlovely. The child loves naturally, spontaneously, because it cannot help loving. Love is the characteristic impulse, trait and condition of childhood. And therefore childhood is the very best symbol as well as the absolute term of that heavenly Kingdom whose very scepter is Love. Happy the son of the Kingdom who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and all men and all creation with an uninhibited' unqualified love: for this is the nature and the law of the Kingdom of God.

A fifth trait of childhood is trust. Luke, in relating this incident of Jesus with the little child (Lk. 18:15-17)' goes a little deeper by including *infants!* To that we should give some serious thought. Have you ever heard of babies biting their nails, worrying whether it will have a crib to sleep in? Have you ever heard one child say to another, "I wonder where our next meal is going to come from?"; What about a little boy afraid that there won't be any fireman's jobs left? Or a little girl fretting that she won't qualify for a student loan in fifteen years? Small children do not worry about the future. They live for today, for today is always *their day*. They live by faith—faith in their parents. Mom and Dad will provide what is needed for today. They don't wonder whether their parents will make enough money to keep up with the Joneses. Clothes' food, cleanliness, safety, and shelter are important' but no child lives for these things. Sons of God live for their Father—not for things. Trusting little children are *pliable*. Sons of God come only to do the will of their Father. Whoever has a DETERMINED MIND OF HIS OWN cannot partake in the government of God. This suggests that we need to have our minds renewed, so that it does not function out of the knowledge systems of this world. It also implies that living in the Kingdom does not allow us any personal rights, but just as a little child is *totally subject* to its parents, so we are totally subject to our heavenly Father.

Suppose we were caught in a fire and could not get downstairs; suppose we were standing at a window; suppose it was quite dark and we could not see the ground. If a voice said to us' "Come on! Jump!,, and we recognized that voice as our father's voice' would we hesitate because we could not see? Ah, we would know our father would not let us down. That is not the way the son with a child-like spirit *ought to* feel about his heavenly Father - that is how the son with a child-like spirit *does* feel about his Father! The son of the Kingdom with a child-like spirit is in every situation and circumstance certain that God will guide him and direct him and order life for him according to His great plan and purpose. I do not doubt for one moment that trust is the first and greatest of all the conditions of entry into, and participation in, the government of God! When these child-like qualities are inworked into our lives we become sons of God who with childlike innocence are lowly of mind, easy to be entreated; humble before God and man; unconditionally merciful, loving, and caring to all men; trusting explicitly the heavenly Father for all things and in all things; totally dependent upon the Father' knowing that of ourselves we can do nothing; forgiving one another and all men their trespasses' no matter how grievous, not imputing their trespasses unto them; unbigoted, unprejudiced' tolerant' and respectful toward every man of every race' color and background; spiritually inquisitive, not blinded or bound by static creeds, doctrines of men, or traditions of the elders; teachable' impressionable' obedient, and pliable in the dealing hands of God. My! My! My!

A farmer watched a bird building her nest in a heap of branches pruned from the apple tree beside the farmhouse. All day long the bird toiled; in the evening the farmer destroyed the work she had done— scattering the tiny twigs about and trampling them beneath his feet. The next day the bird, undaunted, began her building once again. Again at evening time her work was destroyed. Judged by the feeble standards of the bird, ignorant of all beyond the cycle of her instincts' the man was cruel and not to be called good. The third day she began her nest once more' but this time in the rose bush beside the kitchen door. In the evening the farmer smiled upon the bird and her work remained. Day after day she continued her cyclic round; the nest was completed; the eggs were laid and warmed beneath her bosom. But long before the time for hatching' the pile of branches from which she had been driven had been removed and burned. Had the farseeing farmer allowed the bird to have her way' all her nest' her little ones' and her hopes for the season would have been destroyed. She did not see beyond one summer; the farmer saw the end from the beginning. So our omniscient Father knows the end from the beginning' and the son who has submitted himself to the Father has received a new set of senses by which he learns to trust God in all things' even those, which he cannot understand. Jesus said to His disciples' "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter,, (Jn. 13:7). The son with the

child-like spirit has learned this lesson well and goes on in confident trust in Him who worketh all things after the council of His own will without question, concern or disquiet.

The Lord Jesus teaches us that if want to be great in the Kingdom, if our heart's desire is to be able to bless multitudes of people in significant ways and deliver groaning creation' these child-like qualities must be in us and abound. They must be the law of our life. When we are humble' growing' inquisitive' yielded' pliable, trusting, searching, and learning as we walk with God we become that little child who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. By these principles established as the nature of our being we are empowered to assume a role in the rule of God to be made salvation unto the ends of the earth. When we are able to fully trust God for all that we need; when we really *commit* our way and all that touches and enters our experience into His loving hands; when we follow on to *know* Him in all His glorious fullness' as a child grows up knowing and learning everything from his parents: there is a release into our life of the inexhaustible riches of His grace and glory—the depth of His understanding' the vastness of His wisdom and knowledge' the purity of His nature, the omniscience of His mind, the justice of His ways, the unlimitedness of His love, the unmeasurableness of His grace, the absoluteness of His authority, the omnipotence of His power, the fullness of His Spirit, the endlessness of His mercy, the bountifulness of His goodness, the incorruptibleness of His life and the unsurpassed splendor of His majesty.

As these powers are released into our life' we in turn become a channel for them to flow out to humanity. Such high and mighty purpose is certainly beyond the comprehension of the natural man and the carnal mind. The truth and wonder of it all solemnly teaches us how it is that in the glorious and wonderful wisdom of the heavenly scheme it is not in becoming *childish*' but by becoming *child-like*' that a person is able to attain unto greatness in the Kingdom of God.

In closing this thought I am moved to share these poignant words from brother Paul Mueller: "What a practical lesson for us! When we entered the kingdom by being begotten of the Spirit, we came as a little child. We came into the kingdom knowing little, with no background of experiences in the Spirit. As transgressors, we came into the kingdom just as we were' bringing nothing with us that might have hindered our entrance into His kingdom. Now the kingdom of God is coming into the earth in a greater way. And we must come into its greater glory as a little child. When we come as a child' we turn from the ways of the past. We leave past truths and doctrines behind. What was truth yesterday' during the church age' is either fulfilled' or is raised to a higher level' to be fulfilled by the Spirit in a greater way. Having come to the greater glory of the kingdom of God' as it is revealed in this new Day' we must come AS a little child. In spiritual reality we are starting over. As more mature sons of God we know the great truth that we grow spiritually by denying self. We grow spiritually by learning. And we can only learn by becoming AS little children. We have not yet attained unto all that God has for us' for we have much more to learn and experience of God and His kingdom. The apostle Paul was unquestionably one of the great spiritual leaders of his time. Yet' near the end of his life' he said' **'Brethren' I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind' and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 3:13-14)**. Those who really see this new Day and the greater glory of the kingdom of God are truly 'forgetting those things which are behind' and reaching forth unto those things which are before.' They are pressing toward 'the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Keep pressing on' saints of God! The prize of the high calling of God in Christ is not far away! "When the kingdom of God even more fully comes to the earth, the anointed word of the Lord declares' 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb' and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp (an adder or poisonous viper)' and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice, (a similar poisonous viper) den, (Isa. 11:6-8). What a wonderful change shall take place as the reign of Christ transforms every living creature. And 'a little child,' which is the comparatively small manchild company or the elect remnant, shall lead them into the fullness of the kingdom of God. Then' the peace and harmony of the kingdom of God shall prevail among all creatures everywhere. And every word declared by our Father shall be completely and totally fulfilled.

"May the Lord help us all understand the vital importance and significance of our present walk with God. As we walk this kingdom pathway, being led of the Spirit to make the transition from the old age to the new, we are

thereby marking out a clear path to the kingdom of God for the rest of the creation to follow. We are indeed that 'little child that is leading the whole creation into the greater ful1ness of the kingdom of God. Our 'greater works, ministry is a sure work of the Spirit. It is unseen by the carnal-minded, but it is 1eading the creation to a glory that shall ultimately be fulfilled in due time. The 'little child,, or this corporate, Christ-man, shall bring righteousness, peace and justice to the mountain of the Lord, which sha11 then flow down to the whole creation, making it all new by the sovereign power of our mighty King of kings and Lord of lords,, —end quote.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 25**  
**EXCEPT YOU BECOME AS A LITTLE CHILD** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART TWENTY-FIVE**

Before beginning this Study it would be beneficial to each reader to refer to the previous Study' or your Bible' and rehearse our background scripture' Matthew chapter eighteen' verses one through fourteen.

The subject of this wonderful passage of scripture is: WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? There are two characters in the divine drama. You find these two all the way through this teaching of Jesus. The two characters are directly involved in the answer to the question' Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" Of these characters one is a child' the other a man. The child is the greatest in the Kingdom. The man is so offensive that he ought to be drowned in the sea. These are the two characters—the *child*' and the man.

Both of these characters reside in you and in me. The man—who is so offensive and despicable that he ought to be drowned—you look at that man every morning in the mirror. He is the *natural man*' the *soulish man*' the *outward man*' and the *carnal-minded man*. This man is hostile to the spirit and offensive to the little child of the Kingdom. This man is self-centered. The characteristics of his nature are self-indulgence, self-appreciation, self-love, self-motivation, self-defense' and self-preservation. The *soul is* self, and self is the *soul*. The soul is man's personality apart from the spirit. Soul and body in union constitute *the flesh*. Therefore, this man is the earthy, fleshly man. You can look this man in the eye across the table or in the mirror. You need not look in the mirror, however, to meet the little child who is the greatest in the Kingdom. This child cannot be seen with the natural eye. You must look deeper, into the deepest part of your being; past the body' and inward past the soul' into the very spirit itself—there you will find the child of the Kingdom, the inner son, Christ in you. The little child is the *spiritual man* having the *mind of Christ* and bearing the *image of God*.

In this Study we take up at verse five. "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name' receiveth me" (Mat. 18:5). What a tremendous statement that is! If you receive even one person who has that child-like relationship with the Father, you receive the Lord Christ Himself. And we know that when we receive Christ we also receive the Father. Luke's Gospel says it this way: "**Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth Him that sent me**" (Lk. 9:48). It should be obvious to any who meditate upon these words that when one receives Christ he receives the Father, for the Father is in the Son. In like manner, when one receives the *little child* he receives both Christ and **the Father**.

Someone says, "Well, I don't know that I know a little child like that whom I can receive in that way' so that I receive both the Father and the Son simply by receiving him." Let me put in a way where you can grasp the eternal truth of it. When you *become* that little child, the Father and the Son dwell in you. And when you make yourself available in this world as the temple of God, as a vessel through whom the anointing and the wisdom and the life and the power and the glory of God flow—when you make yourself available on that level as a king-priest—let me assure you, precious friend of mine, there are vast multitudes of people that will hasten with expectation to drink from that fountain which you are. They will receive you and drink from you when you come as that little child that is greatest in the Kingdom with a flow of Life, Light and Love; and receiving you and drinking of you they partake of both the Father and the Son who are in you. The little child is the ultimate conduit for the life of God to flow out into creation. The one through whom God flows unreservedly and unconditionally is the person who is the **greatest in the Kingdom!**

In Matthew chapter twenty-five there is that wonderful teaching of Jesus about the *nations* being divided as sheep and goats at His right hand and His left. Of the sheep it is said that the Lord was hungry' and they gave Him meat; He was thirsty, and they gave Him drink; He **was a stranger, and** they took Him in; He was naked, and they clothed Him; He was sick, and they visited Him, and in prison, and they came unto Him. The goats' of

course, failed to do any of these things. The sheep asked, "When did we see you and do any of these things unto you?" Then the **Lord answers** them, saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it **unto** one of the *least of these, my brethren*, ye have done it *unto me.*," Through many years I have heard a great many sermons on this passage of scripture—especially *missionary and fund-raising* sermons! We have been told of the starving children in India' the impoverished masses in Africa, the drunk in the gutter, the homeless on the streets' the orphans' the run-aways' the drug addicts, the prisoners and the sick and dying in the hospitals. Impassioned pleas have been made for money to support programs to minister to all these people' to help the needy' clothe the naked, feed the hungry' provide shelter for the homeless' rehabilitate the drunks and addicts' and preach the gospel to the heathen. And with reference to all these desperately needy ones the scripture has been pressed upon us' "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto ME." The notion is that if you give a dime to a bum, **a dollar to the homeless'** a meal to a starving child' or some used clothing to the missionary barrel, you are ministering to Christ Himself. Let it be thoroughly known and understood by every man and woman who names the name of Christ - **we ought to do those things!** And more. That is the gospel in action' and it is certainly the love of God in manifestation. We are commanded to pray for all men' do good to all men' and bless all men. None can deny that. But - that's not what Jesus is talking about!

The remarkable words of Jesus are' "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these' my **brethren'** ye have done it unto me." The subject is not the starving in India' the poor in Africa' the drunk in the gutter' or any other sinner in the world. The subject is the LORD'S BRETHREN. These brethren of the Lord are members of the Christ-body' kings and priests in His Kingdom' participators in the government of God. *That is the issue.* It,s about how the people of the *nations* act in respect to the *Lord's brethren'* not how Christians act in respect to the needy in the nations! The preachers' as usual, have it backwards. "And before Him shall be gathered all NATIONS: and He shall separate them (the nations) one from another' as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." The nations who respect' assist' bless and minister to the Lord's brethren in the Kingdom are set at the right hand of the King to receive the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God. Those who hate' mock' resist' persecute or ignore the Lord's brethren are set at the left hand of the King to receive the purification of judgmental fire. The way the nations will be dealt with relates precisely to their response to the sons of God, the "least" of His brethren, the "little child" who though humble' meek' unassuming, unpretentious, and esteemed as the least of all is, nevertheless' **THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!**

'But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to *that man* by whom the *offense* cometh!" (**Mat. 18:6-7**). I would draw your attention to the words, "Woe unto **that man.**" Earlier I pointed out that there are only two characters in this teaching of Jesus, the "little child" and "that man.", Everything is summed up in these two personalities. Now the Lord explains that whoever shall offend one of these *little ones*, it would be better for that man to be drowned in the sea. "Woe unto the *world* because of offenses...woe unto *that man* by whom the offense cometh!,' Can we not see by this that the *world is that man!* That man is the man of this present world' the natural man' the soulish man' the fleshly man. He is the man of human reasoning, soulish logic, carnal understanding and worldly wisdom. And this is the man who *offends* the little one!

What does it mean to "offend"? Have you, dear brother, precious sister, ever been offended? To the modern mind offend means to speak a word or commit an act that creates resentment, anger, hurt feelings' or bitterness. If I offend someone, usually I can discern that they are offended by their demeanor' response or actions. They may have a "hurt" look on their countenance' eyes flashing with anger' bitterness in their words' or coldness in their actions. offense is a matter of the feelings' the emotions. 'You stepped on my feelings' you said something I didn't like' you did something I don't appreciate' you didn't do something I expected' and that hurts me—I'm offended." So I pout' thrust out my bottom lip' put a scowl on my face' and if I see you coming down the street I will cross over to the other side and pretend that I'm window shopping so that you won't know that I know that you're passing by. You see' I'm OFFENDED! My feelings are hurt' so I throw a pity-party. But I have news for you, my friend. When we throw a pity-party, God doesn't show up. Nor do the sons of God show up! The sons of God are not offended after the manner of the natural man. But that kind of offense is not what Jesus is talking about. He's not saying' "But whosoever shall hurt the feelings of one of these little ones, it were

better for him that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." The ways of God are not petty or trivial. If you're the greatest in the Kingdom your feelings are going to be quite stable, in fact. God is not fickle and those who walk in His nature and bear His image are not fickle either.

The word "offend", is from the Greek SKANDALIZO meaning "to trip, to snare, to cause to stumble, or cause to fall." If a man comes to the little one, that child of humility and yieldedness to the Lord who is guileless, pliable, obedient, and trusting—if a man comes and does something so deceitful so crafty so drastic, and so detrimental that it trips that little one snares him, causing him to stumble and fall turning him aside from his journey into the fullness of God—**woe unto THAT MAN!** That is the man who is so offensive that he should be drowned in the sea! And let me say to every one reading these lines—that man is not your boss; he is neither your husband nor your ex-husband, your wife nor your ex-wife; he is not your mother-in-law; he is not your neighbor; he is not your meanest enemy. No—that man is the *natural man* the *soulish man*. May I say it another way—he is *your* natural man, *your* fleshly man, *your* very own carnal mind! We have found the culprit and *he is us!* That man lies within each one of us. Our own natural reasoning, our own human logic, our own carnal desires, our own will, emotions, ways, plans, hopes, ambitions, and designs point the finger at us, crying, "Thou art the man!" That is the man who is always seeking to trip, snare, and cause this little one to stumble and fall. Out of the heart of that man springs the whole world system of things. Everything in this natural realm is set against the life of the spirit. The world system moves along lines and upon principles that are contrary and opposed to the mind of Christ and the ways of the Father. Woe unto THAT MAN!

Go with me now into that long ago when Jesus walked the dusty trails with His disciples. He had asked the twelve who they thought He was. Peter promptly answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" Then Jesus said to him, "Peter, flesh and blood did not reveal this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven." In other words, "This understanding didn't come from your fleshly mind. You didn't figure this out by yourself, Peter. You didn't reach this conclusion by human logic. This came to you from my Father." So remarkable was this revelation to Peter that the Lord said to him, "*Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona!*"

Only minutes later Jesus began to introduce to these disciples the subject of His coming suffering and death on the cross. This was an unsettling and disturbing possibility for these men, for they had all their hopes fastened upon Jesus and all their fortunes invested in Him. They had forsaken all to follow Him because they were convinced in their heart of hearts that He was indeed the Messiah, the King of Israel. Was He not the Son of God? Did not He come to liberate their nation from the yoke of Roman tyranny and establish a great and glorious Kingdom? Were not they, the disciples, to reign with Him in that Kingdom? And now their King announces that He is going down to Jerusalem to be despised, hated, mistreated, yea, to suffer and *die!* Then Peter, who had just been pronounced *blessed*, took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, "No way, Lord; that can't be. We won't allow it to be! We will fight to the death to defend you and see that your mission is accomplished." Ah, when Jesus mentioned the cross and dying, Peter began to rebuke Him. Where did he find the senseless courage that would dare to rebuke the Lord? The answer is disturbingly evident—far, far too clear to be a comfort to any of us! The Lord Himself gives us the answer, for, He turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, SATAN! Thou art an *offense* unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of *God*, but those that be of *men*." What a shocking way to talk to the great apostle Peter, the one possessing the revelation of Christ's identity, the one called blessed, the one to whom the Lord had just given the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven! Atrocious to say to this man of deep revelation and keen perception "Thou savorest not the things that be of God but those that be of men!" Indeed, "Get thee behind me, SATAN!" How unthinkable!

Hearing Peter's entreaty to the Lord, which of us would not have said that this was the language of genuine affection, tender solicitude, and loving concern? No doubt we would have chimed in and said, "How kind! How true! How good! Amen!" Our carnal mind is no better than Peter's. But Jesus replies "Get thee behind me—SATAN!" And our Lord was not merely on a name calling spree, nor was He retaliating out of hurt feelings or fleshly anger. He never uttered words in vain, without a definite meaning. Jesus did not speak merely to Satan in Peter, nor did He say to Peter that His words *sounded* like the words of Satan. He didn't say, "Get thee behind me Satan, because you're full of devils." He didn't say "Get thee behind me Satan, because you talk to the dead", or, "you're an ax-murderer." There was no gross sin—just this explanation: "Get thee behind me Satan, for thou art an OFFENSE unto me: for (because) thou savorest not the things that be of God, but **those that be of men!**" The problem was that Peter spoke out of his natural man, his soulish man. He SPOKE AS A

MAN! "Get thee behind me Satan—you who think and speak like a man!" Was this not also what James was saying when he described the wisdom of man in these words, "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. THIS WISDOM descendeth not from above' but is EARTHLY' SENSUAL and D-E-V-I-L-I-S-H!" (James 3:14-15).

On the surface there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with what Peter said. It was a good thought, a kindly thought. He didn't want to see his Master suffer and die, and he said so. What was wrong with that? Wasn't that a good sentiment for him to have? What was wrong with it was that it was the product of Self, it emanated from human sympathy and not from the heart of God. Anything that proceeds from Self' by the very nature of things' is bound to be opposed to the mind and will of God, for if His thoughts, and His ways' are as far from being like ours as the heavens are above the earth, there can be no compatibility between them at all. Self and Satan despise and hate the cross. They will scamper wildly in any direction to avoid it. They will turn their backs upon it, try to go around it' or climb over it' but they will never embrace it. The cross is the death knell of Self' and Self is the arch enemy of the cross. The friendly sympathy and good logic of Self is the cunning, mind of the Serpent. And Self is—**THAT MAN!**

Have you ever considered that Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, could be *offended*? Do you think that means that Jesus, feelings were hurt, or that He was greatly disappointed in Peter? Do you suppose that Jesus went out and threw a pity-party? Do you think maybe Jesus "snubbed" Peter for a few days? Isn't that how people act when they are offended? But that's not what it means! Armed with the understanding that "offend" in the scriptural sense means to trip' snare' stumble' cause to fall or turn aside' how clear it is that Peter was trying to turn Jesus aside from the path Father had marked out for Him. Peter's logic would have caused Jesus to stumble and fall from His child-like walk wherein He was completely yielded' one hundred percent pliable' and totally obedient to the Father's plan and purpose, though it included deep suffering and the agony of the cross. Peter's suggestion was of an *alternative* pathway to the throne, just as the devil had propositioned Jesus in the wilderness. Peter was Satan, an adversary, whose kind and well-meaning counsel would have aborted the whole redemptive work of the Christ. Peter was an OFFENSE!

Each of us faces this same test, and we meet it every day. The test is just this: Will we do things God's way, or, do we do them, in the words of the song, "My way." God's will can only be done by the *little child*. *our will is done by that man*. That man who does things "his way" deserves to be drowned in the depths of the sea, for he is an offense to the little child who treads the path of the Kingdom. This is why discernment is so important in the life of a son, and all things, even prophecy, must be *judged*—the spirit of man can even enter into and pollute a prophetic word. For example, several years ago the Lord spoke to me clearly and powerfully that I should stay home and give myself to writing. Every year we receive numerous invitations from all parts of the country to speak to various groups, churches, seminars, conventions, etc. For many years we traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad. I love to travel. I love the body of Christ, and enjoy fellowshiping with, and ministering to, the elect people of God. And, believe it or not, it would be a lot easier to be on the road than to maintain the schedule we have to keep with the writing ministry.! The Father requires us to give ourselves personally to answering our mail, and overseeing each of the various operations involved in sending out many thousands of articles and books. The burden to put into print a number of truths never before penned (by me) or published intensifies within my spirit. To comply with this vision requires our total and undivided energies. Heretofore we tried to accommodate the brethren who have pressed us to come and minister at their gatherings' crowding meetings into our already busy schedule. But on Monday morning we would stumble into our office tired' bleary-eyed' and exhausted to begin another week of ministry to thousands of saints through the written word. Finally the message penetrated' bringing the deep and clear conviction that we must not accept any further out-of-town speaking engagements' except on those infrequent occasions when Father Himself directs us to go here or there. We miss seeing many of our precious friends across the country' but the reward expresses itself in a flow of revelation truth from our pen unhindered by conflicting concerns.

My point is just this. No sooner had the Spirit of God settled the issue in my heart, when every traveling ministry that passed through El Paso prophesied to me, "Yea, my son' thou shalt travel more than thou hast ever traveled!" And sometimes they prophesied this to me just before their next Convention! I am not joking - brethren have tried to "prophesy" me to their churches and gatherings. This is why Paul wrote' "[Let the](#)

prophets speak two or three' and let the other judge" (1 Cor. 14:29). All prophecy stands to be judged. If I tried to do everything people prophesy to me' my life would be total confusion. One brother said to me once, "Bro. Eby, the Lord shows me that you're going to Alaska." I replied, "Well, praise God, brother, if I ever go to Alaska, it will be *the Lord!*" No offense to our precious brethren in Alaska, it's a wonderful state— I just don't like cold weather! It gives me no joy to find it **necessary to say these things**, but to my utter grief I find that there are a lot of the Lord's people running around today, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," or "the Lord told me this", or, "the Lord showed me such and such", when the Lord has said nothing. Have you never been in a service where someone stood up and prophesied out of their own mind and heart, out of their own desires or emotion? Flesh touched the gift of prophecy and perverted it. The shabbiness and shallowness of modern day prophecy too often stands in the weakness and humanity of **that man**. And sometimes it **can be an offense**, designed to trip, snare, cause to stumble or fall, to turn one's feet away from the will of God. Let no one misunderstand me. We are always open to allow Father to speak to us through writings, ministries, prophecies, or any other avenue, but these must bear witness with our spirit and confirm the stirrings of the Spirit within our hearts. We cannot alter our course just because someone tells us that God has told them something for us.

In twenty-seven years of publishing Kingdom Bible Studies, having mailed out, free of charge' well in excess of a million papers and books, we have never solicited funds in any meeting or by mail. The Lord dealt with us many years ago never to ask for money or even mention any needs, great or small. And' of course' we have nothing to sell! We are forbidden by the Holy Spirit to put a price on any word of God' or even to "suggest" the amount of a "free will offering" to cover the costs. We neither judge nor condemn our brethren who do those things, for every man stands or falls to his own Master, but this has been the dealing of the Lord in our lives. We have been called upon to trust God completely and explicitly without any manipulation. The "closet" principle has been tried, tested, and proven in our walk and we have found that it works! Through these years, though the expenses have been great, we can testify that every bill has been paid each month, and sometimes God blesses with an overflow! At other times we have had to tighten our belts, but I bear witness that we have never gone hungry or defaulted on a payment. Great is HIS faithfulness!

Then the Lord gave us a further word. He instructed us never to use our mailing list to promote any kind of business proposition. We could never become involved in any financial venture or multi-level marketing program, and use our brethren who love us and support this ministry, to draw them, because of their confidence in us, into some financial scheme whereby we would profit monetarily. The word of the Lord was emphatic—we could *never* do such a thing. It's not that we could not participate in any business program, it's just that the Lord has prohibited us from *using our brethren* or our *mailing list* to promote it.

How many times do you suppose we've been tested on that? I've lost count! Friends have tried to enroll us. Brethren have pressured us. And, of course, offers come almost daily in the mail. Just recently a dear sister sent information about a unique money-making program, and as I scanned it I could immediately perceive the vast potential that it held. At once the thought presented itself in my mind, "Wow, if I would just send this out to everybody on the mailing list, probably within a year or two I could retire!" And not only would we have been blessed, undoubtedly it would have blessed a number of people on our mailing list! So - what could be wrong with that? As soon as the thought came I had to turn, just as Jesus did to Peter' and rebuke that wily devil— "Get thee behind me' Satan: you're an *offense* unto me!" You see' God told us how to finance this ministry - by prayer and faith—and such ideas and schemes savor not the things that be of God' but those that be of men. Time and again I have heard the voice of **that man!** The thought that I could bless both my brethren and myself was a kindly thought. It was a good sentiment. It might even appear to be *spiritual*. What was wrong with it was that it was a product of Self, it emanated from human sympathy and greed' not from the heart of God. Worst of all' it was opposed to the mind of God and contradicted the revealed will of God. It was an *offense!* It was a snare to trip me into *disobedience* which' simple as it is' could' as with Moses, KEEP ME OUT OF THE PROMISED LAND. **That man** was an offense to the Spirit-led **little child** in me. Both of these personalities were right there within me! And they are both in you today, my friend. The Spirit of God is even now causing some who read these lines to make the application of this feeble illustration in your own life. You know where the area is that that man is an offense to the little child of the Kingdom. And you will deal with that man when you clearly understand that he deserves to have a millstone hung about his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea! The issue is crucial, for that man is an offense to the little child destined to be greatest in the Kingdom of God.

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot *offend* thee, cut them off and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into hell fire. And if shine eye *offend* thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (**Mat. 18:8-9**). For many years I read this passage of scripture and it was a complete enigma to me. I heard a number of explanations' but none of them spoke to my spirit. I read what the Commentaries have to say' but that didn't satisfy.

The deepest desire of my heart is to bring the power of the everlasting word of God to bear upon all our lives that we may be able to see with all saints what is the height and depth' and the length and breadth, of the wisdom of God. Let the word of God not be a dead letter but a quickening spirit that we may be' one and all, conformed to the image of Christ. The scriptures certainly do not teach or condone *self-mutilation*. Can we not see by the spiritual eye that the hands, feet and eyes that offend us are most often the hands, feet and **eyes of that man, the natural man, the soulish man within us. That man with** all his self-motivated actions must be severed from us, member by member, if necessary. I think David Wilkerson hit the nail on the head when he wrote: "it is a rebuke against self-effort. It's *all about our helplessness!* The Lord is saying, 'If your hand tries to work out your problem - that is, if you're taking matters into your own hands - *then stop immediately!* If your feet run around desperately trying to solve your trouble, *then stop running!* If your eye looks to something or someone else for help—a man or woman who you think may be the answer to your prayer—*then by all means, stop looking and pluck out that type of thinking immediately!*

"I used to do these very things in Teen Challenge. A man once donated a house to our ministry, and we so1d it to help buy a building in Brooklyn. About six months later, I was in deep financial trouble—we needed about \$5,000. I sat in my office, thinking, 'Whom shall I call?', Suddenly, in my mind's eye, the man's name appeared, and I thought: 'He gave us a house worth \$55,0000 !, I told my associate, 'Call him on the phone. We'll get our \$5,000!, Ten minutes later, my co-worker came back with his head down. He said, 'I've never been so chewed out in my life., Then, instead of getting on my knees, I said, 'Surely, there's somebody else who can help., I wasn't praying - I *was thinking!* Oh, how it hurts God when we keep looking for a person or something else to solve our problems! We go around with our hands, feet, and eyes searching for answers - but God is saying, 'Cut it out! Stop it! **It is an offense!**, Jesus makes it clear that there are serious consequences when we try to make things happen without relying on Him. 'What?, you say. 'Do I have to pray about everything? Do I have to depend on God for all?, Yes! That is the humility of a child! It means spending the rest of your life saying, '**It's better to live totally dependent on the Lord than to be cast into the fire trying to do it on my own!**, I see such shrinking back among many today. They have no faith, they do not abandon themselves to God's care. They see themselves as helpless, forsaken, abandoned children. They have not cast themselves upon the Lord, saying, 'Yes, I'm helpless— but I'm a son of Almighty God!'" —end quote.

This truth applies as well on another level. We are all members of the body of Christ. Just as the body is a unity and yet has many parts, and all the parts, though many, form only one body, *so also is Christ*. By one Spirit have we all been baptized into one body. The body does not consist of one limb or organ but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not the hand, I do not belong to the body", would it be therefore not a part of the body? If the eye should say, "Because I am not the ear, I do not belong to the body" would that make it not a part of the body? God has placed and arranged each of the members in the body as it has pleased Him and with the best adaptation. Collectively we are Christ's body and individually we are members of it' each part distinct' each with his own place and function. Not only are we all the members of Christ, we are also *members of one another!* As an individual member of the body, you may serve as my "ear" or my "hand" or my "foot" or something else.

What I am about to say may sound drastic to some, but let us hear the voice of the Spirit and consider the words of Jesus in the light of the body of Christ. "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee. And if shine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, or with one eye, than having two to be cast into hell fire." Please read these words with all diligence and prayer, that the Holy Spirit may apply its truth as a cleansing purifying soap to cleanse us all as we press our way into the Kingdom of God. If the present form of the body of Christ is the end of your hope, then you will despise the words I now write. But if you are of those who cherish a hope in Christ

*above and beyond* the present church order, you will hear and understand by the Spirit and rejoice with exceeding great joy.

The hand that holds the pen with which I am now writing is not my true hand. The feet that walk the streets of El Paso are not the feet of which Jesus speaks. My eyes which beheld with wonder this morning the beauty of the dawn are not the eyes that offend and should be plucked out. The physical is not the realm where the truth and the power of Jesus, teaching should be applied. The true body members of those who believe on Christ are the MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. Someone is quick to retort, "Now wait a minute, brother Eby, that doesn't sound right. Do you mean that if my brother in Christ is a foot, or if my sister is a hand, or if another is an eye, I am to cut that one off, and cast him from me?" If he **offends you**— YES!

Hear my heart. I'm not talking about if your brother hurts your feelings, gossips about you, falsely accuses you, cheats you, mistreats you, or does something you don't condone. That's not the issue at all. The issue is **offense**. If one would trip you' lay a snare for you, cause you to stumble and fall, or turn you aside *so that you miss the Kingdom* - even if that one is your brother—CUT THAT ONE OFF! It is better for you to lay hold upon the power and glory of the incorruptible life of Christ without that one's contribution into your life, than to fall short because of his influence and be cast into the fiery' purging, purifying judgment of God. Nothing—not even your brother in Christ - must prevent you from growing up into your sonship or keep you from possessing your inheritance. The stakes are too high. The issue is too critical. If anyone by carnal wisdom, fleshly zeal, false doctrines' powerless traditions' worldly methods, man-made programs and promotions, or religious guile would turn you aside from following the Lamb to mount Zion and fulfilling the high purposes of God in your life—separate that person from you. That is precisely what it means.

The Lord is not talking about condemning your brethren' assuming a holier-than-thou attitude, exhibiting an ugly spirit toward them' hating them' mistreating them, or damning them. He is talking about raising up a barrier between your forward walk in God and their walk so that you are not turned aside from God's purpose in you. You see, my beloved, you cannot cut any man or woman off from Christ and it is utterly impossible for anyone to cut you off from Christ. No bishop, board, organizational hierarchy, church or saint can excommunicate anyone from the body of Christ. Ah - they can certainly excommunicate you from an organization or denomination' from a man-made religious system' even from their love and fellowship, but *not from Christ*.

We must love every man, especially those who are of the household of faith. I do love them. I love them every one. I pray for them all. I care for them all. I yearn after them more deeply and fervently than they could ever imagine. I ask God's blessing upon them all without partiality. I want only God's best for every believer in Jesus Christ, irrespective of their level of spiritual development, or what doctrines or religious systems they are involved with. But I cannot walk with many of them. I cannot join myself to them in their childish traditions and carnal institutions. I cannot partake with them at their table of static creeds and man-made doctrines. I cannot participate with them in their empty rituals and ceremonies. I cannot be involved in their grandiose schemes and soulish promotions by which they imagine to save the world. Their insipid vision of joining the church and waiting to die and fly away to that bright glory-world above has nothing in common with the beautiful hope of sonship and the revelation of the Kingdom birthed within my ransomed spirit by the quickening breath of my Father in heaven. Their expositions' sermonizings and homilies' their activities' meetings' and projects, their hopes, aspirations and goals hold nothing for me in the light of the glory to be revealed in us. Such high and glorious purpose is certainly beyond the comprehension of the natural man or the carnal mind. "That man" knows nothing of God's eternal purpose and is an offense to it and to all who would lay hold upon it. The truth and sacredness of the high calling of God in Christ only begins to dawn within the consciousness of a saint of God when the spirit of wisdom and revelation bursts upon our quickened spirits giving us a glance behind the scenes into the glorious and wonderful fullness of our Father's great and heavenly plan. "That man" *within our brethren* is altogether as offensive to the little child of the Kingdom as is "that man" *within us*. Anything *within me* that would detrimentally affect my progress in the Kingdom must be **cut off**. Anything that proceeds from "that man" in any person or movement must be put away from us. It must be cast from us as a menstros cloth is cast from a woman. Anything that would hinder our growth and development into Christ must be severed. Anything that would prevent us from becoming the king-priests that shall bless the nations and deliver creation must be separated from us.

I must say today to every Christian who walks as "that man", just as our Lord said to Peter' "Get thee behind me' Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God' but those that be of men.'; When it comes to my quest after the Kingdom of God I do not receive input from "that man." I receive not the counsel of the Pope, nor the opinions of the theologians' nor the authority of the denominations, nor the vision of the Charismatics, nor the hope of the Pentecostals. Neither do I receive the testimony of any man or movement, even if he calls himself "kingdom" or "sonship" or by any other label' when he seeks to lead me in any direction other than **the voice of the Son of God**. Although I love and respect all of the Lord's people' that is why I am not pastor at First Baptist' rector at St. Michael's' or elder at First Pentecostal Church. I'm not there because I can't do things their way. I am called to do things my Father's way. If they are my foot' I have cut them off. If they are my eye' I have plucked them out. There's a **break, a division, a separation. Their input into my life does not help me on my journey or contribute** anything to the vision of God. It would' in fact' derail and destroy the call of God in my life. Are they people of God? Certainly! Do they love God? Absolutely! Are they very busy trying to do the will of God? Undoubtedly! But they still *think like men*.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you' that in heaven *their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven*', (Mat. 18:10). For centuries there has been a world of carnal-minded preaching from this text. First' it has been said that every person has a guardian angel. I do not deny it. I believe there are guardian angels. Is it not written' "*The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him' and delivereth them*" (Ps. 34:7). I am not of the opinion, however' that Jesus is talking about guardian angels when He says, "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Most people conceive of every sweet little child having a guardian angel who as a spirit being is able to see the face of the Father in heaven. Another interpretation is that the "angel" is the very spirit of the little child' and that when a child dies' his spirit goes to heaven' where it abides in the presence of the heavenly Father. That is a beautiful and sentimental thought, and probably true, but it has nothing to do with the child-like one who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven! May God deliver us from *childish interpretations and* impart to us all a *child-like spirit* of understanding. The word "angel" in both Hebrew and Greek means **messenger**: one sent with a message, who is both the message itself and the personal representative of the Sender. Anyone sent with a message is a messenger—an angel. The very same word is used of those sent by men and those sent by God. Any messenger sent by a king, or any other person in both the Hebrew and Greek languages' is an "angel" of that person. And anyone sent by God' whether a man on earth' or a spirit being out of celestial realms' is called an "angel" - a messenger. Any messenger of God is His angel, His personal representative in that particular mission and message. There are scores of examples throughout scripture of those who were God's angel-messengers either by what they *said*, by what they *did*, or by what they *were in* their person by nature, character, or obedience to God. Often the message and the messenger are one. It is not my purpose to belabor the point, though many passages of scripture might be presented.

Let your heart consider what I now say. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these *little ones*; for I say unto you' that in *heaven...*" In heaven! Where is heaven? Is it a place? Is it a planet? Is it a galaxy? Is it beyond the stars? The easiest way to understand heaven is to realize that it is where God lives. And God lives everywhere at the same time! I point you today' dear child of God, to another world' spiritual in content, which lies beyond the immediate grasp of the physical senses. Heaven is not a *place*' not a geographical or astral location—it is a sphere or realm of reality. It is the invisible realm of the Spirit that transcends this gross material realm. It is only up in reference to its essence and quality, it is a higher realm than this universe of matter, though it is all around us and within us. It is the realm of **spirit reality, of being** where God is all that He is. Heaven is the unseen realm of the Spirit' and when we are in the Spirit we are in that realm. Here and now we are raised up together and made to sit **together in the heavens in Christ Jesus**. So you see, beloved, we're not going to heaven' we're in *heaven!*

In the realm of the Spirit the angel of the *little child who is the greatest in the Kingdom* of Heaven does always behold the face of the Father. That is, the *message* the little child bears, yea, the message that he *is*' the *word* that is in him, the *revelation* of the Spirit expressed through him - this angel-message-word revelation always beholds the face of...WHO? The FATHER! Those who are the little ones who are the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven are ever looking only upon the Father. They are Father oriented. They behold the glory of the Father. They know the Father. They love the Father. They dwell in the Father. They speak the words of the Father. They do the works of their Father. They reveal the Father. The Father is the message they bear. The

Father is the message they *are*. These are the sons of God through whom the Father is made known. Babes in Christ are most conscious of JESUS THE SAVIOUR. They are always talking about Jesus, calling on Jesus, Jesus...Jesus...Jesus! However, as one grows up into Christ he receives a revelation of the FATHER. This is the *spirit of sonship* whereby we cry, "Abba, Father!" If there is a spirit within you today that cries, "Father!" then know, my beloved, that you are beginning to enter into your sonship to God. You know that you are a "little one" because more and more, in all you say, do and are, you are beholding only *the face of your Father* which is in heaven. The Father has become your reality, your life' your message' your expression.

Not only do the little ones see the Father's face by entering into His glory' but they behold it also in *all things*. As the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and reveals them unto us' we begin to understand that back of all things standeth GOD' omniscient and omnipotent' arranging and ordaining with infinite wisdom and purpose all the events that touch our lives. It is my conviction' learned both in moments of glory and in the crucible of suffering, that everything God does to us and in us is to further our growth and development in Him. But as we come to realize that behind every happening in our life, behind both the good and the evil, is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels' we are caused to exclaim with the patriarch Job' "He knoweth the way that I take: *when He hath tried me' I shall come forth as gold*" (Job 23: 1 0).

Job was no baby saint' for no one less than God Himself had given testimony that Job was a perfect and upright man' one that feared God and eschewed evil. God had blessed this man with great wealth and a large family. He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep' three thousand camels' five hundred yoke of oxen' and five hundred she-asses. His household was very great with many hired servants so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. In one tragic day all Job's earthly wealth and glory had vanished in a mist before the rising sun. But did Job curse God for all of this calamity? Did he even blame the devil? Was he a fair weather saint without spiritual understanding? No' indeed! He rent His mantle' shaved his head, and falling upon the ground, HE WORSHIPPED GOD with the unmistakable words of reverence, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb' and naked shall I return thither: THE LORD GAVE' AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD!" (Job 1:22). Ah, Job KNEW God! Therefore, in spite of how terrible and hopeless things appeared' He did not condemn himself, wallowing in self-pity, nor did he see the hand of Satan in any of this—HE BEHELD ONLY THE FACE OF HIS FATHER! Yes, precious friend of mine' that is the experience of every little one who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven - in *everything* he sees only the face of His Father in heaven!

Marvelous are the promises of God to these little ones who are the greatest in the Kingdom. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Mat. 1 8:11). It is positively true and abundantly evident that these meaningful words are directly connected to the passage above them. This is clear due to the connecting word "for" at the beginning of verse eleven. For is a preposition used here as a conjunction bearing the meaning of "because". Using the word "because" it reads, "In heaven their angels (the message they are and bear) do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven *because* the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." It is plain to see that the two statements belong together, the former depending upon the latter.

The question follows: What was it that was *lost*? The religious world supposes that *lost* means *eternally damned*. "You're *lost*!" the preacher shouts, and he means you are headed straight for hell to burn, writhing mercilessly in pain and indescribable horrors, forever. Eternal, unending doom! Do you know what it means to be lost? Have you ever been lost? Incredibly, I was lost right here in El Paso several months ago. While driving about the city on business one day I unconsciously made a wrong turn and found myself in unfamiliar territory. I recognized none of the streets, including the street I was on. The streets ran in weird formations and within only a minute or two I was completely disoriented and had no idea what direction I was going or how to get back to my point of deviation. How terribly confusing and bewildering it was! What a relief when I finally found my way out of the labyrinth of streets!

When one is lost there are three things he doesn't know: (1) he doesn't know where he is (2) he doesn't know how he got to where he is from where he was (3) he doesn't know how to get back to where he was from where he is. In other words, when you are lost, you just *don't know where you are*, you don't know *how you got there*, and you don't know *your way back*! For many **years it has been** clear to me that this is exactly what Paul had in mind spiritually when he wrote of the unbelieving people in the world, "But if our gospel be hid, it is

hid to them that are *lost*: in whom the god of this world hath *blinded the minds* of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...should shine unto them" (**Cor. 4:3-4**). The truth of Christ is hidden from those who *don't know where they are*. The teeming multitudes of earth know not the place of their *origin*. They have no idea why they were born. They have never discovered for what *purpose* they are here on earth. The wonderful plan and purpose of God is veiled from their understanding. They are like men walking in a fog. They perceive **not that they came out of God and have** not the knowledge of how to get back to God. untold millions don't even know that they are *supposed* to get back to God. THEY'RE JUST L-O-S-T!

"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep' and one of them be gone astray' cloth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep' than of the ninety and nine which went not astray', (**Mat. 18:12-13**). Within my spirit is the blessed knowledge that the sublime words of Jesus now under consideration are something beyond God,s plan of salvation for the world. It is sadly true that all mankind is lost, but it is equally true that our blessed Jesus is the Saviour of all men. He is not merely a Saviour for all men, but He is the Saviour *of all* men—meaning that He *will save all*.

The subject in Matthew 18:12-13, however, is not the masses of mankind that are lost and must be found. The subject has not changed one iota from verse one all the way through verse thirteen. The subject is still the **little child who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, and that man** who is so offensive that he should be drowned in the sea. There are many things to be learned from types and parables for by them truth is taught with more force than any spoken word. Here Jesus relates a wonderful parable about a man who has a hundred sheep. One of these sheep is somehow enticed, and goes astray. Now, pay close attention to the equation here! It is not, "ALL we like sheep are gone astray" as the prophet said of Israel' but merely *one* sheep out of *one hundred!* Only one percent of this shepherd's sheep has become lost. Can any doubt that these words fail to describe the scope of the tragedy that befell the human race when Adam sinned? "For by the offense of one judgment came upon **all men...**' When Adam sinned ALL THE SHEEP were lost - every single one of them!

Many of us have thought that the one lost sheep was the heathen in Africa, the starving in India, the godless communists in Russia, or the sinner across the street. But if the unconverted masses are the one lost sheep, then WHO ARE THE NINETY-NINE THAT AREN'T LOST? If the sheep are humans' then God would still have ninety-nine percent and the devil would have only one percent! Something is seriously wrong with the mathematics - I'm sure you know that's not how it is in the real world! Let us look at it.

The flock is the Lord's flock' for Jesus is Himself the Good Shepherd. "*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" (**Lk. 12:32**). So the one hundred sheep are Christ's little flock who are given the Kingdom' Christ gives the Kingdom to His whole flock and it is a little flock, even a flock of *little ones*. The masses of unsaved humanity are not in this little flock that receives the Kingdom' nor are they the one lost sheep out of this flock. It is speaking of something else.

In our parable only *one* little sheep is lost out of one hundred. *one* of them goes astray. *one* is turned aside. *one* is enticed away by something or someone, and becomes lost. What happened to cause this "little one", to be turned aside? Ah, he was **offended!** You see' my beloved' that is still what Jesus is talking about. "**But whoso shall offend (turn aside) one of these little ones' it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea**" (**Mat. 18:6**). Some person or some thing offended' tripped, snared, and turned aside this little one. GUESS WHO THAT COULD BE! "**Woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh**" (**Mat. 18:7**). According to Jesus it is a serious offense to offend one of His younger brethren - sons in preparation. You had better believe it! Woe unto that man. There is something within each of us that seeks to turn aside that inner son, that little one, the Christ-life within, from fulfilling the will of the Father, from growing up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' from inheriting his inheritance in' and position in' the Kingdom of God. Everything in our soulish man' everything in our carnal mind, everything in our flesh, everything in the whole world, and most of the things in the church systems, are arrayed against that little one, hostile toward the spirit of sonship in our hearts, and in active opposition to that inner son who is destined to become the ruler and the blesser of all nations and the deliverer of creation. That

is the warfare of this dark hour—between **that man** of the flesh and **the little Christ child within**. And blessed be the Lord, the judgment is pronounced: "Woe unto **that man!**"

Deep within the depths of my spirit is an inconsolable longing to see things as God sees them. I want to see with the eyes of God and I want to feel and understand with the heart of God. What is the Father's attitude and what is the Father's action toward the little one who goes astray? He goes after him! Write it between your eyes and never forget it. The Good Shepherd who came from heaven' that Great and Good Shepherd of the sheep who laid down His life for the sheep' will seek, and seek, and seek until that little sheep is found and brought back to the fold. This is the work of the Good Shepherd. Let it be perfectly clear' the Good Shepherd will seek him until He finds him. If He didn't He wouldn't be the Good Shepherd! He will seek him in his solitude at home; He will seek him in the frenzied activities of the religious systems; He will seek him in the pleasure spots of the night; He will seek him in the cults; He will seek him in the heights and in the depths; He will seek him in the deserts and in the swamps; He will seek the little one lost from his little flock through all the earth and through all the hells and through all the heavens until He has found him and set him again among the congregation of those who are marching to Zion.

Friends, make no mistake about this - not everyone who starts out on this path into the Kingdom is a *sheep*. Some people start out on the path of sonship and turn aside because the spirit of sonship was never in them. No one trips, snares, or turns them aside. They were never called to begin with. They were not chosen. Therefore they were not faithful. They were goats in sheep's wool. They had not the depth in their soil for the Word of the Kingdom to put down firm roots, grow and produce fruit. Their ground was so full of briars' thorns and thistles that they had neither the will nor the courage to eliminate. The seed fell by the wayside of their carnal minds, received only momentarily as an exciting proposition' as a beautiful possibility, as an intellectual concept, as another religious fad in their shallow spiritual world. These are not lost sheep. These are not offended little ones. The Good Shepherd does not go after these dogs who have returned to their vomit or these sows who return to their wallowing in the mire. Yes, He will go after them in due time to save them' but He does not go after them to make them the greatest in the Kingdom.

But if you are of that blessed company that has truly received the call to sonship; if you treasure deep within your being the beautiful hope of the Kingdom of God; if you desire above all else that the Father's purpose be fulfilled in your life; then, my beloved friend, you will never get away from Jesus. Even though you be momentarily turned aside by some work of the flesh, by some allurements of the world, by misunderstanding, by error or deception, by spiritual pride or vanity, by sin or Self, Jesus will follow you everywhere, He will tenderly pick you up, He will carry you back in His loving arms and restore you to the hope of your high calling. You can't get away. You may think you can' **that man** may lead you to believe you can, but if you are ordained to this Day, you are HIS. HE will not let you go! We have His own word for it. What consolation, hope and faith this evokes in our hearts!

How can we know for certain that the one lost sheep is one of these little ones destined to be the greatest in the Kingdom? In closing let us hear from the gracious lips of the Master Himself the true and powerful explanation of His parable. "If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, cloth He not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that He find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep' than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. **Even so** it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven' that **one of these little ones** should perish" (Mat. 18:12-14). There you have it! Who is the **little one** whom the Good Shepherd seeks? "And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, **Verily I say unto you...whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, THE SAME IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"** (Mat. 18:2-4).

The little ones are the greatest in the Kingdom. While the world in its vaunted pride passes on unheeding and unknowing, the Lord of the universe has been preparing individual lives among mankind in His own image and likeness. They have brought forth fruit unto eternal life, sending their enlightening rays to illumine the earth and their heavenly perfume to call men home to the love of God. The whole creation, that has groaned in travail and pain throughout the night of every dispensation, is soon to hear the glad refrain of sons coming up on

mount Zion to rule and reign in righteousness, filling the earth with wisdom' power, and understanding' for the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the seas. The little ones are the sons of God.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 26 REPENT! FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART TWENTY-SIX

#### TAKING A NEW MIND

"Look both ways before crossing the street." "Don't feed the bears." "Stay on the path." All of us have heard these familiar statements. Each one is really a one-sentence sermon that says something important: if we don't look out, we could get hurt; if we feed the bears, we may be inviting danger; if we don't stay on the path marked out, we might get lost. It's to our advantage to take these one-sentence sermons to heart. Jesus also preached a one-sentence sermon: **"Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 4:17)**. It was in accord with Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of Heaven as the rule of God in the hearts of men that He preached repentance as a necessary prerequisite for living in the Kingdom. The rule of the Spirit cannot begin without a turning to God, for it is not a rule of force but of love, and therefore repentance holds a prominent place in the Kingdom teaching of Jesus.

There are occasions when if one speaks a word about "repentance" to saints who have received the call to sonship and are pressing into deeper truths and higher realms in God, most of them have closed their ear to such a word, and have no desire to hear anything else that is spoken, thinking that the message isn't for them, only for the unsaved. Having once repented of their sins, receiving Jesus as their own personal Savior, being washed in the blood and regenerated in spirit, that message which deals with repentance has to be for people in a lower realm, so they think. When we look carefully into the scriptures, however, setting aside our own religious conceptions, we see that the words of God paint quite a different picture from ours.

Christ taught that every man on earth is in need of a Savior. He taught them how they could be saved. **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eonian life" (Jn. 3:16)**. **"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9)**. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8)**. The GOSPEL OF SALVATION also includes a realm of repentance, but repentance is not first. Faith is first. The GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM, however, does not begin with faith. We do not say, **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt enter into the Kingdom."** No, that's not it. Do you want to know the beginning of the gospel of the Kingdom of God? We find it in the Gospel of Matthew. **"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 3:1-2)**. That is the beginning of the gospel of the Kingdom, not faith, but *repentance*. This, then, was the message John brought to Israel. The people who for centuries had looked for the Messiah and for the Kingdom which He would establish were now confronted with the sobering truth that, though the long awaited Messiah was about to appear, there could be no entering into His Kingdom without a true repentance on their part. Jesus Himself came preaching the same gospel. **"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: *repent ye, and believe the good news*" (Mk. 1:14-15)**.

The gospel of the Kingdom begins with this: "Repent! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." It presents the KINGDOM — not forgiveness, not reconciliation, not salvation, not cleansing, not eternal life — as the object of repentance. Why should we repent? Not merely to obtain mercy, not merely to obtain pardon, not merely to obtain acceptance, not merely to obtain reconciliation, not merely to obtain life. We should repent because there is a heavenly Kingdom that requires our repentance. The Kingdom is coming and repentance is the first priority in order to become a partaker in it. We may be satisfied, as most Christians are, to have obtained grace, and pardon and life; but the Kingdom demands more than that. The word of the Kingdom comes to us saying, "You must repent!"

The subject of repentance is one that has scarcely been touched because of our ignorance of the matter and the total lack of understanding of the meaning of the word. The English words "repent" and "repentance" have

placed the idea on such a low level that we have entirely lost the true and biblical meaning of the term. Webster's dictionary defines repent as "to feel sorrow, remorse, or regret for one's past errors, sin, omission, action or conduct; to experience such contrition as to amend one's way of life; to remember with compunction or self-reproach; to feel remorse on account of." I am certain that most of those who read these lines are aware that the Bible was *not* written in English. The English meanings of words are not always the meaning in the original language. And even in English, after correctly translating, words often change their meanings over the decades and centuries. Translators are fallible and often unspiritual men who sometimes, despite their best intentions and accomplished scholarship, flavor their translations with the beliefs, doctrines and teachings acquired from their religious backgrounds. This is just as true of the King James Version of the Bible as it is of any of the modern revisions and translations.

The older the English the more unintelligible it becomes. The spelling changes, word meanings change, sentence structure changes, until finally one is helplessly lost in a morass of indecipherable hieroglyphics. Even in the four centuries since the translation of the King James Bible, what changes have taken place! "Thee" and "thou" have been replaced by the more familiar "you" and are now used only in classical literature and religion. "Let" meant to "restrain or prevent" in King James' day; now the word means *exactly the opposite!* So with Greek. Ancient Greek is a dead language, while modern Greek is a living language, with about as much similarity as there is between Spanish and Italian. And don't think for one moment, dear friend, that religion doesn't influence language! The English word "hell" once meant "a dark hidden place," but church dogma has through the years caused it to take on an altogether different connotation. There is so much fire in the modern hell that there could be absolutely *no darkness there!* Word meanings *do* change! And religious dogma has effected many such changes.

It is furthermore interesting to note how our English word, repentance, came to us. It was originally brought to us from the French and Latin languages. My book on word origins shows that it stems from the word "pain" and is connected with the word "penalty." With the "re" prefix attached to it, it signifies "pain-again." Therefore we might say that repentance, in English, is "twice born pain; a second penalty." And that is exactly what sinners feel during a scathing hell and brimstone sermon when they run to the altar weeping and wailing because of their sins.

As one has written, "Repentance is a word of classical Latin origin and of Latin theological and ecclesiastical descent. The core of it is not *mind*, but *pain*. The note of it is not emancipation, but of condemnation. The scope of it is not spiritual, but judicial. The working of it is not joyful, but sorrowful. Its face is turned in horror toward sin, not in rapture toward righteousness. It is a way to righteousness, but by way of retreat. It flees the evil in fear of *penalty* — of the vengeful punitive action of God or of its own conscience. In its effective operation it can take hold of the mind, change the mental attitude, but it can never renew the spiritual constitution of the mind. It is retrospective, and it leads to introspection, often to intense spiritual self-consciousness."

Before I try to tell you what repentance is, let me tell you what it is not. It is *not* a certain amount of felt and experienced broken-heartedness caused by deep conviction evoked in the heart over the great failings or wickedness of one's past life. There are those who suppose that the goodness of God toward them depends upon the depth of their sorrow, even as those of yesteryear, who had a "mourner's bench" where people would come and mourn their sins. If they were penitent long enough, wept loudly enough, shook violently enough, and were sorry deeply enough for their sins, perhaps there was some chance that they might, in some way, induce a stern and angry God to have mercy upon them. But nowhere in all the New Testament did the Lord Jesus or Peter or James or Paul or anyone else call people to an altar and tell them to weep and cry their way through to either salvation or the Kingdom. Such a concept is unscriptural, totally foreign to the Word of God, and is in fact an "extra-biblical" concept.

In the days of the great revivals that swept the world in the past few centuries, there were altar calls in evangelistic meetings, and sinners came down and wept before God with godly sorrow and holy brokenness, dreadfully sorry for the things they had done and the life they had lived. In the well-known Welsh Revival at the turn of the century, people were so sorry for their sins that they were at the altar weeping and wailing many hours into the night. The people were so sorry for their sins, that the entire society underwent a transformation.

But I do not hesitate to tell you that none of that sorrow WAS REPENTANCE. Ah, it indeed did *lead* them to repentance in relation to their sins, but the sorrow and pain and weeping and begging God for mercy was not of itself scriptural repentance.

With divine inspiration and deep spiritual insight the apostle Paul wrote, "*For godly sorrow worketh repentance*" (II Cor. 7:10). Can we not see by these words that godly sorrow IS NOT REPENTANCE. Godly sorrow works repentance, it leads one to repentance, but godly sorrow is not repentance. The notion that *sorrow* for sin *is* repentance is another of the foolish fables of Babylon. I have seen people weep their eye balls out at altars, drenching the floor with their tears, and their lives never changed. Until men are willing to **turn** from sin, to **turn** from carnality, to **turn** from self and self-will, to **turn** from religiosity, to think differently about these things, to see all things with a **new mind**, there has been no repentance. And when men do take a new mind about things and turn from their course, they have repented even though they shed no tears and experience no wailing or emotional brokenness.

The Greek word METANOIA and our English word REPENTANCE do not bear the same meaning at all. "Repentance" has cast an almost exclusively emotional character around the preaching of the gospel that brings men to Christ. Those who hear the preaching of repentance in Fundamentalist and Pentecostal circles particularly, hear it like a cry, a note of danger, a somber warning, a dire alert, full of alarm and terror, amid which the hearts of the people stand still, instead of what it really was when Jesus preached it — the invocation of a mind, heart and life which should be prepared and adapted to receive such a glorious reality as the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. If the call had really been "Repent ye!" as we understand the term in English, it would have been only an appeal to the feelings, and we would find a record in the Gospels of men kneeling and weeping and trembling and wailing in the streets of Jerusalem, in the desert sands of Judea, and along the seashore of Galilee. It would have moved men to *look back* to what they had done amiss, and for which punishment hung over their heads, instead of forward to the glory of the coming of the Kingdom of God. The cry for repentance would have stirred up in the people a terrific image of wrath, judgment and punishment. Instead, the repentance Jesus preached brought great joy, expectation, anticipation, hope and a change of attitude and action that prepared men for the coming of the rule of God in their hearts by the Spirit.

## **TAKING A NEW MIND**

Then **what is repentance?** May the blessed Spirit of Truth help me, while I try to tell you. METANOIA, the Greek word translated in the King James Version of the Bible as "repentance", in its plainest and most literal meaning signifies A CHANGE OF MIND. Yet that in itself can miss the mark. A better rendering would be TO TAKE ANOTHER MIND. A man may change in the conceptions of his mind, thus bringing himself to another viewpoint, but with the possibility of being just as mistaken in his new opinion as he was in his former. But to TAKE ANOTHER MIND brings into being A NEW CREATURE, one who cannot revert back to the old viewpoint or adopt another faulty reasoning out of the limited powers of the old mind. So let us see that repentance has to do with the TAKING OF ANOTHER MIND, never before possessed. There is to be no mixing of the old leaven with the new bread. This is extremely important if we are to have any understanding at all of God's workings in this, our day.

Thus repentance means "to change the mind" — and **with a new kind of mind**. Let us notice the difference between some terms. Repentance involves a radical change or exchange of *mind*, whereas regeneration involves a radical change of *nature*, and conversion involves a radical change of *life-style*. Each is involved in the formation of a NEW CREATURE. The command of our Lord, "Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" would have been more literally translated, "Take a new mind! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." If you even try to understand the things of the Kingdom of God without having a new mind you will be thoroughly confused and confounded. It means that as we approach the Kingdom every man who from his birth, or from his entrance into society, or from his beginnings in religion, remains unchanged in the thoughts, ideas, opinions, perceptions and conceptions he has about God, himself, and the nature of all things, **is shut up from the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven**.

Repentance is, above everything else, a turning away from your wrong idea about God. It is changing your mind (by the Spirit of Truth) about everything you thought about God. Do you think anyone had the right

conception of God before Jesus came? There were those who were circumcised, who constantly poured through the scriptures, who prided themselves that they kept every jot and every tittle of God's law, and pretended to know God. Yet these were the very people who hated and crucified Jesus! Obviously they did not see God in Jesus. That is an indictment on all mankind. You know, we can crucify Jesus today. When preachers "kill" the image of God in Jesus by preaching a false idea of God, they crucify Jesus afresh. We need our minds, our whole impression of who God is and of what God is doing in the earth today, to be changed. It indicates the receiving in our hearts of a whole new concept, instead of a mere mental change of viewpoint in regard to God. It is not the changing of our carnal mind about something, not an intellectual shift in our thinking. An EXCHANGE has to take place. We are a NEW CREATION in the image and likeness of God. So we are to put away everything that comes from the natural mind. The mind of Christ is not obtained through acquired knowledge or formal training. It comes by the transforming work of the Spirit.

Repentance is what has been referred to by some as a **paradigm shift**. A professor was asking his class if they knew what a paradigm shift was. The students scratched their heads — thinking. After a few minutes, one student spoke up, "A paradigm shift is when you give me twenty cents because that's a pair of dimes." The professor answered, "Well, not quite. A paradigm shift is when you gain all kinds of opinions and knowledge and experience about a thing, and suddenly you receive new information, new facts, fresh truth, or further experience, which causes you to have a change of mind, a change of feeling, a change of understanding, a change of belief, a change of heart. You suddenly have a different perspective on life which gives you a totally new set of priorities and sense of being. That is what is called a paradigm shift." This is what Jesus brought into the world. Jesus came as the revelation of truth and the power of life, the expression of God as He really is. Encountering Christ and the realm of sonship He opens to us by the power of the Holy Spirit, is mind-changing and life transforming. To touch His reality produces within us a paradigm shift that *is repentance*! It is the taking of a new mind about God, ourselves, and the true nature of all things.

The two kingdoms of which Jesus spoke — the kingdoms of this world and the Kingdom of Heaven — are in total opposition to each other. There is no middle ground. In order to become completely subjected to Christ's Kingdom we must be set free from Adam's. This requires a deep, thorough repenting in the heart of every man concerning the things which he was thinking and doing before he knew about the Kingdom of God. If we are really going to do God's will and accomplish His purpose in the earth and all creation we must repent categorically for everything in which we have been participating that is contrary to His mind, His ways, His heart, and His purposes. Repenting is not a weeping, it is not a wailing or mourning our sin. We may weep out of frustration and be sorry out of shame, but we have not truly repented until we have changed our mind about ourselves, the world, religion, the church, and God Himself. True repentance deals less with the negatives of sin and failure and more with the positives of embracing God's ways and God's will. When we truly say an irrevocable and eternal "Yes" to His plan in our lives, we have repented.

It means changing our mind and making decisions out of the mind of Christ, to repudiate one kingdom and embrace another. As Ray Prinzing has said, "Marvelous indeed is HIS SUSTAINING GRACE even while He processes us so, for it is essential, yea, it is imperative that we be brought to the absolute end of ourselves, that we might be totally filled WITH HIM. Repentance is not a one time event at the beginning of our conversion, it is an ON-GOING PROCESS as we are changed from glory to glory — being fully renewed into the mind of Christ. Thus He probes even deeper — into areas it would not have been possible for us to endure in the beginnings of our walk with Him. Patiently He has endured with great long-suffering our carnality and self-centeredness, our ambitions and desires, while He steadily drew us closer to Himself, filling us with a desire for more of HIM in His righteousness, peace, and joy. And now He also reveals new depths to being made conformable to His death, that we might come forth in the power of His resurrection life. A life that is a WITNESS UNTO HIM!"

Right now today we need to repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. And yet, *we cannot do it!* Adam cannot repent. The carnal mind cannot repent. The natural man cannot repent. But when that word, "Repent! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," comes to you in the power of the Holy Spirit and you hear it by the Spirit, it is a creative word within you just as the words of omnipotence in the beginning, "Let there be light!" were creative words of divine power. Just as the gospel comes from God, just as conversion is the work of God, and in the same manner that the Kingdom is of God, repentance also originates not with man, but with

God. Repentance must be wrought within us by the Spirit of the Lord. Notice carefully in the following scriptures how repentance is *given, granted, and worked in us* by God Himself. "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to *give repentance* to Israel..." (Acts 5:31). "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles *granted repentance unto life*" (Acts 11:18). "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God *leadeth thee to repentance?*" (Rom. 2:4). "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will *give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*" (II Tim. 2:25). Men can only *acknowledge the truth by receiving a new mind*.

In the Old Testament the words repent, repented and repentance are seldom used in relation to the sinner (check your Strong's Concordance!). There it is God who is usually spoken of as repenting or changing His mind. God repents. And the way it is brought out in the context is that in His dealings with mankind GOD TURNS in His feelings, in His actions, towards His creation. That is, He purposes within Himself to initiate a new method, a new way of dealing with humanity. It was *not* that God didn't do things right the first time, that He made a mistake, or that His program was failing so He had to remedy the situation by admitting His error and starting over; it was, rather, that He had brought man as far as man could be brought in that way, so it was necessary for God to "shift gears" so to speak, to change the order, to turn and institute new provisions for man's instruction. It was a CHANGE OF PURPOSE **conceived in the mind of the Lord**. The prophets wrote of that change of dealing and direction that shift in attitude and intent on the part of God, as "God repented." It means He **turned**, adopting a new posture toward man.

Repentance is the power by which we put aside our own will to embrace the will of God — therefore it involves us in a radical change of mind. This is a more exacting process than many people realize, for it does not mean that we occasionally act on what we *presume* or *believe* to be divine guidance in preference to some impulse or instinct of our own. That indeed we must always be prepared to do. But *waiting upon God* to receive His orders for us is an essential function of the life of sonship. The son does only what he sees his Father doing. Something more than blind faith is required of the man who will truly walk as a son in the Kingdom of Heaven. He must learn to *know* the voice of the Father and *speak only* what he hears from the Father. He must see the Father's ways, the Father's heart, the Father's will, and the Father's actions and *do only* what he sees the Father doing.

Every son of God must repent! Repent of what? Ah, not just repent of certain fleshly wrongs, not just repent of certain sins. It is not merely repenting of anger, cursing, smoking, drinking, gossiping, lying and lusting; but repent radically — repent of in subjection to the authority of Heaven; repent of nonconformity to the word, will and ways of the King; repent of not submitting to the rule of God. It pains me to say it, but the sad truth is that most "saved" people know nothing of the mind of God, are not in line with the purposes of God, nor are they possessed of the nature of God. They may not curse, smoke, drink or carouse, but they continue to walk carnally after the desires of self, after the rudiments of the world, after the blindness of religion, obeying the traditions of the elders, keeping the commandments of men, employing in their service of God the methods and techniques of the flesh, observing sacraments, rituals, programs, holy days, and a whole world of religious activities that have neither been inspired nor commanded by the Lord. Are they, then, under the authority of God? No! Are they led by the Spirit of God? No! Do they know the ways of God? No! Do they have the mind of Christ? No! Is the gospel they preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God? No! They are not under the *rule* of God, which means that they are not walking in the Kingdom of God. There are yet few upon the earth who respond to the call of God to enter the Kingdom, who will to be God's sons, to be ruled *by* God and to rule *for* God. To all who are called to the Kingdom the Spirit cries, "Repent! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The Kingdom is near you. Let your King possess His own. Let God enthroned Himself in you, that all His will be done in your life.

Here is the grand and glorious reason why men were called to repentance by John the Baptist and by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is because the Kingdom is approaching. The reign of the righteous and loving King is about to begin. The revelation of the rule of God in the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit is ready to explode with power in the midst of mankind. The King who is all powerful to push His conquests, omnipotent to maintain His authority, is disposed out of His nature of love to grant a full and complete amnesty to all His enemies, and pour out His redeeming grace and transforming power in unrestrained profusion upon the right hand and upon

the left. The King of glory is coming to men in mercy, grace, redemption and power! Therefore men must experience a drastic **change of mind** about God, about themselves, and about everything. May I point out the important fact that the Lord commands all men everywhere to repent because the Kingdom *is coming*, and not in order that it *would come*.

The King is approaching with His power, His glory, His profuse love and grace; therefore, you, my relatives, and you, my friends, and you, my acquaintances, and you strangers, and you steeped in sin, and you entrenched in wickedness, and you overwhelmed with hopelessness and despair, and you bowed down with grief, and you who sit in darkness, and you shackled by the chains of religion, and you who are burdened with the impossible demands of the law and the commandments of men, and you who are weary of feast days, ceremonies, rituals, rules and regulations, ordinances, purifications, sacrifices, offerings, pilgrimages and self-righteousness of men — all ye people of the earth, make way for such a King as this! "**Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls**" (Mat. 11:28-29). It is the most potent reason that can convince your mind, and impress your conscience, and inflame your heart, and arouse your will. Come at once and make way for the King!

Jesus was saying that there must be a change in our thinking in regard to the Kingdom of Heaven. We must see this Kingdom differently from the way the scribes and Pharisees and chief priests and elders of His day were seeing it. They were viewing the Kingdom in the very same way the Baptists, Fundamentalists, Pentecostals and Charismatics are viewing the Kingdom today. They were expecting an earthly Kingdom with an earthly Ruler. In their minds that rule of God was yet future, away out in some Golden Age yet to dawn. They could see no evidence of the Kingdom because Israel was ruled under the iron heel of Imperial Rome. How they longed for their Messiah and the Kingdom He would some day bring! Then Jesus came. His first proclamation was, "Repent! Re-think it! Reach a new conclusion! Change your mind about it! Adopt a new understanding! Prepare your minds and hearts!" And why? "For the Kingdom of Heaven **is at hand**." Repent, change your way of thinking about the Kingdom. Don't think of the Kingdom any longer as *future*, as something one day *coming* — because the Kingdom is now at hand, accessible. It is not future. It is now. It is available. You can enter it, partake of it, experience it, minister it. It is a place of dominion deep within you that governs and controls the rest of your outlook. If God is totally in control in that place, everything else will follow suit.

Jesus was telling the people of Israel that if they wanted to see the Kingdom the very first thing they needed to do was to repent, to take a new mind. They needed to *transfer the place from which they drew their thoughts*, because the Kingdom of God was not going to be realized the way they *thought* it was. The Greek word for repentance (METANOIA) basically means to transfer the realm from which we think. Jesus opened this realm up to men. He was telling men, "I don't want you to merely try and change your mind because your mind is carnal; it is not subject to God, nor will it ever be. What I want you to do is draw from another account which I am quickening within you, in your *spirit*. I am giving you this account; now I want you to draw your thoughts from this realm of the spirit." Once we begin to think out of the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God instead of the brain, we immediately perceive that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. When we are thinking rightly, we are *in* the Kingdom and see it in its righteousness, power and glory. That is the first fruit of repentance. We need to have our minds renewed, re-programmed, in the light of Kingdom reality. Traditional interpretations and ideas that restrict the Kingdom to a *coming age* have to be re-thought out in the light of the fact that the Kingdom is within us.

Take a new mind, Jesus told the people of Israel, because the kind of rule of the **heavenly dimension** is at hand. Everything is changing. The law will not be the same. The temple will not be the same. The priesthood will not be the same. The nation will not be the same. Worship will not be the same. Sacrifice will not be the same. The government will not be the same. You will need to be re-programmed, re-oriented. You must **think differently** about everything and prepare for a new order, a new way of life, a new reality. Instead of the law of Moses, in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Instead of the magnificent temple of stone, cedar and gold in Jerusalem, there will be in the Kingdom of Heaven a living temple of living stones. Instead of the priesthood of Aaron offering the sacrifices of bulls and goats and lambs, there will be in the Kingdom of Heaven a Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek ministering to men the blood-life of the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. Instead of a nation of physical

descendants of Abraham, circumcised in the flesh, in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be a nation of people justified by the faith of Abraham, circumcised in their hearts by the sharp knife of the living word of God. Instead of ritualistic worship and ceremony, there will be in the Kingdom of Heaven worship in spirit and in truth. Instead of a human king upon a physical throne, in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be the rule of God by the Spirit upon the throne of men's hearts.

Two thousand years later people are still looking and waiting for the Kingdom of God. Evidently they haven't *experienced* the Kingdom yet. To them it is something illusionary, mystical, or intangible, and they can't get a grasp on it, so they think it is yet to come. If men are repenting because the Kingdom of God is at hand, is it not clear that they are repenting *from another kingdom*? We have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness *into* the Kingdom of God's dear Son. That is a transference from one kingdom to another. Jesus came to subdue the kingdoms of this world, and a kingdom is a rule, a domain and a dominion, a mode of operation, a system, an order. All men are walking according to a rule or a mode of living. The people of America walk in one way, the people of Saudi Arabia walk in another way, and the people of China walk in yet another way because they live in different kingdoms, under different rules, dominions, laws, governments, cultures, social customs and religious requirements. They are subject to various pressures, demands, mandates and conditions imposed by various authorities and powers.

When Jesus came proclaiming the Kingdom He didn't say, "Repent because you have been sinning." Sin is not the issue in the Kingdom. The issue is **allegiance**. Repentance means to repudiate something you have believed in and clung to in order to believe in and cling to something else. Repentance is the call to change our minds about the rule of our lives. Repentance is the call for us to change kingdoms. The Kingdom of God is spiritual, it doesn't work in the carnal mind. So whether a man is sinning or being religious he must repent, because the Kingdom only works in the spiritual mind. Kingdoms clash. Every kingdom wants to rule. When one kingdom is in power and another kingdom comes to take the dominion there is warfare. The message of the Christ is repentance unto another Kingdom. Another rule comes into our lives which will cast out the demons and establish the mind of Christ. God has called upon us to repent of the rule of the flesh, the rule of the carnal mind, the rule of the world, the rule of religion, the rule of the church-systems, the rule of laws and external ordinances, and all that pertains to the old order. Repent of *sin*? Yes! But much more. It is a whole economy, a whole mentality, a whole way of life, an entire system of things that we must repent of in order to enter into the Kingdom Rule of God. When we talk about entering the Kingdom we are changing many things; there must be a change in our whole world of existence, where we think we came from, who we think we are, what we think we are, what our purpose is in this world, how we live in this world, and where we think we are going. All our concepts and realities change. In our natural birth we came from the earth. In our spiritual birth we came from heaven. We are shedding that Adam identity, that Adam delusion, the Adam mind, the Adam life-style, the Adamic wisdom, knowledge and ability.

There is an interesting and illustrative incident in the ministry of Jesus that speaks powerfully to us of the new mind of the Kingdom. "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come. Therefore He said unto them, Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, **Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do WIPE OFF against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you**" (Lk. 10:1-2,8-11). Jesus sent the disciples out to heal the sick. The healings were a *sign* and a sign is a *message*. The message was that the Kingdom of God had come. The healings were done by the power of the Kingdom. They were the sign, the declaration of the Kingdom, the proof that the power of another Kingdom was already at work in their midst. Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "O, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." In other words, "You don't understand the message that sounds forth when I do these things."

Matthew records Jesus' instructions to the seventy in these words, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, **shake off the dust of your feet.**" One thing is certain — the disciples were not just shaking dust off their clothes and shoes. They were saying something. By that action they were sending a message. The message was just this. When the people rejected the ministry of the disciples they were rejecting the Kingdom of God, because that is what they were preaching,

demonstrating and manifesting. Jesus instructed them, "When the people reject the Kingdom of God shake that dust off of you, shake that Adamic nature off of you, don't let that earth-bound mentality cling to you, or find a place in you, don't be influenced or affected by their words or actions, don't walk away from the city with the same kind of *serpent meat* they are providing!"

This brings us back to the curse laid upon the serpent in the beginning. The ancient serpent, having beguiled Eve, became the recipient of the *first curse* in history. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:14). This is a symbol and the Deceiver, Satan, that old Serpent, the Devil, has to eat dust! The metaphor can be more clearly understand when we hear the judgment handed out to the man. God said, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for DUST THOU ART, and UNTO DUST shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). So that first Adam, the fleshly man, that cursed man, is declared by the counsel of the Lord God to **be dust**. Said the wise man, "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust" (Ps. 103:14). That we are DUST! Not very flattering, not very complimentary, is it? This great gob of mud called *man*, strutting his superior know-it-all attitude even in the face of the Almighty! Dust! Our FRAME! Adam's name could just as well have been called "Dusty." The mind of Adam is the *earthly mind*, and it always *minds earthly things*. It is a dust-mind.

The message is clear — Adam and those belonging to him are of the earth, earthy. The Holy Spirit bears witness, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that *are earthy*: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that *are heavenly*. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:45-49). The Amplified Bible reads, "The first man was from out of the earth, made of dust — *earth minded*; the second man is the Lord out of heaven. Now those who are made of the dust are like him who was first made of the dust — *earth minded*. And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, so shall we and so *let us* bear also the image of the Man of heaven."

It's not news to any of us that we are in the midst of a war between two kingdoms. Neither is it news to us that WE are the battleground! More particularly, the major focal point of the battle is **our mind**. There the battle rages at its greatest intensity, because the war is a struggle for our hearts and loyalties — the very souls and lives and beings of men. Adam is dust, the natural, sensual, sense-oriented realm. When God gave dust to be the serpent's meat the earthy man became the rightful food for the serpent. This means that the serpent now finds its base of operation and fulfillment of its nature, desires, and purposes in and through *mankind*. By the very nature of things, when the serpent eats, he seeks to satisfy his appetite and gratify his desires. The curse of "eating dust" means that the serpent nature is only gratified in and through carnal-minded men. Today the sphere of Satan's activity is earth, and the object of his devouring is the man of dust. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking *whom he may devour*" (I Pet. 5:8). He devours you by overwhelming you with sensual lusts and carnal-minded pursuits in which your whole being becomes consumed with things that are not of the Spirit or of Life.

You will find men and women who claim to hate the devil and all he stands for, but no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. In so doing he gives place to the devil. It is the *flesh* that wars against the Spirit! The *flesh* unceasingly wars against the King and His Kingdom that is within you. Just as the religious leaders of the Jews cried, "We will not have this Man to rule over us," so the flesh, your flesh, and my flesh, desperately striving to perpetuate the corrupt nature of Adam within, would push Christ from the throne of the heart and reign in His stead. The energy force and motivating power of the flesh *IS the ancient serpent of Eden*. He now crawls upon his belly, restricted to the realm of man's earthiness. He is the nature of the carnal mind. Multitudes do not understand this mystery, and few will proclaim this truth. The sacred mysteries of God are revealed only by the Holy Spirit of Truth.

Adam is dust. If you want to keep the kingdom of Satan, the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of the earth realm alive in you, just feed him! If you don't feed him, he'll starve! When you proclaim the Kingdom of God, and the message is rejected, shake off the dust of that realm, don't let anything people say or do against the Kingdom cling to you, let them keep their earthiness, let them continue on in their carnal religious and worldly

foolishness, and you be a testimony against that realm by continuing on progressing into the life and reality and power of the Kingdom of God! SHAKE OFF THE DUST, sons of God!

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). What we think in our hearts consciously and unconsciously consists of beliefs, ideas, concepts, habits and practices gathered from our earliest childhood, modified by education, reading, experience and contact with all kinds of people and movements including friends, mingled with the prevailing opinions of our times as drum-beat into us by the media, and the accepted standards of the society in which we live. Furthermore, most of those who read these lines have also been deeply influenced and powerfully shaped by the teaching and example of our religious leaders and spiritual mentors. Every one of us has had false ideas about God, false ideas about church, false ideas about the scriptures, false ideas about ministry, false ideas about sin, false ideas about law, false ideas about grace, false ideas about righteousness, false ideas about heaven, false ideas about hell, false ideas about the coming of the Lord, and false ideas about the Kingdom of God and the present and future program of God on earth.

Enough has been said to show how we have *needed* a MIGHTY CHANGE IN OUR THINKING! Our thoughts and understanding make us what we are and determine the way we live. So if there is to be any significant change in our lives it must be a **change of mind**. That is why the Spirit of God so often calls for a change of mentality. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the *renewing of your mind*" (Rom. 12:2). "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4:23). The gospel of the Kingdom begins with the record of John the Baptist's first proclamation at the Jordan: "Take a new mind! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John was telling the people that although they did not discern it then, they were in the midst of a most marvelous change in the world's history. He was telling them that those things God had given them in the past, by the law and the prophets, were being fulfilled and were passing away. The law, the temple, the sacrifices, the feast days, circumcision, the priesthood, the kingship, were all to be taken away. A completely new world order was to be instituted and made operative, first in their own midst, then throughout all the earth, and eventually throughout the universe.

John told the people there was ONE in their midst whom they knew not. This One was to be the head of the new order, the forerunner and firstborn of many brethren. He was to be despised and rejected of men, but given the highest honor and authority in God, and that honor and authority were to be passed on to those of His brethren when they were prepared for it. Yet He was totally and completely unknown to the people. John the Baptist told the people they were to take a new mind. The mind they possessed at the time of the coming of Jesus could never, under any circumstances, conceive of the work God would do at the coming of Jesus. Their minds were full of the law Moses had given them, of sacrifices, temples, and a whole system of earthly, worldly, external things. They would of necessity need another mind to be able to comprehend the coming of Jesus. All who were faithful in the present truth of that day, as revealed in the law and the prophets, were included in the call to repentance. Why? Because a new day had come! The order was changing! God would do a *new thing* in their midst and in the earth! And only with a new mind could they grasp it and enter into it. A new mind means a new creature, for we are exactly what we are in our minds! A new mind is a new reality, a new sense of being. Repentance produces the NEW MAN FOR THE NEW AGE! Repentance was the very first word of John the Baptist. It was the first word of Jesus the Christ. And the first message of the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost began with repentance, the taking of a new mind that they might comprehend the magnitude of the thing God was doing in that day. God would now call His elect people out of every tribe, every tongue, every people and every nation and would reconcile the whole world unto Himself through Jesus Christ. The Jewish mind was too narrow to believe that, so a new mind was needed.

All who are called to sonship and to God's new purposes in this hour at the dawn of a new age have experienced, and are experiencing, a mighty work of repentance. This change of mind may be, and in some degree must always be, a sudden transformation of life, but for most of us repentance is a process that goes on for years, from experience to experience, from realm to realm, from glory to glory, by which we put away our erroneous beliefs and old order practices and take on the mind of Christ. All of us are in the process of changing, and God is the author of that process. If you think repentance is something you have only experienced in the past, I suggest you think again. God has thoughts for you to think that are so powerful and creative. They will challenge all of your human limitations, doctrinal limitations, and spiritual limitations. He will continue to change the way we think until both our minds and bodies are in alignment with His plan for us in

the Spirit. In this way He is forming us into His image and likeness, bringing us to our full stature and maturity in Christ, and accomplishing the work that shall make us the manifested sons of God. Oh, the wonder of it!

Repentance is the work of God. As we look back on our lives, it is evident that we have made no major choices of our own. The Lord made them all for us. He placed obstacles, blessings, brethren, books, ministries, dealings, teachings, movings of His Spirit, manifestations of His power, and experiences in our pathway to give us an understanding of His will and His ways and His great plan and purposes in the earth, in His people, and in the universe. He Himself injected all these things into our pathway. Every step we took was in response to His intervention and in obedience to His leadings. Never in a million years could I have found the way to the Kingdom of God. Never in a million years could I have searched to find God, to see Him as He is, to know Him as I know Him. Never in a million years of effort could I have uncovered the truth of this new day to which we have come. Just as in the days of John the Baptist and Jesus, the church systems of today think all things shall continue on as they have been. They are not aware that an age has ended and a new day has dawned. They do not understand that God's program is changing, the order of the past two thousand years has waxed old and is ready to pass away. They cannot see that God's many-membered Christ has finally come to maturity and that the time has come for judgment to be given to the saints of the Most High. It is not in their thoughts that the true church, the spiritual woman of the heavens, is now birthing her manchild who shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Their teachings know nothing of the manifested sons of God who shall deliver all creation from the bondage of corruption. There is ONE in their midst whom they know not. He is the **corporate son of Elohim**. The hour is at hand and the stage is set for the next phase of the Kingdom of God on earth. Some do not understand that there are different stages of development of the Kingdom and various ages of its unfolding from one glory to another. Israel of the Old Covenant didn't understand it, either. Therefore the message sounds forth today as it did across the Judean desert in that long ago, "Repent! Take a new mind! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." As we repent our Father shall lead us into our destiny as the manifested sons of God and into the glorious future of the Kingdom of God in all the earth. Our faithful Lord and King shall lead us into the fullness of His Kingdom and into the greater glory that awaits us. The third day, the Holiest of all, the feast of Tabernacles, and the catching up of the manchild are upon us. Only by a deep, profound, and total repentance shall we be able to enter in.

"Have this mind in you," says the apostle, "which also was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). To be a son of the Kingdom is to do just that, to have the spirit of Christ and to learn to think and act out of the reality of sonship to God. We are no longer to see ourselves after the childish mentality that calls us "sinners saved by grace." No more are we to be called after the much maligned, generic term, "Christian." Beloved, now are we the *sons* of God. We are now laying aside our own mentality, conditioned as it is by the spirit of this world and the foolishness of religion, and accept the instruction of the Christ within. As we expose our minds to the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, our thoughts, understandings and beliefs undergo a marvelous change. Our fallacies, misconceptions, errors, ignorance and illusions lose their power over us and we begin to know the truth that makes us free. We cannot have power in the Kingdom of God as long as we are in bondage to any realm of knowledge or false conceptions about God and His purposes in us and in creation. If we are to rule for God in the earth and in the universe we MUST KNOW WHAT HE IS DOING AND BE SUBJECTED TO HIS WAYS, PLANS AND PURPOSES.

Much that has seemed to us in the past as just plain *common sense* is now seen for what it is — the perverted reasoning of Adam. Our natural and religious and church way of thinking is being transformed by the glory of Christ who is now being raised up within us in power as our very life. We are repenting of everything that has been a carry-over from our fleshly mind, we are repenting of all the baggage we have tried to bring along with us into the Kingdom from the church systems and tradition, we are repenting of all our ignorance and all our self-hood. We are repenting because our true and full inheritance in the Kingdom of God is now being offered to us by our elder brother, our forerunner, our Captain and our Lord who lives in us.

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give *repentance* to Israel" (Acts 5:31). In another place the term is "the repentance," meaning to give them *the change*. Repentance means change. You see, it's not a matter of what you *do*, it's a matter of what you *are*. This change is more than a conversion to an idea, a philosophy, or a religion — it's a change to LIFE. It's a change of identity. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted *repentance unto life*" (Acts 11:18). God has granted unto men of all nations the change that brings

life. Why was Jesus raised up to the right hand of God, to the right hand of power? So He could give *change* to Israel! This repentance is the CHANGE TO LIFE. It reaches its consummation in a total metamorphosis.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we **SHALL ALL BE CHANGED**" (I Cor. 15:50-51). What is the *mystery* Paul was declaring? That we shall be CHANGED! We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye *transformed BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND*" (Rom. 12:2). The word "transformed" in this passage is the Greek METAMORPHOO from which we get our English word "metamorphosis." The same word is used of Jesus when He was *transfigured*. This metamorphosis, this change, is brought about by the renewing of the *mind*.

My prayer is that all who read these lines will understand what the renewing of the mind means. It is not exchanging negative words for positive ones. It is not the power of *positive thinking*. It is not being a *possibility thinker*. It is not mental *imaging*. Some people have the idea that the only thing a believer must do to renew his mind is confess only good things as opposed to bad things. "I don't feel too good today" — "Oh, don't say that, that's a negative confession," as if not saying it makes you feel any better. In the early days of my ministry I instructed people in that way because that is how I was taught. But often they got sick and died making their positive confessions. It was a kind of denial. If I have cancer and I confess, "I'm not sick...by His stripes I am healed," I am still sick until I AM HEALED. It has been my experience that the most positive thinking people in the world are in many cases the most carnal and materialistic people. They mind earthly things.

Mind renewal is not positive thinking. It is a spiritual process of a changed identity. It is learning to use the mind of a completely different person than Adam. It is not making the carnal mind repeat spiritual phrases. It is not a matter of positive thoughts over negative thoughts, because both the positive and the negative thoughts may originate out of the carnal mind. Only if the Lord Himself has spoken it within yourself is it from the mind of Christ. It is a matter of experiencing Christ over and over again until the mind of that Spiritual Man is imputed and stamped and imparted into our thinking processes. The 144,000 sons of God in the book of Revelation have the Father's *name* or *nature* stamped upon their *foreheads*. Their thought processes have become spiritualized by the raising up of Christ within them. This change doesn't come by trying to think different thoughts, but by experiencing Spirit — the mind of Christ. The anointing within teaches your spirit man all things concerning the new creation. And that, precious friend of mine, is the renewing of the mind.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:17-18). This change is coming out of the spirit within us. We are renewed from within, not from without, by the anointing that abides within us, to raise Christ up through us. Christ is coming to be glorified IN His saints. He is coming from the inside out. He's not coming from the sky, He's coming from among His people the way He came the first time. He came from heaven into man and out from man. The Life was planted in the womb of a peasant girl and was birthed in humanity into the world. Now He has come again in mighty Spirit power and been conceived within us, He dwells in our hearts by faith, He is being formed in us, He is growing up in us, and shall come out from us AS US — the new creation man, the image of God, the very Christ of God.

"In the beginning God *created the heavens and the earth*" (Gen. 1:1). By this scripture we learn the truth that creation is just two things: Heaven and Earth. Everything God created is contained within the heavens and the earth — there is nothing of creation outside of these. And now — "If any man be in Christ he is a **NEW CREATION**" (II Cor. 5:17). A new creation! The new creation is "**the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness**" (II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1), for that is what creation is, heavens and earth. The new heavens and the new earth of the new creation are the mind of Christ made substance within us. Christ doesn't come from some far-off heaven and descend down to earth; He comes out of the new heavens and the new earth which we are to bring forth the revelation of Himself. Only those who have truly repented, who have taken a new mind, can understand the reality and power and glory of these things. Repent! Take a new mind! For the rule of God out of the mind of Christ within the sons of God is at hand!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 27 REPENT! FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

## PART TWENTY-SEVEN

### JESUS REPENTED

### REPENT YE

The Greek word translated in the King James Version of the Bible as "repentance," in its plainest and most literal meaning signifies A CHANGE OF MIND. Yet that in itself can miss the mark. A better rendering would be TO TAKE ANOTHER MIND. Thus repentance means "to change the mind" — and **with a new kind of mind**. The command of our Lord, "Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" would have been more literally translated, "Take a new mind! for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." If you even try to understand the things of the Kingdom of God without having a new mind you will be thoroughly confused and confounded. It means that as we approach the Kingdom every man who from his birth, or from his entrance into society, or from his beginnings in religion, remains unchanged in the thoughts, ideas, opinions, perceptions and conceptions he has about God, himself, and the nature of all things, **is shut up from the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven**. It indicates the receiving into our hearts of a whole new concept, instead of a mere mental change of viewpoint in regard to God and spiritual realities. It is not the changing of our carnal mind about something, not an intellectual shift in our thinking. An EXCHANGE has to take place. We are a NEW CREATION in the image and likeness of God. So we are to put away everything that comes from the natural mind. The mind of Christ is not obtained through acquired knowledge or formal training. It comes by the transforming work of the Spirit. I ask you now to be prepared for some deep spiritual thinking. It is certain that the *natural mind* cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God. How, then, will we ever come to the knowledge of all truth except we learn to *think in the Spirit*. May the Holy Spirit of truth quicken each of our spiritual minds as we consider this thought of the *repentance of Jesus*.

When Jesus came to redeem us, He came to redeem us not only from sin, but to redeem us from the *law* which gave us the knowledge of sin and which is itself the very strength and power of sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7; I Cor. 15:56; Gal. 4:4-5). Paul tells us that when Jesus came into the world He came subject to the law. "**But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons**" (Gal. 4:4-5). We have to realize that for thirty years Jesus lived on this earth without ever manifesting His sonship to God. He was sent into the world as the Son of God, but He did not manifest His sonship until after He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan river. He was "made of a woman" — born of a woman, speaking of His true humanity.

The Father sent the Son in the likeness of sinful flesh by giving Him a human body. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. In this likeness of sinful flesh He looked like everybody else. He didn't look like a superman — six feet tall with a rugged, handsome face, piercing blue eyes, flaxen hair, bronze complexion, bulging muscles, and a Mr. American physique. He looked so much like any other Jew that He never stood out in a crowd. No one in Nazareth thought He would amount to anything beyond the norm, and when men sought for Him, He had to be pointed out to them. Nothing credible is written of Him, from the time when He was twelve years old, until the day He came to John to be baptized. He operated within the limitations of the flesh. He didn't use any special powers or, except on one brief occasion, display any unusual wisdom. He worked, ate, slept, and bathed like every man. He hungered, grew weary, knew weakness, and experienced doubts, frustrations, perplexities, pain and sorrow, for "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Notice further that when Jesus came He was "made under the law" — and therefore was in subjection under the law. God sent forth His Son from His throne on high, from the estate of His heavenly glory, to be made under the law with all its restrictions, requirements, and demands. He was not merely *born* under the law as a Jew, but "made" by His Father's appointment, and His own will, subject to the law to keep it all, ceremonial and moral; to perfectly fulfill it for all who were under it. Although He was the Lord of the law and its divine Author, He took His place under the law, that He might accomplish an important purpose for those who were under it.

He made Himself subject to it that He might become one of them, and secure their release. And, praise God, He established a perfect record in that He kept the law fully. We know very little of His life while He was under the law. Only one incident when He was twelve years old is recorded. When Jesus walked under the law He was circumcised; He sacrificed; He observed the Sabbath; He kept the feast days; He attended synagogue; and in all His dealings He kept every tenet and precept of the law.

This enlightening passage which I have been unfolding (Gal. 4:4-5) contains yet a further truth. The definite article is not present in the Greek. It does not say, "*the* law," as we have it in the King James Version, but simply "law". "In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son...made *under law*...to redeem them that were *under law*," is how the Greek text reads. Thus, Paul is not speaking exclusively of the Mosaic law given to Israel at Sinai, but is drawing attention to law in general, the whole realm of law as enforced upon men by every kind of government and power. It would certainly *include* the Law of Moses, since that is the specific law-system Jesus was subjected to, but would quickly extend the application to all those who were subjected to any system of ordinances and regulations.

Jesus was sent into the *bondage of legalism* and required to wear that *legalistic yoke* in order that He might shatter it to pieces with His full and free redemption! I am absolutely certain that includes all the religious folk today who are held captive under the legalistic demands of church systems with their myriad man-made commandments of "do's and don'ts" laid upon people in order to make them pleasing to God. Matters not whether it is an Old Testament law about not muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, sowing mixed seed in one's field, stoning an adulteress, washing hands before eating, kosher food laws, holy day laws, or more modern-day prohibitions against women wearing make-up and jewelry, dress codes, meats and drinks, amusements, coverings, or a thousand other laws, old and new, that the religious Pharisees impose upon the Lord's people. They are, one and all, LAW — and blessed be His name, Jesus was "made under law to *redeem them* that are under law, that we might receive the *adoption of sons*" — to be delivered out from under all law, and be brought under the rule of the Spirit; for "*as many as are led by the Spirit of God, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD*" (Rom. 8:14). The Greek word for "redeem" is an especially beautiful term. The concept is of one going into the slave market and purchasing the slave and then taking him out of the market, setting him free. Redeemed from the law! Redeemed to be no longer a slave, serving under rules, regulations and commandments that govern the flesh, to receive placement as sons who fulfill the nature of the Father by the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. Glory to God!

## JESUS REPENTED!

At a definite time appointed by God, a man of strange habits and appearance began to preach in a remote desert part of Judea, near the river Jordan. "Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," he thundered. This man was of the priestly tribe, and had been consecrated to God from his infancy by the vow of the Nazarite. He was not clothed in soft raiment, but in a coarse tunic of camel's hair; he had no craving for sumptuous food, but was content with the simplest fare of dried locusts and honey from the rock; he was no reed shaken by the wind, but a gnarled oak that the wind could neither bend nor break. He was literally the Voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!" He professed to be raised up by the Spirit of God to announce the immediate appearance of the Messiah. Like the prophets of old he had a message directly from God for the people of Israel. His message consisted of the announcement that God was about to act. God would again visit His people. The Kingdom of God was at hand, and the King was already in their midst!

Later, Jesus made a startling declaration about this prophet, John the Baptist. "*Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he*" (Mat. 11:11). Many wonderful men had lived before John the Baptist. Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel, and many other powerful men of God had been born and had done exploits in the name of the Lord. But Jesus said that no one who had been born up to that time was greater than John the Baptist. In saying this, He was putting John the Baptist in a very high position. Jesus was saying that John was the greatest man that ever lived — the *greatest of Adam*! In our generation we have seen some of the *worst* of Adam, men like Hitler, Stalin, Ted Bundy and Jeff Dahmer. John, according to Jesus, was the very best of Adam, but still just Adam.

Then Jesus said something even more astonishing. He said that even the least of us who are in this heavenly Kingdom is greater than John the Baptist! What an exalted position He has reserved for the members of His body, the citizens of His Kingdom! This means that even the least of the called out, the apprehended, the elect, the enChristed — whether a child, a day laborer, a janitor, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, when born from above, birthed into the spiritual world of God, transformed in nature, renewed in mind, regenerated in heart, and invested with the power of the Spirit of the Son — we occupy a superior position among God's people than John the Baptist and all the great heroes of faith and power that went before.

Mark's Gospel says, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord...John came and preached..." Therefore, the scriptures themselves declare that "the beginning of the gospel" was not the preaching of Jesus Christ, but was the preaching of John the Baptist. There is no question about that. That is the beginning of the good news of the Kingdom. The gospel began when John came announcing the approach of both the King and the Kingdom. When John announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, He called on the people to **repent** and believe the good news. By repentance the people would be delivered of the past with all its dead religious forms and ceremonies, laws and regulations, and would be free to embrace the new gospel of the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus. John brought a **baptism unto repentance** — unto the taking of a new mind, a new attitude, a new understanding of things. The record states, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? I indeed baptize you with water **unto repentance**: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I...He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Mat. 3:5-7,11).

What a day of days it must have been for John the Baptist when He saw Jesus coming into the multitude gathered by the Jordan. He came into the midst, not as a spectator, but pushed His way through the crowd and presented Himself at the very water to be baptized by John. John was stunned, incredulous, and protested strenuously, having in mind to prevent Him, saying, "It is I who have need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus replied to him, "Permit it just now, for this is the fitting way for (both of) us to **fulfill all righteousness**" (Mat. 3:14-15). The burning question in John's mind is the same unresolved question in many a believer's mind today, and there are mostly unenlightened and erroneous answers supplied by the teachers and preachers in the church systems.

The question is just this. If Jesus, because He was the Son of God come in human flesh, was able to walk perfectly without sin, and did so, why then did He publicly submit to John's baptism **unto repentance**? If He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and obedient in all things to His heavenly Father, **what did Jesus need to repent of**? Why would the Son of God, heaven's Lamb without blemish, and the King of the new Kingdom, subject Himself to be baptized by a mere prophet under the passing order of the law? Why would He make an open demonstration of **repenting**? The shallow and tradition-bound answer most commonly given is that Jesus was baptized AS AN EXAMPLE TO US THAT WE ALSO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED IN WATER!

The true answer is found in His response to John the Baptist. "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is becoming us to **fulfill all righteousness**." That has nothing whatsoever to do with serving as an example to believers today that we should be baptized in water. That is not what Jesus said at all. To say that is to create a fable, a myth, and religious folklore. The key word is "fulfill". Jesus used this word again in **Matthew 5:17**. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to **fulfill**." Many people think that "fulfill" means to "keep," that Jesus was saying that He came not to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to *keep* the law and to give us the power to keep the law. But that is not what it means at all! That is a flagrant misrepresentation of the words of the Lord.

The Greek word for "fulfill" is PLEROO meaning "to make replete" by accomplishing, consummating, and bringing a thing to its ultimate purpose and intent. By "fulfillment" truth rises from one glory to a greater glory, each glory ascending above the one preceding it. Let me illustrate. When Jesus "fulfilled" the law of the sin-offering, did He "keep" the law or did He **end it** by raising it up to a higher level of reality? In order to fulfill the

law of the sacrificial lamb Jesus didn't go out and select the most blameless lamb available and bring it to the priest to be slain. Nor did He do so as an example to us that we should bring a lamb to the priest to be offered up. No — a thousand times no! He didn't fulfill the law of the lamb by *keeping* the law in the ordinary way; He *fulfilled* the law by HIMSELF BECOMING THE LAMB OF GOD that takes away the sin of the world. He became within Himself the very substance and reality to which the old shadow only faintly pointed. He became the lamb on a higher level, abolished the old observance, and forever delivered us from the necessity of doing the thing by the "letter". That is what it means to "fulfill." Jesus didn't come to destroy the law, He didn't come to say that the sin-offering was a mistake. He came to reveal the eternal spiritual reality to which the symbol pointed, to bring it to its ultimate purpose and true intent. He raised every jot and every tittle of the law up to a new and heavenly glory, the glory of an **inward life** merely symbolized by the outward type and shadow. Oh, how we marvel at the ever progressing purpose and ever increasing manifestation of the ways of the Lord!

With the above truth gaining access and radiating in our hearts, let us investigate further the divine significance of our Lord's words when He explained to John concerning His baptism unto repentance, "Thus it is becoming us to **fulfill all righteousness.**" There are two kinds of righteousness revealed in the scriptures, both of which were ordained by God. Paul by the wisdom given him has set forth the truth in these words, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the *righteousness of God without the law* is manifested, being witnessed (foreshadowed) by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...therefore we conclude that man is justified by faith **without the deeds of the law.** What shall we say then? That the nations, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the **law of righteousness**, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it **by the works of the law.** For they being ignorant of **God's righteousness**, and going about to establish **their own righteousness**, have not submitted themselves unto the **righteousness of God.** For Christ IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS to every one that believeth" (Rom. 3:20-22,28; 9:30-32; 10:3-4).

Let us discard the silly doctrines of men and the ignorant traditions inherited from the dark ages. There are only two kinds of righteousness that God has declared unto men — the righteousness of the *law*, attained by an outward keeping of the law, and the righteousness of *Christ*, which is by faith. The righteousness of the law pointed forward to Christ who brought us true righteousness by the Spirit. Christ is thus the end of the law to all who believe. To have the mentality of keeping law is to deny Christ. His righteousness is the *true righteousness*, and to keep the outward letter of the old law is treason against the Kingdom of God. The only man ever to attain to the righteousness of the law was our Lord Jesus Christ. He submitted Himself to the law, and kept it perfectly, but only that He might redeem and buy out of the slave market them that were under the law, that we might receive placement as the sons of God. Legalists are always striving to keep laws, rules, regulations, codes, traditions, commandments and outward observances. Sons, on the other hand, are made partakers of the nature of their Father. That is just the difference! The son doesn't commit adultery, but neither does he stone the one who does! It is a higher and totally different kind of righteousness that is only revealed by the Spirit in our hearts. It is not bound by any outward code, but is lived out by the dealings and leadership of the Holy Spirit within. It has nothing in common with the Mosaic law or any man-made set of requirements. God doesn't even always require the same things of everyone, just as parents do not always require the same standards for each of their children. The Father knows every heart and deals according to His own purpose to reveal His grace, power and holiness within each vessel. We cannot demand of others that they live by the standard raised up by the will of God in our life. The moment we do, we have departed from the spirit of sonship and are now justified *by law!*

Having beheld these wonders in the spirit, can we not now understand the words of Jesus to John the Baptist. "Thus it becomes us to *fulfill all righteousness.*" It had nothing to do with water baptism or Jesus being an *example* to New Testament saints that they should be baptized in water. Let us come out from the childish and foolish pratings of the teachers of Babylon that we may receive the wisdom of God and become His sons and His daughters. The natural mind will never understand it, but the Holy Spirit, who knows all things and reveals the secrets of God to the spiritual mind, will unfold it to you, if you have a longing to understand.

Jesus did not come to earth in the form of a baby already fully aware of who He was. He didn't wave at the shepherds from His manger-cradle and coo, "Hi, fellows, I was expecting you!" Jesus had to discover His

**KINGDOM OF GOD, THE, Part 27, Repent For The Kingdom Of Heaven Is At Hand [J. Preston Eby] ~ BIBLE STUDY 4**

identity, and I may be mistaken, but it is my opinion that He received the understanding of who He was progressively. In seeking the Father, loving the Father, being taught of the Father, and obeying the Father Jesus became conscious of the Father within as being His very own and only parent. When He became fully Father-conscious, He became fully aware of His sonship. He discovered who He was! Because Jesus came to do the Father's will, His ear was opened to hear the Father's voice within. God awakened Him morning by morning (from one dawning of understanding to a greater dawning of understanding), until He was fully awakened from His identity as an exceptional Jew under the law, to find Himself to be the creature of another realm. As He beheld the face of His Father He did not try to hold on to His natural identity, but was willing to give it up for the realization of His true identity — His sonship to God. Jesus awoke fully to the knowledge of who He was. He no longer knew Himself as Jesus of Nazareth, as the son of Joseph and Mary, but as the Word of God made flesh. Jesus came to know Himself as He was known by the Father. Jesus no longer looked in the mirror of the law that gave only a dim and blurred reflection of reality, but He saw face to face. Jesus knew that nobody else really knew who He was. He set Himself to be about His Father's business. And it was this understanding, fully developed and matured in Jesus, that brought Him to the Jordan that blessed day two thousand years ago!

There was only one sane and sensible reason in the world for Jesus to come to John that day and submit Himself to the baptism of **repentance** — He was **repenting!** If He was not Himself repenting, He had no business standing there before the multitudes of Israel being baptized unto repentance. And He said that by His repentance John and He were **fulfilling all righteousness** — that is, accomplishing righteousness, consummating righteousness, bringing righteousness to its true intent, ultimate reality, and full spiritual power by raising righteousness from one degree of glory to a greater level of glory. Jesus came to the baptism of John because He sought to fulfill all righteousness. Only HE could do that. The question is, How could He do it. He did it by repudiating the righteousness of the law (although He had kept it perfectly) and revealing unto men the righteousness of God through sonship. Jesus **repented** of the law, took a new mind about the law, embraced a higher reality concerning the law, in order to reveal a new realm of life and the nature of the Father in the sons of the Kingdom. Jesus experienced a change of government in His life when He came to John to be baptized! As soon as John had baptized Him, He came up out of the water, and while He was praying, behold, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. And lo, a voice out from heaven said, "This is my Son, my Beloved, in whom I delight!"

Let's look at the spiritual significance of this experience. A change was taking place. Jesus' baptism by John marked the point of crossing over from a life lived under the law to a life that revealed the glory of the Father. Jesus as the perfect man had kept all the law, but by the law He had no power to be the Son of God. Under the law system of the Old Testament the idea of sonship to God was veiled. It is not altogether strange that men could not know God as their Father until the Son of God appeared. The words of our Lord are true in their strictest sense, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." He revealed the Father, led Him forth to view where He could be seen. He could say in all truth, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

Only the Son could bring men into relationship with the Father. Only the firstborn Son could pioneer the path of sonship. Though Jesus was made of a woman, and made under the law, He could never redeem us from the bondage of the law to the liberty and glory of sonship until He Himself once and forever and for all **REPUDIATED THE LAW** and stepped forth to live only and wholly by the Father. He had to abandon the righteousness of the law in order to reveal the righteousness of God by the Spirit. **Jesus repented of the law.** Other men came to John's baptism repenting of **sin**. But Jesus had done no sin, therefore He could not repent of sin. But He was baptized **unto repentance**. Jesus repented! The only thing He could repent of was the Old Covenant Father had subjected Him to. It was a hindrance to His sonship, for it was an inferior order that was ready to pass away. Jesus was baptized unto that repentance and came out of the water in the power of the Spirit of His Father. He buried the law and was invested upon by the glory of the Father. He came forth in public recognition by His Father. He was recognized as **THE SON OF GOD** for the first time when His heavenly Father recognized a Son who no longer was under the tutelage of the schoolmaster of the law. He had turned from being ruled by the law to being ruled by the Spirit of Life! He turned from the natural to the spiritual! He turned from the human to the divine! He turned from the earthly to the heavenly! He received the Holy Spirit and from that time on He was led by the Spirit. His life changed dramatically! He did all these things to *show us the way to the Father and the Kingdom* — as the Pattern Son for us.

From that blessed moment forward Jesus began to preach and testify to spiritual and heavenly things. Luke tells us, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). Jesus received the witness of His sonship from the Father, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and from that moment His ministry of *manifested sonship* began. He was no longer a law-keeping Jew — He was the Son of God with power! No more was He a subject of the kingdom of Israel — He was a Son of the Kingdom of Heaven! More than once during His sonship ministry Jesus stated that He never acted on His own. "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing; for whatever He does, that the Son does likewise...I can do nothing on my own authority...I seek not my own will but the will of Him who sent me...I always do what is pleasing to Him...I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has Himself given me commandment what to say...what I say, therefore, I say as the Father has bidden me...the words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does His works."

I think that it is wonderfully significant that the first miracle Jesus performed, which launched His sonship ministry, was that of turning water into wine. It was indeed, the "beginning of miracles." Consider carefully the fact that the *water* was turned into *wine*. What else could have taken place because of His presence at the wedding, once the power of the Kingdom was released within Him after coming out from under the shackles of the law? The firstborn Son of God was now changed — raised from the old covenant into the new, from the letter into the spirit, from the form into the essence, from the type into the reality, from the shadow into the substance, from limitation into omnipotence, from the temporal into the eternal, from the natural into the spiritual, from the outward into the inward, from the human into the divine. All things would now be quickened when He drew near. The law disappeared and the power and glory of the Kingdom were found instead, filling the vessels of human purification to the brim. The good wine of the Kingdom had been kept until now!

That's when His troubles began. No longer did Jesus observe the law, but only the word of His Father. No longer did His conduct conform to the customs of Israel, but He lived His life by the principles of the Kingdom of God. He healed on the Sabbath day. He silenced and put to shame the self-righteous who would stone the adulteress according to the commandment of Moses. He associated with harlots and publicans and sat at meat with sinners at their feasts, where undoubtedly they ate meats not prescribed by the law, because the Spirit led Him there to seek and to save. His disciples plucked corn on the Sabbath in violation of the Sabbath commandments, and He justified them by appealing outside the law. He refused to identify with any of the various Jewish "denominations" and sought the favor of no man or group. He taught not as the scribes and Pharisees who emphasized and embellished every precept of the law, but as one having authority of His own. "It was said by them of old time, but **I say unto you...**" and He flatly contradicted Moses. He did miracles beyond the comprehension of any of the religious leaders. The elders, chief priests, scribes, Sadducees and Pharisees were His greatest opponents! Many of these were zealous for the law. The Pharisees opposed Him above all others, even to the extent of accusing Him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons. They acted as if they were the only ones who knew God or truth. Oh, how they loved the law! But when Jesus taught the Kingdom of God and did the marvelous works of God, they had it in their hearts to kill Him. They tried to push Him off of a cliff, they took up stones to stone Him, and continually plotted how they could get rid of Him.

## REPENT YE!

Now we understand that when Jesus went to the Jordan River, His repentance consisted of turning away from the law and following after the Spirit. All who enter the Kingdom must repent, just as Jesus and the people of Israel were called upon to repent. When God asks us to repent in order to enter the Kingdom, He is not primarily talking about getting rid of all our weaknesses and sins of the flesh. That is important too, but the essential issues of the Kingdom are much higher and greater than that. After the sin issue has been settled by grace, forgiveness, and cleansing, what a world of *religious* things must be repented of and turned from in order to walk in the ways of the Kingdom! Even if we are cleansed from all our sins we cannot walk as sons of God in the Kingdom until we have abandoned **every other order** that has ruled in our lives. Cleansing from sin enables one to inherit eternal life, but there are many other requirements to qualify for rulership and dominion in the Kingdom of God. I know many precious saints who have been thoroughly converted and cleansed from sin, but I could not trust them with even a Sunday School class because they are not qualified for such responsibility. Many people think that all believers are going to sit on thrones and rule and reign with Christ in

His Kingdom, but that is another of the childish fables of religious Babylon. To rule and reign with Christ requires wisdom, understanding, character, experience, testing and stringent qualifications for handling awesome, omnipotent power. Any Christian who could not handle a Sunday School class, the oversight of a church, the governorship of a state or the presidency of a nation is hardly qualified to rule the nations with a rod of iron! To learn to know the voice of the Father, to walk in the wisdom of God, to understand the ways of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to qualify for power and dominion requires not only deep experience with God, but thorough repentance as well.

Just as Jesus repented of a thing so divine and marvelous as the law of Moses, so must we repent of our bondage to religious systems, baptisms, doctrines, church laws, and much, much more. If any of these are our master, we must remember that no man can serve two masters. Will we believe Christ or will we believe human institutions and traditions? All these things have served a purpose for a season, just as the law did for Jesus, but now we have received another teacher, the Spirit of Christ within. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge and understanding and the strength and power to do all the will of the Father. From the Father's *only begotten Son* there comes forth a *vast family of sons*. Today our God is not the Father of an only begotten Son, but the Father of *many brethren*, all of whom are born into His family by the Holy Spirit and all of whom shall be manifested in the full glory of sonship. When you realize that you have been placed into the family of God's very own sons, it will move you to repent of any other allegiance or attachment other than the mind of Christ, the will of the Father, and the ways of the Kingdom. I do not hesitate to tell you that in order to become the **manifested sons of God** we will have to repent of the old-order church systems we have lived in and functioned by. The former things are passing away and a new day is dawning for all who have received the call to sonship. The call to sonship is not the call to eternal life and heaven, it is the call to THE THRONE OF THE UNIVERSE.

Repentance is the key that unlocks the riches of Christ and the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven! If you have a broken and contrite spirit, and are repenting of the old order of the past, you may be sure that Christ will reveal Himself to you in the fullness of the Light that He is in due time. God is again calling for the repentance of all who are called to the Kingdom. As it was in John's day and in Jesus' ministry, so is it in this significant hour. The old order is passing away. The religion we have called Christianity is passing away. The man-made systems that are falsely *called* "the church," with all their fleshly programs, carnal methods, man-made organizational structures, human promotions and efforts, false doctrines, soulish worship, man-centered and flesh-oriented gospel is passing away. Babylon is fallen, is fallen. God is doing a new thing and leading a people in new and strange paths of His choosing. And repentance is God's way of bringing us into the new.

We are progressing in God and in His Kingdom. The Christ within is growing and expanding in ever-increasing glory. His light is arising within our hearts to dispel all the darkness in us. We are beholding new things in the Spirit and by the Spirit. The Lord is bringing us to repentance from realm to realm, to a changed mind, which allows us to embrace these new realities in the Spirit. The Lord is changing our thinking and understanding, renewing us in the spirit of our mind, and transforming our mind that we may enter all the way into the life and glory and power of His Kingdom.

REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND is the message now being heard from Zion's holy hill. This message of truth and life is a proclamation of a new and greater manifestation of the rule and government of God in the earth. "Of the **increase** of His government and peace *there shall be no end*," the inspired prophet assures us. That increase of the Kingdom is from purpose to purpose, from dealing to dealing, from one stage of growth, development and manifestation to another, and from one age to another. I declare to you today by the word of the Lord that we are now standing at the end of an age, and the Lord is introducing A GREATER MANIFESTATION OF HIS KINGDOM by calling us to repentance. The old "church order" is fastly drawing to a close, and the day for the manifestation of the sons of God is rapidly approaching. The next step in the unfolding of God's Kingdom plan for the world is now dawning.

We have progressed from the age when God has been meticulously forming His body of sons by establishing His rule in their minds and hearts, to the age when that body shall begin to fulfill the great and grand *purpose* for which God has prepared them. We have come to the time when the Kingdom shall accelerate into a further and greater manifestation of the rule and dominion of the Kingdom over all nations and all mankind, answering the cry of the groaning creation to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. This transition requires

repentance, *first on our part*, and afterwards on the part of all the rulers and inhabitants of the nations. The maturing sons of God may now boldly declare, as Jesus did in His generation, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news!"

The gospel message proclaimed in the days of the firstborn Son of God, the twelve apostles, and Paul, was the good news of the *first stage* of the Kingdom development in the earth — the formation of the church, the body of Christ, which is the Kingdom *in our hearts* phase. Now the next phase is wonderfully nigh at hand, which is the greater phase or period of the outpouring of the Kingdom life, deliverance and rule through the younger brothers of Jesus, the manifested sons of God. It is important for everyone who reads these lines to see that *the time is fulfilled*. The fullness of time, relative to the past age and the new age, *has come!* The hour has dawned for the revelation and manifestation of the *next stage* of God's ever-increasing and ever-expanding triumph and dominion of the Kingdom of God over all the earth.

By repenting we let go of the old order of the church-systems of the past age, and become pliable in the hands of the Father, so that we will be able to make the transition into the greater glory of the new order of manifested sonship. That is why the Lord is calling us to repentance. We may not be guilty of sin, but we must become fluid in the hands of the Father in order for His new and glorious purposes to be fulfilled in and through us. We **must** change all our thinking and our religious practices, believe the present truth word of God, and walk in the light being revealed. We may not be harboring any secret or hidden sins, but we need to repent of yesterday's obsolete order, yesterday's ways of doing things, yesterday's "in part" knowledge and glory, of carnal church works, of our own self-will, of the former ways and ideas and promotions of man, to embrace the dealings of this new day as the Spirit reveals them.

The Lord is inaugurating a new age, and is setting forth a new order with new understanding, new methods, new power and new requirements for this new day of greater light and glory. As wonderful as the workings of the Spirit were in the past, they are not good enough for the new order of manifested sonship. Even though we have made some progress, we must have something more from God to be able to rule the nations and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. And we can only receive this change by repentance.

How shall we know that the old order is passed away? What sign shall be given that the old order is ended and a new has dawned? The truth is, no sign shall be given except the word of God within ourselves. In the days of John the Baptist and Jesus no outward sign was given to show a change in ages. There was no blinding light, no burning mountain cast into the sea, no comet streaking across the heavens, no mighty earthquake, no shaking of kingdoms or collapse of empires, no world war, no world-wide economic collapse, no pouring out of apocalyptic judgments upon the earth. When Jesus departed from Galilee and came into the wilderness of Judea to be baptized by John and begin His sonship ministry, it was by the ministry of a prophet of the Lord, wearing strange apparel and crying for repentance, and by the ministry of a Son of God that the old age passed away and a new began. The world knew nothing about it! Rome received no notification of it! There were no news headlines heralding it! Only John and Jesus knew the significance of what they did and the impact it would eventually have, and they knew it, not by any outward sign, but by the revelation of God within them.

**Thus Jesus said, "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Mat. 11:13).** God spoke to an age through the law and the prophets who gave the word of God to Israel until John the Baptist came on the scene preaching repentance and the Kingdom. This means that the prophets and the law revealed God's will for that age and were in effect until John began his ministry. The Lord ended the previous age by removing His blessing and authority from the previous order, and then spoke a new order into existence purely by His word. And by a similar unrecognized word of authority, Father shall conclude this age of the *formation* of His body of sons and inaugurate the new age of the *manifestation* of the sons of God on earth. When the Lord changed the order two thousand years ago, did He send a mighty cataclysmic upheaval and judgment to eliminate all the Old Covenant laws, rituals, sacrifices, feast days, synagogues, and religious forms? Did He move to completely wipe them out and abolish it all from the face of the earth? No — not at all! The old Jewish order remains in the earth today as an abiding and unimpeachable testimony to the blindness of unanointed, uninspired, unspiritual religion!

When Father changes the order in this day, replacing the church order of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers with kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek, will He then eliminate and

obliterate off the face of the earth the Baptist order, the Methodist order, the Lutheran order, the Episcopal order, the Presbyterian order, the Mennonite order, the Pentecostal order, the Charismatic order, the Catholic order, and all the other religious, organizational, denominational, and ministerial orders of the church systems of today? Not by any means! He will simply remove what is left of His anointing from that order. But many will not discern that the anointing has lifted from that old realm. It will be just as John the Revelator prophesied of Mystery Babylon, "And the voice of harpers and musicians (spiritual praise and worship), and of pipers (prophets), and trumpeters (announcers of new things in God), **shall be heard no more at all in thee**; and no craftsman (spiritual ministry), of whatsoever craft he be, **shall be found any more in thee**; and the sound of a millstone (grinding flour for bread — the word of God) **shall be heard no more at all in thee**; and the light of a candle (the little light left in Babylon) **shall shine no more at all in thee**; and the voice of the Bridegroom (Christ the Head) and of the Bride (of Christ) **shall be heard no more at all in thee...**" (Rev. 18:22-23). They will continue on with their fellowships, activities, programs, ceremonies, rituals, crusades, and religious works, for they will be as yet unawakened to the new phase of the Kingdom this day brings. AND THEY WILL BE THE GREATEST OPPOSERS OF THE SONS OF GOD! For a season, until the time appointed of the Father, all will continue to function without Father's authority or the precious anointing of His Spirit, until at last the glory of God penetrates through the walls of ignorance and unbelief to bring deliverance to the captives of Babylon.

Thank God! There is a remnant, a chosen company, a firstfruit, a people with a purpose, called to be the *sons of God*, who have now been awakened to this new day and enter into its holy purposes by the Spirit of God. These have already received the call of the Spirit to repent, because a new and greater manifestation of the Kingdom of God is at hand. This call has come from the SPIRIT HIMSELF, confirmed by many thousands of saints in all parts of the earth, in practically every nation under heaven. It is not a matter of the interpretation of scripture, to prove from holy writ that *this is the time* for the next stage of the Kingdom to come. It is a matter of **hearing from God**. Those who reject this vision reject the voice of the Lord from the heavens. Now God has called us to repent of the old — to repent of all our religious backgrounds, to repent of our doctrines, creeds, and beliefs; to repent of our denominationalism and our non-denominationalism; to repent of our carnal religious methods, our dead works, and all the baggage we have brought with us into this Kingdom walk, from the systems of man. Just as Jesus repented of the law in order to be placed as a Son to fulfill His sonship ministry, so we must repent of our religious heritage and every vestige of that order that is now passing away. Only as we repent, becoming invested with a *new mind*, a new vision and a new reality, can we enter into this new and higher and more glorious dimension of the Kingdom of God revealed through **sons**.

If we are receiving the mind of Christ, we are then able to see the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven and understand the coming of the next phase of the Kingdom. Many do not understand that there is a progression of the Kingdom from realm to realm and from age to age. Some hold to the erroneous notion that the church and the "church age" *constitute* the Kingdom and that there is nothing more beyond this except heaven at last. Others believe that the Kingdom has not yet come and are *waiting* for its arrival and the so-called "kingdom age". Both ideas are wrong. The wonderful reality is that Jesus brought the Kingdom two thousand years ago! But the Kingdom, Jesus said, is like a man who sows seed in his field and it springs forth out of the earth, first the blade, then the stalk, and finally the full corn in the ear. Just as the seed passes through various stages of development to eventually arrive at harvest conditions, so does the Kingdom grow and develop through various stages and manifestations until ultimately God is all-in-all. The Kingdom develops in this way both within each of us individually, and in its subjection and dominion of the world and all things.

There shall be **no end** to the increase of the Kingdom as it grows and develops first in the earth that *we are*, secondly in its dominion over all the peoples and nations of the earth as the kingdoms of this world *become* the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and finally unto the farthest extremities of all the unbounded heavens (Isa. 9:7; Heb. 2:8). This age is not the last age by any means, nor shall the next age bring the final consummation; for it is in the **ages to come** that God shall clearly demonstrate and fully put on display *through us* the immeasurable, unlimited and surpassing riches of His grace and goodness of heart toward all His creation (Eph. 2:7). Neither is the coming age the "kingdom age" as so many say. Every age since Jesus is, and shall be, the Kingdom age! There is no singular "kingdom age". The Kingdom began with Jesus. He proclaimed the Kingdom and brought the Kingdom. The Kingdom is now revealed in the lives of those who are walking in the Spirit and are filled with the righteousness, peace and joy which are the Kingdom. ALL ages are now Kingdom Ages. The age now dawning is the age of the beginning of the manifestation of the sons of God — merely the **next step** in God's great ages-lasting Kingdom program.

Here is God's program. In the age now ending God has been meticulously forming His body of sons, the manchild birthed out of the woman church. In the furnace of affliction and by the power of His indwelling life the nature and ways of the Father have been inworked in a vast family of sons. In the new age now upon us God shall, through these sons, deal with and subdue unto Himself all the *living nations* of earth. That is the next step in His Kingdom agenda. There are vast numbers of ages of Kingdom increase beyond that. God must yet deal with the billions of men who have lived and died upon earth throughout all past generations and ages. Earth, however, is only the launching-pad of God's Kingdom plans and purposes. His program extends unto and through all the billions of galaxies with their billions of trillions of stars and suns and planets and moons — all the works of His hands. All these things were made by Him, and for Him, and for His pleasure and purpose, to reveal His glory and to be gathered into His Christ. In that blessed dispensation of the fullness of times all things in the heavens, and all things in the earth, are to be gathered together into one in God's Christ. And God's MAN shall subdue and rule it all! "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visiteth him? Thou madest him for a little while lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst **set him over the works of thy hands**. Thou hast put ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. For in that He put ALL in subjection under Him, He left **nothing** that is **not** put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him" (Heb. 2:6-8). This passage is a quotation from the eighth Psalm where the Psalmist identifies the *heavens*, the *stars*, the *sun*, and the *moon* as the "all things" that are to be put under God's man.

Each new stage of the Kingdom will require repentance on the part of those who are called to participate in its glory, power and purpose. Without repentance we will never know the mysterious ways of the Kingdom of God. But when we repent and turn away from the old church systems and their time-honored traditions, we then become as little children to receive the Kingdom and walk in its Light. When we repent, the Spirit then reveals to us the increase of the Kingdom of God within ourselves. When we repent and humble ourselves, we become prepared by our Father for the new order of the Kingdom. We then "see" the new Kingdom plans and purposes, and are strengthened to enter into its new principles to become pioneers of its new order and administration. Repentance and childlike faith prepare us to enter into the new and higher realm of Kingdom manifestation. As Jesus had His day of baptism by John, and the early disciples had their day of Pentecost, so shall we have our DAY OF TABERNACLES when the full blazing glory of manifested sonship shall erupt upon a humble and prepared people, and startle an unconcerned, unsuspecting and unbelieving world. Everything of the old order is passing away. Therefore, we repent of it, and embrace the new thing God is speaking and doing among His elect. When we have fully repented to receive the mind of Christ, we shall then make the transition into the transformation, glory and power of this NEW DAY.

There is no sin so damning as the sin of hearing the word of the Kingdom, being close to what God is doing, and then fail to repent and thus reject it. Jesus knew the hearts of the chief priests, scribes, and elders of Israel. He saw that they were set in their ways and their minds were closed against further revelation of truth. They were in no attitude to *repent of Moses* in order to receive the *Son of God* who offered them the Kingdom. They were so hardened and calloused in their minds and spirits that they were foreign to the higher order of the Kingdom that stood in their midst. Having spiritually discerned their stubborn and unrepentant attitude, Jesus said to them, "Verily I say unto you, That the **publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him**" (Mat. 21:31-32).

What an astonishing word for Jesus to deliver to those lettered doctors of the law and chief priests who had studied the scriptures and were esteemed leaders of the religion of the past! Just as those religious leaders could not discern the day of their visitation and refused to relinquish the old in order to apprehend the new, so are there multitudes today who will fail to make the transition by repentance, and will reject the new thing God is about to do in the earth. Only by repentance do we receive the mind of Christ. The one distinguishing mark of a son of God who is chosen as a ruler in the Kingdom in this day when the sons shall be given power over the nations, is repentance. All others will be set in their ways, too calloused in their hearts, too attached to their cherished traditions, and too indifferent to the voice of the Spirit to lay hold upon the greater glory.

If the events surrounding the manifestation of the first Son of God are repeated in this hour of the unveiling of the younger sons of God, then undoubtedly the word of the Lord to the religious leaders in the church systems

in our day is just this: "Verily I say unto you, that the **loan sharks** and the **hookers** *go into the kingdom of God before you.*" I do know firsthand that there is a vast company of so-called religious mis-fits, church order rejects and castaways, spiritual nobodies, and precious people who have been beaten, wounded and broken by man's carnal interpretation of the word of God and his harsh application of the law of God, who have repented and do repent and are following on to know the Lord. These have suffered with Him, and they shall reign with Him.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 28 THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

## PART TWENTY-EIGHT

### THE UNSTRUCTURED KINGDOM THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

In the new order of the Kingdom of God all earthly and man-made institutions cease to exist. Our lives are not governed by external rules, regulations, laws, traditions, systems, organizations, or hierarchies, but wholly by the guidance of the Holy Spirit of Truth. Our citizenship *is in heaven*, therefore the rule of our realm is SPIRIT. The Kingdom is not a physical, organizational, or political structure, but always the doing of God's will. Sonship to God is a relationship. It is not measured by movements, structures, forms, nor by creeds. Indeed, true sons of God will not be characterized by unChristlike conduct nor by false doctrine. Yet, neither of these is a criterion for determining the reality of sonship to the Father. Sonship is strictly a spiritual relationship and is entered into by the reception from the Father of the Spirit of sonship. Then only can one cry, "Abba, Father," out of a union of Spirit with the Father. Because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Nothing external contributes anything to this sonship, nor is sonship dependent upon any external thing for its manifestation.

Jesus broke every tradition and violated all accepted standards, procedures, norms, orders, methods and systems. He demonstrated the ways of the Kingdom of Heaven, and never did so more eloquently than on the night of the last supper. On that solemn occasion Peter and John had made all the arrangements for the Passover — all but for one item. When guests entered a house it was customary for their feet to be bathed, washing away the dust and grime of their journey, for people in those days wore sandals or walked barefoot. This washing of the feet was a simple act, but a menial task performed only by servants. Each of these men had been called to the Kingdom and were associates of the King. They were anxiously competing for position and power in this Kingdom about to burst upon the world. Not one of them would stoop to take the place of a servant, to wash feet. They jostled one another to prove their superiority and closeness to the Master. Each thought the other should be washing feet.

When the hour arrived for supper, no one's feet had been washed. Although no one mentioned it, there was an uncomfortableness about them because the service had not been rendered. Then it happened! Jesus, fully aware that the Father had put everything into His hands, and that He had come from God and was returning to God, got up from supper, took off His garments, and taking a servant's towel, He fastened it around His waist. Then He poured water into the washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the servant's towel with which He was girded. Peter watched, astounded. They knew in their hearts who He was. They had confessed Him as the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God. He was the deliverer prophesied by all the holy prophets since the world began. He was the promised son of David destined to rule all nations, Emmanuel, God with us, who was the King of earth and the universe. *And He was washing feet!*

Peter's blood was boiling beads of perspiration stood out on His flushed face, and His thoughts raced wildly. This isn't the way to rule over men, this isn't a demonstration of power! Caesar doesn't wash the feet of his soldiers, not even his generals! Power would mean that they would wash his feet if he so ordered! Power means that you are served, that your orders are obeyed, that your rank, position, and prestige is respected, bowed to, even cringed before. *What was Jesus doing!* Jesus came to Judas, gazed gently into his shifty eyes, and humbly washed and dried his feet. Peter was horrified and his mind was going crazy. Jesus can't *do this*, it isn't right; what kind of a King is He if He assumes the role of a servant; what is the dignity and power of this Kingdom if its King *serves* His subjects instead of *ruling* over them. And what will be *our* role as administrators in this Kingdom if we are to wash feet instead of barking orders! It all seemed so contradictory.

When Jesus came to Peter, Peter had his thoughts collected and said to Him, "Lord, are my feet to be washed by you? Is it your place to wash my feet?" Jesus met Peter's gaze and replied, "You do not understand now

what I am doing, Peter, but you will understand later on." Peter said to Him sharply, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus calmly answered him, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me — no share in my Kingdom." Shocked, Peter said to Jesus, "If that's the case, then Lord, wash not only my feet, but my hands and my head, too!" Jesus said, "Anyone who has had a bath needs not to wash *except his feet*, but is clean all over except for where he has walked through the dust. And you are clean — but not entirely clean — your *walk* must be cleansed, purified."

The disciples took their places at the table. Their damp, cold feet testified against their pride and condemned them from beneath the table. A holy hush fell over them as they tried to digest the full meaning of the event that had just occurred. Their concepts of the Kingdom were disintegrating, and their quest for power and position was trembling beneath their feet. Jesus looked from one to the other and said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Master and the Lord, and you are right in doing so, for that is what I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet — if I have ministered to you in meekness and humility, and by my words and actions have cleansed your walk — you ought, it is your duty, you are under obligation, you owe it — to wash one another's feet! For I have given this to you as an example, so that you should do in your turn what I have done to you."

The Gospel of Luke gives additional insight into the events of the last supper. According to Luke an eager contention arose between the disciples as to which of them was considered and reputed to be the greatest, and Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles are deified by them and exercise LORDSHIP, ruling as emperors and tyrants over them; and those in authority are elevated above the people and called Benefactors. **But this is not to be so with you.** On the contrary let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and him who is the chief and leader as one who serves. For which is the greater, he who reclines at table (the master of the house), or he who serves? Is not he who reclines at the table the greatest? But I am in your midst as the one who serves. See, I have esteemed you better and greater than myself." With those words Jesus laid down one of the greatest principles of the Kingdom of God: true greatness is not to exalt yourself above others to *rule*; true greatness is to humble yourself before men to *serve*!

## THE UNSTRUCTURED KINGDOM

Jesus came to change the world, transform the world, and rule the world by the power of the Spirit of God. Yet, while on earth, He seemed to have no program, no method, no system, no organization, no instrument, no *structure* to accomplish such a feat. He expended His energies on individual cases, teaching and healing all who were drawn to Him, but forming them into no cohesive movement. Christ's life had no other program than that of personal influence, the transformation of individuals. When Jesus ascended, He left behind Him no system of doctrine, no instructions for the organization of the ministry, no specified chain of command, no detailed guidance about worship. Oh, yes, on the day of Pentecost He founded the church, but He founded it neither as an organization nor with a hierarchy. The commission laid upon the church with respect to the world was to go out and make disciples of all nations and continue His work upon individuals. Christ's definition of a church had nothing to do with a group of people submitted under a pastor, a board of elders and deacons, with board meetings, Sunday School, church buildings, fellowship halls, recreational facilities, committees, youth programs, crusades and the like. The Lord's own definition of church is given in **Matthew 18:20**, "**For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**"

Our long years of captivity in Babylon have given us a distorted sense of the ways of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not an externally organized government, it is the rule of God in the lives and affairs of men *by the Spirit*. To the church the glorified Lord has given *ascension gift-ministries* of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. "*Wherefore he saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*" (Eph. 4:8,11-13).

The apostles of the church age are not the same order of apostle as the original twelve. The twelve apostles were ordained apostles by Jesus *during the days of His flesh*, while He was still on earth. They were already

apostles when the day of Pentecost arrived. The apostles of the church age are given by the **ascended Christ, after** He had ascended on high. "**When He ascended** up on high, He led captivity captive, and **gave gifts** unto men." After Christ ascended He gave to His church a new order of apostles and they were given along with prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and therefore have been a continuing ministry in the body of Christ throughout the age. Let all who follow on to know the Lord understand the undeniable truth that there is an infinite difference between a *gift-ministry* and an *organizational hierarchy*. The gift-ministries are just that — *gifts* to the body of Christ — not *lords* over God's heritage. As a teacher I am myself a *gift* to the people of God. I have a divine commission to teach, exhort, reprove, counsel, instruct, beseech, encourage and strengthen the body of Christ in any and all ways He leads and empowers me to do. But I have *no right* to subject any man or group of men to my ministry, to form them into a movement around myself, to rule over them, dominate them, control them, or become a lord or master over them.

Let not those who have received the call to sonship imagine even for a moment that some *minister* or *ministry* is able to usher them in to the fullness of Christ. There is a great error propagated in the land that says that the five-fold ministry has been ordained of God to bring the Lord's people into perfection, unto maturity as a perfect man, and unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ — manifested sonship. Now should someone reply that the scripture itself declares that God gave the five-fold ministry *for the perfecting of the saints*, and to bring us all unto a perfect man and to full stature in Christ, I must respond kindly but firmly that the scripture says no such thing. A faulty translation and faulty punctuation has spawned that erroneous and absurd notion. But that is exactly what all the *self-appointed apostles* want you to believe so that they can bring you under their dominion. We are living in an hour of *great deception*, and the land is full of self-proclaimed apostles and prophets who will tell you that only *their ministry*, or *their revelation*, or *their church*, or *their movement* can bring you to perfection, immortality, and sonship.

You see, my beloved, there is no punctuation in the original; the punctuation is supplied by the translators as part and parcel of their translation. There should be no comma between the phrase, "for the perfecting of the saints," and the phrase that follows, "for the work of the ministry." The perfecting of the saints and the work of the ministry are not two separate functions of the five fold ministry. It should read, "And He gave some apostles...prophets...evangelists... pastors...teachers, **for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry...**" A number of translations have corrected this error and given the accurate sense of the Greek. I will quote just a few. "And He gave some...for the equipping of the saints for ministering work" (Wuest). "And the same one gives these...toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing" (Concordant Literal). "And He gave some...with a view to the fitting of the saints for the work of ministering" (Rotherham).

It should be a self-evident truth that no man can bring another man into something that he does not himself possess. You cannot give what you don't have, neither can you bring anyone into a place you have not entered. The five-fold ministry cannot bring God's elect saints into something they have not themselves experienced. It is impossible for the five-fold ministry to *perfect* the saints *unless the five-fold ministry itself IS PERFECT*. It would be an effort in futility for any ministry to try and make me a PERFECT MAN IN CHRIST except that ministry should have already **attained perfection**. How could any apostle or prophet bring saints unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ except that apostle or prophet has already reached that position of absolute fullness in Christ? I cannot lead men to Christ if I have not myself experienced Christ. Preachers who have not been filled with the Holy Spirit do not go around laying hands on people, imparting the gift of the Holy Ghost. A teacher cannot successfully teach science or mathematics unless he is proficient in those subjects. ONE CANNOT MINISTER OR IMPART WHAT HE DOES NOT POSSESS. If an apostle or prophet is to bring you into immortality, he must first become immortal himself. No sick, aging, or corruptible servant of God can minister incorruptible life to your body. If a ministry can bring you into fullness, that ministry must first be filled with fullness. Can we not see by this that **only one who is perfect can bring men to perfection, and only a manifested son of God is able to bring men into sonship**. Thank God, there is ONE! "**But we see Jesus...crowned with glory and honour...for it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings"** (Heb. 2:9-10). That is why Jesus is called our great forerunner — He has entered in before — therefore HE is able to draw us in!

The five-fold ministry are indeed ministers to the body of Christ for the blessing and edification of the body. But notice the limitation of the perfection they minister. "And He gave some...for the perfecting of the saints FOR

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY." These gift-ministries are placed in the body of Christ to perfect the saints. The five-fold ministry is just that — MINISTRIES! Any ministry can take people only as far as that **in the area of ministry**. ministry has gone, reproducing itself. The disciple is never *above* his master — it is enough that he be *as* his master. Therefore ministry can only perfect you in ministry. They can bring you into what they themselves possess and which they are able to impart. You can become *as* that ministry in the experience of Christ. All the knowledge, wisdom, anointing, power and ability of that ministry can be reproduced in you. But they cannot bring you to *full Christ perfection and stature* because they are not themselves perfect or fully mature as sons of God. They cannot bring you to manifested sonship because they are *not manifested sons*.

The five-fold ministry continues "TILL we all come **IN THE UNITY OF THE FAITH AND OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SON OF GOD UNTO** a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." There are three key words in this passage: TILL, IN, and UNTO. The five-fold ministry is only valid TILL. Then it is *IN the unity of the faith of the Son of God and the knowledge or knowing of the Son of God* that we arrive at the measure of the Christ's full stature. The "till" is the dividing point. All before the "till" is what the five-fold ministry can do for us. It can edify us and equip us for the work of ministering in the present "in part" realm of church experience. *That is all*. Everything after the "till" is what the *unification of His faith and knowledge* within ourselves can do for us! Since HE is the only one thus far to enter into the perfection and maturity of sonship, it becomes obvious that only by HIS FAITH, and only by KNOWING HIM in intimacy of fellowship and vital union, are we enabled to enter in! J. B. Phillips, in his translation, has beautifully and accurately expressed the truth of these words: "His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service, that the whole body might be built up UNTIL THE TIME COMES, when in the unity of common faith and common knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity — the measure of development which is meant by 'the fullness of Christ.'"

The Kingdom is established by the power of the Spirit and it is ruled by the ministration of the Spirit — not by men in hierarchical positions of authority. Do I mean by this that I am opposed to brethren meeting together as the church or the body of Christ, with elders, pastors, teachers, prophets, apostles, evangelists, and the various gifts and ministries the Spirit would bring forth among them? Not at all! Let me be understood very clearly. It is not a question of whether brethren come together as a local expression of the Lord's body to encourage, strengthen, bless and edify one another — it is altogether a matter of the *spirit* in which they assemble, and the *attitude, agenda and role* of those who minister. God is not the author of organizational structures, man-made dominions, or hierarchical lordships over His people. But He *is* in the midst of His people, and He *does* move among His people, and He *does* flow through spiritual ministry to the members of His body. If I didn't believe that I would put away my pen, for whether I *write* the counsel of God via articles and personal correspondence to a vast, scattered "invisible congregation" of God's elect, or whether we meet together and I *speak* the word of God to a local "visible congregation" of saints — THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE! The idea that a local congregation with physical and visible ministry is Babylon, whereas a scattered congregation with ministry via the Post Office and telephone is *not* Babylon, is ludicrous. Either way I would be the "ministry" and those who receive would be the "congregation." It is not a question of *whether*, but a matter of *how*.

The Spirit flows through men in a fluid way, ministering as Christ ministered, touching lives, healing, delivering, teaching, instructing, encouraging, counseling, correcting, rebuking, and any other needed service — all as a ministry of the spirit and life, as a gift to men, not out of title, delegated authority, organizational design, or hierarchical position. The Kingdom is thus an **unstructured kingdom**, for it is the **kingdom of the Spirit** — who is like the wind — you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from whence it comes or whither it goes. The Kingdom is the rule of God in our hearts, activities, and relationships. The Spirit teaches us Kingdom ways and manifests through us in Kingdom grace, mercy, wisdom, glory and power.

When I say that the Kingdom of God is **unstructured** I do not mean that it is without parts, form or order. There are two kinds of structure in the world — that imposed from without, and that unfolded from within. Let me illustrate. There are only two ways of building anything. It must be built either by external manipulation — by the works of men's hands — or it must be a product of life. For instance, a chair, an automobile, or a house is the work of men's hands. All of its design, symmetry and structure is achieved by a power outside of itself. On the other hand, a bird, a beast, a flower, a tree or a man is fashioned by an internal power apart from any

external manipulation at all. It is not necessary to create some kind of "form" to slip over the tiny shoot or the microscopic embryo in order to fashion it, as it grows and develops, into the shape of an oak or a human. Its nature, characteristics, function and structure are all the product of an *indwelling life*. And therein lies the difference! Everything in the whole world that is fashioned by outward work or power is **dead** — no inherent life at all. Automobiles have no life, furniture has no life, clothing and buildings have no life. They do have structure, but not life. Plants, animals and humans, however, have form and order by life and out of life. Education, technology, planning, design, skill, manufacturing and organization play absolutely no role in what they are. They are what the life in them is, and form by the life continually ministered to them by nutrition. They are created by life, develop by life, and function by life. They are unstructured so far as the operation of man is concerned.

The Kingdom of God is an unstructured Kingdom because it cannot be "built," "assembled," "formed," or "produced" by the wisdom or ability of man nor by any external exercise, handicraft, workmanship, management, control, administration or governance. The Kingdom is only by life and out of life. Though the word of the Kingdom be spoken and imparted into your life by man, just as the seed is planted in the earth by man, the germination, growth, development and result is all the work of life. Both the foundation and superstructure of the Kingdom are the result of the reign of God within our hearts. The Kingdom is not, nor will it ever be, a political institution or outward organization controlled and dominated by a president, prime minister, senate, parliament, mayor, council, police force, army, pastor, apostle, bishop, or organizational headquarters. The dominion that God uses in His theocracy is something altogether different. The Kingdom is God's authority **by the Spirit** versus Babylon's authority **by system and hierarchy**. The Kingdom is God's government by the flow of His life vs. the governments of the world by law and force. When men speak, act, and minister out of the anointing they express and manifest the wisdom, power and glory of the Kingdom of God. That is not structure — that is LIFE!

If you were Jesus and realized that you were going to leave the earth and return into the heavens, surely you would have made arrangements with those who were going to carry on your work and establish your church. It would seem to us, naturally and religiously speaking, that after His resurrection, when the Lord Jesus planned a special meeting with His chosen apostles on a mountain in Galilee, that meeting would have been a very long meeting filled with much teaching and many detailed instructions. We know that He was shortly to ascend into heaven, and how logical it would be for Him to seize this opportunity to pass on many counsels, directions, recommendations, directives, guidelines, and regulations for His disciples to follow after His departure. Surely He would dictate to them the creeds, doctrinal statements, liturgies, how to organize local churches, methods for ordaining elders and selecting deacons, with specifics about church finance, church programs, delegated authority and the chain of command in the assemblies.

One would think the Lord would need to schedule a three week work-shop with His disciples. But to our amazement, instead of a three week work-shop, He appears but briefly and delivers an 88 word memo! "**And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**" (Lk. 24:49; Mat. 28:18-20).

That was the first conference after the resurrection of Christ, and the only one that related to the future church agenda! The Lord Jesus was so simple. He wasn't concerned about external things and outward structure — He was only concerned that they be filled with **the power of the Holy Spirit!** There was no need for Him to tell them so many things, or to give them a book on theology, a minister's manual, or a church discipline. There was only the need for them to possess the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit and to be led by the Spirit. The Spirit Himself would guide and teach them day by day as to where to go, what to do, and how to do it. They would not need to write a book about it to guide those who would come after them, but all God's ministers, throughout all generations, would need the very same credentials and qualifications — the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and to be led by the Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

And the Lord would probably never do the same thing in the same way twice, for God is a God of infinite variety and diversity. One of our difficulties in doing the work of the Lord is that we think only in terms of established patterns. We want to know how God *has done it*, so that we can follow the pattern. We think that when God does something by His Spirit once or twice that He is revealing a system for us to embrace and use. But it is impossible to limit God to a fixed pattern, to any method He has used in the past, or anything He has done before. Sometimes saints get the notion that if they fast for forty days — because Elijah and Jesus fasted forty days — they will receive the ministry of a prophet or become a manifested son of God. But copying patterns is wrong. Just because God blessed someone when they did a certain thing a certain way doesn't mean that is His purpose or requirement in our life. God doesn't usually do the same thing twice, in the same way, in our own experience! Just as soon as we think we have found the "groove" or discovered the "method" or laid hold upon "the way it works," we discover that this is not His groove, but *our rut*. Unless we are ready to follow the Lord along the new and strange paths of HIS PURPOSES, discovering that His ways are inexhaustible, we might become buried in this rut. As wind, those who are born of the Spirit cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth (Jn. 3:8). Ever try figuring out the wind? Where did it start, where is it going? Can I detect some sort of pattern so that the next time I can predict its movements? There are *no* precise patterns for those who are born of God! There are no precedents for the on-going ministry of the Spirit of God!

Our God is *spontaneously* creative; He is not *systematically* creative. What I mean is that God does not employ a program in His purpose; God is a God of spontaneity. God moves not by system, method, or organization, but by the creative power of His life. God is speaking in this hour by His life. His words are words of life. God is quickening, energizing and transforming by supernatural life. The life of God is the creative instrument of His nature. God is infinite in all of His thoughts, abilities, actions and ways. God in creation is ingenious beyond comprehension. Everything God creates is unique. God is a God of unlimited diversity, of infinite variety, of inexhaustible capacity, and we behold the blessed wonder of this fact displayed gloriously in creation.

There are billions of trillions of stars in the heavens and no two stars are equal in their glory. With my finite human brain I can't even comprehend the understanding, wisdom, knowledge and power that is able to create a billion trillion stars and make each one of them unique, giving each an unduplicated glory and *naming them!* Oh! the wonder of it. How many snowflakes do you suppose have fallen upon the vast plains and towering mountains of earth through the measureless ages of time? And yet they tell us that no two snowflakes are alike! What kind of a mind is the architect of this marvel of nature? There are more than six billion people walking the face of this globe today, and no two fingerprints match — no two people are identical. God has established it all by His creative word of life. When God speaks the superlative comes into existence. And the varieties are as infinite as His divine mind.

The Lord builds His church and establishes His Kingdom, not in a human way, but in a divine way; not in an organized way, but by His life-giving, transforming Spirit. There is no so-called "divine order" pattern or system for God's church — what He does in one place or at one time will be totally different from what He does in another place or at another time — if it is by His Spirit! The way He deals with you may not be the same as the way He deals with me. What He requires of me in specific acts of obedience may not be the same thing that He requires of you. The way the Spirit moves and directs His people to worship, minister, and the structure He brings forth in their midst, will not be carbon copies of what He did in Jerusalem, Ephesus, Colosse, Corinth, or in the body of Christ today in the next city, state or nation.

Jesus never made any arrangements or left any schedule. He left a bunch of men in charge who only weeks before had abandoned Him, who cursed and swore that they didn't even know Him, and who fled in terror into hiding. What a faithless, unpredictable, undependable group! From our natural viewpoint, what He did was a mess. Everything occurred as a kind of accident. Jesus did everything without any revealed plan or any appointments or any pre-arrangements or apparent method. When He wanted to speak to His disciples after His resurrection He just came. He came in a way that was absolutely different from the religious systems of today.

Even during His three and a half years of sonship ministry He never called a formal meeting — there never was *one*. Never did He announce that He would be preaching and ministering to the sick on a certain day, at a particular place and time. He held no organized crusades. He did no advertising, nor mailed out any

announcements. He rented no halls, stadiums, auditoriums, and pitched no revival tent. His meetings had no announced time of beginning or ending. He hired no campaign manager and appointed no song or worship leader. Peter didn't open the meeting with prayer, James didn't lead the worship, John didn't make the announcements or take the offering. Think of it — no prayer, no singing, no worship service, no Bible reading, no stirring of the emotions, no form of preliminaries, no order of meeting, no *hype* of any kind! There were absolutely NONE of the activities or structure without which modern-day traditional evangelistic, revival, crusade and church meetings *could not function*. There was certainly *nothing religious*. Only His preaching and teaching as one having authority, and the spontaneous manifestation of the power of God — that was all Jesus used — that was *positively all!*

Sixty seconds is all it takes. When sponsors of a television program want to entice viewers to tune in next week, a one-minute preview of the most exciting scenes is all it takes. If you like what you see in that brief encounter, you will surely love the complete version — or so they hope. In a similar way, the Lord Jesus provided His disciples and the nation of Israel with a brief yet powerful portrayal of the realm of sonship. The only ministry of **manifested sonship** the world has ever seen is the ministry of Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God. As we consider and meditate upon His sonship ministry I believe the Lord is revealing something to us which is absolutely different from today's Christianity. The ministry of the sons of God must be absolutely outside of religion. With religion, there is always a schedule, an organization, a system, an arrangement. But with sonship there is none. There is only one thing — the appearing of CHRIST in the sons.

Jesus raised Lazarus at the cemetery and Tabitha in her home. Blind Bartimaeus was healed on the street and Zacchaeus was saved in a tree. A cripple was healed in the synagogue and another at the pool of Bethesda. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding, and fed the multitude in a desert place. The sea was calmed from a boat and the centurion's servant was healed by a word. Jesus erected no platform, issued no "healing cards," and the sick were not formed into a "healing line." There was no production, no show, no theatrics; simply a continual flow of compassion and power that worked wherever He was. Will the *many brethren* minister any differently? The Spirit of the Lord has been speaking to my heart. He is urging me to seek that ministry that is *not religious*. He is planting deep within the hearts of His elect the desire for that spontaneous ministry of Christ that will work at all places, at all times, and in every situation and circumstance. In the open air or under a roof, indoors or outdoors, in the homes, on the streets, in the business establishments, in the churches, at the seashore, on a train or airplane — HE is always there, unrehearsed, unprogrammed, unannounced — *spontaneously* appearing in glory and power.

That is how Jesus ministered, and He is the pattern, the prototype of the life of sonship and the realm of the Kingdom. Jesus ministered wherever He was, day or night, here or there, with one person, two, ten, a thousand, five thousand — it mattered not. He preached by the sea and in the fields; He ministered on the streets, in the homes, in the desert, in the temple, in the synagogues, in the mountain, by a well. This is not the order of the modern-day church systems, but this is how the Kingdom of God will be established on earth. The sons of God will not function within the framework of our old kind of Christian "service." We must confess that is pure man-made tradition. We didn't learn it from Jesus! It is easy to get out of religion, to *come out* of Babylon — but *far more difficult* to get the religion out of us! We are called to be the sons of God, led by the Spirit; to speak the words of God and do the works of the Father spontaneously at all times and in every place, not doing anything religious, not doing anything of tradition, organization, forms, rituals, ceremonies, showmanship, or churchiness. The sons of God are the display of the infinitely creative, omnipotent power of HIS LIFE.

Recently a brother shared with me a little article he wrote in which he gave the following example. A gentleman was on a plane that was in serious trouble. Someone on board the plane suggested that all the passengers on board the plane bow their heads in prayer. One man didn't. Others asked why. He said, "I don't believe in prayer." They said, "Well, do *something religious!*" **So he took up a collection.** The firstborn Son of God opposed religion and all that went with it. He broke the Sabbath, He companied with harlots and ate with sinners, and He sat at meat with unwashed hands. He acted so clearly "un-religious" before His disciples, showing them by example His attitude toward religion. They all saw it. By example He taught them the ways of the UNSTRUCTURED KINGDOM. And when, after the day of Pentecost, the apostles went out into all the

world preaching the name of Jesus and the Kingdom of God to every creature, they did it exactly the same way!

The twelve apostles and Paul and the other apostles all preached and did mighty signs and wonders among the people. This they did on the streets, in the temple, in the synagogues, by the rivers, in the deserts and fields, in the homes and places of business, in the shadow of pagan temples, on ships and in chariots — but **never** in an organized "crusade." Read the book of Acts and you will see. They rented no halls, established no system, made no program, announced no schedule, built no platform. They required no hour of "worship" to create an "atmosphere" for God to move! God was in them equally at all times and in every place to spontaneously reveal the power of Christ. They didn't have to preach for two hours in order to get spiritually "primed" so their "gift" would work! Their ministries were not traditional "Christian" ministries, they did not do things the way they are done today, but they had the goods even in this in-part realm and they *turned the world up-side-down!*

While I was still writing this message brother Bob Torango's paper arrived in the mail. He has written some words so poignant and powerful that I am compelled to share them here. He speaks of the manifestation of the sons of God in terms of the "New Millennium Ministry," and says, "A millennial mind-set is one that does not allow the world to dictate death and destruction to it, but the world must line up to the order of this Millennial Ministry. Their order dictates the blessing of God in the earth and they are the representatives of an everlasting kingdom that will never pass away. They are the shining lights of God's presence and are His express will in the earth. They are not preachers, teachers, bishops, prophets or any other labeled office of ministry, but they are a new order, a company that is totally re-programmed from the six-day mind-set. They do not rely on the intellect of learned knowledge, but they operate out of a millennial mind-set of newness. They do not feel compelled to line up with the church system and know that the armor of Saul will never fit them in the upcoming battle with Goliath.

"God has a ministry to minister to this Millennium! We are being initiated into it even now and our heart-mind is teaching us the order of it. One thing is certain. This New Millennial Ministry will not rely upon the smoke and mirror methods of the passing church age to meet the challenges of this Day. Kiss your Sunday morning religion good bye. You can also kiss your dead, structured, lifeless, Bible thumping, pulpit pounding, money pulling, program driven, people pleasing ministry good bye. While you are at it, why don't you kiss your philosophical, theological, pseudo-psychological, metaphysical, intellectual, holistical, rational, logical, apocalyptic, twice dead, plucked up from the roots, doctrinal dogmas good-bye, also. None of these things will do anything for you or anyone else if the collapse (of the world system and economy) comes.

"The only thing we can rely on, the only thing that will save us is the Spirit of the living God. Anything else that we have used in the past to try to describe that Life...will be utterly useless to us. Only the real McCoy, the 100%, concentrated, undiluted, unmanufactured, true blue, pure, undefiled, unpolluted Life of God will help us in that case. All temporary, maintenance type of ministries will not be Millennial ready. The five offices of the church, namely the Apostle, Pastor, Prophet, Teacher, and Evangelist are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, UNTIL we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The offices of the church are a *maintenance ministry*, necessary and needful to KEEP THE CHURCH MAINTAINING, but in view of the arrival of this new millennium, they are not Millennial ready! I say that there is coming forth out of our midst a New Millennium Ministry that will not be molded out of the old mold of the church maintenance system, but will start a new lineage of priestly and kingly ministry" — end quote.

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

The fame of Jesus' miracles and teachings increased until vast multitudes followed Him. He began to teach in the open air. Once He taught the people from the bow of a boat, while the multitude stood on the shore. At another time He spoke on a grassy knoll. But on one wonderful occasion He climbed into a high place in the mountain and sat, undoubtedly on the ledge of a rock, and delivered His wonderful words of wisdom. It was a plain, simple address. It was but a few direct words. There were no oratorical flights of eloquence. There were no stately rhetorical periods. There was no emotional appeal, no animated theatrics, no soulful stirring of the

crowd to respond with "Amen's," "Hallelujah's," or "Praise the Lord!" But in its simplicity and unpretentiousness it was one of the mightiest and most momentous proclamations of history. It was potent because it came with divine authority. It was a message from God. It was delivered by His chosen messenger. A great company of people sat listening, silently, hushed by the power of the message which they heard. Today it is called "The Sermon on the Mount."

The crowd assembled before Jesus resembled the multitude of Israel that stood, fifteen centuries before, at the foot of Mount Sinai and heard the voice of God and received His law. Men of different opinions, persuasions and backgrounds were there. But they all had one thing in common — the earnest desire that the Messiah should come and cleanse Jerusalem and the land of Israel of the Roman legions and the Roman standards that were perched atop every tower, and redeem the people of God from the degrading yoke of Roman bondage and servitude. They were ready to take up arms in the holy cause of patriotism and religion. They waited only for the signal that the hour had come, and they would march at His command up to the city of David as Israel had marched at Joshua's command to drive out the nations that polluted the land in the long ago. They supposed that he would stand highest in the new Kingdom whose sword had drunk most freely of the blood of the slain. God would restore the Kingdom to Israel, and the law of the Lord would again rule over His people.

What must have been their astonishment when the first sentence fell from His lips, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the Kingdom of Heaven! The Kingdom of God for which you so earnestly yearn is not an empire of war and conquest, nor is it the military power of Israel, to be exercised over foreign nations. It belongs to the humble, the quiet, the peaceful, the contented. You expect a Messiah to vindicate the weak against the strong, to revenge injury, to repay insult; that He will set up His Empire with the sword and defend it by the sword. But I say unto you, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. The gentle, the kind, the gracious, the merciful, the caring, the loving, the compassionate, the peacemakers, the forgiving, the pure in heart are those who are to flourish in the days of the Messiah. They shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The blessings and benefits of my Kingdom belong only to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. They shall be filled with the quality of righteousness manifested by those who experience God's *kingly power* in their lives. Those who become citizens of my Kingdom, those in whom God reigns by His Spirit, receive a new righteousness, the righteousness not of an outward law, but of an inward life. It is a righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, for it is the righteousness of God who reigns within."

The Lord began His sermon on the mount by describing the citizens of God's Kingdom. The men seated immediately around Him had seen things that no man before them had ever seen. Their ears had caught the sweet sounds of a message so transcendently glorious that even the soldiers exclaimed, "No man ever spake like this man!" And now their ears heard with joy His manifold blessings pronounced upon those who had the spirit of the Kingdom of God in their hearts. Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled; blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God; blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Never could man devise such a Kingdom as this! This is how the citizens of the Kingdom live, this is how the citizens *and* rulers in the Kingdom of God *are*. All other kingdoms since the dawn of earth's history have been governed by man's stupidity, fashioned as they were by the weakness and futility of the carnal mind, and crumbling in decay and disarray after a few fleeting years because of the deep corruption of the human heart. Jesus told His audience of a Kingdom that would be the direct antithesis of all former kingdoms, a Kingdom in which the mind of God and the righteousness of God and the love of God would both be shed abroad and rule in every human heart. The Sermon on the Mount is the **Constitution of the Kingdom of God**. It is the Constitution setting forth the laws and principles by which the holy nation, the Kingdom of God, is governed. Old Testament Israel had a Constitution — the Law of Moses. Jesus introduced a NEW CONSTITUTION for the NEW KINGDOM. He said, "It was said by them of old time (Moses, specifically)...but **I say unto you!**" And although we refer to the Sermon on the Mount as the CONSTITUTION or LAWS of the Kingdom, I have

chosen to title this article THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, for these are the wonderful *principles* by which all life in the Kingdom functions, manifests, and ministers.

"Upon the mountain Jesus sat; the hillside by the beach  
Grass-carpeted cathedral where He could speak, and teach  
Those flaming, burning words of truth that priest and demagogue  
Would never tolerate at all in church or synagogue.

His own cathedral He had built; had built it by His word,  
And 'neath its vaulted panoply the glory of the Lord  
Would pale the light of noonday sun; for what He said that day  
Would blaze and shine eternally, when worlds had burned away.

Back to their tasks the crowd had gone, and He was left alone  
Save for a little company that He could call His own.  
What use was there for restless crowds — the worldly, giddy throng  
Might listen to the music, but never hear the song.

*Blessed are ye*, the tones rang out, repeated o'er and o'er!  
Galilee pressed with watery hands the keyboard of the shore;  
And from her heaving bosom rose the music of her waves,  
For heaven was calling earth to tell that only Jesus saves.

For can the sermon on the mount be lived by human life?  
Can sinful man ascend so high above his sin and strife?  
Is there the possibility that he can strive and strain  
Through a thousand consecrations that life to attain?

Forgive us, Lord, if such we think, for this is not the way.  
Oh, give us ears to really hear what Thou didst say that day!  
We want life. Oh, vision blessed, from us, Lord, never part,  
For we can only live it when Thou livest in our heart."

Charles S. Price.

At that time only Jesus knew how to love His enemies; only Jesus knew how to pray for those who would spitefully use Him. No one but Jesus knew how to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and have all else added unto him. Only Jesus knew how to bring Himself to complete subjection to the Father that He might stand in God's place on earth. Jesus taught the people a higher realm of life, a dimension of life that is completely above any natural realm. IT IS NOT NATURAL TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES. Such is *supernatural*. It is not natural to pray for those who spitefully use us. It is supernatural to do that. It is not natural to seek first the Kingdom of God. It is supernatural to do that. It is natural to see material things first and the things of God afterward. It is natural to worry about tomorrow and what it will bring. It is supernatural to live in a world where worry and fear are unnecessary by the faith of Jesus Christ. **This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!**

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 29 THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

## PART TWENTY-NINE

### A MESSAGE TO THE SONS OF GOD

Every nation on earth has a Constitution. The Constitution of a country is its supreme law. The Constitution is the basis of the national government. The Constitution establishes the branches of government with their respective powers, as well as the rights and privileges of the citizens. In the United States, for example, no decree of the President, no act of Congress, and no law of any state, county or city can conflict with the mandate of the Constitution. The primary function of the Supreme Court is to rule whether a law or act of any institution or individual is "Constitutional," that is, conforms to, and is permitted by, the Constitution. Any law, regulation, or activity ruled *unconstitutional* is then unenforceable and forbidden.

If we admit that the Kingdom of God *is a kingdom* indeed, then it must be acknowledged that it has a Constitution and laws by which its government functions. And though we refer to these as laws, I have chosen to title this message "The **Principles** of the Kingdom of God." It is not difficult to fathom what kind of principles an infinite, all-wise, all-powerful, all-righteous and all-loving Ruler would adopt. Necessarily they must be in keeping with the *nature* and *character* and *purposes* of that Ruler. They must work in the same manner within the citizens of the Kingdom of God as they do in its Ruler — by the Spirit — for God IS SPIRIT. His righteousness is the spirit of righteousness. His wisdom is the spirit of wisdom. His peace is the spirit of peace. His joy is in the Holy Ghost. His might is the spirit of might. That the principles of the Kingdom are by the Spirit and therefore *spiritual*, does not for a moment mean that they are not *real!* Spirit is *real!* Peace is *real!* Righteousness is *real!* Joy is *real!* Power is *real!* These things are not tangible or material, but they are very, very real.

There is an old saying that things are not what they seem; that is to say our faculties are not infallible. The testimony they give is not always dependable on its face value. The world is packed full of illusion. The earth looks as if it were flat but we know it is not. The sun looks as though it rises and sets, but we know it does not. We say that seeing is believing, but when we say that we forget the curious tricks our senses play. Scientists speak of the phenomena of nature, but phenomena is a Greek word and simply means appearance. The appearance of things is not the reality; the reality is infinitely more wonderful than the appearance. To the eye the firmament is studded with fixed points of light but to the soul these points are celestial worlds sweeping by at a breathless velocity. I have met men who say there is no God, simply because they have never seen Him.

But then, my friend, have you ever seen any of the really great things about you? Have you ever seen any of the cosmic forces? Have you ever seen a single motive that impels you? Have you ever seen love or hate or joy or peace or patience? Have you ever seen music? A visible God would not be our God. A visible God would have limitations. God, to be God, must be invisible. No man can see thought but thought can be clothed in speech. No man can see truth but truth can be communicated. The seeming is not the real. The real is the intangible, the eternal, the spiritual. When I say that the Constitution or laws of the Kingdom of Heaven are spiritual, it simply means that they operate in the realm of the spiritual, not as external laws of force or control, but as the inward *law of life*.

The Sermon on the Mount is the Constitution of the Kingdom of God. It is the Constitution setting forth the laws and principles by which the holy nation, the Kingdom of God, is governed. The Beatitudes — "**ble**ssed are...**ble**ssed are they...**ble**ssed are they that..." — these are the preamble to the Constitution. The key to all of this, as the key thought, is a change of nature, HIS LIFE being worked out in and through us. Consider just a portion: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself" (Mat. 6:25-34).

Jesus repeated again and again, "Take no thought, be not anxious," meaning "Don't worry, don't fret yourself," or as one brother put it, "Save your nerves for an emergency!" Jesus was teaching us that life in the Kingdom is free from worrying, that life in the Kingdom is free from anxiety, that life in the Kingdom is free from fretting. You have such a relationship with the King, you are so very close to Him, so very one with Him, and you are convinced of His ability to rule your life and to rule the nations, that there is no concern in you at all. These are spiritual principles — the principles of the Kingdom of God!

There are, therefore, *spiritual principles* that govern the Kingdom of God. There is a difference between a *principle* and a *law*, though the two are closely related in the same way money and possessions are related. Money is the cause, source, ability and power, and possessions is the effect and result of having money. God by His Spirit deals with principles. The whole universe runs by principles, although often these principles are called laws. Those of you who read these lines who have children have sometimes said to them, "Do this," or, "Don't do that." The question then follows, "Why?" "Because I said so! You do what I tell you and that's that — or *else!*" When we say it that way we have laid down a law. But if we counsel them in wisdom to do such and such, or not to do the other thing, and then they ask, "Why?" we can explain to them the *principle* behind our advice. There are things children want to do that will hurt them, disappoint them, end in failure or break their hearts. We know this both by observation and experience, we understand the principle by which such actions work. On the other hand, we know that if the child does thus and thus it will benefit him, it will work for him and bring joy and satisfaction. That is what I mean by a *principle*. It is *the reason behind the law*.

God is a God of principles. The law given to Israel was the external commandment. The principle behind that law is the revelation of *why* men were given the law. The law of God is given to reveal the nature of God Himself. For instance, when God says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," He is not merely trying to prevent us from enjoying our flesh. He is telling us something about Himself — how He is. The only eternal, unchangeable, immutable, invariable, unalterable, firm, fixed, sound, solid, balanced, dependable, reliable, steady, steadfast, and trustworthy thing in the whole universe is — GOD! "Thou shalt not commit adultery" — it means that GOD HIMSELF is committed, reliable, true, dependable, faithful and trustworthy. He keeps His commitments. He keeps His covenant. He honors His word. He is faithful to all His promises. He will not cheat on you, lie to you, deceive you, forsake you or fail you. He loves you and will take care of you, cherish you, nurture you, protect you and cleave to you. THAT IS HOW HE IS! When you understand the nature of one who is not adulterous in thought, desire or action; who has no roving eye or lying, cheating heart, you understand something about the character of God. And that is how He wants us, His sons, to be! These are the very principles Jesus enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount. **"It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mat. 5:27-28).**

When God's law is written in our heart, His nature — *how He is* — is inscribed upon the tablets (genetic code) of our inner life. There would never be a broken home, a heartbroken wife or husband, or deserted and destitute children if the nature of God was written in all men's hearts. There would be no bigotry, no hatred, no crime, no war, no evil or trouble anywhere on earth if the nature of God was written in the heart of every man, woman and child, giving them a heart in the likeness of His own and a mind as the mind of Christ. From the redeemed and transformed heart the law (nature) of God flows forth as a river of life. The law of life within us is the principle of the external law. The Sermon on the Mount enunciates the underlying *principles* of the Kingdom of God.

Under principles we are free — we can do what we want. Nobody is telling us that we can't do this or that, or we must do the other. There are still those among us who thunder the letter of the law from Sinai's mount and

would impose the penalties for breaking it, but I do not hesitate to tell you that Moses' law has no authority or power in the Kingdom of Christ. In the Kingdom the Spirit of God reveals in our hearts the way it works — what will happen if we do this or don't do that. Paul said it this way, "All things are legitimate — permissible, and we are free to do anything we please; but not all things are helpful, expedient, profitable and wholesome. All things are legitimate, but not all things are constructive to character and edifying to spiritual life" (I Cor. 10:23, Amplified). There is the difference between the law of Moses and the Sermon on the Mount. The Law of Moses said, "Thou *shalt*...thou *shalt not*!" and imposed a penalty if broken. But the principles of the Kingdom say, "Blessed are they *that*..."

Therefore it is in the Sermon on the Mount that we find the complete statement of the Charter or Constitution of the Kingdom of God, answering to the law of Moses, the Constitution of the nation of Israel, given at mount Sinai. Both were delivered from a mount to God's people by the very voice and authority of the Lord Himself! The contrast between the two mountains and between the circumstances of these two givings of a Constitution to a people on earth, is wonderfully expressive. At the first were awesome sights and sounds; the mountain burning with fire and quaking at the presence of God, the blasting of the trumpet long and loud, and above all that terrifying *voice of words* which caused the people to shrink back in fright and to beg that the word not be spoken to them any more; and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Ah, at the second mountain the same divine Lawgiver, now in lowly human guise, sits quietly down, and the people gather willingly at His feet to drink in His words. With tenderness and compassion He then opens His mouth and taught them, saying, "**Blessed are they that...**"

Jesus assumed an authority above that of Moses. The character of His teaching stood in sharp contrast to the teaching of the priests and rabbis which relied upon the authority of earlier rabbis. Nor did His teaching follow the style of the prophets who said, "Thus saith the Lord!" The prophets, including Moses, spoke *on behalf* of God. But Jesus' message was grounded in His own authority and is repeatedly introduced by the words, "I say unto you!" "It has been said by them of old time (Moses and the prophets)...but **I SAY UNTO YOU!**" Jesus did not speak *for* God, He spoke *as* God. Jesus was not speaking as a prophet, He spoke as the Lord Himself. And that is the order of *sonship*. Sons are not mere messengers for God, sent by God — sons are themselves, within themselves, the Voice of God, the righteousness of God, the wisdom of God, the authority of God and the power of God. As we move out of the old order of the in-part church ministries into the reality of *manifested sonship* we will no longer use the gift of prophecy, which says, "Thus saith the Lord." God will speak to humanity out of us *as us* — "I SAY UNTO YOU!"

In the Kingdom we must be able to discern what is constructive to spiritual character in our lives and the will of God in the earth. That is the way of sonship! It's not a matter of whether it's good or bad, right or wrong, but is it constructive to the life of God being raised up in men? Is it in conformity with the principles of His Kingdom? When we walk in the ways of the Kingdom we are BLESSED! If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. There is no avoiding that. But we are not under a law. We are blessed if we do the Father's will, and not blessed if we don't. "Blessed are they *that*..." It's that simple. Only those who *understand* and *live* within these Kingdom principles shall be qualified to rule and reign in the Kingdom of God! If the principles are fulfilled in your life you reap great glory and heavenly wealth; if they are not, you forfeit the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom. In the Sermon on the Mount there are twenty-one principles of the Kingdom. If by the Spirit of God within you, you live by and in these principles it will set you free. These principles are progressive, for they are the blueprint for spiritual growth, development, and attainment.

## A MESSAGE TO THE SONS OF GOD

The underlying thrust of the Sermon on the Mount is revealed by the word "Father" which pervades it. That word, along with the word "sons", beyond anything else, is its prominent feature. It is here that the name "Father" is first revealed in the word of God. And it is here that the principle of "sonship" is first established. The Sermon on the Mount sets forth the lifestyle, not of Israelites under the law, nor yet of subjects of the Kingdom of God in some future age. It is not a message to babes in Christ in the church systems teaching them how to be good little children of God. It is the very essence of the Kingdom of God instructing SONS OF GOD how to *be* the sons of their Father, in what nature and character to live and reign in the Kingdom. Throughout the teaching Jesus speaks of "the Father," "thy Father," "your Father," and "our Father," and "your Father in heaven." Then He teaches in what spirit one should act "that ye may be the sons (Greek: *huios*,

mature, adult son) of your Father which is in heaven." The characteristics of the son company will be exactly the characteristics of Jesus, the Pattern Son, and the Father who indwelt Him.

The Sermon on the Mount reveals the divine characteristics of the sons of the Kingdom. In fact, some of the principles specifically state that this divine kind of nature sets them apart as sons of God, and to have this kind of disposition means they are in the Kingdom of God. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: **that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust**" (Mat. 5:44-45). "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called **the sons of God**" (Mat. 5:9).

It is not true that the church is for the Gentiles, as some teach, and the Kingdom of God is for Israel. The most superficial knowledge of the scriptures shall confirm that both Israelites and Gentiles enter into the church and also into the Kingdom of God. It is not at all true, as has been taught by many theologians in the church systems, that the Kingdom laws — the principles of the Kingdom set forth in the Sermon on the Mount — were for the Jews of Jesus' day only; and now that grace has come we no longer are subject to the words of Jesus Christ our King. When we accept such flawed teaching we make the precepts of Jesus and of His apostles of none effect by our tradition.

The Sermon on the Mount is the most important word in all the scriptures given to the sons of God who are the sons of the Kingdom. It is the Manifesto of the King, it is the Constitution of the Kingdom. Today there are multitudes of believers who claim to be born again and children of God, but they live lives that contradict the principles of the Kingdom of God. The Sermon on the Mount is not about salvation or being a church member or a servant of the Lord; there is no mention in it of salvation, grace, or the church. It is about the LIFE OF SONSHIP. It teaches us who will be called "least" and who will be called "great" in the Kingdom of God. You don't need to fulfill *any* of these precepts in order to be *saved by grace* and be in *the Church*. Living out these principles are the *marks of sonship*. Let no one called to sonship despise the law of our King; rather let us consider prayerfully the depths of truth and revelation nestled in the heart of this great teaching. The principles of the Kingdom are committed to those sons of God who are called to rule in the Kingdom of God. As a matter of fact, the Manifesto of the King does not apply at all to the outside world or to the carnally-minded Christians who fill the pews of the churches. To attempt to establish these high and holy precepts among the vast unregenerate masses of the people or even among the millions of nominal church members would be an effort in futility. It is as impossible for those people to walk in the spirit of sonship as for a pig to fly. The things Jesus spoke to His chosen disciples on this occasion can only be fulfilled in the sons of the Kingdom. That sublime and heavenly Manifesto is the enunciation of the very nature of the Kingdom which no man can fulfill until He grows up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of THE KING. Only the *Lord's brethren*, who are *led by the Spirit*, and have been *conformed into His image*, CAN FULFILL IT!

The Sermon on the Mount is the picture of the Perfect Man. It is the portrait of one who has fully put on the mind of Christ, which is the mind of the Father. It embodies all the deepest yearnings of the heart of the man or woman who has been apprehended to live and walk and rule by the divine nature. The man that Jesus describes in that sermon is poor in spirit, humble and meek, always thirsting after righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, a peacemaker, suffering for righteousness' sake, yet rejoicing in it, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, devoid of anger in human relationships, using no contemptuous words, having the spirit of quick agreement when opinions clash, without lustful thinking, relentless against evil, happy in family relationships, truthful in speech and motive, ready to turn the other cheek, giving sacrificially, going the second mile, giving to those who ask, loving his enemies, blessing and praying for those who hate and persecute — being *perfect* as the Father in heaven *is perfect*. What a word! "It was said by them of old time...*but I say unto you...*" If anyone doubts the power and authority of this teaching of Jesus as the Constitution of the Kingdom, let him recall what the Lord Himself said at the conclusion of His teaching on the mount. "Therefore whosoever heareth these saying of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were *astonished at His doctrine*: for He taught them as one *having authority, and not as the scribes*" (Mat. 7:24-29).

The Holy Spirit also bears witness to the significance of the Lord's teaching. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2). The prophetic mysteries spoken by Moses himself give testimony to the blessed fact that our Elder Brother, the firstborn Son of God, brought a new and higher word than any word delivered to Israel by the great lawgiver at Sinai. "The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desirest of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly (before mount Sinai), saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them ALL that I shall command Him" (Deut. 18:15-18).

Christ was the prophet like unto Moses in that He spoke the words of God to a people whom God had set apart for Himself. When Jesus said, "It was said by them of old time," it is abundantly clear that He referred to the word and law of Moses. "It was said by them of old time, *Thou shalt not kill.*" "It was said by them of old time, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" "It hath been said, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorcement.*" "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, *Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.*" "Ye have heard that it hath been said, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.*" "Ye have heard that it hath been said, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.*" Can we not readily see from the above quotations how each and every one of these is right out of Moses' law, **including the ten commandments?**

Now listen to what Jesus says following each of the above: "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU!" "I SAY!" Ah, there is a word that is higher than Moses' word. There is a commandment that transcends, as the heavens are high above the earth, the commands of Moses. There is an authority that is greater than the authority of Moses. There is a law that supersedes and replaces the law of Moses. "But I say unto you" is indeed a very impressive claim of the King of the Kingdom. And His word always goes beyond Moses' word, and sometimes completely reverses Moses' law. See how radically and powerfully the Son of God repudiates the commandment of Moses: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 23:3-6). But I say unto you, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you...*" Moses gave an outward law to the people of Israel, but Jesus gives an inward law to the sons of God. The law of Moses, on the one hand, was the Constitution of the fleshly nation of Israel, inspired, spoken and delivered by the hand of Yahwey to the prophet Moses and the nation at mount Sinai. The Sermon on the Mount, on the other hand, is the Constitution of the Kingdom of God, inspired, spoken and delivered by the hand of the heavenly Father to Jesus Christ the Son of the living God and to all who are called, chosen and predestined to be *the sons of God*. Which Constitution you live under, and seek to bring mankind under, clearly and unmistakably reveals whether you are called under the Old Covenant to be a *human Israelite*, or whether you are called under the New Covenant to be a *divine son of God!*

The Sermon on the Mount was not spoken to the careless and promiscuous multitudes on the plain below. To enjoy the unspeakable privilege of hearing the laws of the new order of the Kingdom of God they must have the heart of a disciple, and must undergo the exertion of climbing the mountain into a high place in God. There it was that Jesus opened His mouth and taught them and there proceeded from His gracious lips those matchless words which God had promised through Moses. One would think that Jesus would have remained with the multitudes where there were such pressing and desperate needs, to minister to them in their sicknesses and sorrows. Who can deny that most preachers today, hearing the urgent cries of the people for help, would have reasoned with their carnal minds that the needs of the people should have priority. Oh, how need conscious we are! How *man-centered* our gospel is! But not Jesus! Hearing within Himself the voice of the Father, and seeing by the spirit His higher plan and wiser purpose, Jesus turned away from the demanding pleas of the multitudes and led His disciples up the mountain where, in a place of quietness and solitude, He taught them the ways of the Kingdom of Heaven. "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying..."

Father had a higher purpose in mind than just to minister to some needy people. If Jesus would have healed their sick and cast out devils and done signs and wonders all that day, all we would have of it would be the *record* of some wonderful works done in a far away place on a long ago day. God's plans and purposes go

beyond meeting physical and material needs. His concern is for the whole man — that men might be sound in mind, pure in heart, kind and merciful and loving in disposition, holy in character, joyful in spirit, powerful in life, helpful and redemptive in actions, honest and upright in motives, filled with righteousness, wisdom and power. God sees the overall plan, while we may see only the immediate problems. It is His plan to bring the blessings and benefits of His Kingdom to all the earth. The earth shall be filled with His glory and all nations shall come and worship before Him. The tabernacling of God in His sons shall be with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And all men shall be righteous for there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things shall pass away and all things shall be made new. It is only as we are *led by the Spirit* that we can be right on target and right on time in God's great Kingdom program of redemption and restoration. When Jesus taught the Kingdom principles to His disciples, He set forth a plan for His Kingdom that would raise up many more sons, just like the first Son. And when His vast family of sons was complete, matured and equipped, they would set the whole creation free from the curse of sin and death. That hour is now upon us for in our own generation, in the midst of the sound of a mighty wind from heaven, as God has again visited His people in great power and authority, **the mouth of the Lord has spoken it!**

The scriptures record for our instruction the two great and wonderful occasions in the history of the world when men heard the voice of God Himself giving them the divine Constitution for their age. What a marvelous contrast there is between those two occasions! At mount Sinai there were terrifying sights and sounds. The mountain was aflame because the Lord, the consuming fire, descended in glory upon it and the smoke of His presence hung like a thick fog over the craggy peak and the desert floor beneath; the whole mount quaked violently. There were blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet which waxed louder and louder. But the hardest of all for the people to endure was the voice of the Lord Himself which was powerful and full of majesty, which so terrified them that they begged that the word should not be spoken to them any more. "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:18-19).

How different it was at the other mount, concerning which it is written, "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, *His disciples came unto Him*: and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying..." Because of His miracles great multitudes followed Jesus from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan. It was upon "seeing the multitudes" that Jesus purposed to sift and separate "His disciples" from them by going up into a mountain. Many have portrayed the vast multitude assembled on the mount to hear Jesus teaching, but that is a mistake. There was no great multitude at the Sermon on the Mount. His closest disciples, not just the twelve, but all those whose hearts were deeply stirred to pursue the depths of God in Christ, climbed the rugged terrain to hear the gospel of the Kingdom of God. And now we have His real ministry, which was not to heal nor to work miracles, but to *speak the Father's words to those whose hearts were ready to hear them*.

Why did they come to Him now and not shrink back and stand afar off as when the same Lord gave commandments to a fleshly people at mount Sinai? Why did they climb that mountain and listen unterrified to His words? He was not working miracles on the mountain, nor dispensing loaves and fishes. He was giving a new order for a new age, just as He had done at the other mountain. Yet His disciples came unto Him and quietly and reverently drank in His words while He revealed the heart of the Father who had sent Him for this very ministry. Ah, at Sinai we see man shrinking from the presence and the voice of God, and standing afar off. That was LAW. But on the Mount of Beatitudes we have Immanuel, God with us, the King of glory, the blessed Saviour, come in the form of a servant, made flesh like unto His brethren, to redeem, lift, and transform into the image and likeness of God. That is the KINGDOM.

Those disciples, in response to a heaven-sent impulse, made their way up the mountain, away from the distracting sights and sounds of earth, to that quiet place where the Christ's own voice might be heard speaking the words His Father gave Him to speak, that they might be the sons of their Father in heaven. Those who ascended the mount with Jesus heard His call by the spirit and separating themselves from the noisy crowd, followed Him in silence. On reaching the summit, Jesus sat down and they gathered around Him. They had come not to be entertained, not to be blessed, nor to see a sign and wonder, but to be taught by Him of the Kingdom of God. Only those whose hearts were strangely drawn to Him were prompted to climb the

mountain, and only they heard those words of priceless worth that poured from His lips. Today, as then, it is necessary for every son of God, in order to hear the words of the Kingdom of God, to leave the level of the *crowds*, even of those crowds that sing Hosannas and glory in the signs, wonders, and miracles of the Christ in their midst. Is it not sadly true that the multitudes *still follow Him* for the healings, for the miracles, and for the loaves and fishes? They follow Him for the blessings, the meeting of their immediate physical and emotional needs, the answers to their prayers about *earthly things*. Few there are who leave the noise, the clamor, the excitement, and the *experiences* of the religious fervor below, to *climb the mountain*, and to *come to Him*. The difference between those who ascend into the high place, there to sit at His feet, and listen attentively to *His words*, and the "crowds" who follow Him for various causes, is entirely a matter of being **called to sonship and called to the Kingdom**.

It is certainly high time for the saints of God to stop *playing church* and *come apart* instead to be taught by the King of kings. There is a place closer to Him than the multitudes that throng to churches on Sunday mornings. There is much subtle truth in the words of the Gospel writer where he records, "*And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem He took the twelve disciples apart*" (Mat. 20:17). Again, "*And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them*" (Mat. 17:1-2). I wish to draw your attention for a moment to that word "apart". Matthew is especially specific about the word, mentioning several occasions where either Jesus went into a place *apart* to pray, or where He took His disciples to some remote or high place *apart*. There was always something dramatic and especially significant that transpired in these places apart. Indeed all the Gospel writers, but especially Matthew, have a fondness for this word, which, by the way, in the original is two words and denotes separation. The Greek means aside, away from the people, the idea being that of division. We speak of taking a piece of mechanism apart as a watch or an automobile engine; we break it up into its components. An *apartment* is a suite of rooms usually in a building separated from others — the aim being that of privacy.

Our Lord loved the people, yearned after them, and met them compassionately and powerfully in their need. But how often do we read of His going away from them for a season. Every time there was something truly important and superlative to be done He withdrew from the crowd. So He went up, up to symbolically get near to His Father and to be alone with Him. He was always stealing away at evening to the hills. Most of His ministry was carried on in the towns and cities by the seashore, but He loved the mountains best and oftentimes when night fell He would climb into their peaceful embrace. And I cannot help feeling that what the sons of God need today, more almost than anything else, is that they should go apart with their Lord and sit in silence and holy solitude at His feet in the sacred privacy of His blessed presence. Consider with bowed head and shoes removed from your feet the *secrecy* of true relationship with the Father. Sonship is preeminently a personal matter; it is a strictly close and familiar relationship; it is a sacred association. There is something about the walk of sonship that was never intended for the vulgar gaze, just as the relationship between a husband and a wife. Sonship is different than brideship, but sonship can only be learned in the presence of the Father. In order to know intimacy of fellowship and vital union with our Father it is necessary to find a state of retirement from the throng. "Come," says the Master, "come ye apart into a desert place, come with me into the height of the mountain," and He did not mean by that a vast waterless, treeless, grassless, flowerless waste or a place with nothing but rocks and boulders, but rather a place deserted by the people, a place of tranquil and undisturbed and intimate communion.

We all know that there is a strange strength that is conceived in solitude. The noblest creatures of the field and the air are not sociable. Crows go in flocks and wolves in packs, but the cougar and the eagle are solitaires. When we study the history of the church we find a great deal said in it about a certain class of people, some of whom were called saints and others mystics. They were men and women who seemed to have genius for the unseen. They had a strange passion for seclusion. They loved to go apart. They were a company of God's elect children who even in this dark age pilgrimed on the heights — St. Francis, Loyola, St. Teresa, Thomas a Kempis, [Jacob Boehme](#), George Fox, [Jane Leade](#), Praying Hyde, and a long glorious chosen band on whom the Spirit came. What a shining group they are as they walk the great white lonely way! And the particular point just now that impresses me is that they all loved the secret place. They lived in the shadow of the Almighty. The heavens were opened to them and they saw things none other saw, and experienced the Lord in measures beyond all the divines of the church age. They sang songs in the night.

In relation to mystics [George Hawtin](#) once wrote, "Though some may disbelieve it, the truth is that all spiritual men must and will appear to be *mystics*. It is not because they *try* to be so, but it is because they *are* so. They

cannot help being oddities and misfits here because they *do not belong to this world*. Jesus said, 'Ye are *not* of this world, even as I am not of this world.' Therefore, because we are *not* of this world, we will *always be strangers* to it. We are foreigners and wanderers in a strange country. Our *speech* will always betray us. Our *actions* and *customs* will always reveal us. Our communications with the spiritual realm will *mark us*. The things we love will *unmask us*. Our lack of interest in all that belongs to this present realm will *give our identity away*. We will always feel that we *do not belong* in this realm and that we neither *can* belong nor *wish* to belong. 'They that speak such things declare plainly that they *seek a country*. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city'" — end quote.

We are living in a very wonderful age. It is an age of drive and hurry and stress and storm. One would not go far afield today in describing our age as an age of impatience and unrest. The tragic fact in the life of the American people at the present time is the absence of apartment or repose. We believe in "drives." We slavishly pursue our careers and social involvements, we meet our husband or wife in the hall and say, "Hi!" and we are gone. It takes great effort and tenacity in order to find a few minutes to spend "quality time" with the children. If nothing else is going on we have the television going to keep our mind engaged lest we discover the silence. We are in too great a rush for repose. We have little or no time for the inner chamber. We prefer the limelight and the crowds, the hustle and bustle. Nothing appeals to us but the strenuous and the thrilling. Repose is too tame a thing entirely for this atomic space age.

The sad part of it is that it is no different in the church world. The church is imitating the world. Christians regulate their devotion by the clock. The church schedule is packed with flesh-appeal programs and activities that run day and night. They feel that a ministry that does not cry aloud in the streets, and does not advertise in every newspaper in glaring headlines is an ineffective thing. They have the strange idea that nothing is being done unless somebody is talking. So they fairly swarm to conferences and seminars and committee meetings and platform discussions and concerts and programs and workshops and conventions. The inquiry that is nearly always made concerning a religious gathering is, "Was there much of a crowd there?" They take it for granted that if the speaker was a good talker and the building was crowded, the meeting was a big success. Do you remember in "Pilgrim's Progress" the conversation between Christian and Talkative? "I thought we should have a great deal of talk by this time," says Talkative. The moments when he was pursuing his journey in silence seemed wasted.

The church systems are reaching out their hands to society around them but their hands are so full that their hearts are empty. What do busy preachers or busy Christians know about the *secret place of the Most High*? The churches are filled to overflowing with members who are so busy running hither and thither, on errands of mercy and ministry it may be, that they are never *alone with God*. Undoubtedly they think that their heavenly Father is proud of them and their "Christian success," their "religious career" and their eternal, unceasing business for the Kingdom of God, never giving thought to the fact that they are not unlike the successful child who is so absorbed in his pursuit of position, fame and prosperity that he never finds a moment to stop by and chat with Dad who made it all possible.

The churches that don't have great programs often specialize in the noise of emotionalism, forgetting that their true power is out of sight. Today we have the noiseless gun. The noise is eliminated by the use of a muffler called a silencer; it being a well-known fact that the noise which goes with an explosion is not produced by the actual discharge but by the sudden escape of the gas. There is no real power in noise. There is never any real power in noise. The prophets of Baal discovered this long ago on Mt. Carmel. Many meetings today remind me of the scene on Mt. Carmel as the saints shout and cry and dance about, commanding God and rebuking spirits with the noise and fervor of a pagan war dance. They tell me that the engine room of a great factory is often the quietest room in the building, although it sets all the rest of the machinery in motion. Strength is not in bluster and noise. Strength is in quietness. The life of sonship is deep rather than demonstrative. "It is the brook and not the river that goes brawling," someone said. Jesus never sweat His garments wet while preaching, nor worked Himself into a lather when healing the sick and casting out devils. If the *authority* is there the calmest command will evoke obedience There is no need for the President of the United States to yell and scream and work himself into a frenzy in order to give a military general orders to initiate hostilities against an enemy. The quietest directive will do the job.

Oh, for the culture of the secret place! It is in solitude that we catch the mystic notes from the depths of God within. It is deep down in the depths that the righteousness and power and glory of the Kingdom are known. By going apart one gets a vision of eternal realities. How vast the soul becomes when in the presence of the Infinite! But ours is an age of fuss and trumpet blowing. Most Christians have more faith in the noise and swirling activity of the whirlwind than in the still small voice. I have learned by arduous experience that God usually speaks in whispers but we cannot hear these whispers for the clamor of the street. We are called to heavenly places, far above the clamor of the world and the babel of religion. For after all our real home is in the heights. Our real power is in communion and union. There is a music that no one can hear until the ears are anointed. The voice of truth is a very low sweet voice.

Amid all the religious ruckus of the hour there is a *little flock* that has climbed the mount with Jesus. They care not for the flamboyant humbug of the hour, but, having beheld the glories of the Kingdom afar off, they are pressing through surging waves of humanity to *come apart* to receive instruction from the King of the Kingdom. At His feet they hear the call to the heavenly mark and find a door opened for them to enter in to lay hold upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They lean hard upon Christ. The spirit of His sonship dwells within them. They are partakers of His mind. They have been given the knowledge of His will. They comprehend His plan and purpose in the earth, in His sons, and in the universe. They have laid aside every weight and the sin, which does so easily beset them. They are running the race with patience. They esteem the hope that is set before them higher than all the pleasures of Egypt and the prestige of Babylon. They are patient in tribulation, knowing that through much tribulation we shall enter the Kingdom. They continue instant in prayer to God, and He comforts them and upholds them with the right hand of His righteousness. To them the voice of the Father speaks in words of everlasting hope and assurance, "Fear not, *little flock*; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

I will close this message by quoting some pertinent words from the pen of [George Hawtin](#). "Men and women *must abandon* this mad rush of religion and *come before God* in quiet meditation and prayer, looking to God and looking to His word that they might clearly see how far away from God this sectarian religion has led them. God has *no pleasure in it*. He has pleasure only in those who *love Him* and seek to *know Him*. '*The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, and my people doth not consider*' (Isa. 1:3). How dreadful a statement that is — that even a dumb ox should know his owner and a dumb ass should know his stall, yet God's people, the sheep of His pasture, *know not* the voice of the Lord! They know the doctrines of denominations. They can recite the records of great men or rhyme off their litanies and creeds, but, if they met Jesus on the street, nothing within them would respond or bear witness to Him. Oh, how we need to *know Him* and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering! Oh, how we need to say with Paul, '*That I may know Him!*'

"Let not those who enter into the secret place of God's presence imagine even for a moment that other Christians will understand, for they will not. Tell them ever so earnestly, but they cannot hear. From this day forth the spiritual man will be a *speckled bird* (Jer. 12:9). Even while he tells them, their eyes will be *heavy with sleep* and he will seem to them as one who has taken leave of his senses. The hour is coming and now is when the sons of God, who are coming into the image of the firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, will find themselves living in a *spiritual realm* completely independent of the bondage of all that is earthly. It is clear to be seen that Jesus, even while He lived among men being found in fashion as a man, proved that sons of God are in *all things independent* of the bondage and power of this present world system. Always after the hour of His baptism in the Jordan the *heavens were opened* to Him and all the lasting and eternal benefits of that realm were His, never to depart from Him. When He ministered, the angels of God ascended and descended upon Him. Is it any wonder that no power of man or devil could stand before Him? This, then, is the heritage of sons!" — end quote.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 30**  
**THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART THIRTY**

**THE POOR IN SPIRIT  
THEY THAT MOURN**

The Kingdom of God is the divine dominion of Christ's sovereignty. Accordingly, the Kingdom of God has its commandments. But these commandments are not imposed laws or enactments of ordinances; these commandments are the enunciation of *principles*. The principles of the Kingdom of God are scattered throughout the New Testament. But there is one discourse of them so profound, comprehensive, explicit and divinely imperial, that it may be called the *Manifesto* or the *Constitution* of the Kingdom. It is the Sermon on the Mount. In the days when our blessed Lord, the King of the Kingdom, clothed in humanity, walked as a man among us, He established a school of learning in order that His many brethren might be instructed in the way of the Kingdom of God and fulfill their roles as ambassadors of that Kingdom and rulers in that Kingdom. We shall now give heed to the curriculum that He set, and which He carried through in His own ministry; and which He caused to be recorded for all future generations of the sons of God.

The principles of the Kingdom are not the way to *enter* the Kingdom, but reveal to us the *lifestyle* of the Kingdom. Our King is not asking us to live any differently than the way He lives Himself. The more we yield ourselves to the Spirit to live the Kingdom lifestyle, the more Christ-like we become. The Sermon on the Mount is not a teaching for those who expect the end of the world someday, and a Kingdom to follow, but for those who *have experienced the end of the world within themselves* and the coming of the Kingdom of God here and now. The basic outline of the principles of the Kingdom is as follows:

1. The Principle of Kingdom Attitudes (Mat. 5:1-2).
2. The Principle of Rewards (Mat. 5:13-16).
3. The Principle of Outward Righteousness (Mat. 5:17-26).
4. The Principle of Inward Purity (Mat. 5:27-32).
5. The Principle of Integrity (Mat. 5:33-37).
6. The Principle of Non-Resistance (Mat. 5:38-42).
7. The Principle of Divine Love (Mat. 5:43-48).
8. The Principle of Almsgiving (Mat. 6:1-4).
9. The Principle of Prayer (Mat. 5:5-15).
10. The Principle of Fasting (Mat. 6:16-18).
11. The Principle of Kingdom Priorities (Mat. 6:19-23).
12. The Principle of Faith (Mat. 6:24-34).
13. The Principle of Mercy and Judgment (Mat. 7:1-6).
14. The Principle of Persistence (Mat. 7:7-11).
15. The Principle of Discernment (Mat. 7:15-23).
16. The Principle of Hearing and Doing the Father's Will (Mat. 7:21-27).

To walk in the Kingdom of God we must have an eye that is *single* to *His glory*. We cannot lead a double life. "A *double minded* man is unstable in all his ways," wrote the apostle James. The word "minded" in this passage is the Greek word PSUCHE which is often rendered "soul." "A *double-souled* man is unstable in all his ways," it might just as well be translated. Is it possible to have two souls? There is no doubt about it! The soul is composed of four primary functions: mind, will, emotion and desire. These are the four parts of the soul. The natural man consciously has only one soul. But the regenerated man consciously has two souls. This is a great mystery, but let us see how this is. The natural man knows only *one mind* — the mind of the flesh, the carnal mind, his own human mind. The natural man knows only *one will* — the will of the flesh. The natural man

experiences only *one set of emotions* — the emotions of the flesh. And the natural man has only *one desire* — the desire of the flesh.

Paul makes this very plain. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our lifestyle in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:2-3). Again, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, sensual appetites, unholy desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience: in the which ye also once walked, when ye lived in them" (Col. 3:5-7). Paul doesn't tell us that all these things have passed away, that they no longer exist in us, that they are dead or were crucified two thousand years ago on the cross. The command is, "*Mortify* — kill, put to death, execute, slay, assassinate, liquidate, do away with, wipe out, put an end to, waste, finish off — the evil desire, the animal impulse, the earthly disposition lurking in your members!"

May I here point out that within the Lord Jesus Himself, in the days of His flesh, dwelt two souls. We know that within Him were *two wills*, for on that dreadful night in the agony of Gethsemane, He said it Himself. "And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as *I will*, but as *Thou wilt*" (Mat. 26:39). Have we ever considered that GOD *has a soul*? Many scripture passages speak of the soul of God, as we find in Isaiah 42:1, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom *my soul* delighteth." Delight is an emotion, and emotion is a function of the soul. It should not be difficult to understand that God, though He *is spirit*, **has a soul**. Does God have a *mind*? Mind is soul. Does God have a *will*? Will is soul. Does God have *emotions*? Emotion is soul. Does God have *desires*? Desire is soul. God thinks, plans, and purposes. God determines and predestinates. God feels, laughs, is vexed, angry; God hates, loves, is pleased, displeased, satisfied, dissatisfied. Ah, yes! God has a soul.

When a man is born of the Spirit he inherits from his heavenly Father the *soul of the Spirit*. The soul of the Spirit is simply the mind of the Spirit, the will of the Spirit, the emotions of the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit. With the mind of the Spirit we think the thoughts of God, thoughts of peace, thoughts of righteousness, thoughts of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. The mind of the Spirit is the vehicle of *revelation*. By the *will* of the Spirit we are motivated to act as sons of God, to fulfill all of Father's purpose in us. The *emotions* of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. By the *desires* of the Spirit we are drawn to spiritual and heavenly realities and seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

I doubt that any child of God would deny that there is also within him *another soul* — the soul of the flesh. The soul of the flesh is simply our own *natural mind*, our own *human will*, our *fleshly emotions* and *carnal desires*. If we say we have not this soul of the flesh we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. E. Stanley Jones has given the following illustrations. The Chinese have a character for "peace" which depicts a house roof and one woman under it. The character for "strife" or "contention" is the same house roof with two women under it! A mother said to her little girl as she was all flustered and flurried with indecision: "Now, hurry up, Mary, and make up your mind." To which the little girl replied with a sigh, "It's easy for you to make up your mind, mother, for you've got only one mind to make up, but I've got lots of minds to make up!" There is age long wisdom gathered up in those stories. Where there is unity of purpose and action there is peace and power, but where there is inner division in loyalty and purpose there is strife and contention and consequent weakness and breakdown.

The double-souled man that is unstable in all of his ways is the man who constantly vacillates back and forth between God's will and his own, between the emotions of the Spirit and those of his flesh. Back and forth, back and forth, seeking God's will today and his own tomorrow. He can never make up his mind, can never maintain constancy in his experience, is like a wave driven by the wind, and never becomes established in the will and ways and life of the Spirit. That is the two-souled man. The spiritual man, in all things, says with the firstborn Son of God, "Not *my will*, but *Thine* be done!" The spiritual man *denies* — not the movie house, not the liquor store, not the dance hall — he denies HIMSELF! His own flesh-soul is brought under subjection to the spirit-

soul. Our heavenly Father never functions out of any soul except that of the Spirit, for He *is Spirit*. God's soul is a *spirit soul*. Man's soul is a *flesh soul*. Therefore there is omniscient wisdom beneath His determination to *subdue* our soul unto His.

The following quotation from [George Hawtin](#) will plainly illustrate what our true position should be. "There is coming a day when the *sons of God* will *subdue all things* and bring *everything into subjection* unto the Father. Christ *must reign* until *all enemies are under His feet* (I Cor. 15:24-25). Let us therefore face this solemn fact that **all who reign with Him must first** of all be **subject to Him** and be ruled by Him. Those who will be used of God to *subdue all things* must *first of all* be subdued. Those who are to subdue the enemies of Christ must *first of all* have all the enemies of Christ subdued within themselves. **Never let this truth depart from you either day or night**, for, if God should give men power to *subdue* who have not *themselves been subdued*, they would not be one whit superior to all those tyrannical dictators of the past, who in their lust for power trod their enemies under their bloody feet, rejoicing only in their bombastic and dictatorial spirit and the groveling servitude of the people.

"Before God can launch us into the breadth and sweetness of His service and entrust us with great things for Himself, we must be perfectly subdued in every part of our nature to His will and the disposition of His mind. We must be subdued in our hearts, in our minds, in our words, in our tempers, in our manners: subdued through and through so thoroughly that we will be flexible to all His purposes and plans. We must be subdued that harshness, severity, criticism, sluggishness, laziness, impetuosity, and all *wanting our way*, even in spiritual things, must be subdued out of us. Conversion will not finish this work and perhaps not in one case out of a thousand will a second work of grace produce this complete condition of teachable subjugation to God's will. Being able to preach strong sermons on sanctification will not do it, or having charge of camp meetings, or conventions, or Bible schools, or the writing of books and editing of papers on Christian holiness will not prove adequate for this.

"*We must be subdued*, not merely in our opinion, not merely think ourselves subdued, not only in the esteem of our friends and fellow-workers, but *subdued so perfectly* that the all-seeing eye of God can look us through and the omniscient One knows that we are subdued. *God must conquer the man that He can trust with His great thoughts and plans*" — end quote.

It is here that we meet the powerful principles of the Kingdom of God in the Sermon on the Mount. No more penetrating words were ever spoken concerning the spiritual life than the statement of Jesus that "a house divided against itself cannot stand." And that is a discerning portrait of religion and religionists. Jesus saw that men were trying to live in contradictory directions, upon contradictory principles, with divided loyalties. So He pronounced a doom upon all this living by the simple statement, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." The man who is double-souled is trying to do an impossible thing, something that is against the nature of things and therefore impossible. The double-souled man is unstable in all his ways and his life and works can only end in collapse.

When Jesus uttered those words about the house divided against itself, He was speaking to Pharisees. They themselves were what He meant by the futility of living a life in two different directions. They were not consciously bad men — just hypocritically *divided men*. They were trying to please God while they *pleased themselves*. They were trying to fulfill the law of God by being *self-righteous*. They drew around themselves a set of religious scruples which fit into their outward form of what religion was, and rejected things that were closer to the heart of God. "Ye tithe mint and anise and cumin and pass over justice and the love of God." These men were so zealous for the law that even if in their patio or on the roof top they raised a very small patch of spices for their personal use in cooking, *they tithed it!* They were legalists to the penny. But mercy, goodness, helping the needy, forgiveness, love, and compassion would mean they would have to share and consider the feelings and circumstances of others, and that they felt no responsibility to do. On the side of the law they served God, but on the side of mercy, forgiving, loving, lifting and blessing creation they served themselves. They were divided in their religion, majoring in minors, and minoring in majors. They were double-souled, and their religious house doomed to collapse.

When Jesus enumerated the principles of the Kingdom of God He set forth in the sweetest of terms the power and glory of an *undivided life*. That is the power and glory of the life of *sonship*! The expression and actions of

the life of sonship reveal the heart and nature of the Father and our own reality as His sons. After teaching about loving our enemies and doing good to those who despitefully use us and many other noble qualities of the spirit He ended with, **"Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father which is in heaven IS PERFECT" (Mat. 5:48)**. To be "perfect" means in the Greek to be "complete" — **undivided!** The reason many Christians do not live as sons of God is because of one thing and one only: inward division. Someone has pointed out how Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, struck out at this inward division in the following phrases:

1. Don't try to give your alms with the divided motive of pleasing God and getting credit from men (Mat. 6:1).
2. Don't pray to God and at the same time try to impress men with your sanctity (Mat. 6:5).
3. Don't fast before God and at the same time try to build up a reputation for self-abnegation and spirituality (Mat. 6:16).
4. Don't try to make the best of both worlds by attempting to lay up treasure in two directions (Mat. 6:19).
5. Don't try to be divided in your loyalty by attempting to serve two masters — God and mammon (Mat. 6:24).
6. Don't be anxious in two directions — today and tomorrow — concentrate on today (Mat. 6:34).
7. Don't try to judge in two directions — yourself and others — concentrate on yourself (Mat. 7:1-5).
8. Don't try to bring forth good fruit out of an evil heart (Mat. 7:15-18).
9. Don't try to give lip service saying, "Lord, Lord," without *doing* the will of God (Mat. 7:21).

If you try to live with a dual motive, Jesus says, then there will be one sure result — you will be like a man building his house on sand, and when the pressures of life come, when the winds blow and the floods come, there will be a great crash! In these examples Jesus was not preaching what men call "morality." He was expounding *how life in the Kingdom of Heaven works, how the life of sonship functions*. If you try to live a divided life of flesh *and* spirit you are living against yourself and against the Kingdom, and that won't work. You can live that way and appear religious, you can live that way and prosper in many churches, you can live that way and the church systems will promote you to the office of Sunday School Superintendent, Member of the Board, Head of a Committee, Deacon or Pastor; you can live that way and become famous and perhaps have your own Christian Television Show — but you cannot live like that as a *son of God*. Every son of God is one-souled, living *only by the spirit*.

When I speak of Kingdom laws I do not mean external rules and regulations. True, Jesus enunciates these principles of the Kingdom as an instruction, as a teaching, but He does not demand *legalistic obedience* in the way Old Testament laws were obeyed. That is merely external righteousness. And that is why Jesus didn't say, as Moses said, "*Thou shalt* and thou *shalt not*." He said, rather, "*Blessed* are they *that...*" Someone may say, "I find it almost impossible to love that person, but I am **going to love them** because Jesus says I must." That is not the Kingdom! That is not sonship! That is just plain *law*, and the person who attempts it is still divided within himself and his attempt *will fail*. You cannot love people by any *human effort*. The principles of the Kingdom can only be lived out by a *new nature*, not outward conformity. If you have to bite your tongue and count to ten, you are still divided and living under law. And I am not preaching condemnation to you, precious friend of mine; I am merely pointing out *how the life of sonship is*.

The law of the Kingdom is the *law of the spirit of life* in Christ Jesus. Jesus is not instructing us as to what commandments we are to obey, but about what nature we must receive. "**If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him. Whosoever is born of God does not practice sin; for God's seed abideth in him: and he cannot practice sin because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil...**" (I Jn. 2:29; 3:9-10). Nature is inherited. Moses was the giver of *laws*; Christ is the giver of *life!* Those who fulfill the law of the Kingdom are not servants, slavishly obeying, but sons, born of His life, possessed of His heart. The righteousness of the Kingdom can be lived only by the man who has experienced the powers of the Kingdom of Heaven within himself. You cannot have the apples without the apple tree. You cannot grow the tulips of the Kingdom of God unless you get the bulbs from heaven. The demands of the outward law proved how *utterly impotent man was*; now the demands of the inward law prove **HOW INFINITELY ABLE GOD IS!** Today the demands of the Kingdom serve to demonstrate the infinite ability of God in His sons by the Spirit. He has Himself become our life that He may meet all the demands His Kingdom makes upon us. God's life has been given us, not merely for our eternal enjoyment and

benefit, but for the sake of His Kingdom. As He sits upon the throne of our lives and asserts His authority in us His Kingdom is raised up in us and functions through us. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

## THE POOR IN SPIRIT

We come now to the first principle of the Kingdom of God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:3). It seems strange to say that the poor in spirit inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; rather it would seem that the rich in spirit should inherit the Kingdom! There is a great depth here that can only be plumbed by the wisdom of God. The things of the spirit are always contrary to the logic of the carnal mind. Only when we are willing to reject our minds and our wisdom does God draw nigh to us and give us light, true light. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

To be poor in spirit does not mean to be lacking in spirit, but indicates an attitude of heart. The Greek word used for poor is PTOCHOS. It is one of two words for "poor" in the Greek language. While the other word, PENES, is used to describe one who has fewer possessions, and has to work hard for a living, the word PTOCHOS describes the man who has absolutely nothing at all. It means a pauper or a beggar. It has connections with the root word PROSEIN which means to couch or cower. It describes the poverty of one who has been beaten to his knees. To be "poor in spirit" is to become like Jesus, who "made Himself of *no reputation*" (Phil. 2:7). For, "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became *poor* (ptochos), that ye through His *poverty* might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). Deeper yet, this term "poor in spirit" in the original speaks of *bankruptcy*. I like to translate our Lord's words this way, "Blessed are the *bankrupt* — they who have come to the end of themselves — for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are those who have nothing within themselves, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." God is looking for a people that will be emptied out, that out of their weakness they may find His strength. That is a principle of the Kingdom — it is how the Kingdom of Heaven works!

Ah, we cannot come to be taught of God feeling within ourselves that **we** are understanding, **we** are power, **we** are creators, **we** are kings and rulers, or that **we** have anything that commends itself to God. We must be **poor** in spirit, **poor** in attitude — unclothed of self. The word "spirit" is used many times to describe an attitude of heart or a state of mind. If we say of someone, "He has a good spirit," we don't mean that he has an holy angel or a well-mannered ghost living inside of him. We mean that he has a good attitude, disposition, temperament, personality, demeanor, and expression. The *beatitudes* are just that — attitudes of being. They are the BE-ATTITUDES, the very attitudes the sons of God must **become**. Jesus said in effect, "The attitude of a poor person is the same attitude that will help you to inherit the Kingdom of God." But He does not mean by this that we are to be **spiritually destitute**! We must realize that we are the "branch" dependent upon the Root and the Vine just as the firstborn Son testified of Himself, "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. I can of mine own self do *nothing*: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn. 5:19,30). It follows then that the poor in spirit are actually the rich in spirit!

Poor in spirit means "renounced in spirit." Yielding up everything of self — selfishness, self-assertiveness, self-interest — that we may gain Christ. Right on the threshold of the Kingdom of God we encounter an act of renunciation from the deepest depths of our being. One Greek scholar has said that poor in spirit comes closer in the Greek to mean "teachable in spirit." Ah, what a word that is! To be happy and blessed in the Kingdom we must be *renounced* in spirit, *teachable* in spirit, *pliable* in spirit, and *receptive* in spirit. Receptive to all that God is, to all that God does, to all the strange and wonderful ways that He leads, and to all that He speaks by His Spirit. We must be *pliable* in the Father's hands at all times and in all situations. We must have an ear to hear. We must know and think and be nothing of ourselves. We don't bring anything to the Kingdom — but the Kingdom is ours! All the resources of the Kingdom are at the disposal of the poor in spirit. The Kingdom of God is within us, and it also reaches to the lowest hell and beyond the farthest star. All the powers of the Kingdom are centered in those who are the sons of God.

The saintly [George MacDonald](#) has beautifully expressed the truth in these inspiring words: "The poor, the beggars in spirit, the humble men of heart, the unambitious, the unselfish; those who never despise men, and

never seek their praises; the lowly, who see nothing to admire in themselves, therefore cannot seek to be admired of others; the men who give themselves away — these are the freemen of the Kingdom, these are the citizens of the New Jerusalem. The men who are aware of their own essential poverty; **not** the men who are poor in friends, poor in influence, poor in acquirements, poor in money, but those who are poor in spirit, who *feel themselves poor creatures*; who know nothing to be pleased with themselves for, and desire nothing to make them feel well of themselves; who know that they need much to make their life worth living; these humble ones are the poor whom the Lord calls blessed. The gate of the Kingdom begins to open to such a man.

"Whatever such a man has attained to, he straightway forgets; it is part of him and behind him. His business is with what he has not, with the things that lie above and before him. The man who is proud of anything he thinks he has reached, has not reached it. He is but proud of himself, and imagining a cause for his pride. If he had reached, he would already have begun to forget. He who delights in contemplating whereunto he has attained, is not merely sliding back; he is already in the dirt of self-satisfaction. The gate of the Kingdom is closed, and he is outside. The man who does not house self has room to be his real self — God's eternal idea of him. He lives eternally; in virtue of the creative power in him, he *is*. How should there be in him one thought of ruling or commanding or surpassing! He can imagine no bliss, no good in being greater than someone else. He would lift every man to the embrace of the Father. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they are of the same spirit as God, and of nature the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs" — end quote.

The following quotation by Paul Grubb further illuminates this wonderful Kingdom principle of *poor in spirit*. "When Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' in essence He was saying, Blessed are they, who in spirit reckon that they possess nothing. Blessed are those who in their spirit are conscious of the fact that they do not possess one thing. It all belongs to the Father. If the automobile has their name on the title, it does not belong to them. If the house has their name on the deed, it does not belong to them. If the million dollars in the bank is deposited in their name, it does not belong to them. It belongs to the Father. If humility is demonstrated through their lives, it does not belong to them. It belongs to the Father. If righteousness is manifested in them, it does not belong to them. It belongs to the Father. If goodness is exerting its influence through their lives, it does not belong to them. It belongs to the Father. If power flows through them to the needs about them, it does not belong to them. It belongs to the Father. Anything valuable that they possess either spiritually or materially is not their own. They are conscious that a man does not really possess any righteousness. Any he thinks he possesses is self-righteousness. He does not possess any humility or goodness. He does not possess any power, for 'all power is of God.'

"Until we come to know we are poor in spirit, we are not in the Kingdom. Anyone who thinks he has righteousness is far from the Kingdom. He who thinks he has humility, goodness or power is far from the Kingdom. Jesus never boasted of humility, goodness, righteousness or power. But you never saw Him with anything less! Jesus declared that even the words which He spoke and the deeds that He did were not of Himself. The very words that He spoke belonged to the Father; they were the Father's words. The works that He did were not His own works, they were the works of the Father. What He heard from His Father He spoke, and what He saw of His Father He did. As sons of God we must be brought to the place where we know the words are not ours, the works are not ours, the results are not ours, the humility is not ours, the gifts are not ours, the calling is not ours, the ministry is not ours, the automobile is not ours, the house is not ours, the family is not ours, the children are not ours, the parents are not ours. **Everything belongs to Him.** 'Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven'" — end quote.

Brother [Bob Torango](#) adds this testimony from a recent article: "Don't be anxious! Look not on the outward evidence of the vessel. You are only a container, a bottle in which the Lord of glory abides. The container is only as holy as what it contains. It is not the container that this Day depends upon, but what is contained within it. This Kingdom has nothing to do with you, with your righteousness, with your power, with your ability, with your holiness; but it is totally reliant and dependent upon the Righteous, Holy One who embodies us. It is not up to us to perform these things, it is His plan, His ministry, His salvation, His conciliation; it is Him and only Him that this Day is about. You are His vehicle through which He will express Himself, but the ultimate work of change, the melting of the elements, the burning of the heavens and earth, the passing away of the old and the rising up of the new, all of this cannot and will not be done by mortal man — but we do contain the Lord of lords, and the Logos of His will is in us to will and to do of His good pleasure! Our only challenge is to expect,

believe, yield, disappear, get out of the way, lose our self, avail our self, and ultimately just to hang on when the ride begins!"

## THEY THAT MOURN

Jesus gave the second principle of the Kingdom in these words: "**Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted**" (Mat. 5:4). Let all who read these lines understand — Jesus is not merely putting a premium on mourning. He is saying that the man who can mourn and is able to know sorrow is to be thought of as a blessed man because he shall find comfort in his sympathy for his brethren.

Nowhere is this principle seen with greater clarity than in God's Royal Priesthood company being selected and trained in God's school of sonship dominion to restore all creation back to God. Of these King-Priests it is written, "Thou...hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast *made us* unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10). This passage is one of rare beauty. It is like a precious diamond, the effulgence of whose radiance dazzles the mind. It must be engraved deeply upon the heart of every son of God. There is so much depth to that text that I am afraid we often do not perceive it. It is like a beautiful star-studded sky on a bright clear night and one cannot even begin to grasp the vast depth that lies above us. So it is with these marvelous words: "Thou hast *made us* TO BE KINGS AND PRIESTS!" Can you say that? As we plumb its depths a little more I hope that you will ask yourself the question more carefully, "Am I being **made** a **priest** unto God? Is the process of transformation into the *kingly* and *priestly nature* practically taking place in my life?"

The wonderful book of Hebrews is literally packed full of mysteries, types, shadows, and allegories, all pointing to the ministry of the *sons of God* who are God's *Royal Priesthood*. These are only unfolded by the Holy Spirit as we are able to bear it. Hebrews chapter five sets forth the qualifications that the typical High Priest under the law, and therefore Christ Jesus, the anti-typical High Priest of the new order of the Kingdom, must possess. All the members of the Royal Priesthood, the Kings and Priests of the Kingdom who are, with Him, "partakers of the heavenly calling," must also have the same qualifications, for they are the body of the High Priest.

"For every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that He may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: *who can have compassion* on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that *he himself is compassed with infirmity*" (Heb. 5:1-2). Here we have defined the intrinsic nature of the priestly office. First, he must be "taken from among men," that is, he must partake of both the nature and the circumstances of those on whose behalf he acts. Second, he acts not as a private individual, but as a public official: "is ordained for men." Third, he came not empty-handed before God, but furnished with "gifts and sacrifices for sins." Then, he himself must not be exempt from infirmity, so that he might the more readily succor the distressed and distraught.

All this is important for it points to Jesus' qualifications to be our great High Priest. A High Priest must know and experientially understand the problems and limitations of those he represents. "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; **for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.**" On three different occasions Matthew tells us that our Lord was "moved with compassion" on the multitudes. Frankly, when you read the Gospels you read of Jesus doing miracles, healings, signs and wonders; but Jesus never went around looking for a miracle to perform. HE WENT ABOUT DOING THE FATHER'S WILL. The Father brought Him to a place where His heart could be moved with compassion. It was not a gift of compassion that came to Him by the Holy Spirit; it was the compassion wrought out in His life by His many sorrows, sufferings, and testings. He had suffered loss, He had suffered pain, He had suffered reproach. Coming to a town He sees a funeral procession and as a Son, having suffered the loss of Joseph and friends and family members, and shared in the sorrow of His mother at the loss, thereby developing the nature of a Priest, He is filled with compassion when He sees the widow and her dead son. There was no Social Security in those days, and the boy was the only person to look after the widow, so He stops the procession, raises the boy, hands him over to the mother, and goes about the Father's business. I find that the basis of the sonship ministry of Jesus was *not power* — IT WAS COMPASSION!

When He saw the multitude He was moved with compassion. They were hungry, and He had known gnawing hunger, so He said, "Let us feed them." When He met the leper He was moved with compassion, for He had

experienced pain and shame, and He laid His hands upon him and healed him. He could have spoken a word to heal him, but that man needed the touch of somebody's hand on him, he had been separated from people so long, he needed more than to be healed from his leprosy, he needed the sense of the hand of God upon him. When Jesus looked upon the careworn faces of the toiling, tax-ridden multitudes — taxed by cruel priests; taxed by Herod; taxed by Pilate; taxed by their own sins and sorrows; wearily burdened, wounded at heart, and heavy laden — He was not looking for a chance to show off His power — He was moved with compassion.

"Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; FOR THAT HE HIMSELF ALSO IS COMPASSED ABOUT WITH INFIRMITY." The condition which develops compassion in us, is that *we ourselves* get compassed — surrounded, hedged in — by the problems, the difficulties, the needs that are going to be represented in the people to whom we minister. So many of us are intolerant in certain areas of our lives because we have not gone through the pressure, we have not been compassed by that particular infirmity, weakness, sorrow or need. Priesthood demands suffering, trial, testing, tribulation, and pressure. Sonship demands relationship with God. He sends the Spirit of the Son into our hearts and we cry, "Abba, Father!" Now God intends that all of us who have been called should be sons of God, and that all of us should be a Kingdom of Priests, a Royal Priesthood unto God. But you may be a *son* and still not be a *priest!*

John the Revelator said, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them...they shall be **priests** of God and of Christ, and shall **reign with Him a thousand years**" (Rev. 20:4-6). Here you see that it is not the sons who are reigning — it is the **PRIESTS!** What about the sons? "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7). The sons inherit, for they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). Who, then, is destined to reign? THE SONS WHO ARE **PRIESTS!** Christ was a Son before He was a Priest. He was not a Priest during His years in the flesh, although He was qualifying to be one, but He was a Son. Christ in His ministry from the heavens today is not merely the Son of God. As a Son He is "heir of all things;" but to become the great High Priest and provide the priestly ministry on our behalf the Son had, as a Son, to go through the experience that was necessary to perfect Him for the understanding heart of the Priesthood. "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; BUT WAS IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS WE ARE, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being *made perfect*, He *became*...AN HIGH PRIEST AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK" (Heb. 5:8-10). "Every High Priest...must be compassed with infirmity."

Ah, Jesus could have been a **son** without being so totally compassed with infirmity, BUT HE COULD NEVER HAVE BEEN A PRIEST WITHOUT IT. He might have been perfect in character, noble in motive, and desirous to help us; but, if He had never tasted death, how could He allay our fears as we tread the verge of Jordan? If He had never been tempted, how could He succor those who are tempted? If He had never known pain, how could He have compassion on the sick and sorrowing multitudes then and now? If He had never wept, how could He dry our tears? If He had never suffered, hungered, wearied on the hill of difficulty, or threaded His way through the quagmires of grief, how could He be a merciful and faithful High Priest, having compassion on the ignorant and wayward? But, thank God! Our High Priest is a perfect one! He is perfectly adapted to His task. If we would sit with Him upon that blessed **throne of mercy** we must not shrink from the problems and troubles and perplexities of this life, for this is the stuff Priests are made of!

There have been those precious folk who have said to me, "Brother Eby, I don't understand. Since I came into this Kingdom message things have gotten worse — all hell has broken loose." That is just what you need — IF YOU WOULD BE A PRIEST! Have you not known some beautiful saints to whom you naturally betake yourself in time of trial and sorrow? They always seem to speak the right word, to give the very counsel you are longing for; you do not realize, however, the cost they had to pay ere they became so skillful in binding up gaping wounds and drying tears. But if you were to investigate their past you would find that they have suffered more than most. They have watched the slow untwisting of some silver cord on which the lamp of life hung. They have seen the golden bowl of joy dashed at their feet, and its contents spilt. They have stood by ebbing tides, and drooping flowers, and darkened skies; but all this has been necessary to make them comforters and healers, the priests of men.

The only persons on earth who really understand our sorrow are the persons who have traveled the *same valley* of despair. Only those who have been bereaved know what bereavement really is. They alone can shed

the sympathizing tear and intercede in power with God, for they alone truly understand. Others may kindly and with feeling offer their condolence, but they can do little more than that, for they have not experienced the pain and loneliness of our loss. The reason our blessed Lord is *touched with the feeling of our infirmities* is that He *knoweth our frame*. He remembereth that we are dust. He knows this not by revelation or by divine omniscience, but He Himself was a "man of sorrows and *acquainted with grief*." He knew what it was to be despised, afflicted, and rejected of men. He knows what it is to be misunderstood, to be dragged from prison and judgment with **no man** to declare His generation. He knows what it is to be tested in all points as we are tested, and the sympathizing tears flow from His eyes as He extends His nail-pierced hand to lift us from the shades of our gloomy night to the ineffable light of the plain on which He dwells.

If you are going to be a manifested son you must first get bound because God wants His sons to be Priests, kingly Priests who show forth both authority *and* redemption. You must not only have the authority of Kingship, but also the compassion of Priesthood. Let me say now, I DO NOT RECOMMEND PRIESTHOOD — I RECOMMEND SONSHIP! When you are a son you have an inheritance, great wealth, blessings from the Father's hands, and freedom. As a son you have power to do things, but the moment you become a Priest, they put you in chains: compassed, surrounded, hedged in, pressed on every side by infirmity. Infirmity is weakness. I pray that as God deals with His sons in these days that we will not despise our limitations, our infirmities, and our sufferings, but *look unto Jesus* who has pioneered the way of Royal Priesthood before us.

Christ was tempted as a Son, but after that there came a temptation in testings that had nothing to do with Him, but were preparing Him for the perfection of the Priesthood. As sons of God, with full inheritance, we should be blessed beyond measure, we should have no problems, by rights we should be in perfect health, have good jobs, money in the bank, and everything coming to us. And we can *demand* our rights! Vast numbers of Christians today choose to walk only in their Kingdom privileges of blessing, health and prosperity. And they do not know it, but they SHALL NOT REIGN WITH CHRIST. It is the **priests** that **reign**! "And they shall be priests of God...and they shall reign." To the Priests God says, "No, I am going to limit you here, put you through pressure there, subject you to suffering, hedge you in and compass you about with infirmity, not because you have no rights, but that it will work a compassion, an understanding, a mercy, a grace, work something in you so that out of you will flow a river of love, forgiveness, tenderness, redemption — and then a flow of power, enabling and ability.

Now can we understand the depth of the principle of the Kingdom that teaches, "Blessed are they that *mourn*: for they shall be comforted" — *and* they shall be comforters!

There is, however, a *further dimension* to the mourning of the sons of God! In the true and eloquent words of another, "When Jesus says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted, He is not talking about someone who is hired to mourn. Of course, in Jesus' day, the Eastern custom at funerals was to have just such as that. With cruel, yet merciful swiftness, the hour arrives for interment. The lamentation, that was passionate before, became tumultuously defiant. Relatives lost all self control, and refusing to let the pall-bearers discharge their sad office, had to be forcibly removed. A procession was then formed and on the way to the cemetery the wailing was increased by those who joined in to show their respect to the family. After the family and neighbors became weary with wailing, they hired professionals to continue it. This highly hysterical type of mourning continued for days!

"The foregoing is just a description of the Oriental custom for mourning. That certainly was not what Jesus had reference to in the beatitude. As we look to another scripture or two, we will be able to determine what Jesus had in mind when He said, Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. **John 16:4-6**, 'But I have said these things to you that when the hour comes you may remember that I told you of them. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to Him who sent me. Yet none of you ask me, Where are you going? But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.' And then in **verse 20**, "Truly, truly I say to you, you will weep and lament (mourn), but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy." And then in **verse 22**, "So you will have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice and no one will take your joy from you."

"The mourning Jesus is referring to is a mourning over the absence of the presence of God, or of Christ. That is the godly mourning that Jesus had in mind. And that is the mourning that is representative of the sons of God. The only time that Jesus mourned was when He mourned for the absence of the presence of God. Twice we find Him weeping. He wept at Lazarus' tomb. It was because of the absence of the presence of God. "When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled; and He said, Where have you laid Him? They said to Him, Lord, come and see. *Jesus wept*. So the Jews said, See how He loved him! But some of them said, Could not He that opened the eyes of the blind have kept this man from dying? Then Jesus deeply moved came again to the tomb" (Jn. 11:33-38).

"His deep mourning here is for the absence of God. Lazarus had died. In the first place, that signifies the absence of God. Life is of God and God is life. Death is the absence of the presence of God. Where God is, there is life. Death is the opposite to it. The mourning here is because there is death and not life. Jesus was not mourning because He thought that Lazarus would not come back to life. He knew exactly what He was going to do. In part, Jesus was mourning because there was the presence of death and the absence of the presence of God. But the absence of faith in God grieved Him also. The unbelief was expressed by the mourning scene and the expression of the sisters. The unbelief was undoubtedly the influence of their past teaching. Although the doubt was the expression of the emotional disturbance and grief in the hearts of these women, it displayed the absence of God's assurance and faith. God's presence is faith. God's presence is life. The mourning of Jesus was for the absence of God in this situation. He mourned because they did not believe. Satan had beclouded their minds to cause them to believe a lie rather than the truth. After all that He had said to them, they still could not believe. Although Martha said, 'I know that my brother shall rise in the resurrection at the last day,' they still did not believe. Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. If a man believes, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and if you live and believe, you shall never die.' Jesus did not see that kind of faith there! So He mourned because of the absence of the presence of God.

"On one other occasion Jesus mourned — when He beheld Jerusalem and contemplated her rejection of the King and her rejection of God's Kingdom. He witnessed her rebellion against God and against His Kingdom program. The whole nation of Israel was represented by Jerusalem. When He used the word Jerusalem, He was not just speaking of a city that is made up of buildings and streets. He was speaking of the Jewish nation. 'Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets, stoning those who are sent to you. How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' Here Jesus was mourning over Jerusalem because the Jewish nation was rejecting the King and the Kingdom. That is the true reason for the mourning of the sons of God today. Their mourning is because God is absent from the lives and activities of the people of the world. God is being rejected from all of their ways. The King and the Kingdom are not being accepted in this hour, when God is offering the King and the Kingdom to the church and they are rejecting it. Certainly the mourning is in the hearts of God's sons.

"That is one of the ways in which the sons of God enter into the fellowship of Christ's suffering. It first begins in our own lives and then it goes out to the others. Our first revelation is how little of the King is embraced in our own lives. There comes a mourning in our spirit, when we recognize how little of the Kingdom of God is operating and being demonstrated in our lives. We are beginning then to suffer with Christ. We begin to understand how Jesus felt when God, who deserved to be worshipped and obeyed as King in the earth, who deserved to be Ruler in men's lives, was rejected. Jesus sorely grieved as He witnessed how God was rejected and dethroned when men would not have His Kingdom enter their lives. Jesus' mourning was for the fact that God was displaced. It is when we begin to realize that there is so little of Christ in us, and so little of God's Kingdom manifested through our lives that we enter into the mourning of the true sons of the Kingdom.

"Jesus' promise in the beatitude is that this mourning will not be permanent. This mourning of the sons is going to climax with a comfort when Christ fully rules in our lives and finally rules in all the earth. The Kingdom of God is going to fill these lives. If we have a godly mourning because God is not occupying many areas of our lives and those of other men, Christ will come and expel the self-life and all things that are contrary, and ascend to His throne, to His rightful place in the hearts of men. When He comes to His rightful place in your life

and mine, that mourning turns to joy. Then, as we view the world, our mourning becomes like that of Jesus for the world. We are conscious that God ought to be in His rightful place in all things, everywhere. Satan ought not to be ruling in lives by bonds of sin, sickness and sorrow. God deserves to be there! There should be perfect minds and bodies revealing the power and life of God. There ought to be life instead of death. Instead of going down in death with cancer, man ought to be victorious in life. But sin and death rule in men's lives, therefore we are grieved in spirit. As we sorrow for that condition, we allow the Christ to reach men. God, who is Life, begins to spring forth. Comfort, joy, and life in God come out of that death-realm for which we had mourned.

"Our mourning is because there is sin in the world. There is sickness. There is sorrow. Christ is not ruling in the lives and affairs of men. But we live in assurance that the day is coming when *all* of the kingdoms of this world will give way to the Kingdom of our God and His Christ! Then all of the mourning of the sons will be comforted and shall be turned to joy. This mourning is the kind of mourning experienced by the firstborn Son of God. It is mourning because God has been displaced and is denied His rightful place. Likewise, all the sons of the Kingdom mourn because of it. I am sure that Christ is mourning today in the lives of the sons of God because many multitudes of people, including the religious ones, are rejecting His Kingship and His Kingdom in their lives. The common people heard Jesus gladly. They welcomed the gospel of the Kingdom and the King. They had lived in distress and hardship long enough. They wanted to see God! They welcomed a Kingdom in which there was peace and joy and plenty, righteousness and health and perfection.

"The present world condition distresses our spirits. It gives us a mourning within. But Jesus promised that this mourning is going to be changed. We shall be comforted because we are going to see in fullness what we now see in part. What we are seeing on a small scale in a local manner, we are going to see on a mighty scale, in a world-wide visitation. We are going to see this glorious Christ come to His rightful place. We are going to see the Kingdom come in its power and come in its glory. Then shall we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!" — Paul Grubb.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 31**  
**THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART THIRTY-ONE**

**THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Of all the beatitudes, or the be-attitudes of the sons of the Kingdom, the third is the one that seems to bear the greatest contradiction. "**Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth**" (**Mat. 5:5**). After all, isn't it the high-energy, self-motivated, grasping, ruthless, promoter, wheeler-dealer, fast talker, power broker who really gets super rich, famous, and powerful, and inherits the earth? What did Jesus mean when He said that the *meek* shall inherit the earth? Wouldn't it have made more sense if He had said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit *heaven*?" That we could understand. But inherit the earth? To the natural mind that doesn't seem to add up. And it doesn't add up until with the spiritual mind we understand what it means to be meek and how the principle of meekness works in the Kingdom of God. The word "meek" means "to be mild, gentle, free from retaliation, self-defensiveness or avenging oneself." How many are born meek? Not one of us! We all want our way and from a babe we will cry for it, scream for it, fight for it and defend our "rights" to the bitter end. But Jesus says, "Learn of me, for I am *meek* and lowly in heart."

Let me give you an illustration. "**Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth**" (**Num. 12:3**). Moses, when he first felt the call of God upon his life, sensed that God was with Him and had raised him up to be the deliverer of His people. God had called him to this deliverance ministry. One day it happened that he went out among his brethren, the Israelites, and looked at their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of Moses' brethren. At the sight something rose up within Moses' spirit and he rushed over and smote the Egyptian with his fist. Moses was a real macho man! I do not doubt for one moment that he worked out in the palace and had bulging, rippling muscles. He was no jelly fish or wimp. He grabbed that Egyptian and slew him and buried him in the sand.

He went out again the next day to observe his brethren. On this occasion he saw two Hebrew men quarreling and fighting. He said to the unjust aggressor, "Why are you mistreating your comrade?" The man snarled at Moses and said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me, as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?" Then Moses realized that his actions had been observed and the news of what he had done was spreading among the people, and he was afraid. And sure enough, in due time the news reached the ears of Pharaoh. Pharaoh was furious and put a price on Moses' head. So Moses fled the land of Egypt and took refuge in the land of Midian, a desert land beyond the Red Sea. God took Moses to that backside of the desert and kept him there in seclusion for forty years. It was there that God enrolled Moses in the school of the Spirit. God stripped him, purged him, taught him, dealt with him, processed and prepared him, and when Moses came out of that wilderness experience he said, "Ah, Lord God, I can't speak — I am not a man of words or ability or influence," and the Spirit testifies that he was the meekest man on earth!

The Hebrew word for meek is ANAV which can be translated this way, "He was the most *worn out* man on the face of the earth." God drew Moses to the backside of the desert and there He wore him out. He conquered him. He broke him. He took all the fight out of him. He purged all the arrogance and self-reliance and self-sufficiency and self-defensiveness out of him. He stripped him of all his spirit of retaliation. He brought him to the place where he was worn out and meekness was the hallmark of his life. God changed him. God prepared Him to be a deliverer. Today God is preparing us to be deliverers, to deliver all creation from the bondage of corruption — self, rebellion, sin, sorrow and death. God is preparing us to rule and reign with Him in His Kingdom. And He is wearing us out, bringing us to the end of ourselves!

One day Jesus was up in Nazareth preaching and the people didn't receive Him too kindly there. James and John, the sons of thunder, began to defend Jesus. They wanted to do like Elijah did and call fire down from heaven and consume the adversaries. "We won't let them get away with this. They can't treat Jesus this way.

We'll teach them a lesson or two. We'll show them who we really are. We are the rulers in the Kingdom. We have the power and authority for this new Day, and the mandate to establish the new order of the Kingdom of God in the earth. We're not going to take this sitting down." Jesus stopped them in their tracks, saying, "Wait a minute boys. You don't realize what you're doing. You don't know what spirit you are of! That is the spirit of the law, the spirit of the prophets, the spirit of the *passing order*, not the spirit of sonship and the Kingdom. God has not sent His Son, or His sons, into the world to destroy men's lives, but to save them. This isn't the way my Kingdom operates!" So God took John out in a boat and dropped him off on a little island there called Patmos, and by the time John got off the isle of Patmos he wrote, "Little children, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." John's epistles are epistles of meekness. Ah, yes, God has a way of breaking us and qualifying us for the Kingdom!

King David prophesied, "**But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace**" (**Ps. 37:11**). The word "meek" in both the Hebrew and Greek conveys the idea of being humble or saintly. And indeed, God's firstfruits shall be just that. The spirit of the firstborn Son was the spirit of humility and virtue. Paul wrote, "**Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in *humility* count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind within you, which also was in Christ Jesus who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped or held onto, but *emptied Himself*, taking the *form of a servant*, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He *humbled Himself* and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross**" (**Phil. 2:3-8**).

Two striking statements stand out: "He *emptied Himself*," and "He *humbled Himself*." The most startling thought of all is that GOD HUMBLLED HIMSELF! We can hardly conceive of such a thing. The high and holy One, The omnipotent Creator and omniscient Lord of the universe **humbled Himself!** Yet, it could not be otherwise. Let me state it this way: God is humble! Have you ever thought about that? If God were not humble there would have been no babe in Bethlehem's manger, no Son growing up in a peasant home in dusty, riotous Nazareth, no Redeemer dying in agony upon a Roman cross. If God were not humble there would be no indwelling Spirit, no habitation of God in vessels of clay. If God were not humble it would mean the destruction of God Himself. He would then have almighty power and infinite knowledge without the balance of mercy, love, compassion, and identification with His creation. Thus, He would be a tyrant, and tyranny holds within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

Furthermore, God *requires* humility of all His sons and daughters. "**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up**" (**James 4:10**). "**Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with *humility*: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the *humble*. *Humble yourselves* therefore under the mighty hand of God...**" (**1 pet. 5:5-6**). "**Put on therefore, as the *elect* of God, holy and beloved...*humbleness of mind*...**" (**Col. 3:12**). God does not require an attitude of mind or a state of being of *His elect* that He does not Himself possess. Nay! "He humbled Himself." In Jesus Christ we behold the meekness and humility of God!

And now comes the word: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God *emptied Himself*, and as a man *humbled Himself*." The sons of God must be like Christ in His self-emptying and self-humiliation. The first great act of self-abnegation in which as God He emptied Himself of His divine glory and power and laid it aside, was followed up by the no less wondrous humbling of Himself as a man, to the ignominious death of the cross. And in this amazing twofold humiliation, the astonishment of the universe and the delight of the Father, the Word with utmost simplicity tells us we must, as a matter of course, BE LIKE CHRIST.

People have great difficulty understanding an abstraction or a force. It must be personalized. And that is why God has come in the person of Jesus Christ, so that we might see Him and see **what God is like**. The only begotten Son, He hath revealed Him, hath led Him forth and made Him visible. God has been personalized in Jesus Christ, and this personification, this embodiment of God Himself, HUMBLLED HIMSELF! That One who walked by the sea of Galilee and through the dusty roads of Palestine was none other than the Living God, the great Creator who emptied Himself and humbled Himself and came into this world. Humility, self-abasement, serving, laying down *our lives* to pour out to *others* — these are the very principles of the Kingdom of God! "**Whosoever therefore shall *humble himself* as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of**

Heaven" (Mat. 18:4). "But he that is greatest among you shall be your *servant*. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted" (Mat. 23:11-12).

God said, "I will invade humanity and come down in the person of my Son, limit myself to a human, physical body just like man has, with all its appetites, emotions, possibilities of suffering hunger, pain, weakness and death, and I will demonstrate the character, the life, the love and the power of God on the human level." The incarnation was God manifesting Himself within the limitations of a human body. As a man Jesus could not fly, He could not see further than anybody else, He could not run faster than the other young men in Nazareth, He got as tired as anyone else, He got as tempted as anyone else, He got hungry and thirsty and weak, fell asleep, they could spit on Him and finally kill Him. Yet in Jesus Christ you have the perfect expression of God. The meaning of the incarnation is that God could drink out of a bottle if Jesus drank out of a bottle, God in Him learned to crawl before He learned to walk, God learned a language and stumbled over the words before He got it straight, His mind could increase.

When God invaded humanity in the body of Jesus Christ, He took upon Himself human nature and limitation. He was made in the likeness, not of glorified flesh, but of sinful flesh, and for thirty-three and a half years lived, walked, slept and died in that body, manifesting God in the scope of humanity. God was not in Christ as a separate entity, as a separate personality and reality dwelling in His body. No, God was in Christ **as Christ**, as the personality of His life. Being mocked, God was living in Him. Asleep in the boat, God was living in Him. Hungry, and He goes to a tree and finds nothing to eat on it, God was living in Him. When He was weary, pressed, persecuted, hated, reviled, slapped, His back beat, His brow crowned with thorns, His hands and feet nailed to a cross, His side pierced, yet, dying on the cross in agony with the blood and spittle running down His face, GOD WAS LIVING AND MANIFESTING IN HIM — God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself! Do you see what God did? He made it possible for Himself to be at home in human bodies. "The tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev. 21:3). Not with angels, with man. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). Oh, the mystery of it! The wonder of it! It means that God can, by His Spirit, Jesus can, by His Spirit, come in and live in these human bodies of ours, grow up in the fullness of His nature, mind, and power within us, becoming the personality and reality of our lives, living in us, loving in us, and manifesting Himself in us, yea, **as us**, until with Christ we can say, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father; I and the Father are one." Described negatively, meekness is the opposite of self-interest and self-assertiveness. In keeping with this Ricky Evans wrote, "Meekness is the state of being where we have lost self-interest. How hard it is to lose this self-interest! We have all our lives been taught to set goals and strive for those goals. Find what it is you want in life and go for it. Choose a worthy vocation and make it the center of your life. Plan around it. Let nothing stand in the way. For role models we are given examples of those who have worked hard and become 'successful.' Meekness doesn't fit into the modern person's life-style. Ask people today and you will soon discover they have everything well planned out. They know what they want and how to get it. They have their five year, ten year, and twenty year plan. All of this is geared to enjoying the 'good life' and being 'successful.'

"People who have been born of the Spirit, and yet have not had their soul realm dealt with, are no different. One only needs to take a drive around their community some Sunday morning for it to be obvious that born again people are most often still full of self-interest. One can see the great buildings filling with people whose one great interest is to get *blessed*. 'I come here because I get fed, I get a blessing, I like what Dr. So and So preaches...' Self is still the motivation behind what is being done. Those who build the great buildings and great ministries, for the most part, are simply those who have *redirected their self-interest* into religious areas, saying, 'Let us make a name for ourselves' (Gen. 11:4). Turn on your television and soon you will find Brother So and So's or Sister So and So's ministry. Does not all this reveal that there is yet *self-interest* involved in our lives? When we see those who promote *their* ministry, *their* books, *their* tapes, *their* meetings, does this not speak of the self-interest behind such actions?

"Ah, meekness. Meekness says, 'I do only what I see the Father do' (Jn. 5:19). 'I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me' (Jn. 7:16). These statements show a lack of self-interest. The interest is not in self, but in the Father and His purpose. We are not learning and growing in the spirit so we can preach better or prophesy better. Oh, no. We are learning and growing into a mature relationship with the Father, that we might be led by the Spirit as *mature sons of God* (Rom. 8:14). Maturity is not measured by the amount of knowledge

we may attain about God and His Kingdom; maturity is measured by the degree that we are *led by the Spirit*. Meekness means no self-interest, no self-assertiveness, not occupied with self, every vestige of self pushed aside for the will of the Father. The Father's will becomes our *only* concern. We now find a new freedom from all that religion would impose upon us. We are now free to be led by the Spirit, and not by religious rules and regulations. Meekness finds its expression *toward God*. When we learn the meekness of our Lord Jesus Christ we find developed in us the attitude that is interested only in the will of the Father. Those who have meekness developed in them *seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness*, knowing that all other things shall be added unto them" — end quote.

Another adds yet a further depth of meaning to this principle of the meekness of the sons of God. "Meekness is not timidity, as some suppose. If you review the life of Jesus, you will not find any timidity about Him. Yet, He was meek and lowly. The personal life and ministry of Jesus demonstrated great meekness associated with great boldness of character and fearlessness of opposition. He was never plagued by fear or timidity when brought to verbal blows with the pharisaic religionists of His day. Well aware of the opposition being incurred by His utterances and the logical outcome to which it would eventually lead Him, Jesus never compromised a principle, or declined a declaration. He had no misgivings about the reactions even from the king of Israel, when He said, 'Go tell that fox, that I heal and do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be glorified.'

"Meekness is a relationship between Father and son. The son senses a meekness in His fellowship with the Father. The Father gives the command — the son performs it. The Father administers discipline — the son submits to it. The Father instructs the son in wisdom — the son receives enlightenment with thanksgiving. The acid test of true meekness comes when the Father uses someone else to bring His discipline to us. If we are truly meek, we will not only rejoice in submitting to the Father's process, but will level no blame or accusation against the one who is the immediate instrument through whom the correction reaches us. Meekness as an attitude of soul toward the Father results in an attitude of love, humility and kindness toward those who spitefully use us, recognizing that Father does all things well although we may not understand at the moment why it is done in the manner in which, and by the instrument with which, He performs it. But we meekly submit to it. This is the most difficult test of sonship meekness! Jesus displayed it as He hung upon the cross. Rather than silently or openly cursing or retaliating against His murderers, in meekness He prayed, in essence, 'Father, you do all things well. I am on this cross because it is your will. These fellows are not putting me here. It is the fulfillment of your plan that I am here. And Father, because it is your will, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.' That was nothing short of *perfect meekness* in submission to the will of His Father. 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' *That is true meekness.*

"These are the kind of meek ones who are going to inherit the earth. It looks impossible! Man says, 'It is the strong who will inherit the earth.' Surely it would seem that those who are skilled in the art of warfare should inherit the earth. The human attitude declares that *might makes right*. Not so! God the Almighty's principle is different. Meekness brings dominion and rulership, the son of God assures us. What does 'inherit the earth' really mean? Jesus took the phrase from the Old Testament scriptures. It was not a new phrase with Him. It is found in Isaiah 60:21 and in many other passages. Psalm 37:9 declares, 'For evil doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord, they inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be. Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.' The 29th verse reads, 'The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever.' The 34th verse continues, 'Wait on the Lord and keep His way and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it.' Those who become submissive (meek) in their spirit shall enjoy this inheritance of the earth. This does not forego their possession of the heavens. Some seem satisfied with inheriting heaven, and some with inheriting the earth. But *the sons of God will possess both.*"

"**The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek Him: your heart shall live forever" (Ps. 22:26).** The meek are those who eat the bread of God, which is the bread that is come down from heaven as the Christ of God, and are abundantly satisfied. Their heart, their inner, deepest self, their very nature and life are quickened by the bread of God, for the bread of God is the life of God in Christ. The sons of God are right now experiencing this precious reality from day to day, as God spreads a table and gives us spiritual,

heavenly bread that the world knows not of and of which the church systems have absolutely no conception. By this bread they shall LIVE FOREVER. What a wonderful promise of abundant life!

There shall be a marvelous *result* of this celestial bread of life manifested in a company of "meek ones," the sons of God. When mankind finally sees the pure and abundant revelation of the fullness of life in the son company, it shall cause them to *remember* a state they once possessed and enjoyed in union with God. Like a person who catches a glimpse of someone from out of his distant past, and the recognition brings a sudden flood of *memories* of wonderful events of another time, so it is that when mankind sees the full revelation of divine life and glory upon the sons of God there shall come instant *recognition* and *recall* of a time when GOD WAS THEIR LIFE. The very next verse following the one I quoted above declares, "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations*" (Ps. 22:27-28). If all the peoples of the earth are to "remember" something, it means that they have already heard the voice of the Lord, they have at some previous time seen His glory, and have in some distant eon experienced His life! Certainly that was before the race fell into the futility of sin and death! And when "the meek" shall eat of the heavenly life of God until they are "satisfied," until they have appropriated *all of His divine life, nature, and power* — it is *then* that all the kindreds and nations of the earth shall be caused to *remember* and *turn unto the Lord*! And I am convinced by the Spirit of God that we are right now standing wonderfully close to that very day!

It would be of utmost profit if every Christian would diligently study the oft repeated scriptural term "in Christ" or "in Him." I will now quote one passage that appears to teach that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things. He is, of course! But that is not the truth set forth in these particular verses. I will quote this first from the King James version, since it is in this translation that the apostle Paul seems to say that all things were created *by* Jesus Christ. "*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist*" (Col. 1:15-17). From this scripture we would be led to believe that the creation was made by the Son; but it is important to note that the word translated "by" here in the first instance is the Greek word EN, and means *in*, not *by*. And this is the way that nearly all other translations render it: "For IN HIM were all things created."

Words are totally inadequate to articulate a truth so sublime, so I must leave this ultimately to the Holy Spirit of Truth to unfold within your spirit. You see, when God planned the universe, He planned it in and around His Christ. The Christ is the center and the circumference of it all. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The whole vast creation, including the spirit of every man, was made *in Him* and *for Him*. It all began *in Him* because *He is* the beginning; and it will all end *in Him* because *He is* the end. The Christ was the beginning of the creation of God, the firstborn of every creature; that doesn't mean that He was personally created before everything else, but that originally ALL WAS CREATED IN THE BEGINNING IN HIM. "*These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD*" (Rev. 3:14). You see, beloved, creation began in Christ. Christ is the origin of *all things*, including *all men*. That was the first reality of the universe. He will also be the end, for all things must not only begin in Him, but all must end in Him, for this is the Father's purpose for His Son. Everything that can possibly exist or be, is included in the scope of both creation and redemption in that wonderful passage in Colossians 1:16-20. Within the compass of five verses we read no less than *eight* times that the things created *in Him* and *for Him* are all-inclusive and all-pervading. He is the firstborn of **every creature**. **All** is created in Him, and **all** is created through and for Him. He is before **all**. **All** is bound together by Him. In **all** He is becoming first, having preeminence. **All** fullness, or the fullness of **all**, dwells in Him. He reconciles **all** through the blood of His cross and on two occasions this is amplified and defined as **all** that is in the heavens and **all** that is on the earth. It is said to include both visible and invisible — **all** matter and **all** spirits! Nothing is omitted and nothing can be left out. It certainly includes ALL MEN!

Our God and Father has been pleased to leave us in no doubt or uncertainty as to how or where all things began, but in clear, unequivocal language stated the source and goal of all things for our assurance and joy. All originated IN HIM, created from the substance of His own divine energy and being, and held together in a harmonious wholeness *in* His eternal Word, or the Christ. But, for His own wise purposes, all did not remain

that way. The scriptures are clear that all did not remain in that pristine state "in" Him. We are assured that there was initiated another stage of activity whereby all things were brought "out" of Him. Nothing can be clearer than the fact that "in" and "out" are *opposites*! You cannot be both in and out of any place or thing at the same time. It indicates a COMING OUT of. The Word of God declares that not only were all things created *in* the Christ, or *in* God, but there was a process by which the same all things *came out* of God. Let us read it: "We are aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is *no other God except One*. For even if so be that there are those being termed gods, whether in heaven or on earth, even as there are many gods and many lords, nevertheless to us *there is but one God, the Father, O-U-T OF WHOM ALL IS, and we for Him*" (I Cor. 8:4-7).

And again, "O, the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord? or who became His adviser? or who gives to Him first, and will be repaid by Him? seeing that ALL is OUT of Him and through Him and for Him: to Him be glory for the ages! Amen!" (Rom. 11:33-36). Now let us read these last verses from the Emphatic Diaglott. "For who knew the mind of the Lord? or who was His counselor? or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given to him again? Because OUT OF HIM, and through Him, and for Him are ALL THINGS. To Him be the glory for the ages. Amen." This is without doubt one of the least understood statements in the whole of the Word of God. And yet, a true comprehension of the real purpose of God from the dawn of creation to the final consummation of all things cannot be had apart from it.

In that primeval and pristine glory the spirits of all men were one with God. All began in the bosom of God and all came out of God. In the glory of that celestial beginning there was no trace of sin, no evil, no adversity, no death, and no darkness or discord at all. Everything everywhere existed *in Christ* and every spirit stood forth in its full majesty, pulsating the dynamic anthem of exulting creative glory. It was preeminently a *spiritual* creation, vibrating as a symphony of unutterable beauty, a triumphant masterpiece of dynamic harmonious accord. What a song!

O my Father, Thou that dwellest  
In a high and glorious place;  
When shall I regain Thy presence,  
And again behold Thy face?  
In Thy holy habitation  
Did my spirit once reside;  
In my first primeval childhood,  
Was I nurtured at Thy side.

For a great and glorious purpose  
Thou hast made me here on earth;  
and withheld the recollection  
Of my former friends and birth.  
But at times that secret something  
Whispers, "You're a stranger here;"  
And I feel that I have wandered  
From a more exalted sphere.

O my Father, Thou that dwellest  
In a high and holy place;  
Yet shall I appear before Thee,  
And again behold Thy face.  
Day by day Thy Spirit leadeth,  
Ever onward up to Thee;  
Till at last I find contentment  
In Thy pure reality!

And now, Oh the wonder of it! — "The *meek* shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek Him: your heart shall *live for ever*. All the ends of the world shall *remember* and *turn* unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations." And that is how the meek shall inherit the earth — the meek, the sons of God, are first restored in their remembrance and enter back into their inheritance in God; then as all creation is quickened to remember the sons shall restore every man and every thing back into God again. What a plan!

To be the instrument of God to restore all things unto Him requires that we be changed. We must become meek in all our ways, for the ministry of Christ is specifically directed *to* the meek and *through* the meek. Our own hearts have been won by the forerunner of meekness, the Man of Galilee now exalted in the heavens. The prophet declared of this firstborn Christ, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me **TO PREACH GOOD TIDINGS UNTO THE MEEK**" (Isa. 61:1). The good tidings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the joyous message of the Kingdom of God, is a message reserved for the meek. The meek shall inherit the earth — that is, *all things* shall be delivered into the hands of the meek! This is a principle of the Kingdom of God, and it is a principle of the realm of sonship. Therefore, all the great declarations of God throughout scripture in regard to the *meek* (check your Concordance) are revelations of God's great purposes *in His sons*. The meek inherit the earth and all things, and the same is stated of the overcoming son company. "He that overcometh *shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be my son*" (Rev. 21:7). If the Lord has appointed us to hear and embrace the good news of the Kingdom, He will process us, thus causing us to be meek. And when God makes us meek, we then have no reason to glory in ourselves. The meek have that inner ear of the spirit to both hear and do the will of the Father, and therefore God can trust them with omnipotent power and universal dominion. What a calling rests upon the firstfruits!

## THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mat. 5:6). This is a great saying. It is so great that we will never be able to grasp it in its rich and rounded completeness except by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It speaks of being satisfied; it speaks of the only thing that can satisfy — righteousness. And the article is used in the Greek, *the* righteousness, the one real righteousness, the righteousness of the Kingdom of God.

Now to hunger and thirst after a thing is to feel that we need it and need it badly, and need it so badly that we are determined to have it, whatever the cost. The Lord Jesus takes the most familiar of physical cravings, the appetite for meat and drink, and applies these to the cravings of the soul. He is not asserting the blessedness of righteousness in itself, but the blessedness of those who *hunger and thirst* after righteousness. The Lord looks upon the heart. It is not a question of what we are, but of what we are called to be, and therefore want to be. He promises to fill the sons of God, not with the elementary blessings and benefits of free grace, but with that high and holy thing we desire above all else. Our deepest longings shall become our greatest possessions! And this is the principle of His promise to the sons of the Kingdom! Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after the righteousness of the Kingdom of God! Blessed are those sons who shall reign in righteousness!

One scholar says that the Greek expresses it this way, "Blessed are those who hunger for the *entire loaf* and thirst for the *entire pitcher*." God is raising up a people that is not satisfied with the firstfruits of the Spirit, that is not satisfied with the Spirit by measure, that is not satisfied with mere *gifts* and *blessings*, that is not satisfied with just the feast of Passover or the feast of Pentecost, who will not settle for salvation and speaking in tongues and a few healings and miracles along the way — they want the whole package. They want the fullness of God. They want perfection, the mind of Christ, maturity, and incorruptible life and glory. Some think these are extremes, pipe dreams, things that are too high for us. But such desires are "blessed" in the words of the first manifested son of God! **Blessed** are those who hunger and thirst for the fullness of God! **Blessed** are those who hunger and thirst for the Holiest of all! **Blessed** are those who hunger and thirst for the feast of Tabernacles! And these are blessed simply because **they shall be filled!**

The Kingdom of God is infinite just as God Himself is infinite. Our progression into God is infinite, and that is just why the prophet declared by the Spirit, "Of the *increase of His government and peace there shall be no*

**end" (Isa. 9:7).** Eternal increase! Can we even comprehend that? The story is told of a man in the Patent Office in Washington, D. C. who resigned his position in 1835 because he had come to the conclusion that about the last of the inventions had been made, and his office would soon close. That was almost a hundred and sixty-five years ago, and still the inventions come pouring in thicker and faster than ever! There are no limits to the field of invention. It is as boundless as space. And the possibilities of the life of sonship are equally rich and ample. The thirst of the soul is not soon quenched. It is like the asymptote to the parabola in mathematics, in that the line only reaches the curve at infinity.

The greatest curse of religion is that it *settles*, it forms its dogmas and creeds, its rituals and forms, its institutions and programs, and builds its fences around them and there is nowhere to go beyond that. But the Kingdom of God is like walking across the earth. On yonder hill I see the horizon line, but when I climb the hill and put out my hand to touch it, the line retreats and is just as far off as ever. So when I know one truth I see another. When I attain one experience in God there is another just ahead. No explorer in the vastness of the Kingdom realm need ever sigh that there are no more worlds to conquer. We are on a journey. What is behind is interesting but it is not half so interesting as what lies before! We are sons of God, children of the infinite and only the infinite can be our eventual home. If you eat a meal you lose your appetite, but if you feed on the Lord Jesus Christ your appetite is intensified and you cry for more. Ah, that we might *know Him*, not just in a measure, but in the infinitude of His fullness; this, O Lord, is the cry of our hearts! The attainable is not attained until we "awake in His likeness."

Hunger and thirst after God is not a condition that comes at will. We cannot *will* ourselves to be hungry. We cannot put an edge on appetite if the appetite is not there, except by some questionable temporary stimulant; just as at the old Roman feasts men would drink bitter mixtures to make them thirsty and regurgitate their food to regain their hunger. Only God can give man a hunger for the Kingdom, just as it is only God who can satisfy the hunger. We pray for our loved ones, we cry out to God because we are concerned, dismayed, or alarmed that they have no hunger for the depths of God. It distresses us that they are satisfied with the husks that the swine eat in the pig pens of the world or the church systems of man. And yet, they *cannot* hunger until God's *time* for them arrives and He Himself creates within them the hunger. They cannot will to hunger. Nor does God command us, "Hunger! Thirst!" Jesus merely explains the way of the Kingdom, the principle of the Kingdom — Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst! Happy are they! We are happy *because* we hunger, and we hunger *because* our heavenly Father sovereignly laid His hand upon us and apprehended us to His Kingdom. Yes! WE ARE **BLESSED!**

And, furthermore, the quest for righteousness is the only quest that is certain of fulfillment. In this blessed crusade there can be no disappointments, no failures. We have our Lord's own word for it. If you are truly hungering and thirsting after the fullness of God, my beloved, it is not possible to fail. "They shall be *filled*" is the promise. Fed, Filled, Satisfied! The peacemakers are going to be called the sons of God; the merciful are going to obtain mercy; the mourners are going to be comforted; the meek are going to inherit the earth. All of these are divine certainties, absolute principles of the Kingdom of God. And those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are going to be *satisfied*.

Only righteousness can satisfy. That is the law of the Kingdom. Should you be given power without righteousness, it would not satisfy. Would not it have been surprising, for instance, if Jesus had said, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after *knowledge*." How great a thing is knowledge! "Knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven," said Shakespeare. There is not much danger these days of underrating knowledge. The pursuit of truth, the unveiling of nature's secrets, the development of technology, the exploration of the universe is mind-boggling. Alexander the Great so valued learning that he used to say that he was more indebted to Aristotle for giving him knowledge than to Philip his father for giving him life.

"Knowledge is power," said another; on which yet another comments that knowledge is power in the sense that wood is fuel. Wood on fire is fuel and knowledge on fire is power. There is no more power in knowledge of itself than there is in pieces of sticks or lumps of coal. Knowledge is not power until it burns and sparkles in some earnest, consecrated life. When such a life hungers and thirsts for knowledge then it becomes power. If we desire the *knowledge of God* and the knowledge of His Kingdom only *for the sake of knowledge*, then we will never be conformed into God's image, we will never attain unto incorruptible life, nor will we ever rule in the

Kingdom of God. Head-knowledge of Kingdom truths is only so many sticks and pieces of coal. There is no power. Nothing will ever be accomplished. I meet people continually who can mouth all the right phrases and are able to speak Kingdom terminology, they know all the doctrines inside-out, but it has never burned in their lives, it has never been translated into power in their experience. But even when the power of the Kingdom begins to operate within, we are not satisfied. There is yet a void, a lack, something is missing, we are still hungry and thirsty. **ONLY RIGHTEOUSNESS CAN SATISFY!** I would not be mistaken in saying that you will be far more blessed, dear friend, more satisfied, more filled by possessing righteousness without power than in having power without righteousness. That is the law of the Kingdom of God.

"They shall be filled." "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall never thirst." Filled with righteousness means that they shall *be* righteous. *They shall be like Him.* God has made man's spirit so great that no created thing can possibly feed it, much less fill it. There is a vacuum in the soul that nothing can fill but the life of God Himself. The world's concoction is like rich confectionery to a starving man. Only spiritual realities can satisfy the spiritual life. "My soul thirsteth for the living God." I believe that I would be correct in saying that the *soul* thirsts and the *spirit* hungers after God. And we who hunger and thirst after God and His Kingdom and His righteousness in this hour are being filled! To be sure, this reaches far beyond the present. It can only be true in its literal completeness when we stand on mount Zion with the Father's name written in our foreheads. To be satisfied is to cease from hungering and that can only come in the fullness of God.

[George MacDonald](#) once put it so well: "To be *filled* with righteousness is to forget even righteousness itself in the bliss of *being righteous*, that is, a son of God. The thought of righteousness will vanish in the fact of righteousness. When a creature is just what he is meant to be, what only he is fit to be; when, therefore, he is truly himself, he never thinks what he is. He *is* that thing; why think about it? It is no longer outside of him that he should contemplate it or desire it." That is what it means to be "filled with righteousness." Filled goes beyond hungering and thirsting. How *blessed* is the one who is filled!

All through His ministry, Jesus emphasized the great value of eternal things, in contrast to the material or visible things. The "blessed" one must be just as hungry for righteousness as he would be for food if he had had none for days or weeks. All men can understand this, for all of us have at one time or another had this experience in the physical body. Jesus insists that blessing is never attached to mere hungering and thirsting after *natural things*. Those who seek wealth and prosperity in this world's goods, those who say the "King's kids" should have the finest homes, the fastest cars, the best jobs, the most expensive clothes, and the largest bank accounts know nothing of the blessing of the Kingdom of God. **"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 7:33).** That is the law of the Kingdom. The hunger for, and the thought of seeking after, must be for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Then all these necessary natural things will be added. They are not the *blessing* — they are the *added*. Yet multitudes of Christians today are *seeking the added* and *calling it the blessing*. They are wrong. God does not *bless* you with houses and lands and earthly things. Those are not blessings of the Kingdom! They are mere things that are *added* after you have received the blessing of the Kingdom. God's counsel to all those who imagine that God is blessing them with temporal, corruptible things is: **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestinated us unto the placement as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:3-5).** Now *that*, my friend, IS BLESSING!

To hunger to add something more to our stature, some finer clothing to our wardrobe, or a swimming pool to our place of dwelling promises no satisfaction or blessing. Even those who seek after signs are hungering after *externals* and not after the Kingdom of God. In the whole Constitution of the Kingdom Jesus never once says, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after signs and wonders and miracles, for they shall be called the sons of God who shall inherit the earth." Hungering to behold signs in the sun, in the moon, in the hand, in the forehead, in healings, miracles, and wonders, or anywhere else, is not hungering for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. There is no promise that those who seek after signs will be satisfied or blessed. If we are hungering and thirsting after signs, we become just a part of an adulterous, unbelieving generation that demands a sign. No sign shall be given to it.

The deepest meaning of righteousness is obedience to the will of God. Jesus said, "My *meat* (the thing I hunger after, that sustains me) is to do the will of Him that sent me." That is true righteousness. It was demonstrated in the life of the firstborn Son of God. The basic principle of His life was phrased by the Psalmist, "Lo, I come to do Thy will O God." He did not come to save lost souls primarily. He did not come primarily to heal sick bodies. He did not come primarily to perform miracles, to feed the multitudes, to still the raging sea, or to produce tax-money from the mouth of a fish. His sole mission on earth was to fulfill the will of the Father.

The sons of God must have this same testimony. Our all-consuming passion must be to perfectly perform the will of God in our lives, whether that be working or waiting, winning or losing, suffering or recovering, prospering or being impoverished, going or staying, preaching or carpentering, or living or dying. We feel helpless beside a truth so great and eternal. God must teach us these things. He sets before us the example in Jesus. He hungered to be in the center of, and perfectly obedient to, the will of the Father. He learned this obedience by the things which He suffered (Heb. 5:8). The sons of God today are learning this righteousness through the things which they suffer in their maturing experience. Their personal action in the process is merely to hunger and thirst after this righteousness. God wisely and sovereignly "sets us up" by causing the circumstances to so arrange themselves into the *suffering* by which He teaches us *righteousness*. He brings us into conformity with His will by the pressure of our environmental experiences. Our steps are ordered by the Lord. And the righteousness thereby effected within our lives *is the righteousness of God*. This is exactly what the sons of God are hungering and thirsting after today. They are bowing low before the Father and saying "Amen!" to the will of God. It is not an external demonstration of righteousness that someone might behold and commend to exalt our ego. It is not a set of standards established by a group of religious churchmen. It is not the observance of outward rules and regulations called holiness. We are hungering after a deeper righteousness. We are hungering after the very life, the very nature, the very substance of Christ that we might *become* "the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus." Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after this righteousness!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 32**  
**THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART THIRTY-TWO**

**THE PURE IN HEART**

The fifth beatitude, or principle of the Kingdom of God, is found in **Matthew 5:7**. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Mercy is a characteristic of the sons of God since it was a characteristic of the Pattern Son — Jesus. Luke states this principle in these words, "Be ye therefore merciful, even as your Father in heaven is merciful" (**Lk. 6:35**). The life of the firstborn Son revealed this attribute of the Father's own nature. The life of all of God's sons will express that same attribute, for it is the nature of our Father. Mercy is love in manifestation toward an erring one. In the Old Testament mercy is used to describe God in His attitude and activity toward His people. David exults about the goodness of the Lord, saying, "The mercy of the Lord endureth for the ages." It means that the actions of God toward mankind are merciful and remain so as long as time endures, until that blessed dispensation of the fullness of times, the consummation of all ages, when all things are gathered together into one in Christ, and God becomes ALL IN ALL — everything to everyone, everywhere! It is an enduring relationship that does not end until grace and mercy and redemption have finished their work on behalf of the human race.

This fifth principle of the Kingdom of God insists that the sons of God are to demonstrate this same spirit in their ministry to men. We are the instrument of God to bring His salvation unto all the ends of the earth. And only love can prevail! Judgment is sometimes necessary to restrain evil, but only grace and mercy reveal the tender heart and redemptive purpose of the Father. And while it is true that the merciful also obtain mercy, this demonstration of mercy is not motivated by the hope of receiving mercy in return. That is only the glorious by-product of being merciful. The sons of God do not come to have mercy shown to them, but to show mercy. When we show mercy because it is our *nature* to be merciful, and with no hidden agenda of obtaining mercy in return, we are moving onto the high plane of sonship ministry. It is still true that those who show mercy will have mercy shown to them, for it is the law of the Kingdom! The Father will abundantly pour out His mercy upon those who flow out in His mercy unto others.

Mercy is an aspect of the perfection of the Father's nature. This is to be found also in the sons. For sons it cannot be something we learn to do, or something we do out of obligation because we are commanded to do it, but it must flow out of the heart of the Father birthed within us. Many years ago there was a song titled, "Doing what comes *naturally*." That is what all of Adam's race is doing — what comes naturally! In Adam it is natural to sin, natural to doubt, natural to fear, natural to lust, natural to strive, natural to fight, natural to hate, natural to cheat, natural to war, natural to retaliate. All these things and many more are *natural* because they spring out of *nature*. That is what natural means — *nature-al*. People just do what comes *nature-ally*! But the sons of God are made partakers of the *divine nature*. When a son of God does "what comes naturally" he is acting just like his Father! Ah, yes, we are putting on the mind of Christ, the law of God's life is being inscribed within our hearts, and we are coming to that place where we now think as God thinks, we now speak as God speaks, we now walk like God walks, and we act like God acts. To be perfect in character, to be pure in mind, to be kind, generous, faithful, loving and merciful is becoming NATURAL!

A brother related the following experience. "I recall one time when I had laryngitis, the doctor wanted to take a throat culture to see if I had an infection. He took a long Q-tip and reached way back into my throat. I gagged and coughed. When he withdrew the Q-tip he said, 'I need to do this one more time.' I said, 'Okay. But this time I won't gag. I am going to practice positive thinking.' He shook his head and assured me that, in this case, positive thinking would not work. I insisted that it would. And so he explained, 'Bob, the gag is a *reflex*. A reflex comes from the spine, not from the brain. I'll put pressure on the back of your tongue and you *will* gag. It's that simple.' Then he demonstrated by having me cross my legs. He hit my knee. My leg kicked. Then he challenged me, 'Okay, try positive thinking.' I did. He hit my knee *again*. My knee kicked *again*. Then he

summarized, 'The brain doesn't control the spinal cord. And the spinal cord is the source of a reflex. So, *thinking*, be it positive or negative, won't do you any good in this situation.'

The nature of the sons of God works like a reflex. There is a realm *beyond the mind* and *beyond the will* where the nature of God makes us like our Father without conscious thought or effort. Children often walk or talk or laugh or manifest some other mannerism just like one of their parents or some other ancestor. These are inherited traits that have nothing to do with thought, training or effort. It is the way *we are*. The nature of God must be so formed in us by the operation of the Holy Spirit that the attributes of God **become our nature**. If we are still *thinking* about how we should act and react, if we are still *trying* to bring ourselves to the point where we can manifest God's life, then the nature of the Father has yet to be fully formed in us. There is no condemnation if you fall short; but trying will not do the job. Nature is inherited on the basis of *relationship*, and as we are truly born again from experience to experience, from realm to realm, we are made partakers of the divine nature. When the Father's life has truly become *our life*, the attributes of God will flow naturally and effortlessly and powerfully from our lives!

Mercy is not measured by outward demonstrations of kindness and goodness. As wonderful as visible acts of kindness are, they do not guarantee the possession of mercy in the heart as a true revelation of the Father. Any of us can force our actions to conform outwardly to the standard we believe God requires of us. And even though externally we appear to be kind and gracious and good and merciful, we are not yet doing "what comes *naturally*." Mercy by revelation is the transmission of the very heart of God to the son. When mercy flows out of our *state of being*, every attitude and activity is merciful. There is no other possible way for the son of God to act or react. Because the Christ within cannot act in any other manner, the son of God cannot act in any other manner. He is merciful because he is filled with and possessed by the SPIRIT OF MERCY. **"Blessed are the merciful!"**

All who rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom rule in mercy. The throne of God *is* the Throne of Mercy. **"And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth...judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness" (Isa. 16:5)**. In mercy shall the throne be established, saith the Lord. God has come to our lives in mercy. The only reason we are breathing today is because of His mercy. God didn't have to wake us up this morning in our right mind, but He did. Mercy is an aspect of God's nature that flows out to all men, for our heavenly Father causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Man does not know how to be so merciful!

The Greek word for throne is KICCE. It means the place or seat of authority. The throne of God is not a golden chair somewhere out in outer space, nor is it a seat in London, England or in Jerusalem, Israel. It is the authority that is invested in the *name* of Jesus Christ within His elect. The Lord is taking all the authority that is in the name or nature of Jesus Christ and He is *establishing* that authority in His sons and daughters as the power of life.

Before David became king, while Saul was seeking to kill him, God put mercy in David's heart. David and his men hid in many places in the mountains of Judah, continually hunted by Saul, but always escaping from him. At one time Jonathan, Saul's son, and David's friend, came to meet David in a forest, and he said to him, "Fear not, for the Lord is with you; and Saul, my father, shall not take you prisoner. You will yet be the king of Israel, and I shall stand next to you." And Jonathan and David made the promise to be true to each other and to each other's children always. Then they parted; and David never again saw his dear friend, Jonathan.

At one time David was hiding with a few men in a great cave near the Dead Sea, at a place called Engedi. They were far back in the darkness of the cave, when they saw Saul come into the cave alone and lie down to sleep. David's men whispered to him, "Now is the time of which the Lord said, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you may do to him whatever you please.'" Then David went toward Saul very quietly with his sword in his hand. His men watched to see him kill Saul, but instead, he only cut off a part of Saul's long robe. His men were not pleased with this; but David said to them, "May the Lord forbid that I should do harm to the man whom the Lord has anointed as king." And David would not allow his men to harm Saul. After a time Saul rose up from sleep and went out of the cave. David followed him at a distance and called out to him, "My lord the king!" Saul looked around, and there stood David, bowing to him and holding up the piece of his royal robe.

David said to Saul, "My lord, O king, why do you listen to the words of men who tell you that David is trying to do you harm? This very day the Lord gave you into my hand, and some told me to kill you, but I said, 'I will do no harm to my lord, for he is the Lord's anointed king.' See, my father, see the skirt of your robe! I cut it off to show you that I would do you no harm, though you are hunting after me to kill me. May the Lord judge between you and me!"

When Saul heard these words, his old love for David came back to him and he cried out, "Is that your voice, my son David?" And Saul wept and said, "You are a better man than I am, for you have done good to me, while I have been doing you harm. May the Lord reward you for your kindness to me this day! I know that it is God's will that you shall be king, and you will rule over this people. Now give me your word, in the name of the Lord, that you will not destroy my family, but that you will spare their lives." And David gave his promise to Saul in the name of the Lord; and Saul led his men away from hunting David to his place at Gibeah. David is a type of the greater son of David who was prophesied to reign in righteousness over the people of Israel and over all the nations of the earth. The blind man recognized who Jesus was when he cried out from his place by the roadside, "Jesus, thou *son of David*, have *mercy* on me!" All the sons of God are members of that corporate *son of David* whose throne is established in *mercy*! As the authority of Christ is raised up within us in *mercy* we are beginning to see the **Throne of Mercy** established in our lives. When this wonderful work is completed within the sons of God the overwhelming manifestation of *mercy* shall be seen by all the peoples of the earth!

The greatness of a man is measured by his attitude toward his enemies. While living here on earth, our Lord was extremely kind. He picked up little children and blessed them. He healed all who were suffering with disease and pain. While relatives were weeping over dead loved ones, He raised four of them to life again. The Saviour of ALL men said to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more." His **kindness** made an evangelist out of the licentious woman at the well. Because Jesus really loved the weak, helpless creatures whom He had created, He wept over them, prayed for them, succored them, and taught them continually. Except those religious Pharisees, Jesus never spoke *one cross word* to the multitudes of people, saint or sinner. He was very tender and kind and merciful in all His dealings with men. His approach to them was very gentle, delicate and considerate. Surely, then, we are safer in His hands than anywhere else! The things He has in store for every one of us are far greater than we could plan for ourselves.

Does God expect His *sons* to be either *better* or *less* than Himself? In **Luke 6:35-36** we read, "**But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be THE SONS OF THE HIGHEST; for HE IS KIND UNTO THE UNTHANKFUL AND TO THE EVIL, BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER ALSO IS MERCIFUL.**" In this instance Jesus plainly says that if we desire to be the **sons of the Highest**, we must be merciful as He is merciful. **THE HIGHEST IS MERCIFUL TO ALL!**

The question follows: Why should the Highest be merciful to the evil and the unthankful? The answer is clear — that the evil one and the unthankful one may come to know the mercy and goodness of God! They would never know that mercy in any other way. If Jesus teaches us that we are to be kind to those who mis-use us, reproach us, curse us, and make themselves our enemies, then what kind of a God and Father would He be, whose words Jesus taught us, who would **hate His enemies, refuse to be kind and merciful to those who oppose Him, and cast them into merciless eternal hell to burn forever — even if they deserve it?** If such a thing were to be, then God would require *us* to be *better than Himself!* Jesus teaches us that we are to be kind and merciful to the most despicable of men. Do we then have a Father whose nature is entirely opposite to ours? Impossible! The sons of God are sent, as was the Son, to reveal the nature of our Father to all — not merely in words, but by our actions.

If we see a God who loves only those who love Him, then we have a very small and fickle God indeed. But Jesus taught us the principles of the Kingdom of God, and laid down as the very Constitution of His Kingdom this law: "**Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; THAT YE MAY BE THE SONS OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the**

unjust. And if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT" (Mat. 5:43-48).

Are we to suppose that God requires us to behave in one way toward the unrighteous, while His own disposition toward them is exactly the opposite? Are we to believe that our Father commands *us* to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that persecute us...while *He* banishes *His* enemies to everlasting damnation, torturing endlessly those that curse *Him*, meeting out eternal vengeance upon those that hate *Him*, and shutting up all mercy from those who persecute *Him*? But that is exactly what the churches tell us. What great nonsense! What horrible blasphemy! "Oh," they say, "God does not send men to hell; they take themselves there." What an absurd, unspeakable cop out! It is God Himself who has all power over every creature and over every event that transpires in the whole universe. There is no power but of God. He is the Judge of all. None can go into hell except that He banishes them there. Men do not go down into hell on their own volition. No man would! Adam didn't leave the Garden of his own volition, God Himself *drove* the man from the Garden. The serpent didn't do it; God did. And the devil certainly isn't the one who takes men to hell! No scripture says that.

God in infinite wisdom has ordained judgment for His corrective purposes, but blessed be His name, He always makes a way for His banished to return. Is it not obvious that if even one ounce of that *infinite love*, of that *unequaled goodness*, of that *unending mercy*, of that *omnipotent power* of the heavenly Father and His sons in His image, were to reach these people — the goodness of God would ultimately triumph and lead all men to repentance; and hell would eventually *freeze over*! And it is so! Hallelujah! It is so! How do I know? *The Bible tells me so*. Furthermore, the mind of Christ and my Father's nature and heart within my own ransomed spirit *tell me so*! That is why God Himself is the Saviour, the Deliverer, and the Redeemer. He loves the sinner enough to be patient even for long ages with him; He loves the sinner enough to forgive him any depth of vileness, insult, or injury; He loves him enough to pardon, cleanse, and transform him by His Infinite Grace and Omnipotent Power. He hates sin enough to deal with it, He hates death enough to destroy it, and He hates hell enough to empty it! It cannot but be true, David's testimony of Him, "His mercy endures for the ages..."

God not only reigns in righteousness, He *reigns in mercy*. Mercy is the activity of His authority and power. "**And in mercy shall the throne be established" (Isa. 16:5)**. The Hebrew word for throne also means "a canopy; something that is covered." The mercy seat in the tabernacle in the wilderness was covered by the skins and the veil of the Most Holy Place and by the overspreading wings of the Cherubim of gold. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my covered place — *the mercy seat*." It was upon the mercy seat that the glory of the God of Israel dwelt. He is preeminently a God of mercy, who *remembers mercy* in time of judgment. The writer to the Hebrews says, "**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16)**. God is the God of mercy. Mercy is the ability to get in other people's skin until you see the way they see, hear the way they hear, feel the way they feel — so that you can be touched by the feelings of their infirmities. That is exactly what Jesus did for you and me. And it is what every *son of mercy* must attain to. "**In mercy shall my canopy be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth...judging, and seeking judgment, and accelerating righteousness" (Isa. 16:5)**. God's throne is a covered place, a canopy, the place of mercy where all sin is covered. On another level *we are* the tabernacle of God and the ark is in us. The throne of mercy is established in our hearts. "In mercy shall the throne be established." Where? IN US! "And He shall sit upon it." Where? IN US! "And He shall judge." Where? IN US! "And He shall seek justice." Where? IN US! "And He shall accelerate righteousness." Where? IN US! Nothing that God's throne is or that it represents is worth a hill of beans until it becomes reality and life in us. God must reign *in us and through us* — in mercy!

The world today is full of people who excel in so many virtues, and live in a state of holiness so far as their conduct is concerned, and yet spoil it all with an unmerciful disposition. It has been said that there are only two kinds of sin: there are the sins of the body and the sins of the disposition (soul). Christians have been conditioned to condemn the sins of the body as far worse than the sins of the disposition. But listen to this, O sons of God: No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of money and possessions, not foul language, not drunkenness or drug abuse, not adultery or sexual perversion, does more to shut up God from men than *unmercifulness*. For embittering life, for splitting churches, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for alienating friends and loved ones, for withering up men

and women, for perverting the innocence of childhood, for fostering hostilities and warfare, in short, for sheer misery-producing power, lack of love and unmercifulness take the lead.

The sins of the body and the sins of the soul (disposition) are illustrated by the story of the Prodigal Son and his Elder Brother. But, ultimately, which was worse? And how many prodigal sons are kept out of the Kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside? Analyze, as a study in mercy, the thundercloud as it gathers upon the older brother's brow! What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, judgment, vindictiveness, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness — these are the ingredients of this dark and sullen soul. I do not think I am mistaken when I say that the sins of the soul are worse to live in, and for others to live with, and more destructive to God's gracious nature, than any of the gross sins of the body. Did Jesus not say that the harlots and the publicans enter into the Kingdom of God before the religious Pharisees? Why is a judgmental, condemning attitude so vile? Because it denies the very redemptive nature and heart of the Father — His mercy! And I do not hesitate to tell you that no man can be a priest after the Order of Melchizedek, which is the Order of the Son of God, unless he be a MERCIFUL PRIEST.

The writer to the Hebrews put it this way: "Forasmuch then as the children (of God) are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:14-18). When the Word of God consented to be made flesh, to strip Himself of the glory He had before, and become a man, a human being, to live among the vileness of the sinful, rebellious, and dying, to be touched by the same infirmities, weaknesses, and feelings that touch us, to suffer being tempted in all points like as we are, to be rejected and suffer the agony of false accusation and the humiliation of ridicule, the pain of the stripes received from the Roman lashes, and the suffering of the cross itself — why did He submit to all this? The stock answer to this is that He had to become a man and suffer and die in order to purchase our redemption. This is true. This is a part of the reason He became a man, *but only part of it*; there is much more to the reason He became a man, *much more*.

Not for one moment would I detract from His great love for us in the sacrifice He made for our salvation. Such love, such wondrous love! Words fail to express the wonder of all that was transacted at Calvary, and how thankful and appreciative we are for it! But in the passage quoted above we see that Jesus became a man, not only to die on the cross for our sins, but after having redeemed us, to become a High Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek, a faithful High Priest and a MERCIFUL HIGH PRIEST. Ah, Jesus could be the eternal *King* without having been so totally compassed about with infirmity. But He could never be a *Merciful High Priest* without it! He might have been perfect in character and desirous to help us; but, if He had never tasted death, how could He allay our fears as we walk through the dreadful quagmire of this *death realm*? If He had never been tempted, how could He succor those who are tempted? If He had never wept, how could He soothe and dry our tears? If He had never suffered, hungered, wearied on the hill of difficulty, or threaded His way through the swamplands of grief, how could He be a *merciful* and faithful High Priest, full of understanding, compassion, and kindness? And the nature of the firstborn Son of God, the High Priest of our Profession, must be the nature of every member of the *body of sons* who are also the *body of the High Priest* — the *Priests and the Priesthood* of the Most High God! "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou hast made us unto our God kings and *priests*: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10). "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and...they shall be *priests of God and of Christ*, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4,6).

Let all men know that God is a GOD OF MERCY! "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plentious in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever" (Ps. 103:8-10). "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth unto all generations" (Ps. 100:1,5). "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Lk. 6:36). "Blessed are the merciful..." (Mat. 5:7). SONS OF THE HIGHEST will be merciful even as their Father! It is the mark of sonship.

The following words by [Paul Mueller](#) are precious truth for this hour. "The basic principle of mercy in the Kingdom of God is clearly stated: the merciful shall receive mercy. Those who lack mercy, who condemn the

lawless, inconsistent lifestyles of others, and put them outside the grace and mercy of the Lord, will not receive mercy for themselves. Much of Christendom is embroiled in carnal, political efforts to isolate and bring judgment on those who do not live according to their standards. It is plain to see that they themselves are violating a basic principle of the Kingdom of God. When they stand before the great Judge of all, their merciless attitude toward others will bring forth a harvest of judgment. But the judgments of the Lord are always tempered with His abundant mercy (Ja. 2:13).

"Most certainly, what most Christians believe is far from the basic principles of the Kingdom of God. A good friend told me years ago that the only truth most Christians know for sure is the truth that Jesus died for them. Everything else they believe and teach is either a mixture of man's ideas, or is total error. But this is a new Day of reformation and restoration unto full redemption. The Lord has been restoring truth to His elect, by the Spirit. We are blessed in being part of another, significant, spiritual reformation. This time, we are not led to post these kingdom truths on the doors of the churches, as Martin Luther did, but Father is writing them on the tables of our hearts, by the Spirit, where it will do the most good.

"All who receive of the Lord's salvation and enter His house do so by the abundant mercies of the Lord. The Psalmist said, *'I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy'* (Ps. 5:7). And all who dwell continually in His house are surrounded by His goodness and mercy. David said, *'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever'* (Ps. 23:6). The basic principle of the kingdom of God and of the Lord's house is mercy. All who come into the kingdom and the house of the Lord can only come because of the Lord's goodness, grace and mercy. But for Christians to show a merciless attitude toward others is to stand in the doorway of the kingdom as the scribes and Pharisees did. Jesus said to them, *'ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in'* (Mat. 23:13).

"The Lord has had mercy on His elect in Zion. Therefore we should be merciful to others. The Psalmist prophesied, *'Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come'* (Ps. 103:13). It is due to the Lord's forever enduring mercy that He is now favoring Zion, which is the spiritual realm of the elect. The Lord is dealing with the elect of Zion now, not with the multitudes in the world. The Lord's purpose for us is perfection in Christ. It is a purpose only He can fulfill. *'The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands'* (Ps. 138:8). We are the works of His hands! And we know that in His mercy, the Lord will surely perfect that which He has begun in us for His glory" — end quote.

Demonstrations of mercy, such as the world has never known, are now upon the horizon, ready to be manifested at our Father's appointed time. Ah, darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, but God is forming a body of His own nature with a message of *mercy* and *hope*, and in them the light of His glory shall arise upon all the ends of the earth. God is preparing a merciful priesthood to minister unto all the kindreds and nations of mankind. It is a light arising in the darkness and out of the darkness to swallow up all the darkness everywhere. It is a *theatrical of mercy* in a world of wrath and violence and degradation.

My earnest prayer to God is that all His dear sons shall learn this one grand truth: *"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"* (Mat. 7:1-2). That is but a negative way of saying, "Blessed are the merciful: for *they shall obtain mercy*." Note the words: Shall be judged — shall be measured. There are two kinds of judgment. One is of condemnation; the other is of mercy. The one is according to appearance and accusation of evil; the other is righteous judgment and according to truth and mercy. Jesus commands to "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." He warns against the judgment which arises from faultfinding and condemning. The warning is just this: You will be judged *with* your own judgment, and you will be measured with, or in, *your own measure*. The measure that you use for others is the very same measure that shall be used for you — until you learn! Until you become a merciful one!

How precious this inworking of His grace whereby we are being transformed to become HIS MERCIFUL ONES. How long we have walked with God without learning what it means to **"have mercy,"** to become a vessel or channel through whom His mercy is poured forth. There has been far too much fight in us, a demand for justice according to what we perceived to be justice. *"And that He might make known the riches of His glory*

on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He hath called..." (Rom. 9:23-24).

Merciful priests! The priestly heart is above all things a sympathetic, compassionate, merciful heart, in which the love of Christ constrains us to express His goodness unto men. If a vicious serial killer is caught and slain, or some homosexual activist is murdered, there is that deceitful self-righteous spirit within us which silently judges, saying, "Good...there is one less murderer or one less pervert in the world." That is not the Spirit of God, and it is not the judgment of a Priest of God. A priestly heart! Oh, Spirit of God! Write upon my heart, with indelible letters, the merciful heart of my High Priest! It is my deep conviction that it is more important to manifest the nature of Christ in meeting a person's need, than in witnessing to people about the "plan of salvation." Christians have become so conditioned to the idea that they aren't "doing anything for God" unless they go out and witness, skillfully using the sword of the Word of God. But, my precious brother, my dear sister, when you are merciful and encourage and help people in their desperate need, you **become a living word** to them that says, "I care and God cares for you!" Jesus speaks His word through us in actions, we become a word that is alive to them, not a dead, printed word, or doctrinal word, or religious word, but a Living Word. This is a life to be lived, as Jesus did, and it is more important than witnessing, quoting scripture verses, teaching or preaching. Instead of witnessing, we BECOME THE WITNESS of what our Father is *really like*.

There is no need to be skilled in the wisdom and ways of this world, no need to attend a Bible School or Seminary; no special talent is needed, no training, no education, no wealth, no power, or attainment in order to BE A VESSEL OF MERCY. Any saint of God can be a merciful priest any day, because there are people who need help every day! When we care for them, we are bringing the heart of God to them in the place of their need. Our Father cares for every soul that has ever seen the light of day upon this planet. The way that He has chosen to reveal that He cares is through His MERCIFUL PRIESTHOOD. That is why it is so important for us to know what our Father is like, that He is a God of justice and a God that is filled with kindness and tender mercies that endure throughout all ages.

It is the property of God to always have mercy, and mercy triumphs over judgment. His mercy is above the heavens. It is from everlasting to everlasting. He has provided a way that the banished may always return. There can be no limits to God's mercy. Men have limits to their mercy, but our Father has none. The mercy of God is not only mercy, it is *tender mercy*. It is mercy of the utmost tenderness and compassionate love and infinite kindness. It is mercy that reaches to all, to the darkest sin, and to the lowest hell. Christ Himself manifested that mercy. It is mercy without any alloy, pure, and without any restraint. It is mercy without any remembrance of the transgression. It is the blotting of it out. The record is erased. It is the casting of it into the deep sea of eternal forgetfulness. It extends through all time and into eternity. Those who would be priests of the Most High must exercise His mercy. When you exercise mercy it must be in great tenderness; not grudgingly, not by compulsion, but because it is your nature to do it. Gentle and heavenly mercy is of God. When God speaks of mercy, He uses a figure which is of the sublimest character. He says not only that His mercy endures for all ages, but that His mercy is above the heavens, as if it were the dome of Infinite Love over all. Matters not where are the heavens of His justice and wrath; His mercy is higher than all! It shines brightest in the fair crown of God Himself. It seems as if it were the celestial diamond in the diadem of heaven. On the brows of all God's sons there is no brighter gem. He sets a crown of forgiveness and tender mercy upon our brows. When we are compassionate and kind and merciful, we are most like God, the very sons of the Father.

## THE PURE IN HEART

The sixth principle of the Kingdom of God is given us in these words, "**Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God**" (Mat. 5:8). Who are the pure in heart? Those whose hearts are undivided, unadulterated, unmixed, and unalloyed. To be "pure" means to be "unmixed, single, free of anything that adulterates or taints; containing nothing but its own reality." *Pure* water is water without any contaminants; *pure* air is air free from pollutants; *pure* gold is refined until it contains no tinge of alloy, no trace of impurities, no residue of dross. Under the law of Moses people were not permitted to wear garments of wool mingled with linen. Not that there is wrong in either one, but *the type* is meaningful, for wool is derived from animals while linen comes from a plant. They were not to plow with an ox and an ass in the same yoke, for an ox is a *clean animal*, but an ass is

*unclean*. God was showing that there are things that are not to be mixed. Flesh must not be mixed with spirit. Truth must not be mixed with error. Righteousness must not be mixed with unrighteousness. The will of God must not be mixed with the will of man. The activities of the people of God must not be mixed with the methods and ways of the world and of Mystery Babylon. Purity of heart means that the old Adamic heart is put off; the old religious heart is put off as well. There is singleness of vision, purpose, hope and motive; the mind of Christ which is the nature of the Father is its only reality.

This truth is powerfully expressed in one of the writings of George Wylie. He writes, "Some years ago, at a camp meeting I attended, there was a lovely flow of teaching. There was very little prophecy, but wonderful teaching. The people, and especially the young people, expressed their appreciation of the teaching. 'This is just what we need,' they said. When it came to the last meeting, and the teaching ministry had not reached its climax, one of the brethren said to one who had taken it on himself to direct the meetings, 'Don't you think we should let the teaching ministry finish?' 'No,' he answered, 'we want to pray and prophesy over some people, we want to impress some who are here from a certain area.' I won't mention any names, but the idea was to try and impress those present with the greatness of our prophetic ministry. We wanted to let them see how we could do it. So we got some people up on the platform where all could see and prophesied gifts and ministries to them. I don't think they were the least impressed, as we never saw them again.

"One wonders, when such things are done, how much of God is in it and how much of the fleshly nature; how much of the prophecy was from God, and how much came from the mind of man. We have seen some poor earnest souls struggling to exercise a gift, and fulfill a ministry that was prophesied to them, that didn't seem to be there. How we need to make sure that our deeds **are wrought in God**. 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name...and in Thy name done many wonderful works...depart from me, ye *workers of lawlessness*.' How we need to make sure that our hands are clean, that when we carry into the temple our sacrifice of praise and service, to present it to the Lord, that it is not defiled with the uncleanness of the works of darkness, the corruption of the flesh, and the pride of self. Are we ministering unto the Lord in pure love or are we looking for praise and acclaim from men, trying to impress others with our ability and greatness.

"Who has the right to climb the mountain of Yahweh, who has the right to stand in His holy place? He whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure' (Ps. 24:3-4, Jerusalem Bible). 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.' If we are to see God, and stand in His presence in the Most Holy Place, we not only need clean hands but also a pure heart. Pure means to be without mixture. It is oneness. One of the hamburger places here advertises 'Pure Canadian Beef.' That means there is nothing in their hamburgers but Canadian beef. It has no fillers, no hamburger helpers such as oatmeal, bread crumbs, or whatever else they can put into it. One can usually tell whether it is pure beef or not.

"Our heart is our inward man and when we first invite the Savior in, our heart is not pure; besides the Lord being there, there is a lot of the old self nature. We have dual personality, a mixture of self and the Spirit of Christ. These two are at enmity with one another. There is constant conflict between the flesh and the spirit. Whether we call it self, the flesh, sin, the carnal nature, or the old man, it is all one and the same and is contrary to God and doing His will. 'For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would' (Gal. 5:17, R.S.V.). If one is careless, and not overly concerned about pleasing the Lord, he may not be too conscious of this conflict and most of the time he will be living after the flesh; but if your heart's desire is to do the will of God you will certainly know of this war in your inward parts. When we desire to do the will of God, the old self is there to oppose. Sometimes we know when the flesh has had its way, but many times we have been doing the will of self and are convinced we have done the will of God. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?' (Jer. 17:9). It is so deceitful that one can even commit murder and think he is doing God's will. Jesus said, 'They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God a service' (Jn. 16:2). Can you imagine a man being so deceived? It is easy! Many today, even among the professed elect, are committing character murder, slandering a brother in Christ, desiring to kill his ministry and destroy his influence with God's children, and are convinced they are doing God's will. "The pure in heart is one in which only *one personality* dwells. Paul described the pure in heart when he said, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me.' Paul's old self-nature had been brought to death, it no longer existed, only the Christ lived within

him. Paul's old nature was gone and the divine nature controlled his being. If we are to have a heart pure enough to be able to stand when He appeareth, we will have to come to this place also.

"If we are to arrive at the place God wants us to attain, and be what He wants us to be, the old self nature has to go. If from us a *pure stream* of the water of life is to flow to the restoration and life of the rest of creation, this river must be unpolluted. I think we should all be conscious of the fact that in the course of our ministry we may receive something pure directly from God, but after flowing through a carnal vessel what comes out of our mouth may not be all that pure. It could, and usually does, pick up some impurities along the way. It is like running pure water through a dirty pipe. The water may be pure when it enters the pipe, but what comes out the other end has very likely picked up some of the impurities left by what formerly flowed through the pipe. We have been contaminated with sin and self, and even though saved and washed in the blood, there is still fleshliness in us and we are still possessed with selfish and carnal desires; some of our own thoughts and desires can be mixed with what God has given us as it flows through us to others. My prayer for years has been, 'Lord, as I minister what you have given me to give to your people, please let it be a pure stream; let it not be polluted with my own thoughts or desires as it flows through my mind. Cleanse my mind, renew my mind that I may only have the mind of Christ.' Every time I sit down at the computer to write, my last prayer is, 'Lord, I am your vessel; I want you to use this vessel. I want to be like your firstborn Son who said, I speak only the words I have heard from my Father; I want to do the same. Give me the words to write and help me to write only what you have given me, no more and no less; prevent any of my own thoughts or feelings from entering into this writing'" — end quote.

their religion or lack of it, or the degree of sin in their lives. God loves them all, God was in Christ reconciling them all, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and God shall deliver and change them all, in their due order (I Cor. 15:23). We are the elect who are now being changed in our order, for this Day is the Day of God's choosing in our lives to change us into the image and likeness of Christ. The process of our change requires a new heart. We shall have a heart that wills only the purposes of God and His Kingdom. It is the heart that counts all men and all things as reconciled unto God. It is the heart that embraces the power of the Kingdom of God to subdue every person on earth, and make them subject to God's will and way. The pure heart is the heart that sees every hell empty, every sin destroyed in every life, every enemy, including death, abolished, and Christ All-in-all. Those who have a pure heart do not consider any other possibility except the absolute triumph of God's Christ. They also know that all this is accomplished and fulfilled by the Kingdom of God. These are the pure in heart who shall see God. They shall see *only God* in all things everywhere! With this pure heart they shall live to reign with Christ in His Kingdom until every enemy is put under His feet!

This may, in some respects, be called the greatest of the beatitudes; for surely of all things, the most sublime is *seeing God*. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The word "see" in the original tongue is interchangeable with the word "know," and must be so understood. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall *know God*." It is better to know God than even to see Him by the eyes of sense. There were many who saw Jesus who did not know Him. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They thought that He was a great Teacher or Prophet, but they did not see God in Him. They even rejected Him and hated Him, some of them. You could see Christ Himself in bodily form today, but unless you had purity of heart you could not know Him to be the Christ. I do not mean that you must be sinless, with never a wrong thought or deed. No, that is not what I mean by pure in heart. Your heart must be *single, unmixed*, turned wholly to the Lord, the Spirit. Then you will know God when you see Him. Only such purity of heart gives purity of sight.

As one has written, "The nature of Jesus Christ will be demonstrated in the lives of the sons of God. His characteristic conduct will be reproduced again through them. Even as the holiness of His conduct is to be reproduced in this company, also His pureness of heart shall be duplicated within them. He does not declare, "Blessed are the pure in *deeds*: for they shall see God." Frankly, one can have exemplary conduct and yet not have purity of heart. We can manifest good deeds without having them spring from pure motives. With a sinister purpose and evil motive men can look good and act good at times. So we conclude that the pure in heart are not necessarily detected by good deeds.

"Knowing now by this instruction of Jesus that sons of God must have purity of heart, our next consideration is how to obtain it. The beatitude states that the pure in heart shall *see God*. There is no higher, no more glorious

reward than to see God. It is not here making reference to a natural view of God with physical eyes, visualized as some ancient prophet with long flowing locks of snow white hair, or as a cloud of brilliant haze, or devouring fire as beheld by the Israelites throughout the wilderness journey, and by the High Priest in the Holy of holies.

"The apostle John tells us that 'No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has revealed Him, has made Him known' (Jn. 1:18). Paul supports this truth, saying, 'I command you to keep the commandments unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light whom no man has ever seen or can see' (I Tim. 6:15-16). John and Paul are both writing about visibly seeing God with the physical eyes of man. Jesus affirms this same fact when He says, 'And the Father who sent me has Himself borne witness to me. His voice you have never heard. His form you have never seen' (Jn. 5:37). He repeats the thought in John 6:46 by the reference, 'Not that anyone has seen the Father except Him who is from God. He has seen the Father.' In I John 4:12 there is another reference to the fact that the Father is not beheld in physical form by man. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man has ever seen God. If we love one another God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.'

"Perhaps these scriptures are sufficient to show that man is not to expect to see God with his human eyes, or to expect to behold Him in the form of a man. Therefore, this promise of Jesus to the pure in heart, does not indicate a physical beholding of a material form of God. He promises to the pure in heart the view of the Father which He, Himself, always experienced. The word 'see' used in the beatitude is specifically indicating SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION. In John 3:3, the word 'see' is used in this sense. 'Jesus answered him, Truly, truly, I say unto you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' The word is here connoting an understanding, comprehension, perception or revelative knowledge of the Kingdom of God. We must also translate John 14:7 into this same spiritual category. 'If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. Henceforth, you have known Him and have seen Him.' We must guard against the idea that a visible view of Jesus was the sight of God. That does not prove to be true. The Pharisees beheld Jesus literally, but by all means they never saw the Father. The words of Jesus made specific reference to a *spiritual perception* of the Father. The person who beholds Jesus with spiritual comprehension is granted the privilege of perceiving Him in all of His glory, majesty and being far beyond any physical appearance!

"Jesus was not saying, 'Look at Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary, and you see the Truth and the Life.' It was the eternal God speaking through the human lips of an earthly tabernacle who could lay claim to being the I AM who is the Way and the Truth and the Life. Many had seen and known the earthly tabernacle of Jesus of Nazareth after the flesh, or from the human viewpoint, who never saw the eternal Christ, the Deity, the God within Him. Likewise, many are now beholding the earthly tabernacles of the sons of God today after the human viewpoint, who never see the Christ, the Deity, the God within them. They have never seen Him who spoke through Jesus' lips to declare, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' They neither knew Him nor had seen Him, although Jesus had walked in their midst for over thirty years. They saw with physical eyes and understood with human comprehension and thereby knew only after the flesh and not after the spirit. Only those who came to know Him *after the spirit* had truly *seen the Father*.

"'Beloved, we are God's children now. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope within him, purifies himself even as He is pure' (I Jn. 3:2-3). The 'hope', which is making us purify ourselves, is the hope of this glory coming to us, the hope of *seeing God as He is*. Millions who only hope to see Jesus coming in clouds are doing nothing about purifying themselves as He is pure. But a company that has become anxious and hungry to see *God as He is* is setting to work to purify themselves. When we receive the revelation that God plans to again fully manifest Himself in some human tabernacles, we immediately make ourselves candidates for that demonstration, and begin to purify ourselves (become single, unmixed, unadulterated), as He is pure, that we might qualify to see God as He is, and be of the company of sons in whom He will be glorified, and through whom He will manifest Himself to the waiting world. When you inspect the company that today is attempting a purification of themselves in the inner man, you will find it to be the people that has this blessed hope — that God once more is going to descend into tabernacles of flesh. This time it will not be just one Son, but a company of 'many sons brought to glory'" — end quote.

[George MacDonald](#) adds these inspiring words: "It is not because we are created and He uncreated, it is not because of any difference involved in that difference of all differences, that we cannot see God. If He pleased to take a shape, and that shape were presented to us, and we saw that shape, we should not therefore be seeing God. Even if we knew it was a shape of God — call it even God Himself our eyes rested upon; if we had been told the fact and believed the report; yet, if we did not see the *Godness*, we should not be seeing God, we would only be seeing the tabernacle in which for the moment He dwelt. In other words, not seeing in the form *what made it a form* fit for Him to take, we should not be seeing a presence, a reality, which could only be God. To see God is to stand on the highest point of being. Not until we see God — no partial and passing embodiment of Him, but the abiding reality — do we stand upon our own mountain-top, the height of the existence God has given us, and up to which He is leading us. That there we should stand is the end of our creation. This truth is at the heart of everything, means all kinds of completions, may be uttered in many ways; but language will never compass it, for form will never contain it. We not only may, but we must so know Him, and it can never be until we are pure in heart. Then shall we know Him with the infinitude of an ever-growing knowledge."

**I could see God tonight,  
If my heart were right.  
If all the rubbish in my soul  
Were cleared away, I'd be whole.  
My breast then would thrill in glad surprise  
Of all the wonders before my eyes.  
If my heart were right,  
I could see God tonight,  
And the radiance of His face.  
I'd fling with light and fill this place  
With beauty and the world would know  
The face of God down here below tonight;  
If my heart were right.**

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 33**  
**THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART THIRTY-THREE**

**THE PERSECUTED  
PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM**

**Matthew 5:9** gives us the seventh principle of the Kingdom of God. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God." It is interesting to note that seven is the number of spiritual perfection. Peace is the hallmark of the glorious reign of the Kingdom of God in the heavenlies and in the earthlies. The seventh day is the sabbath, and the sabbath pictures the rest or peace of God. This principle speaks, therefore, of the realm of KINGDOM PEACE. The peacemakers are called the sons of God; the activity of the peacemakers springs from their sonship to God. Peacemaking is an important characteristic in the lives of God's sons, as it sets them apart for manifestation of the nature of God in the earth.

Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, is the Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, resides within His elect, the body of Christ. Can we not see by this that with Christ in our lives God has given us the role of *peacemakers* in this world? Has it occurred to you what it is a peacemaker does? A peacemaker is expected to MAKE PEACE! If you fulfill what Jesus said about peacemakers, you will be blessed indeed. You will be *called* the sons of God! The nature of your Father will be recognized in your life, and acknowledged. In order to *be* a peacemaker you must become involved in legitimate conflicts. In this world, if you truly want to be *blessed* in the Kingdom dimension of the term, you have to encounter crises and conflicts and get involved in them so that you can change the conflict into a *peaceful* situation. You can do it even now, for the spirit of sonship is already within you! If you are not willing to become a peacemaker in the nitty-gritty of everyday life, don't think that in some future blaze of glory you will suddenly become qualified to be a peacemaker on behalf of nations and principalities and powers. Many have no desire to become involved in conflict and problems. We would just as soon stay at home, laid back in our Lazy Boy recliner, with a glass of iced tea, watching our favorite television program, and say, "Thank you, Lord, for that wonderful word you gave me, that you will make a son of God and a peacemaker out of me. I feel so peaceful here! May everyone know this deep peace that I have come into."

Comfort does not make peace. The peace that we experience in the absence of conflict *is not Kingdom peace*. Anybody can have peace when all is going well and there are no cross-currents, opposition, trouble, or conflict. Learn this and you will know a great truth: Peace is more than the absence of war. The peace of God is unaffected by any external conditions. If your peace flees in the face of trouble and calamity, what you have is not peace — it is merely the calm between storms. Because you are not being blessed by being a peacemaker, but are satisfied with a sense of comfort which you perceive to be peace, you speak peace but are totally uninvolved in those situations which prove peace and demand a peacemaker. You don't want to be disturbed. You have no desire to be challenged. You feel inadequate to attempt anything so demanding. You say, "I can't do it!" No, you can't. No one can! But there is One in the midst of us, in our very midst — within — who has already been conditioned to rise to the occasion and accomplish the task. It is Christ who *is our life*. The Christ within is the Prince of Peace! You must step forth in your weakness, for His strength is made perfect in weakness; that is, His ability is perfectly and wholly revealed out of your human inability. Christ will arise in you and minister out of you, and display His power and victory through you. Oh, yes! You will be blessed as a peacemaker and all men will rise up and call you the son of God!

While writing on this blessed subject of the principles of the Kingdom of God I have quoted the inspiring words of brother Paul Mueller on numerous occasions. I cannot do better than quote him again at this point. "Christ also is *The Prince of Peace* (Isa. 9:6). According to Strong's concordance, a prince is a head person of any rank or class. Therefore, Christ is the Prince or the Head of a class who are all sons of God. Everyone of them are peacemakers. Like their Head or Prince, each one in that chosen body has a peaceful nature. And each of

them is called to bring the whole universe into a peaceful state. Divine peace, order and harmony are attributes now lacking in the world. Man, through all his own carnal, limited efforts, could never bring true peace, order and harmony to the world. But what man can never do, our God is doing by the power of the fullness of Christ and His kingdom. There is no doubt whatsoever that true and lasting peace shall prevail in all the earth and in the whole universe, for *'the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this'* (Isa. 9:7).

"The Hebrew word 'shalom' is the word that is translated peace when the prophet says that Christ is the Prince of Peace. But the Hebrew word means much more than the English word, 'peace,' would imply. The word 'shalom' also means to be safe, well and happy. It means that every person who comes into the kingdom or dominion of Christ will also be healthy and prosperous, and will live on this earth in peace (Lk. 2:14). By the anointed power and divine leadership of the sons of God, who will be moving in the Spirit and functioning at their Father's direction in this world, every person of every nation shall enjoy the many blessings implied in the word *shalom*. The sons of God are peacemakers, just like their Prince or Head, for they bring everything around them into a peaceful state. In Father's time, He shall raise us up to proclaim *peace* to *all*. Yea, our message shall be more than peace, for we shall decree 'SHALOM' and all that it means to all mankind. And if this sounds like too much of a task for us to envision, much less fulfill, we should remember that *'the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.'* That which is impossible with man is always possible with God!

"To become peacemakers, we must have the peace of God inworked within us. The anointed prophet said, *'Lord, you will ordain peace (God's favor and blessings, temporal and spiritual) for us, for you have also wrought in us and for us all our works'* (Isa. 26:12, Amp.). In order for us to have peace and be peacemakers, the Lord must establish His peace within us. And it should give us great peace just to know that He is doing it! All the work necessary to make us what we must be in His kingdom is the Lord's work. He has wrought all our works in us and for us. All the work necessary to make us Melchizedek kings and priests unto God is the Lord's work. And He is doing it within us for His glory" — end quote.

The word that Jesus used for "peace" reached to the very heart of what He meant when He spoke of the "peacemakers" who are the sons of God. This important term involves harmony not merely with man, but especially harmony with God. Let us remember that in all of Jesus' teaching, the paramount issue was man's relationship with God. Man's relationship with his fellow man always took a secondary place. He said that we must love God first, and then love our neighbor as ourself. We can only manifest to men what we have first of all experienced and appropriated in our relationship with the Father. Every teaching of Jesus was God-centered first. It cannot be otherwise! And thus it is in relationship to peacemaking — we, and all creation, must first be brought into harmony with our heavenly Father before peace can reign between men and nations on the earth.

The word peace is used approximately 90 times in the New Testament, and in the vast majority of cases it is used in reference to harmony with God. It has become clear to me that this principle of the Kingdom is related primarily to harmony with God. "Blessed are the peacemakers" — those who have within themselves entered into peace with God, and have launched upon a mission to bring *all men* into that same harmony with God. When men can be brought into harmony with the Father, concern about their relationship with one another becomes unnecessary, for the peace of God out of the heavenly realm flows into them and through them, bringing *peace on earth, goodwill to men!*

Yes, our Lord Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. He came to bring peace. Peace is alien to earth. When sin entered, peace fled. The moment that sin entered man removed himself from harmony with God, and peace fled. Adam and Eve themselves were at strife with God and each other, so that their firstborn son had the spirit of the devil and was a murderer from the beginning. He slew his own brother. The second Man, the last Adam, was the Lord from heaven. When He was once rejected, in the days of His flesh, His disciples, with indignation, besought Him to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy those wicked people. His answer comes down to us through the ages: *"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them"* (Lk. 9:55-56). The firstborn son of Adam was a murderer, but the firstborn Son of God was a Saviour. One was the *peacebreaker* shedding his brother's blood, the other was the *peacemaker* shedding His own blood that He might make peace with God. Yet the Christ had power to destroy men's lives, if He had the will. When He stood there with the cross in full view, He said to His

persecutors that it was in His power to call twelve legions of angels. If that heavenly host which hovered about that Son could have once made itself manifest, oh, how they would have swept that doomed city, that accursed conclave of false priests, and those wretched, blind and filthy-minded heathen soldiers! How the breath of those heavenly angels could have swept the life out of them and swept them down into hell and the grave. But that is not God's way in redemption. That is not the mission of the Son of God nor of the sons of God.

"For by Him were *all things* created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; *all things* were created by Him and for Him: and He is before *all things*, and by Him *all things* consist. And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to RECONCILE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF, by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet *now hath He reconciled*" (Col. 1:16-17,20-21). "And all things are of God, who *hath reconciled us to Himself* by Jesus Christ, and hath given to US the *ministry of reconciliation*; to wit, that God was in Christ, *reconciling the world unto Himself* by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto US the *word of reconciliation*. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ (the representatives of His Kingdom), as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, *be ye reconciled to God*" (II Cor. 5:18-20).

Here we see the great truth that reconciliation is first and foremost **unto God**. And it is utterly impossible for any man or any creature on earth or in heaven to exclude himself from this most precious provision — the *reconciliation of all unto God*. Before the reader can shut himself, or any other man or being out from the application of this grace, he must prove that he does not belong to earth, for all things in earth are reconciled; he must prove that he does not belong to heaven, for all things in the heavens are reconciled; he must prove that he does not belong to the "all things" that are created, because all created things are reconciled; and since he has no identification with any of the all things created, the all things in earth, and the all things in heaven, therefore he is excluded from being reconciled! This he cannot do. Every foot of this earth and every man upon this earth belongs to Christ, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein. On that wonderful day when God created "all things" in earth and in heaven He also said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness." God made every man and Christ tasted death for *every man*, and therefore every foot of the earth and every man on the earth belongs to Christ my Lord, first by right of creation, and second by right of redemption.

Far too many Christians testify like this: "Thank God I'm saved, sanctified, and baptized in heaven's sweet Holy Ghost — but it's too bad for the rest of you people. Thank God He laid His hand on me, so I believed and am on my way to heaven — but it is going to be hell for the rest of you. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, and take me out of this sin-cursed world, and let it go to the devil." Few people, even if they had the authority, would condemn anyone, even their worst enemy, to a burning, scorching, tormenting, eternal hell. Yet they expect God to do it! Some, as we have spoken of the good consolation and everlasting hope we have for all men, have said, wistfully, "I wish it were true." But sadly they confessed that their own sense of hope and mercy obviously exceeded that of God's. Other folk would never be satisfied for God to judge the world in a way that would bring the world back to Himself. Their attitude is, if men have spurned God's love, if they have lived in sin, if they have done wickedly, if they have drawn their last breath blaspheming His name, or even if they have carelessly *neglected* so great a salvation, then let them burn in hell — they *deserve it!* And these so-called followers of the Lamb of God who died to take away the SIN OF **THE WORLD** would personally join in shoveling the coal and seeing to it that they get everything they deserve — and perhaps a little bit more! I have no hesitation whatever in saying that people who hold that attitude are not Christians at all. They are devils.

Reconciliation brings harmony and peace. "And having *made peace* by the blood of His cross, by Him to **reconcile all things unto Himself.**" "God was in Christ **reconciling the world unto Himself.**" The distinguishing characteristic of a *son of God* is that he is a peacemaker above all things. How are we to be peacemakers? We are peacemakers, first of all, by being at peace with God. We cannot make peace; we cannot assist in ministering God's peace, unless we are ourselves at peace. If I am to be an ambassador for the Kingdom of God, which is the Kingdom of Peace, I must surely be at peace with God. I must not be striving with God about anything, or harboring any accusation against God's purpose, or resisting in any way God's will in my life. If the ministry of reconciliation (peacemaking) is my ministry, then I must possess the peace of God that passes all understanding. Many Christians are not at peace. They ought to be but they are not. They talk

about being justified by faith and having peace with God, but they have no such thing. Every time God sends something into their life that is hard and seems adverse, they immediately cry out, "God, why did you allow this to happen to me!" Some are at controversy with God because they are not obedient. All within has not been stilled, reconciled, made peaceful. All within has not been subdued. You may be God's child and yet be at controversy with your Father. Some who now read these lines are children of God but you are at controversy with the Holy Spirit of Truth over the message of the reconciliation of all men to God! My message to you today is: BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD. Accept God's beautiful plan and stop fighting against His Omnipotent Love, His Measureless Grace, and His Infinite Mercy; and He will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and you will be His son, a fit instrument to bear the word of His reconciliation to all the ends of Creation. How *blessed* you will be! "**Blessed** are the peacemakers..."

The Lord is trusting *His sons* with the job of seeing to it that the lost men and women of the world and out of all ages know that God has reconciled them unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. The Christians in the church systems today cannot fulfill this awesome task, because they are still *imputing men's sins unto them*. When they say, "You are headed straight for eternal hell," they are imputing men's sins unto them. When they shun men because of their evil or wickedness, they are imputing men's sins unto them. When they say a person who died without Christ is eternally doomed, they are imputing men's sins unto them. Every time we think judgmental thoughts against people for their sins and errors, we impute their sins unto them. The sons of God are not sent to threaten men with damnation if they do not receive Jesus — there are plenty of God's immature, mis-guided, deceived, naive *little children* who are doing that! The sons are sent with the message that all men and the whole world **are reconciled to God** on God's part, and to convince them, not that they are going to hell, but that they should **be reconciled to God within themselves**. The church world has a ministry of threatening men and coercing them by fear of hell-fire; the sons of God are the sons of peace and love and mercy who speak the word of reconciliation into men's lives by the Spirit.

Now, as representatives, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ and His eternal Kingdom, you and I are to minister this reconciliation to the world. The debt of sin has been paid in full. The books are balanced so far as God is concerned. Divine righteousness is theirs also, when they will finally lay down their rebellion and surrender, believing God's word of love, and accepting the life He offers them in exchange for their death. As Ray Prinzing once said, "Not charging them with guilt, to heap upon them loads of condemnation, but simply giving them the GOOD WORD, namely, that God *loves them*, forgives them, and is ready to receive them back to Himself. All is well, come home — forsake your wayward course, the Father waits to receive you. No word of condemnation, not imputing a list of sins against you, but a word of hope, of grace, of love." And the sons will never give up, for God's heart of infinite love will never give up. He will seek the sheep as far as they have strayed, and carry them home. Jesus did the work, and now God is making His appeal through us. God shall make a full and lasting peace with the world through His sons, His peacemakers. Blessed are those through whom God brings the world to peace with Himself! That is the ultimate of the ministry of the sons of God. The ministry of Jesus is a pattern picture of the ministry of the sons. Amazing grace! Stupendous and glorious plan! What a ministry!

## THE PERSECUTED

The final principle in this preamble to the Constitution of the Kingdom is the eighth. "**Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven**" (**Mat. 5:10**). Sometimes we take a mistaken attitude toward the "blessedness" that comes from fulfilling these principles of the Kingdom of God. We are so prone to view blessedness in terms of the great ministry of the sons of God, forgetting that Jesus also *suffered* and it is those who *suffer with Him* that shall also *reign with Him*. Sometimes we think, "Blessed are you when you can heal all the sick that come to you for help. Blessed are you when you can cast out all the devils that you encounter, without failure. Blessed are you when you can reveal the secrets of men's hearts and prophesy mysteries unto them. Blessed are you when you can perform mighty signs, wonders, and miracles before the multitudes. Blessed are you when you can gainsay all the critics and stop every mouth and humble all the wisdom of the world by your words of authority and power. Blessed are you when you can win millions of souls and sweep nations into the Kingdom of God." That is not what Jesus indicated in His teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. He did not promise that the Kingdom belonged to those who could heal the sick,

cast out devils, perform miracles, and raise the dead. He said, "Blessed are they that are *persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!*"

Jesus did not evaluate things the way we evaluate them. We measure success and blessedness by the effectiveness of our ministry. We use the world's system in determining "blessedness." Jesus used the divine instrument of measure — divine evaluation of what constitutes blessedness. Blessedness, He asserts in this case, is experienced by those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, and the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them! This persecution of which Jesus speaks is not the religious persecution that we have seen throughout the age. He is not saying that everyone who has been persecuted for their faith is in possession of the Kingdom of Heaven. He does not even mean that everyone who is persecuted because of Jesus is blessed! There is virtue in some kinds of persecution and there is reproach in other kinds of persecution. This principle of the Kingdom is very specific about the type of the persecution. "Blessed are they that are persecuted for *righteousness' sake...*" Not all persecution, even when it involves one's walk with the Lord, is for righteousness' sake, and only that which *is* for righteousness' sake reflects possession of the Kingdom.

Righteousness means "right-ness". To be persecuted for righteousness' sake is to be persecuted for that which is right. But even then it doesn't involve just any kind of right-ness! A person may be persecuted because they are *politically right*, that is, on the right side of some political issue, but that certainly would not qualify them as a possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven! The person might not even be a child of God! There are a thousand disputes every day between the people of God, disputes between husband and wife, disputes between neighbors, disputes between brethren in a fellowship, disputes between preachers, disputes over doctrine, disputes about the will of God, disputes over what is ethical for a believer to do or not do; and someone may be right and another wrong in each of these disputes. But if being right brings persecution, that doesn't necessarily make that one a possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven. To be *right* means to walk in the nature of God, to think with the mind of Christ, and fulfill the will of God. Only as we are *led by the Spirit* are we truly *right* or *righteous* in Kingdom terms. These are the principles of sonship, and only as they are related to sonship to God are they related to the Kingdom of God. This is the righteousness of sons, and "as many as are *led by the Spirit of God*, they are the *sons of God*." Kingdom righteousness means living the Kingdom Life. When we are persecuted for sonship righteousness we share in the sufferings of Christ. And all who are persecuted for this kind of righteousness possess the Kingdom of Heaven!

People, including professed Christians, are persecuted for various reasons. Sometimes the cause of persecution is ignorance. But Jesus does not promise, "Blessed are they that are persecuted for ignorance," any more than, "Blessed are they that are persecuted for wrong doing." I have met a great number of people through the years who are filled with self pity because they are being persecuted for their Christian walk, when the fact is they are being persecuted for saying or doing unwise, ignorant, outlandish, ridiculous, bizarre or stupid things in the name of the Lord. They have supposed that they were doing righteously and being led by the Spirit, but they were misguided or deceived and made a display of themselves to the public through ignorance. They have suffered tremendous persecution because of it, and don't realize that they were acting out of the carnal mind and have therefore been persecuted for *foolishness' sake*. It is obvious that if we are ignorantly performing foolish things that are bringing undue persecution, we experience no blessedness in it! The blessedness that Jesus promised is not in manifestations of spiritual immaturity and ignorance, or in demonstrations of the flesh by those who think God is speaking out of every rock and tree and happening, and speak in riddles and do weird things, or in displays of excessive emotional feelings in the soulish realm of their nature. Persecution for the righteousness of the Kingdom is on a plane higher than all this!

The *reward* for sonship persecution is — BLESSEDNESS! "**Blessed** are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake." But what is this blessedness? Ah, the blessedness is just this: "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." The blessedness is in obtaining the blessings, the provisions, the benefits, and the privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven. All that the Kingdom involves — its gifts, its joy, its peace, its wisdom, its powers, its glories, its manifestation are included in this blessedness. For these who walk after the Spirit and do all the will of the Father *in spite of the adversity it brings* — every element of the Kingdom is theirs! What a promise! What a principle!

Well has George Hawtin written: "I would to God that all God's elect might see that everything everywhere is working tirelessly and endlessly to produce *sonship* in those who are *called according to His purpose*."

Everywhere! Everything! Temptations, tears, heartaches, unfaithful friends and brethren, loss of property, loss of business, perils, hateful neighbors, fiery furnaces, dens of lions, rugged crosses, and isles of exile! *All things! All things! All things*, too numerous to mention, are working for the good of God's elect, and are adding, though unseen now, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory to us."

We who have endured our share of the persecutions of Christ shall be abundantly blessed of the Lord to receive our inheritance in the Kingdom of God. "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." As we look beyond the present, with its trials and persecutions, we will see the glory of the fullness of the Kingdom of God that is yet before us. The darkness of this present world, with its evil, ignorance, beastliness and violence, is rapidly fleeting. The new morning, with the fullness of the Light and Glory of God and His Kingdom spread upon the face of all nations, shall soon dawn over the whole earth. While we wait for the glory that *shall be revealed* we may "rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Paul Mueller bears wonderful witness to this same blessed truth in the following testimony. "To be persecuted for righteousness' sake gives one the right and privilege to inherit the kingdom of God. Persecution marks all the saints of God, from the Old Testament sages and prophets, including the prophets and apostles of the early church, to the sons of God of this present hour. Every one of us, from Abraham to the fullness of Christ, has endured the necessary persecutions for the sake of Christ and His kingdom. We may not have known it in the beginning of our appointed time of trials, but with every trial we endured, we were gaining a royal entrance into the fullness of the kingdom of God.

"Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, shall inherit the kingdom. Jesus clearly qualified the type of persecution that would gain us an inheritance into the kingdom of God, when He said, '*for righteousness' sake,*' and '*for my sake.*' To be persecuted for any other reason, including for our own disobedience or for breaking the law, does not count in the kingdom. Let me give you an example. Years ago I served as an assistant minister in a large church here in Portland. One of my duties was to minister to the sick in hospitals and homes, and to visit the needy, some of them in prisons. I enjoyed a rich and rewarding ministry and learned much from those experiences. One day, I visited a man from the church who was in a local prison. After praying with him and encouraging him in the Lord, I left the area of the prison where he was. Before I got very far from him, he began to wail and mourn as if he was dying. All the other prisoners could hear him. When I went back to ask why he was mourning so, he shouted that he was crying and mourning because he was being persecuted for righteousness' sake. But I knew he was in prison because he failed to pay his first wife's alimony, which he was ordered by the court to pay. His moaning and groaning did not stop even when I reminded him of the reason he was in prison. I met this same man some years later, and he informed me that he was 'holding the universe in balance!' To be persecuted for righteousness' sake will give us an inheritance in the kingdom. But to be persecuted for our own lawlessness and disobedience will only bring more of the corrective judgments of the Lord into our lives. And of course, as the elect of the Lord, you already knew this!

"Jesus was persecuted by the world because He was of another Spirit, even the Spirit of His Father. He was not of this world, and neither are we! The world hated Him, and we can expect to be treated as He was. The servant is not greater than his lord. Our Lord was persecuted for righteousness' sake, and we shall be also. They treat us the way they do for His name's sake, for they do not know our Father, who sent us on this mission for the kingdom of God.

"Being persecuted for His name's sake brings rewards undreamed of. Persecution for righteousness' sake identifies us with Christ. The sufferings of Christ that we have gone through made us one with Him and linked us with Him in Father's eternal purposes. And now we are one with Christ — united and identified with Him in the eternal purposes of His kingdom. Because of our union and identification with Christ, the world shall surely hear us when we speak forth His anointed word. Jesus said, '*The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also*' (Jn. 15:20). Think of that! Just as people of the world kept the sayings of Jesus, so also shall they keep our sayings. They will respect the word we speak! The persecutions and trials that we endured have removed from us all personal, egotistical and exalted ideas and carnal desires. We are being set free of old Adam that we might fully glorify the Lord. When the Lord has finished His work in us, He shall say of us as He did of His first

Son, *'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him'* (Mat. 17:5). The authority and power of God's word spoken by one of Father's anointed sons may be beyond the scope of our present understanding, but God shall bring it to pass. If the world kept the sayings of Jesus Christ, the first manifested Son, they will keep our sayings also, for we are also sons of God and members of the same purified and anointed Christ body" — end quote.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM

In addition to the eight beatitudes we have considered over the past months, there are almost three whole chapters and one hundred and seven verses in this Constitution of the Kingdom of God. Wonderful and significant principles of sonship are here set forth in simplicity and power. The sons of God that Christ describes in this Kingdom Manifesto are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They embody the spirit and the life of every law that Jesus Himself *fulfilled*, or brought to its true intent and spiritual reality, out of the old *letter* of the law of Moses. These sons are devoid of anger and strife in all of their human relationships, using no contemptuous words and seeking peace and harmony with all men. They are without lustful thinking and are victorious over the deceitful wickedness of their own hearts. They are content in their family relationships, truthful in speech and motive, longsuffering, merciful, and without retaliation toward their enemies or any who would mis-use and abuse them or violate their rights. They are generous and give joyfully and sacrificially, go the second mile, turn the other cheek, giving to those who ask, loving their enemies, praying for those who persecute. They do nothing for pretentious show, recognition, or vain glory. They forgive everyone their trespasses. They seek eternal, heavenly and spiritual realities above earthly possessions, prosperity and wealth. They are not anxious about what tomorrow may or may not bring, but trust explicitly and commit all things into Father's loving hands. They do not condemn or judge others, they pray in faith and receive every blessing with gratitude and thanksgiving. They treat others with the same concern and respect they wish to be shown to themselves. They live wholly to the will of the Father and seek only His Kingdom and His righteousness. **THEY STRIVE TO BE PERFECT AS THEIR FATHER IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT.** What an order! What a challenge upon God's firstfruits!

All these are the *marks of sonship*. All these are the *principles* of the Kingdom of God. All these comprise the *Constitution* of the Kingdom of God! We can readily see, therefore, that any behavior that falls short of this Constitution, or that is contrary to this Constitution — *is UNCONSTITUTIONAL!* In the Kingdom of God it is *unconstitutional* to be angry at your brother without a cause. It is *unconstitutional* to see your brother have a need and shut up your bowels of compassion against him. It is *unconstitutional* to refuse to forgive any man, to fail to be merciful, to retaliate for a wrong done you, to judge and condemn others. It is *unconstitutional* to pray or fast to be seen of men, or to do any act of righteousness for show or recognition. It is *unconstitutional* to walk in any spirit, attitude, expression or action other than the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom! These are the character traits that *qualify* one to be given authority and dominion in the Kingdom! No greater hope was ever set before the ransomed of the Lord than the hope of being members of *His body of sons* to reign with Him in the regeneration. Every man that has this hope in him *purifies himself* even as *He is pure*. Let us therefore lay aside every weight. Let us seek to be *rid of self* and *self-will* and *self-glory*. Let us waste the mind and motions of Adam in our flesh and put on the mind and the nature of our glorious Father in heaven.

In reading the Sermon on the Mount we must learn to distinguish between *the letter of the command* and *the spirit of truth* that it expresses. For even of Christ's own words it is true — the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. I do not mean that we are to so "spiritualize" these laws of the Kingdom as to make them of none effect. I do not mean that we are to so etherealize our Lord's commands as to get rid of the obvious, practical applications. What I mean is, we must make allowance, for instance, for Jesus' methods of teaching. The Eastern mind loved the parabolic and proverbial form of speech. He was fond of stating his truth in bold, picturesque, illustrative and metaphorical ways. Our Lord was typically Eastern in this respect. He opened His mouth in parables, and *without a parable spake He not unto them*. In this sermon His teaching is again and again in proverbial form. Only by that wisdom that comes down from above are the sons of God able to separate the *spiritual principle* from the *literary form* in which it is expressed. Jesus was not giving us maxims to which we are to give slavish obedience, but sets forth principles that we must apply and walk out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He did not come to give a second and more minute external law, but to create a disposition, a spirit, a new attitude and state of being which should be the law of nature within ourselves.

Let me illustrate what I mean by taking just a few precepts out of the Sermon on the Mount for our reverent consideration. Take first that staggering precept about "turning the other cheek." "Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Now what kind of a spineless individual would do a thing like that! I think many of us would be like the little boy in the Sunday School class. His teacher had been teaching the class some of the teachings of Jesus, and she said to Johnny, "Johnny, what would you do if Tommy slapped you on the right cheek?" "Teacher," said Johnny, "I would turn the other cheek." Then after pausing and thinking for a moment he added, "But, boy, if he hit that one, I would beat the daylights out of him!" We have our rights, you know, and we are pretty good at sticking up for our rights. If we think the mechanic has cheated us on the repairs on our car, we would like to tell him so. If we haven't had the service we think we should have had, we are tempted to raise our voice and give them a piece of our mind. We at least reduce the amount of our tip or leave no tip at all! That is natural. But sons of God are *not natural!* We are ordained to be *spiritual*. And spiritual is not some religious exercise or worshipful appearance, it is simply *expressing the nature of the Spirit*. It is just as "spiritual" to keep our cool under pressure as it is to sing in the Spirit or prophesy — yea, even more so!

Although there are times for literally turning the other cheek, Jesus was speaking of a spiritual reality that transcends the physical act. He did not give a literal obedience to the precept Himself! When He was smitten on the face in the High Priest's hall, He did not turn the other cheek, He gently but firmly rebuked the smiter for his injustice and violence. And besides, a literal obedience would sometimes defeat the very object at which Christ was aiming. To do this literally to an angry man would in some instances so infuriate him that it would bring even harsher recriminations against you. The "letter" in this case "killeth." We must get at the "spirit" of the command, and the spirit is just this: that we must meet rage and violence not with rage and violence, but with meekness, compassion, and forgiveness. Retaliation and revenge are the practice of the world — forgiveness even until seventy times seven is the practice of the *sons of God*.

Ah, these things are against human nature. It is impossible for the natural man to do these things! Oh, we might try, but trying isn't good enough in the Kingdom. Even if we did walk out these things, just because Jesus said we should, it would still be a forced action out of a sense of duty, and not because we felt like doing them. Though outwardly we may obey, inwardly we would rebel against them. Unless our obedience emanates from our nature, it isn't *Kingdom obedience!* Isn't that why Jesus said, "Except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God." If we do these things because our nature *desires* to do them, then we have experienced the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

Take the next precept which says, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." As it stands it sounds almost like an order to indulge in indiscriminate charity. Now indiscriminate charity when it is indulged in is not a blessing to men, but a curse. If you give to every one who would bum off of you, you turn people into economic leeches. It is a direct encouragement of sloth and irresponsibility. It disintegrates the character; it degrades more than it helps and delivers. The apostle Paul tells us that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. The *spirit* of what Jesus is telling us is that we must have the spirit of self-sacrificing generosity! As a son of God I cannot turn a deaf ear to any cry of need. It does not follow that we shall give money to every beggar who stops us on the street, or to every supposedly homeless person holding a sign at the intersection. By so doing we may be only confirming in idleness men who ought to be compelled to work, or giving another bottle of liquid damnation to a man already drinking himself to death. We simply impoverish ourselves to injure others. That is not what Christ meant!

We do not give even to every brother in Christ who asks our help. Solicitations arrive in the mail almost daily to help this person and that, to support this ministry and the other, to give to this and that cause. If we gave to *everyone that asks* what an array of worldly methods and spurious ministries and deceitful causes we would be supporting! Sons of God are *led by the Spirit* even in their giving. How much better to seek the Lord about what we should give, and to whom, and receive His guidance by the Spirit, than merely to dole out money to every one who presents a need! Where we know need to be urgent and real, our help will always be forthcoming, even if it is an unspeakable sacrifice. A loving heart and a ready hand, guided by the Holy Spirit of wisdom and understanding, are the marks of the son of God. And sometimes we give even when no one has said anything about a need, simply because the Spirit of the Lord speaks to us to give. HE knows every need, and just how He will meet the need. We become His channels of blessing. This is the way of the Kingdom!

Now let us look at another principle. "And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And if any man shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two." Of this principle George Wylie wrote, "This is a reference to a custom in the East, and which we saw in Liberia while there. You see, the soldiers and government officials didn't ride around in cars and trucks like they do today. They were on foot, or else carried in a conveyance that was carried on the shoulders of four men. When they needed someone to carry their load, or carry them about their business, they would just say to someone nearby, 'Hey you, come and carry my load.' And they dare not refuse. In Liberia, when a soldier, or a government official was on the road, and by road I mean a little foot-path through the jungles, each village was supposed to provide them with porters to carry them to the next town, and that is as far as the law required them to go. Then that village was supposed to provide carriers to take them to the next village. It was the Town Chief's duty to find these porters, and sometimes when the men of the village heard that the District Commissioner was coming their way, they would head for the bush, and the poor chief had a time finding the men to be carriers. Nobody wanted to be forced into this kind of labor. They had other things to do, things they wanted to do for themselves, so they would try to get out of this duty if they could.

"The custom in Palestine and the law of the Romans was very, very similar to this. The law required a man under these conditions to go one mile, but he was not compelled to go any farther; he could stop there and drop his load and let someone else take it from there. But Jesus said, 'If he compels you to go a mile, don't stop there, go with him another mile.' In other words, *do more than is expected of you, more than it is your duty to do, more than the law requires of you!* You see, the sons of God are to be a whole lot different than the ordinary run of people. Jesus gave us a little parable in Luke 17:7-10. I am just beginning to understand what He meant by this parable. 'Will any man of you, who has a servant plowing or tending sheep, say to him when he is come in from the field, Come at once and take your place at the table? Will he not instead tell him, Get my supper ready, and gird yourself and serve me till I eat and drink; then afterward you yourself shall eat and drink? Is he grateful and does he praise the servant because he did what he was obligated and ordered to do? Even so on your part, when you have done everything that was assigned and commanded you, say, We are unworthy servants — possessing no merit, for we have not gone beyond our obligation; we have merely done what was our duty to do.'

"We think we have done pretty good when we have done some of the things commanded us, let alone all things. If we only do the things required of us, and that which is our duty to do, we are still *unprofitable servants*. If we are to be the sons of God, we have to go way beyond what is required of us, if we are to be profitable unto God. He that does only what is required is a *servant*, not a *son*. He has no initiative of his own, he is not a ruler in the kingdom, he has no authority to act unilaterally, he merely obeys orders and does what is required. What this really means is, that what we *do* is not really that important, and doesn't count for that much. What really matters is what we *are*, *who* we are becoming, not what we *do* by commandment. When the *spirit* of the Sermon on the Mount gets down into our deepest heart as the *law of being*, then the Kingdom of God operates within us in the realm of sonship" — end quote.

Take one more example. "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon the earth." It reads like a prohibition of thrift and provision for the future. Taken literally, it would seem to forbid the farmer to store his harvest in the autumn for the coming winter; it would seem to put the seal of its approval on those who squander their money as soon as they get it, who spend up to their means and perhaps beyond it; it would seem to say that one should not make any provision for a rainy day, one should not pay into Social Security or any pension fund, one should not invest in properties, stocks, bonds, or make any provision for security or retirement. But that is not what Jesus meant! What Jesus is saying in the Spirit is that our hearts should be entirely emancipated from the love of wealth — that our care should be not so much about our balances at the bank as about our standing in the heavenlies. We are understanding by the carnal mind if we read this as if Jesus were encouraging irresponsibility; what He is bidding us do is to put first things first, to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and trust Him for everything else.

We cannot cease striving to lay up treasures on earth until we come to the point of *absolute trust* in our heavenly Father. He *will provide!* If He does not provide by natural means He will provide by supernatural means. Testimonies to God's unfailing faithfulness could be written by millions of saints throughout the ages. In our own family we have seen the car battery charged by the power of God when the ignition key had been left

on overnight and the battery was absolutely dead. There was need to be in a meeting that Sunday morning and with prayer the impulse came to go out and try it one more time. The car started immediately and the battery was *better than before!* Lorain and I drove many miles through the Ozark mountains in the late night darkness and early morning with no gas in the tank, only praying that God would get us to our destination, as there were no gas stations open in that wilderness at that hour of the night. We have had so many miraculous provisions that to us it is no longer a question of *whether* the Lord will provide — merely *when* and *how!* This is merely a small sampling of life in the Kingdom of God as a son of God!

No one has more clearly and eloquently articulated the power and glory of this blessed dimension of Kingdom reality than George Hawtin when he wrote: "We can see and point out some very important examples of Christ's heavenly citizenship which show us as nothing else can that all the time of His earthly ministry He lived and moved on the plane of *a son of God*. He lived in a *higher realm*. He lived in the realm He preached about, even the realm of the *kingdom of God*. And I would like you to see that in every respect and in every phase of His life He proved Himself to be living in *the realm of the kingdom* and totally independent of *every part of this world's system*. Let us notice first that He was completely independent of that one thing to which we are always in bondage — *money*, the currency of this world system. I often wondered why it was that though Jesus knew that Judas was a thief, yet He allowed him to carry the money bag and though He knew Judas was stealing the money, He said nothing about it. Now I know it is wrong to steal, but the point we should see is that in the realm where Jesus actually lived He did not need money and did not care whether there was any money in the bag or not. He was no more in need of money than a robin, an eagle, or an angel. He lived in a realm where God was all in all and everything belonged to Him. It was a realm higher than the realm of men. Judas by his thefts was trying to lay by in store for *this* realm, but Jesus was not living in this realm nor for it, but independent of it and far above it in the realm of the kingdom" — end quote.

We have only superficially touched this realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. We have but *tasted* the powers of the age to come. I cannot be too emphatic in saying that the full glory of the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven cannot ever be compared to the purely "in part" measure which we have experienced during this church age. None can deny that this age has been very limited and lacking in the glory, government, and power of God and filled with human ways and human ideas and human methods and promotions. When Jesus was here in the flesh He neither lived nor moved in the in-part measure of this passing age, but He walked and ministered and manifested out of the unlimited and boundless plane of a *manifested son of God*.

And so I might go on illustrating — but enough has already been said. The first thing to be done is to disentangle Christ's spiritual meaning from the form of its verbal expression. The difficulties about the practicability of the Sermon on the Mount arise from a carnal and too literalistic interpretation of its principles. These principles are not exact rules — they embody *divine nature*. It is the *spiritual principle* we must get at — and **blessed** is the man or woman who does! These words are the mere husk, the eternal truth they contain is the kernel. The *letter* killeth, but the *spirit* giveth life!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 34 THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART THIRTY-FOUR

#### RECEIVING THE KEYS USING THE KEYS

"And I will give unto thee the *keys of the kingdom of heaven*: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mat. 16:19).

With the words of this passage in view, let us suppose that a king of incredible wealth decides to do something wonderfully beneficent for his people — something no other king has ever done. He decides to take all the wealth he has amassed and share it fully with each and every subject of his kingdom. There are great treasures, vast sums of money, gold, silver, precious stones, houses, lands, huge warehouses full of grain and rations of various kinds, and a multitude of other commodities. Why all this generosity? Because the king is *good*, he has a *pure spirit* and a *loving heart*, and *justice* is the essence of his character. He wants his people to be happy, to know joy, to prosper and experience the best of what life has to offer. He wants them to live on his own level of wealth and abundance.

Of course, there must be a means, a method for the distribution of all these blessings and benefits. Certain rules have to be established, and specific guidelines put in place. For instance, the king must appoint a select company of men to have the oversight over the distribution of his wealth. These men must be completely trustworthy — honest, unselfish, faithful, industrious, skilled, conscientious and efficient. They must have only the will of the king and the best interests of the people at heart.

One bright morning you are called with a chosen group of men to appear before the king. A background check has been done on each one and only those who have met the rigid qualifications have been selected. "To you," the king says to these men, "I entrust the keys of my kingdom. It is obvious that you understand my heart and share my purpose. Take these and do what you should. My palace is available to you twenty-four hours a day, and all my houses, warehouses, treasuries, and gates will open and lock by these keys I give you. The future success of this venture rests with you. Now, I must be about other important matters!" What an honor! What a responsibility!

What would you do? Would you use the keys carelessly, selfishly, or dishonestly? Would you brag to everyone you meet that you are one of the select persons in the kingdom who has the final say as to who gets what and who doesn't? Would you walk about haughtily with an air of superiority because you have privileged access to the realms of riches of the king? Would you conceal the full intent of the king to share his wealth with *every man*, from the pauper to the prince, and prevent certain individuals who appear unworthy, or whom you don't like, from getting their fair share? Or would you let everyone know of the king's benevolence, while at the same time protecting the interests of the king by making known and enforcing the few stipulations and procedures he established? I do not doubt for one moment that the king would be interested in whether or not the people were receiving and enjoying his gift! Should some people refuse to believe his generosity, they must be convinced, because it is the *decree of the king* that they have their part in his kingdom. If they don't know the proper protocol for receiving the gift, they must be instructed. If they have neither the wisdom nor the ability to properly use the gift, they should be taught, or someone appointed to administer the gift on their behalf. That all this is accomplished is of vital interest to the king — but the importance and power attributed to you, the holder of the keys, would be far less significant to him.

Within this illustration lies the divine secret to the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. You see, Peter is not the issue. The kind of power Jesus did or did not bestow on Peter is not what this is about. Rather, Jesus was

talking about something new and wonderful that had come to earth — the Kingdom of God itself and the possibility and plan for every son and daughter of Adam to enter into a new realm and participate in that whole new dimension of life. So different, however, was this Kingdom, that only a company of very special people with unique purpose and particular qualifications would be able to successfully unlock all of its riches and judiciously administer all of its benefits fully to every man according to the will of the King. The issue is not what the people think they want, or what the administrators want, but a matter of the King's decree! Any who would illegally grasp after that which is not theirs must be quickly and effectively dealt with — but in the end every man would receive his share. Those unfaithful servants who would deny the blessings to some because of their own ignorance, unbelief, or rebellion, must be punished, but in the end every man will receive his inheritance. For any man to live as he had previously lived would impugn the wonder of the gift. But for any man to express contempt for the gift, or to secure it by illegal means, or to mistreat it in any way, would bring swift judgment by authority of the King. So the person holding the keys was not only to open up this marvel of grace and glory, but to protect it from ruin as well. Every man must be so dealt with that he will ultimately accept the gift and live in the power of its provision. So the work of the keeper of the keys goes way beyond just passing out gifts; it involves the ability to convince every man to joyfully receive the gift and to prepare every man to properly appropriate the gift. The intention and provision of the King is *very wise and thorough!*

"You understand me, Peter," the Lord seemed to be saying, 'you are someone to whom I can entrust the keys of my Kingdom!' What a day of days it must have been for Peter, who had already seen so much beyond what other men had seen, to now be given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven! Many make the mistake of thinking that only Peter was given these keys! Notice, however, the qualifying statement that follows which explains *how the keys work*. "What soever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." It is revealing to note that this whole incident isn't even mentioned in any of the other Gospels. But those identical words about binding and loosing are spoken by Jesus again just two chapters later, when He's talking to *all* His footstep followers. "**Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 18:18-19)**. Check it out! It should be obvious to every thinking mind that the other disciples, too — not every follower, but every specially selected disciple — was given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven!

But beyond this — what was Jesus' *intent* in giving the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to His chosen disciples? Was it to let everyone know clearly who was in charge of letting people into the Kingdom and keeping them out? Not by any means! It had nothing whatever to do with letting *people* in or shutting *people* out of the Kingdom of Heaven — it was rather a matter of releasing the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of Heaven to all men, but not so indiscriminately that men could inherit the Kingdom on their own terms without meeting its requirements. To the key keepers is given the responsibility and ministry of opening up this new realm of the Kingdom of Heaven to all men, and making sure that Kingdom principles are adhered to. Was Peter a good key keeper? Or was Peter more interested in impressing people with the great power he had within himself — to admit or bar them from the favor of God? Ah, Peter proved worthy of this honor! He never mentions the keys in his epistles, nor do any of the other apostles speak of the keys, but he does write about the wonders of who we are in Christ, a *Royal Priesthood*, of the great and precious promises by which we escape corruption; of the great principles of our entrance into, and inheritance in, the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of the passing of the old heavens and earth and the establishment of the new; and how to walk in the will of God as sons of the Most High. These are the words and wisdom and revelation of a man who within himself possessed the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven! And he possessed those keys as an apostle of the church age to bring forth the formation of the Christ body in the earth!

The sun is now setting on the church age with its ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. The transcendent glory of that brighter and greater age when the body of Christ has been brought to its fullness in the *manifestation of the sons of God* is even now dawning upon us. We know this, not by claiming a scripture or by embracing a doctrine, but because the Holy Ghost has powerfully spoken and testified of it among vast numbers of the Lord's elect in recent years. It is a revelation "come down from heaven" and proclaimed in the "power of the Spirit." Those who cannot see the change in dispensations, nor the implications of it, have not heard from God. The present work of the Spirit has to do with the Kingdom of

God increasing into the new age, not established just in the lives of the elect body of Christ, but through them among all the nations and peoples of the earth. It is a new day and a new work. In the previous age the Lord's dealings have been for the formation of His body, the sons of God. In the dawning age the Lord's dealings will be *through* the manifested sons of God, gathered out of the previous age, for the increase of His kingdom and peace throughout the earth. Of the increase of His kingdom and of His peace there *shall be no end!* From age to age the Kingdom shall increase, first in the Lord's people, then in all the earth, and finally throughout all the endless vastnesses of infinity forever more!

God has prepared His holy remnant, who are all sons of God, those whom He has formed for His purposes and called to sonship for such an hour as this. Our Father has made us what He wants us to be, and that is what we are. He has called us, separated us unto Himself, laid His hand upon us, broken us to pieces, purged and purified us out of the world and out of the religious systems of men, in the furnace of affliction, and led us in the strange paths of His dealings, that He might raise us up by the power of His Spirit and make us a blessing unto all the ends of the earth. We now desire to do all the will of our Father in the earth! Our expectation is to use the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to bring the blessings and benefits, the power and the glory and the riches, of God's Kingdom upon all men of all the nations. During the church age the Lord's ministers have only had power to claim the *called out* for God. If men refused, there was nothing else we could do. But in the age coming upon us, the sons of God will have power to claim *all men* for God! We are not willing to lose even one to hell or eternal damnation. We will do whatever it takes to accomplish this! We will use the keys of the Kingdom that God gives His sons, just as Jesus said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing (or any person or persons) that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." What power to *claim all men for God* lies in these keys! All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and *resistance is futile*, for the transforming power of the Spirit shall be poured out from on High through the sons of God. All men shall be assimilated into the Kingdom of God! All creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What a day!

It is now time for the *apostles of the Kingdom* to be sent forth. These apostles of the Kingdom are the firstfruits company. In these firstfruits the foundations of the Kingdom are being laid. It is to these — to the elect remnant of the Lord — that the first dominion or reign of the Kingdom of God comes. Christ must first rule and reign in the lives of His elect before He can reign in the lives of anyone else. And when Christ fully reigns in our lives, the scepter, or ruling authority of the Kingdom of God, is then bestowed upon us. According to the measure that Christ fully reigns in our lives He has given us the authority to reign with Him from His spiritual throne in the heavenlies. And according to the measure that His life, wisdom, grace, nature, power and purposes are established in our lives WE ARE GIVEN THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN! How wonderful and complete is the plan of our God!

There shall again be a true witness of God in the earth when the holy sons of God fully possess the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and are guided and empowered by the Spirit to use those keys. These keys of the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven where God dwells and reigns over all are of very great value, above estimate, invaluable. There is a very great need today for the exercise of the keys of the Kingdom! The witness of the professing church has become quite weak; indeed, it is a flickering flame, the exaggerated claims of the televangelists notwithstanding. Much ministry is carried on, but the true testimony is obscured by fleshly programs, fleshly lusts, carnal showmanship and worldly theatrics, soulish sentimentalism, and self-seeking. Few Christians have as yet been entrusted with the keys of the Kingdom because they are ignorant of God, of His Kingdom purposes and processes, and His ways. The churches today are full of sin, rebellion, carnality, self-love, fleshly pursuits, presumption and pride. Believers and popular preachers cannot be trusted with the awesome authority and power of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven!

## RECEIVING THE KEYS

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art

thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 16:13-17).

How was it that Peter suddenly realized who Jesus was? He got a revelation from the Father that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God! He received a revelation of *who this Christ was*. If there is one thing in the world that you and I and all men everywhere need to know it is *who this Christ is*. Without a revelation of who the Christ is we will never attain anything in God. But one cannot receive a revelation of who the Christ is without getting something else to go with it. Let me show you what that something else is. "Thou art Peter (Petro, small rock, fragment), and upon this rock (Petra, large rock, rock mass) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat. 16:18). Upon the *revelation of who I am* I will build my church, saith the Lord. When you receive a revelation of who this Christ really is, the church is in that moment established in your heart, for Christ is not one member, not one person, but many. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (I Cor. 12:12). It was upon this revelation of who the Christ is that Jesus said to Peter, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." A key is an instrument that closes or opens something which without that key cannot be closed or opened. Spiritually, it may be a *word* that opens a hidden mystery which cannot be otherwise discovered, or a *power* by which a state or condition or circumstance may be revealed, dealt with, or changed, which could not otherwise be effected. Jesus spoke of keys several times. To the astonished John on the isle of Patmos He declared, "I have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18). To John there came One who announced Himself as "the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last." At His girdle hung "the keys of Hades and of death." Ah, the enemy usurped control over mankind, ruling with fear, and bringing creation into bondage to the whole dreadful realm of death. Death was the adversary's "trump card," his final victory. He beguiled man into sin, and "sin when it is finished, bringeth for death" (James 1:15). After all the beguilement, which the adversary has exercised with ruthless working and deception, causing man to become perverted and corrupt, sinking into the quagmire of fear, sorrow, and hopelessness, the final result was death with its habitation in Hades. When Jesus came into the world in the humiliation of the Incarnation, He started on a route of conquest that took Him through the lonely years prior to His introduction at the muddy waters of Jordan, where the bony prophetic finger of John the Baptist was pointed at Him and those significant words were uttered, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). For some thirty-three and a half years He overcame and lived an impeccable life so that it was said of Him that "He was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus' flawless life was followed by a decisive death. He went to Calvary to endure inexplicable and incomparable suffering: suffering of which we can only have a hint; suffering we can only look at curiously with a sob in our throats; suffering veiled in the mystery of the bearing of sin: suffering surrounded by torn rocks and a sun that refused to shine, and an earth that writhed in agony. As He hung there alone, God reached down His giant fist and gathered the accumulated sins of men and placed them upon Him. In the awful agony of Calvary, Christ made His soul and offering for sin. The sin of the world was imputed unto Him, and the waves of sin's judgment were released upon Him. When He had become an offering for sin, He gave up the Ghost and came down from the mystery of His sufferings, having finished that work. What men saw was a man hanging limp — every bone out of joint, a swollen tongue protruding from burning lips that cried out, "It is finished!"

And then He arose the conquering Christ! What a marvelous turn of events! He took control of the situation as with one exultant shout He grasped the keys of death and hell from him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; stripped away the power of death, burst asunder the bars of hell, stalked boldly out in eternal triumph over all the dread powers of that unseen realm, entered back into His body in the garden tomb, passed through the walls of rock as water passes through a filter, ascended up far above all heavens, stepped up to the Father's throne, and presented the tokens of His redemption. The Father said, "Sit down, Son, at my right hand until all your enemies are made your footstool!"

Nearly two hundred years ago the world was in chaos because "The Scourge of the Earth" (we know him as Napoleon Bonaparte) almost conquered the world. Everything fell before him. The British feared that soon their homeland would be invaded by the troops of France. In one last effort to stop the tremendous on-rush of Napoleon's army, they sent their greatest general. General Wellington invaded the heartland of Europe. The

people waited as the forces were joined at Waterloo. Eagerly they followed the watchman on the tower of Winchester Cathedral as he looked out over the English Channel in the fog waiting for some sign of a ship to bring them news of the outcome. The hope of England rested on that report. Finally, as the fog lifted just a little bit, the watchman saw a ship blinking the signal of what had happened. The letters were taken down. W-E-L-L-I-N-G-T-O-N D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D. The fog sank and with it all the hope of England. The people quivered at the thought that soon they would hear the tramp of French troops upon their land. However, an hour later, the fog lifted and again the message was sent forth: W-E-L-L-I-N-G-T-O-N D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D E-N-E-M-Y! A wild shout of glee went out all over England; that feared invasion never came.

There is a great hero whose name is Jesus. On a hill outside the city wall of Jerusalem, He went forth to take on the combined forces of death, hell, and the devil. He did this with His hands and feet secured to a cross, and a lion out of the pit leaped forth in rage and threw itself upon Jesus. The world and all spiritual realms waited to see what the outcome of that life and death struggle would be. Hour after hour His life oozed forth drop by drop. The people waited, hoping that soon He would respond to their taunts, "Come down, if thou be the Son of God, and we will believe on thee." Jesus never moved. Finally the great, piercing cry — He bowed His head and gave up the Ghost. Word went out in the midst of that midday blackness: JESUS DEFEATED. A pallor hung over the world. Life went black, hopeless and meaningless. But then, on the third day, as the sun began to break over that lonely sepulcher, a new light came with a dazzling radiance. The huge stone that blocked the door began to move back as if by some unseen hand. Those Roman troops were startled by the appearance of the messengers resplendent in white. Then, out of the darkness of that tomb, out of the jaws of death, out of the very pit of hell itself, there stepped forth One who was dead and could now say, "I am He that was dead and, behold, I am alive forevermore and have the *keys of death and of hell!*" Word went out through all of Jerusalem. At first just a whisper — then a voice — then a cry — then a shout — and a chant sublime: JESUS DEFEATED DEATH! JESUS DEFEATED HELL! JESUS DEFEATED SATAN!

Jesus has the keys; He proved that He has the keys of both death and hell, for He unlocked both and arose Victor. Death could not hold its prey! Hell could not hold its captive! Oh Christ! Thou Son of the living God! Thou art the resurrection and the life. Thou wast alive. Thou wast dead. And, behold, Thou art alive forevermore and in Thy nail-pierced hand dost hold in triumph the keys of hell and death. Oh, death, where is thy sting! Oh, grave, where is thy victory! Oh gates of hell, thou shalt not prevail, thou shalt one day be empty, for the Redeemer of Israel and the Saviour of the world holds in His triumphant hand thy key.

Who *now* has the key of death? OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Who *now* has the key to hell? OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Praise God, no one passes through the gates of either of those two, hell or death, except the Lord open or close those gates. The devil has no authority there. And now Jesus proclaims, "FEAR NOT — I have the keys of death and of hell." Think about it! What reason do we have to not fear? He was dead, but behold, He is the *living One*. He is living for the ages of the ages. And this ever living One HAS THE KEYS. We commonly think of keys being used to lock or unlock doors, but there is another sense in which the word key is used. Many times when we say that we have the key to a thing, we mean that we have the solution to a problem. Jesus was saying to John and to us all that HE HAS THE SOLUTION TO THE UNSEEN WORLD. He has all the problems connected with it unraveled and solved. He had worked out the problem for Himself, overcame in it, and now stands to proclaim to all men everywhere the GREAT EMANCIPATION. Through His death and resurrection, Christ took away from the adversary his power of death, and from hell its' power of containment. No longer can negation claim the final victory over any man — CHRIST HAS THE KEY, and shall ultimately bring every man into the fullness of His life. Christ has the *power* to redeem, and He has the *keys* of death and hell.

Praise God! Not only does the firstborn among many brethren possess the keys of death and hell, but He shares them with His OVERCOMING ONES IN WHOM IS INWROUGHT THE TRIUMPH OF HIS LIFE. Jesus said to Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock shall I build my church; and the GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT" (Mat. 16:18). The gates of hell *have not* prevailed against our Lord Jesus Christ, and they *shall not* prevail against His Church. What are the "gates" of hell? Gates are used either to bar entrance or prevent exit. What does it mean that the gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ's Church? I used to erroneously imagine the conflict between the Church and Satan as a game of "cat and mouse." Satan was the cat and the Church was the mouse! Satan was big and powerful — the Church was small and weak,

always on the defensive. But that's not what that passage means! Far from it! The picture instead is of a VICTORIOUS CHURCH laying siege to hell and breaking down its gates to release its prisoners! The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the example and prototype! The key of hell gives Christ and His sons the spiritual power to open the "door" of Hades to set every captive free. Death is literal and spiritual death, and includes *the second death*, for in the end there shall be "no more death" — first death, second death, *any* death! And the key of death gives the Christ company power and authority to conquer all death in every man. What joy shall be ours when we *fully possess* the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, giving us Kingdom authority to reign with Christ and to release every captive from the bondage and curse of hell and of death!

Jesus also declared that He has the "key of David." There was a day when God called a man by the name of Eliakim to rule Judah, and the Lord said of him, "**And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open**" (Is. 22:22). The key of the house of David speaks of the divinely-invested power and authority given to Eliakim to rule and reign over the house of Judah. With that key Eliakim was fully authorized of God to open doors of opportunity, favor, and blessing that no one else could shut, and to shut doors that no one else could open. For the overcoming sons of God, the key of the house of David represents God-given authority and power, not merely to do a few works of God, not merely to build up churches, not merely to govern one nation, but to govern all the nations in the Kingdom of God. And when we have fully come into possession of that Kingdom key, we shall shepherd all nations with a rod of iron, and govern all peoples wisely, for we shall do so with the mind of Christ and with the authority of the Father.

It is interesting to note that God told Eliakim that He would lay the key of the house of David "upon his shoulder." The Hebrew word translated "shoulder" in this passage indicates the area where burdens are placed. When a man like Eliakim is commissioned by the Lord to reign over an earthly government or kingdom, none can deny that such responsibility is indeed a burden. One has only to consider how quickly our recent presidents of the United States have aged, how soon their hair turns gray and their faces wrinkle, to see how the responsibility of rulership in the earthly governments and kingdoms under man's corrupt order is indeed a burdensome experience. Ah, but in the Kingdom of God *there are no burdens!* The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! It is not a burden to rule and reign with Christ in our Father's Kingdom, for we reign in righteousness, we minister by peace, and we shepherd with joy! We are then doing our Father's will on earth in righteousness, peace, harmony and perfection. All our would-be burdens are placed upon "His shoulder."

Another aspect of keys is revealed when Jesus reproved the Jewish leaders, saying, "**Woe unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge**" (Lk. 11:52). This they had done by killing the prophets and traditionalizing their teachings, for to them had been revealed the mysteries of God. As it is written, "**Surely Yahweh will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets**" (Amos 3:7). "**To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**" (Col. 2:1-3). These hidden treasures are made known by the Holy Spirit in the power of inspiration, revelation, and spiritual understanding. The key of knowledge opens the door of spiritual perception by which we understand by the Spirit the true and spiritual meaning of all things that are written in the scriptures. If our understanding of the things of God is on a literal and carnal level, then this blessed key of knowledge has been taken away. Woe unto all who see only the *letter of the Word!*

Keys — what blessings, benefits and opportunities they open up! Who would not like to be given the keys to a new Lexus or Rolls Royce! You will notice that every key is formed with a series of notches. The purpose of those notches is that when you insert the key into the lock they turn some things there which you cannot see, called tumblers. A key that doesn't have the notches that correspond to the tumblers won't open the lock. That is why a key will generally open only one door. My car key will not unlock my house, neither will my house key open my Post Office box. If you are given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and you use those keys, what are you going to get? The Kingdom of Heaven! You can bring the Kingdom of Heaven right into your now, into your present reality, and the reason you can do that is because you have the keys. I can go out and get in my Dodge Intrepid today and go anywhere I want, but you can't, because you don't have the key. There are men who live in beautiful mansions and in swanky penthouses and they come and go at their pleasure, but I have never stepped a foot in those places because I don't have the keys. While on the island of Puerto Rico one

time we visited the El Conquistador Resort on the east end of the island at Las Croabas. What an incredibly beautiful place! We could not afford to stay there, but if you pay the price the hostess will give you the keys to a room with a magnificent view of the Caribbean. When you receive the key you are given the ability to enter, occupy, and use to the full all the wonderful facilities of that magnificent resort. Keys give *access*. Keys grant the *right of entrance*. Keys often denote *ownership*. Keys open up a world, a realm, a reality, a dominion. Jesus says to Peter, "I will give unto you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. I will give you the keys to the *spiritual world*." Do we today possess any of the keys to that bright and exalted domain of the spiritual heavens? If you don't have any keys how are you going to see that realm? Without keys how can you enter that world? With no keys how could you possibly use and enjoy the powers and glories of the Kingdom of the Heavens?

## USING THE KEYS

The keys of the Kingdom provide us with all the authority and power of the Kingdom of God! Those keys enable us to do God's Kingdom work and are given to those elect members of His body who have grown spiritually and have followed the Lamb all the way to His fullness upon mount Zion. They have the Father's name written on their foreheads. They have put on the mind of Christ. When the keys of the Kingdom of God are fully operative in our lives we shall bind and loose things on earth according to God's will out of the heavens where we dwell. While the King James Version says, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," that is not how it reads in the Greek. Young's Literal Translation is one of the most accurate in conveying the meaning of the Greek text and reads, "Whatever thou mayest bind upon the earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever thou mayest loose upon the earth, shall be having been loosed in the heavens." The Amplified Bible also does a beautiful job, rendering "Whatever you bind on earth must be already bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth must be what is already loosed in heaven."

The message is clear — whatever a son of God binds on earth must have already been bound in the heavens. Whatever you bind in the outward world must already be bound in the spirit world. It is impossible to *bind* something on earth that is *loosed* in the spirit realm! If it is not loosed in the spirit realm you will never have enough power to loose it in the physical world! How much do we know about what has been loosed in the spirit realm? Only with the mind of Christ can one know what the Spirit of God has bound or loosed from the heavenly realm, and therefore only by the glorious mind of Christ can we, like the firstborn Son, do *only* those things that we see the Father doing. The heavens must be opened to us so that we can clearly see the will and purpose of God on earth from that high realm of divine wisdom and understanding. I am not talking about learning a set of scriptures or a doctrine, but I speak of *seeing and knowing by the Spirit* the will and purpose the Father in every situation.

This is what Jesus meant when He said, "I do only those things I see my Father do." "As I hear, so I speak." "The Father shall show me greater things." Jesus saw by eyes of spirit into the spiritual world of His Father and there He saw what His Father in heaven was doing. He perceived by the spirit the plans and purposes and will of the Father and then acted upon what He saw. And that is why Jesus had 100% perfect results! When He saw the Father healing a blind man, He touched the eyes of that blind man and he received his sight. When He saw His Father feeding the multitude, He multiplied bread and fish. When the Father showed Him Lazarus alive and well coming out of the dark tomb of death, He went and raised Him from the dead. Jesus had 100% faith and 100% results because He only bound and loosed things in the earth realm that He saw and knew were already bound or loosed in the spiritual world.

You see, beloved, contrary to popular thinking, Jesus did not heal every sick person He met, He did not cast out every devil that passed before Him, nor did He stop every funeral procession in Israel. One beautiful day He went to the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem and there was on Solomon's porch a great number of sick people who waited for the stirring of the waters, for every now and then an angel of God made his appearance in the pool, stirred and agitated the waters, so that they bubbled up like a modern jacuzzi, and whoever was first to step into the waters at that sacred moment was cured — made every whit whole of whatever disease of infirmity he had. The Son of God came there that day, and lying among the multitude of sick folk was a man who was completely paralyzed and had been in this condition for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw Him lying there helpless, knowing that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Wilt thou be

made whole — are you really in earnest about being healed?" The invalid answered, "Sir, I have nobody when the water is moving to put me into the pool; but while I am trying to drag myself, somebody else steps down ahead of me." Wonderful words of compassion and power flowed from the lips of Jesus as He said to the man, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk!" Instantly the man was made whole, strength flowed into his body, his withered flesh filled out, and he picked up his sleeping pad and walked.

Now if this would have been in one of our modern healing meetings the preacher would have shouted, "Glory to God! The power of God is here, the Lord is present to heal all who are sick," and he would have immediately gone throughout all of Solomon's porch and laid hands on everything that moved or didn't move. And do you know how many would have been healed? Only the paralyzed man would have been healed! All the rest would have gone home in the same condition they arrived, because *in the heavens* only one man was being loosed that day. Jesus saw the Father healing this one man and He made His way there and did exactly what He saw His Father doing — no more and no less! As an obedient Son He healed the one man and walked away. Jesus had the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and He also understood this great and eternal truth — the keys will only lock or unlock on earth what has already been locked or unlocked in the heavens!

How often do we pray for things that are not God's will? How often do we speak things that we think are good and profitable and worthy, but about which we have no personal word or direction from the Lord? Many years ago I heard Oral Roberts confess that he considered his ministry successful if only one person in five who passed through his healing lines received a touch from God. What a confession! It means that he was praying for five people, but the Father was healing only one. It is obvious that he neither saw nor knew what the Father was doing, therefore he tried to loose five people on earth for every one that had been loosed in heaven. How much time and energy we waste trying to do things the Father isn't doing! And I'm not condemning Oral Roberts — we're all just as guilty.

"Oh," you say, "it is God's will to heal everyone!" The truth is, beloved, He *doesn't* heal everyone. Evangelists and pastors may *try* to loose every person they minister to. But how many of us have healed every sick person we have prayed for? How many of us have had every demon we adjured to leave to come out? How many of us have had every prayer we prayed answered? I do not believe I will be contradicted when I say — *not one of us!* Is it not because we failed to *see what the Father was doing*? We thought we had a blank check to write in anything we wanted, not realizing that God has a *time* and a *way* for everything and everyone. We must know what God is doing *today, right now*. When we truly understand these three things — His *will*, His *purpose* and His *timing*, we will speak His words and not one word we speak will fall to the ground! Everything we touch will turn into a miracle! Jesus had 100% results just because He never wasted time and energy ministering to those He knew the Father was not ministering to. He did *only* what He *saw His Father doing!* He carried within Himself the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and in the spirit He carefully watched the heavens to see which lock they would or would not fit. What He saw bound in the heavenly realm of the spirit He bound on earth, and what He saw loosed in the spiritual world of the heavens He loosed on the earth. It is just as simple as that. And He had 100% results. The keys worked every time! Hear me, sons of God — we cannot lock or unlock every door we come to. We must see that door in the heavens and as it is in the heavens, so act. It will then work for us every time when we walk in harmony with the divine order out of the heavenlies! When we try to bind and loose on earth and nothing happens, it is only because we fail to see by the Spirit what the Father in heaven is doing in the realm of the Spirit. Sometimes we tread on illegal territory and brashly take unauthorized actions. When the keys of the Kingdom of God are inserted in an illegitimate manner, the spiritual monitor flashes: **Unauthorized request — admission denied!**

Did you know that if you are praying to stop something that in God's plan has to happen, you're wasting your breath? The disciples of Jesus, when He spoke to them of how He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, could have prayed and fasted until they starved themselves to death to keep Jesus from going to the cross, and He would have died there anyway. Peter could have practiced the power of positive thinking, he could have moved into his deliverance mindset and rebuked and bound every devil in every Pharisee, scribe, priest and in every Roman soldier throughout the land; he could have boldly spoken a word of authority to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, commanding them to release Jesus from His hour of agony; but none of that would have availed anything. What is bound in heaven *cannot* be loosed on earth!

My friend Franklin Fitzjerrel told about an event in the state of Utah several years ago. There were devastating floods there due to the rains that had exceeded any rainfall they had received in recorded history. The lakes were overflowing, the rivers and streams were flooding, highways and railroad tracks were washed out, homes and communities were under water, and destruction and devastation were everywhere. Finally the Mormon Church called a day of fasting and prayer to stop the rain. And the day they fasted and prayed they got the most rain that the state of Utah had ever had in one day! Someone did not have the keys to the Kingdom! You see, you can fast and pray until you wither away and die, and you will not receive what you are fasting and praying for unless that thing has first been accomplished in the spiritual heavens. If it has already happened in the spirit world then I commend your fasting and prayer, for fasting and prayer are two of the primary instruments of binding and loosing in the Kingdom of God. But if our fasting is merely a *hunger strike* by which we are trying to force God into a corner, and force His hand to make Him do what we want, then we are indeed of that ignorant company of the spiritually stupid. As it is written, "**And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (I Jn. 5:14-15).** And that is not just saying, "Thy will be done," but involves the *knowledge of His will* and asking accordingly.

People sometimes ask us to pray for folks, situations, or nations that are under the dealing hand of God. It is time for God's elect to clearly understand that we cannot always pray for everything people request prayer for. Ah, we will pray, but sometimes not the way people would desire, but according to what we sense in the spirit. If God is purging, correcting, breaking, refining, teaching, or judging a person and has thrust them into the fires of tribulation and the waters of trouble, putting them under pressure of His making, how can we beseech God to save them out of it and abort His necessary work? It is impossible to loose on earth what is bound in heaven! Furthermore, it is spiritually irresponsible to try and do so. It is mutiny, yea, treason against the Kingdom of God! Let us seek the understanding of the Lord *before we pray* lest we be found fighting against God. The spirit of wisdom and revelation from God is the vehicle bearing the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. It was when Peter received a divine revelation of who the Christ was that Jesus disclosed that it was out of that very spirit of revelation that the keys of the Kingdom would be committed to him. And it is clear to me that these keys come by revelation of the spirit in the life of each and every son of God!

It is only when we *know by the spirit* what God's purpose is, it is only when we *see by the spirit* what the Father is doing, it is only when we *hear from the spirit* the counsel of God's voice, that we can go forth and do the works of God. Those works may be small or great, visible or invisible, but we will be found doing our Father's will in the earth. When some Kingdom purpose is wrought, first in heaven and then on earth, it is completed and finished, it is totally fulfilled, and the glory of God is manifested in the earth! The will of God is then done on earth as it has already been decreed and fulfilled in the heavens! What power and authority shall be ours when we have fully received the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and have matured in the knowledge of God to use them! Such power shall not be given to babes in Christ, nor to the unprepared, nor to the carnal-minded Christians held captive to the deceptions of man's religious systems. I speak the truth when I insist that the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms today are filled with preachers and people who are presumptuously and illicitly trying to use the keys of the Kingdom. Most of them have not even been given the keys but are trying to "jimmie" the door, and those who do in some measure possess keys of the Kingdom often use them according to their own will and for their own ends, to make a name, to build a kingdom, for financial gain, or for power over other men's lives. We may be sure that in this sacred hour God will not commit the fullness of Kingdom power to us until we are *prepared and matured* to both receive and use that Kingdom power and authority. As the elect of the Lord we will have been thoroughly processed and finished by our heavenly Father to use the keys of the Kingdom. We shall also have the fullness of the mind of Christ to know what should be bound and what should be loosed.

When Peter perceived who the Christ really was, Jesus told him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Ah, herein lie the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven — THE REVELATION OF THE SPIRIT! Someone insists, "But, brother Eby, isn't it God's will to save, heal, bless and deliver everyone in the whole world?" YES! There is no doubt about it. But that doesn't mean, precious one, that it is His will to save, heal, bless and deliver them all *today*! If such were indeed His will, you can rest assured that it would be fully accomplished before the sun again sets beneath the horizon! Furthermore, if it were God's will to save the whole world today there would be no *plan of the ages*. "**As in Adam all die, so also**

in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order" (I Cor. 15:22-23). There is a time, an order, a plan for everything and for every man. You see, beloved, it may be God's will to heal you today, but on the other hand it may be His plan to heal you one year from today. Only He understands the *why*, but His purposes are always wise and meaningful. When that day arrives *you will be healed*. If you prayed for healing yesterday, if you earnestly sought the Lord for healing yesterday, and didn't receive it, obviously it was not His plan to heal you yesterday. Only when one knows by the spirit what the Father is doing can one speak and act with authority. And only then will we, like the firstborn Son, have 100% results!

That loved one for whose salvation you have been praying — I tell you he or she *will* be saved! You can count on it. God has an appointed time and a prescribed order to deal with that one and bring him or her to His salvation. That appointed time could be today, tomorrow, or in another age. Only by the spirit can we know. Only God can teach us these things. Ah, yes, do pray for them! Do not hesitate, do not fail to do so, do not faint, never give up! for prayer is a vital part of the redemptive and restorative processes of God. But seek God at the same instant for that holy understanding by which you can know **WHEN HIS HOUR HAS ARRIVED** so that you can cooperate in wisdom with Him to do your part, if indeed you have a part, in bringing it to pass. Only then can you loose on earth what has already been loosed in heaven!

Within the *living revelation of the Spirit of God* is found **THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!** Keys are of no use unless we use them. And if we mis-use them we will get into trouble. Instead of trying to save, bless and deliver the whole creation today, or even your own family, wait humbly before God in holy submission to hear His voice, to know His ways, to understand His will and to see His works. Then go forth and speak and do those things that you have heard and seen of your Father in the secret place. As you go you will hold in your hands the **keys of the Kingdom!**

I will close this message by sharing the following words of godly instruction from the pen of our beloved brother Paul Mueller. "Luke tells the story of a certain centurion who had a servant who was dear to him. The centurion's servant was sick unto death. When he heard about Jesus, the centurion sent word through the elders of the Jews, beseeching Jesus to heal his servant. So Jesus started to go to the centurion's house. But when the centurion heard that Jesus was coming, he sent his friends to tell Jesus, 'Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: **but say in a WORD, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it'** (Lk. 7:2-8).

"This centurion understood the power and authority that belonged to Jesus the Christ. This story shows the power and authority of the kingdom of God in demonstration. It is the same power and authority that we shall have in Christ. Because that centurion understood the power and authority of Jesus, he saw that Jesus could simply speak a word and his servant would be healed. That centurion was also a man of authority. He was under authority, and had authority over other soldiers, as well as his own servants. All he needed to do to accomplish something was to speak the word and his servants would obey him, thus fulfilling the centurion's wishes. As the centurion's servants obeyed his every word, so also would every specter, of all the diseases and afflictions of man, obey the Lord Jesus Christ. The centurion knew this, and so also should we. This is the power of God given to His sons!

"We are living in a greater and more glorious Day than did the centurion. We are living in the great Day of the kingdom of God on earth when every disease and affliction — when every sin and every form of death — shall be completely conquered and put under the feet of this glorious Christ. And the sons shall be given that authority! The whole earth shall be cleansed of the many diseases and afflictions of man, including sin and death in every form, by the power of the Word that He is. What a Day this is! And what a privileged people we are!

"When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, found the servant whole that had been sick' (Lk. 7:9-10). The servant that once was sick unto death was now healed and made whole by the power of God. But how was that power manifested? Obviously, Jesus did not go to the

centurion's house. But did Jesus pray the prayer of faith? Did He speak a word commanding the sickness to leave that servant? There is no record that Jesus said or did anything! When He heard the centurion's plea for help, Jesus Christ **saw the Father doing that work in the Spirit, and lo, it was done.** Just a thought in harmony with the Father's will, sent on the winds of the Spirit, is all it took to heal that servant. And that is all that is necessary to bring deliverance to the groaning creation, and bring forth the new earth. Just a thought or a word **in harmony with the Father's will**, sent on the winds of the Spirit, is all that is necessary to change us from the earthbound worms that we are into that glorious body, bearing the image and likeness of Christ. As sons of God, we can see and hear in the Spirit. And so we await our transformation" — end quote.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 35 THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART THIRTY-FIVE

#### SOULISH VS SPIRITUAL THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God is as enormous and awe-inspiring as God Himself. God's Kingdom is so vast and comprehensive that we can never fathom or understand its power and glory apart from the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. Since the Kingdom of God is the realm of His omnipotent power and universal dominion, we must *know God* in a greater way in order to fully grasp the wonders and powers of that realm. Perhaps it is because of its transcendent nature that the church system rarely teaches anything about the Kingdom of God, and when they do, they invariably either confuse it with the religious systems *called* "the church," or place it out in some future time or age. Yet, we need more than diligent study and research to see the Kingdom of God! To perceive His Kingdom at all, we must be born of the Spirit and begin to put on the mind of Christ. Without the wisdom and understanding of the mind of Christ, the mysteries of the Kingdom will remain hidden and veiled, lest the carnal-minded put forth their unclean hands to illegally grasp and use the Kingdom for their devious purposes, thus distorting its truth, diminishing its glory, and corrupting its power.

Many who read these lines can confess with me that the mighty seed of the Kingdom, which is Christ, has been sowed within our hearts by the Holy Spirit. That Kingdom seed is daily growing within us and is bringing forth the increase of Christ the Lord in our experience. The Kingdom of God shall continue to grow and increase, by the spirit of life from God, until everything everywhere is swallowed up into God and He becomes All-in-all. The very *life* of God Himself is the power of the Kingdom of God within us!

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (**Rom. 14:17**). The Kingdom is here defined both negatively and positively. We are told first what it is *not*, and then what it *is*. "The kingdom of God is *not* meat or drink." The blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God are not the outward fruits of the land of Canaan, but the inward fruits of the Spirit of God in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. "The kingdom of God *is* righteousness, and peace, and joy *in the Holy Ghost*." The nature of the Kingdom is the *new wine* Jesus promised to drink with His chosen ones. "But I say unto you, I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new with you IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM" (**Mat. 26:29**). Luke records these words thus: "I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be FULFILLED IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (**Lk. 22:16**). And Paul says, "Who hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (**Col. 1:13**). And, "The kingdom of God is *not* meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The new wine of the Kingdom is wine of a new kind. Wine out of a new vineyard. Wine out of a new winepress. Wine of a new character, a new sweetness, a new strength, and a new exhilaration. The new wine of the Kingdom is the *divine life* of Christ! He is now pouring out His divine life into His elect and the fruit of the True vine is now righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! I thank God for the privilege of proclaiming this message, this word of the Kingdom that Jesus brought, and that today is quickened in the hearts of God's sons. Do not forget how beautifully Jesus taught it, and do not fail to hear how powerfully the Holy Spirit unfolds it in our lives today. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (**Lk. 12:32**). Today the Father gives us a Kingdom which will never fade away — a Kingdom which is righteousness, which is peace, which is joy; a Kingdom which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away. Fear not little flock! The Father has brought this Kingdom into our experience by His Word and by His Spirit.

Paul knew of a blessed plane of existence, a glorious sphere of life, known as "the liberty of the sons of God" (**Rom. 8:21**). He knew that there was another and better realm entirely beyond the earthly realm where men dwell and toil under the unrelenting spell of natural things, and beneath the weight of sorrow, limitation, fear, sin and death. It is the realm where men are delivered from the bondage of this passing world, and are

translated into a heavenly land of life and immortality in the spirit. The moment God is given the throne of our life and is glorified in His sons, at that very moment, *straightway*, we begin to  *dwell in God*  and  *glorification*  begins its work in us. It is not where we dwell in the natural that counts, but where our spirit dwells. If our dwelling place is in God, then we begin to live out of the power of God which is the atmosphere of this new world. Where grace is needed for any trial, we steadfastly draw upon His grace. Where peace or joy is needed, it must flow forth from Him, for peace and joy are the fruit of His Spirit within. Where life and health are needed, we draw upon the life and power of the resurrection,  *which He is* , and which through Him dwells within us, that the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead should quicken our mortal body by His Spirit  *that dwelleth in us* .

We know that Christ Himself from His riches in glory is the supplier of  *all our need* . Here in this blessed land of the Kingdom of Heaven we can live as Jesus lived, who did  *always those things that pleased the Father* . In like manner we also can follow His steps, doing only those things, which are given us of the Father that sonship may begin to manifest itself in us. Herein is the righteousness of the Kingdom, not doing by laws, ordinances, regulations, doctrines, or commandments of men those things we  *think*  please the Father, but pleasing the Father by doing only those things which the Spirit of the Father instructs us to do. It is a matter of life and nature, not of outward conformity. Life on this high plane is THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD. The liberty of the sons of God describes our position in the Kingdom of Heaven. And it is into  *this very liberty*  that  *all creation*  shall, in God's due time, find its place, as the apostle has said:

"In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has in store for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of  *the sons of God coming into their own* . The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited — yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty WHICH CAN ONLY BELONG TO THE SONS OF GOD! It is plain to anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail. And it is plain, too, that we who have a foretaste of the Spirit are in a state of painful tension, while we wait for that redemption of our bodies which will mean that we have realized our full sonship" (**Rom. 8:18-23**) (J. B. Phillips). ALL CREATION SHALL HAVE ITS SHARE IN THE LIBERTY THAT BELONGS TO THE SONS OF GOD! What a word that is! Oh, Christ, what glory Thou hast prepared for mankind! How infinite is Thy love, how omnipotent Thy power, how all-inclusive Thy purpose, and all Thy ways past finding out!

We are sometimes confused about this idea of freedom and liberty. To some it means no limitations, nor restrictions, no holds — anything goes! I have met men who thought that because they were "free" from the law that they could therefore indulge their flesh and do any perverse or licentious thing their carnal heart desired. But there are two sides of liberty! The apostle Paul reveals these two sides of liberty **in Romans 6:14-18**. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?  *God forbid* . Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

There is a freedom  *from*  and there is a freedom  *unto* . Should I drive on a highway where there is no speed limit I am free from the law, free from any  *legal limit*  on how fast I can drive. Am I then free to drive as fast as I wish? Should I then on bald tires and a wet road travel at 120 miles an hour simply because there is no speed limit? By no means! Though I am free from the  *legal restraint*  of the speed limit, I am now limited by a number of other factors — road conditions, visibility, safety and how fast the car will go. There is no absolute freedom anywhere in the universe! Absolute freedom could not be a liberty that guarantees ones rights or secures ones happiness — it would be anarchy. When people live without any form of government it is called anarchy. Some people believe that all forms of government are unnecessary. They are called  *anarchists* , and what they believe is called  *anarchism* . An anarchist says that government or any kind of control does more harm than good. He believes that people will cooperate with each other and behave themselves without rules of any kind. Anarchism is as old as history. The Stoics, a group of philosophers in ancient Greece, believed in a world

without laws, schools, or any force on the individual. Conditions close to anarchy, however, have existed for short periods of time when a government has just been overthrown, or after a great catastrophe, such as a fire, flood or earthquake. History proves that anarchy produces riots, looting, murder and every *lawless* act.

As a United States citizen I am not free, although I live in a so-called "free country." Nobody in the whole world is a free man or a free woman. We are called unto liberty and justice, but we are not absolutely free. The impressive statue standing majestically in New York harbor is called the Statue of Liberty — but it does not proclaim to those who sail past it, escaping from some totalitarian regime, that in this land men are *unconditionally free*. Liberty means to live in a domain, an environment, a state of being wherein there are boundaries, and you can freely move within those boundaries. When a slave is set free he is released completely and forever from the bondage of his former master, but as he goes out into society he discovers that he has freedom *from* his past, but he is still not free to do anything he pleases. He is limited by his abilities and skills and by the availability of opportunity. He cannot live anywhere he wants, and must be subject to the laws of the land and the customs of society.

As a citizen of this country I am aware that there are boundaries, there are restrictions and limitations. I must pay taxes. There are speed limits and stoplights. If I am a felon I cannot run for the office of president. Zoning laws do not permit me to build just any kind of house or put up a business just any place I choose. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT ANARCHY! It is a kingdom, a king's domain, and in the Kingdom of God I am not free from HIS LORDSHIP. As a matter of fact, the better I know Him the more I come under bondage to Him. Paul continually affirmed, "I am a *bondservant* of Jesus Christ." When you begin to walk in liberty you recognize your boundaries. Service men are often able to get "leave" for the weekend. If they overstay their leave and fail to get back on time, there is a penalty to be paid. And even while on leave they remain subject to all the laws governing men in the military. They cannot abuse their liberty. They have liberty but they still have to obey the rules and get back. They are not free, but they do have liberty. Salvation makes men free from sin and death, but the Kingdom of God is not a realm of absolute freedom! The Kingdom of God reveals a King in control. This King has called us to be a people recognizing our liberty.

What happens when we go beyond the bounds of our liberty? It is called *trespassing*. As you have walked along some street or road have you not come upon a "No Trespassing" sign? You have all the liberty you can want to walk all around that property. You can stand just outside that property line and enjoy yourself to the fullest. But the moment you step over the property line you have *trespassed*. And so it is in the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God is first of all righteousness, and then peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The moment you step outside those boundaries you have trespassed! Anything outside of the Holy Ghost does not pertain to the Kingdom of God! Whatever is not of righteousness is not of the Kingdom but of the world. It is a trespass. All that abides under the dark cloud of sorrow, despondency, trepidation, depression, disquietude, fear or guilt is not of the Kingdom for it lies outside the unspeakable joy that is in the Holy Ghost. Frustration, agitation, confusion, anger, and emotional outbursts are a trespass, for they pertain to a realm outside the peace of the Kingdom realm of God. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Every precinct beyond these is trespass — you do not belong on that territory! You have no right to be there! You have entered another land, another country, another world without a valid passport. You have been translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, and you are a foreigner on any other territory. You are no longer a citizen of the realm of the flesh, of sin, of the world, of religion, or of death. You do not belong there! You have no right to be there. All those realms are beyond the sphere of your liberty in Christ Jesus, the liberty of the sons of God. If you subject yourself to these it means bondage to a foreign power, to an alien domain. We cannot use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). Ah, there is the boundary of our liberty in Christ! Liberty is in the spirit. We are free to walk in the spirit and live in the spirit. We are not free to walk in the flesh or live after the flesh. The moment we step out of the spirit to walk after the flesh we have trespassed beyond our liberty in the Kingdom of God. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it! All creation shall be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption and shall gain an entrance into THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD! All shall be the children of God and shall find their citizenship, their residence, their eternal habitation in the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God. All other realms, above and beneath,

shall be empty and desolate — eternally uninhabited! Sin shall have no slaves, death shall have no prey, hell shall have no prisoners! What a hope!

## SOULISH vs. SPIRITUAL

It is important to be able to distinguish between things that differ, for appearances are not to be relied upon. Things which seem to be alike may yet be opposite of each other. A serpent may be like a stick, and a stone like an egg; but they are far from being the same. Like may be very unlike. Especially is this the case in spiritual things, and without this understanding properly applied it is impossible to discern the righteousness, peace, joy and power of the Kingdom of God. Every heavenly reality may be counterfeited, just as jewels can be imitated. As zircons are wonderfully like real diamonds in appearance, so sham graces are marvelously like the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Many men in false religions have a belief which is similar to faith, and yet it is not *the faith* of the Son of God. Their belief does not save, redeem, quicken, deliver, or transform. Vast numbers of people exhibit pious affections of love, joy, peace, righteousness and power, but are quite destitute of the *living presence and power of Christ Jesus the Lord*. They indeed have a *soulish* joy, a *soulish* peace, or a *soulish* righteousness, but not one that emanates out of a *quicken and regenerated spirit*.

Every man is both soul and spirit, and each has its own set of expressions and powers. Only the two-edged sword of the Spirit, which is the *living word* of God, is able to divide and separate soul and spirit — distinguishing between what is the expression of the soul and what is the manifestation of the spirit. In this discernment between soul and spirit a man will need the mind of Christ, or he will soon deceive his own heart. I do not hesitate to tell you that many are already mistaken, and will never discern their delusion till they lift up their eyes unto God on bended knee, with a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, to humbly and earnestly seek that wisdom which comes only from the heart of God.

Righteousness holds a very dominant position in the Kingdom of God. It has a leading place of importance in the teaching of the King who will allow no one to enter or rule in His Kingdom without a righteousness which exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees (Mat. 5:20). This same concern is uppermost in all those elect sons of God who shall reign in the Kingdom. These hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mat. 5:6) and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mat. 6:33), knowing that in the Kingdom of God "the throne is established by righteousness" (Prov. 16:12). "Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom" (Heb. 1:8). The Kingdom of God is *first*, righteousness; *then*, peace; and finally, joy, and all in the Spirit of God. In the Kingdom of God righteousness is of supreme importance. The very scepter of the King, Jesus, is a scepter of righteousness. The effect of righteousness is peace. There can be no peace where righteousness is not established. The effect of peace is joy. There can be no joy where there is no peace, but only confusion and every kind of trouble. This order can never be reversed or rearranged. Any joy that does not proceed from peace and righteousness is a carnal, soulish, sensual joy. It can never be the joy of the Kingdom of God! It is a sham, a false joy, a mere pretense. Therefore, the Kingdom of God with its marvelous peace, its wonderful joy and glory, is rooted in the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, and is being wrought in the personalities of those who are becoming an integral part of *God's Christ*. The Kingdom of God is a glorious Kingdom of righteousness! The Psalmist assures us that "The Lord shall endure for ever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness" (Ps. 9:7-8). The deepest cry of every son of God is, "Give the king Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness" (Ps. 72:1-3).

As we look upon the sad earth today, it is plain for every eye to see that, flowing from the corrupt minds of the corrupt rulers of every corrupt government on earth, taught in the schools, practiced in business and in the courts and propagated on every hand, we find the evil fruit of death manifesting itself in lies, deceit, oppression, cheating, injustice, variance, murders, adultery, uncleanness, drunkenness, perversion, idolatry, heresies, bigotry, crookedness and sin of every kind. Everywhere on the planet, in every nation under heaven, mankind is being overwhelmed by its evil until the earth is filled with violence and the thoughts and imaginations of men's hearts are only evil continually. Only with the mind of the Spirit may we imagine a world ruled by a government such as is prophesied in the ninety-sixth Psalm, "Say among the heathen that the Lord

Reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: He shall *judge the people righteously*. Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall *judge the world with righteousness*, and the people with His truth" (**Ps. 96:10-13**). Isaiah adds his prophetic voice, speaking of the many-membered Christ of God, "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him...and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: but with *righteousness* shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth...and *righteousness* shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins" (**Isa. 11:2-5**).

## THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE KINGDOM

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (**Mat. 5:20**). The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees consists in following rules and regulations that seek to govern actions in every conceivable circumstance of life. The Kingdom requires a righteousness that *exceeds* that and is not founded on any rules or regulations imposed from the outside. It must be a righteousness of heart and nature. What is *righteousness*? Is it obeying every little law, dotting your "I's" and crossing your "T's"? Is it when you avoid every temptation to sin that comes your way, and live an absolutely flawless life, pure in every thought and deed? In my opinion that is a very negative definition of righteousness!

If you want a positive definition, look at the Gospel — the GOOD NEWS! Scrutinizing everybody's life to make sure they don't make one single mistake is definitely not *good news*! It genders fear, intimidation, and condemnation. Don't look at what you *shouldn't* do, look at what you *should* do! If you are so busy doing what you *should*, you won't have the time, energy, money, or will to do what you *shouldn't*. Righteousness is having the attitudes of Jesus. How full He was of mercy, love, compassion, kindness, goodness, forgiveness and graciousness! Righteousness is saying, "What can I do to make a difference? How can I help, lift, encourage, heal, restore, and bless mankind? How can I make the world a better and more beautiful place around me? How can I practice *righteousness*?"

The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, it is not a matter of whether you eat pork or drink wine, it is not a matter of whether you take communion on Sunday, it is not external religion at all; it is not outward laws, forms, rituals, traditions or observances; it's not what you take off your face, what you take off your ears, what you take off from around your neck; it's not clothes, make-up, or jewelry; and it's not diet. Then, what is it? Religion is man trying his best to please God. Do you know something? That is exactly what religion was trying to do in Jesus' day! It was trying its very best to *please God*! But except your righteousness *exceeds that* of the scribes and Pharisees, except your righteousness goes beyond all your sincere and earnest efforts to *please God*, you will in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven! There is a higher righteousness than that, a righteousness that doesn't arise from our own efforts or from outward conformity to laws and commandments. It is the product of the divine nature. "Everyone that is *born of God* doeth righteousness," says the apostle John. He also says that "God is love."

In **Isaiah 45:19** we read, "I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." God is righteous. That means He is *always right*, He is never wrong. That is what righteousness is — it is right-ness. God is always right in everything He says and does. He never makes a mistake. Sometimes we wonder why God does things the way He does, and we may sometimes question why; but He is never wrong, He is always right. He cannot be wrong because He is absolute righteousness. He acts out of divine wisdom, knowledge, understanding, goodness and love. What a wonderful God! What a marvelous Being to be able to trust in, to have as our God and King, and to commit everything to Him, knowing He can never be wrong, He cannot make a mistake, and all of His doings stream from His loving concern, from His inscrutable wisdom, and His divine ability to do always and only what is best for us. THIS IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS HE IS ASKING US TO SEEK. THIS IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HIS KINGDOM. THIS IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HIS THRONE. THIS IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF EVERY SON OF GOD WHO SHALL REIGN WITH CHRIST IN HIS KINGDOM! What a goal God has set before us! We must be *like Him* in all of our ways — *that*, precious friend of mine, is righteousness!

Why should men doubt the wisdom and love of God? How dare they place a question mark after His beneficence? Sometimes men's doubts have arisen because they have listened to the ambiguous oracles of nature, rather than the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. Nature impresses men with the awful mystery, power and sovereignty of God. The storm with its jagged lightnings and rolling thunders, the proud mountains with their dizzy heights mantled in snow, the heaving bosom of the ocean with its foam-crested waves, yes, and the tiny violet on the hillside — these eloquently proclaim a God of infinite power, wisdom and riches; but they do not convince the unconverted heart of God's infinite love. The forces in nature that sometimes work for our good often turn about and *seem* to work for our ruin and destruction. The sunlight that warms our fields to produce the golden harvests also beats down unmercifully upon the earth and produces a dust bowl making thousands homeless and hungry. The warm rains that help to germinate the seed that has been sown sometimes come in ruinous abundance, producing floods in whose wake are destruction, disease, despair and death. How apparently contradictory! Possibly in the midst of some tragedy you, too, are asking the question, "Is God loving? Is God just? Is God *righteous*?" "Why does God permit war?" you ask. If He is a loving God, if He is all-righteous, why does He permit the roar of bombers and the barking of guns to silence the joyous laughter of innocent children? If God is a God of love and righteousness, why does He not stop it all?"

We do not have the answer to many of the dark questions of life, for our vision is so limited, and unlike God, we cannot see the end from the beginning. Ah! If only we could see the end — God's *glorious* end, then we would understand all the "whys" and "wherefores" and how even all these things WORKED TOGETHER FOR OUR GOOD. We do not have the answer to many of the dark questions of life because we cannot fully understand the wonderful interplay of God's justice, chastisement, training, and mercy. We only know that man has sinned, the whole planet is in rebellion, mankind continually rejects the ways of the Lord and spurns the love of God, and sin takes its awful toll, and all of nature is thrown into chaos in the process. The ambiguous testimony of nature alone cannot supply you with an adequate answer. Only those elect saints who are spiritually enlightened can discern the love and wisdom and righteousness of God, even in the adverse and fearful demonstrations of nature, in the cruel and violent actions of men, and in the terrible judgment that stalks through the earth. Ah, let us turn from these oracles with their double and confusing answers and turn to the only LIVING DEMONSTRATION of the loving, wise, and righteous nature of God — a demonstration that all the ages have not been able to contradict, namely, the great fact of the *incarnation*; the deathless, eternally glorious fact that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation...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*" (II Cor. 5:19-21). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son...beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and HIS LOVE IS PERFECTED IN US" (I Jn. 4:10-12). Can words make it any plainer that God's love in Christ is given to pass into us and to become our life? We shall then love God as He loved us. And we shall then love the world with the same love which God in Christ revealed upon the cross! This, my beloved, *is righteousness*! This is the righteousness, the right-ness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees! This is the righteousness by which God shall judge the world through His sons! Hallelujah!

The righteousness of the Kingdom, therefore, can be experienced only by the man who has submitted to the rule of God by the indwelling spirit of holiness, and who has therefore experienced the nature and powers of God's Kingdom authority. It is by the power of the inward reign of the spirit of HIS LIFE that the righteousness of the Kingdom is to be attained! And contrary to what many preachers preach and most Christians think, righteousness is not first of all soul winning, preaching, prophesying, speaking in tongues, healing, casting out devils, establishing churches, doing good works, nor any of the thousand and one other things mistakenly imagined to be "fruit." Righteousness is, first and foremost, a state of being. Righteousness is, above all else, a nature. Righteousness is not merely what a person does, but what he is. It follows, however, that there is a *doing* of righteousness which springs from the *being* of righteousness.

I have already pointed out that righteousness is RIGHT BEING...right living, right attitude, right desire, right motive, right actions, a total rightness in all things according to God's standard and as an expression of God's nature. That is what God is — righteous, right. We are exhorted in the Word to seek and receive this same attribute. And to be right doesn't mean that all our doctrines must be absolutely correct, or that we dress in a particular fashion, or that we don't smoke, drink or cuss, or that we observe certain religious traditions! It

means that you think, know, and act like God! When you receive a new spirit, or right spirit, or Holy Spirit, you are destined to right being and right doing; you are destined to righteousness. David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). Ah, that is what we want! The right spirit. That is righteousness! Right being and right doing are attainable on this earth right now because of the right spirit. Who is the right spirit? Christ is the right spirit, a new spirit, the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit, the spirit of righteousness.

The gospel that Jesus preached was the gospel of the Kingdom. He announced that He had come to found a Kingdom; He claimed the title of King for Himself; and in the Sermon on the Mount He gave us the laws, the principles, the very *constitution* of that Kingdom. Well, what kind of a Kingdom is it? Across millenniums of time the answer of the great apostle Paul rings clear: "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." There you have in one sublime statement the essence of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, or right-ness. There is cruel wrong in this world of ours. Man wrongs man, brother oppresses brother, nations war against and oppress one another, bosses become hard taskmasters, taking advantage of employees, pastors lord it over the flock and control and manipulate men's lives, husbands beat and abuse their wives, parents neglect their children. The low realms of the earth are full of cruelty, maliciousness, violence, lust and crime, and even in the midst of those who name the name of Christ there is iniquity also. But the Kingdom of God is righteousness and when His Kingdom comes tyranny, oppression, strife, injustice and wrongs cease — men do right out of the loving nature of the KING OF LOVE who reigns within. Forgiveness of sins does not secure such a transformation, but when the Kingdom of God comes with power there is a mighty change!

Let one thing be abundantly clear — it is not just righteousness by man's standard, not external obedience to law, not outward conformity to society's norms, not observance of religion's demands, not mere human goodness. There is more than one kind of righteousness. Paul says, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:3). I tell you the truth when I say that most of the "righteousness" taught by the church system is a righteousness imposed and exacted by the traditions of the elders and by the commandments of men. It has nothing to do with the righteousness of God, being rather the religious man's *own righteousness*. It is the same old righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees accommodated to Christianity. The righteousness of the Kingdom is found only in the Holy Ghost. And it is found there today, right now, for the Kingdom of God IS righteousness. The Holy Spirit does not say that "the kingdom of God is righteousness IN THE KINGDOM AGE." Too long preachers and believers have interpreted the Kingdom of God as a future, physical, materialistic Kingdom, attainable only in some coming age. God wants you to understand today that His Kingdom is not to be sought in that realm. That would make His Kingdom too cheap, materialistic, natural, worldly and earthly. Oh yes, there are *many ages* of the Kingdom yet to come, but all that the Kingdom *is* IS IN THE HOLY GHOST! It is now, and ever will be. When you enter into the consciousness of God by the spirit you have stepped upon the territory of the Kingdom. It is *in the Holy Ghost*. Glory to God! Righteousness is the work of the Spirit within us. It is the result of the rising of Christ, "the Sun of righteousness," within us (Mal. 4:2). When the Lord has fully transformed us and made us righteous within, we shall then be clothed outwardly with "the robe of righteousness" which is the fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His love, holiness, power and immortality. Then we, the body of our glorious Head, shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness," as the prophet said, for we have been "made the righteousness of God in Him." What a calling!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 36**  
**THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART THIRTY-SIX**

**POWER WITHOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS**

The miracle of what God has done through Jesus Christ ravishes my heart. I am enthralled beyond measure that He has translated me out of the kingdom of darkness, and is clothing me with the fullness of the Son of God. Daily I am putting on the Lord Jesus Christ who is my robe of righteousness and my house from heaven, the new man, the spiritual body, and the new building of God, eternal in the heavens. Just as the life within a lamb produces its covering of wool, so does the life of Christ within each son of God create the garments of our full salvation. We put on the robe of Christ's righteousness, not by putting it on from outside of ourselves, by our own self-efforts and good works, but by the working and power of His life within.

Some time ago Jody Dragoo shared with me a beautiful experience the Lord gave him in vision in which he saw the glory of the robe of righteousness as the spiritual body of the new man. The following is his account of this manifestation. "The events that I now share are none other than the sons and daughters of God coming into their own, having overcome through the blood of the Lamb and having put on the incorruptible, immortal, and resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"It was about 7:00 o'clock one morning when I awoke to get ready for work. I didn't stay awake long as the next thing I knew I found myself in a foreign land. The name of the land was not revealed, but it may have been in Africa. The area was hot and dry without any wind at all on this day. The sky above was blue and clear for miles around. The sand beneath my feet was bright due to the sun beating down upon it. There were areas of sparse plant life, but not sufficient to sustain life. The area had apparently been in a long drought as there were very few cattle around. There were a few people who still resided in this village, one of which was a woman who was carrying a pail of water upon her head. She was off to my left and under the porches or walkways of the village. Another individual was a young black man who wore a light shirt and dark pants, who took me through the village. He spoke of the conditions that the people faced daily and how hard the drought had been on the livestock and all concerned. As we walked, he said the greatest need of his people was for rain. While he talked, I did not answer a word. It seemed I was completely aware of the situation at hand and the conditions they were in (Amos 8:11-14). Next we came to an open area within the village where we stopped and this individual stepped a few feet away from where I stood.

"After he spoke of the greatest need of the village being rain, immediately my hands and arms raised upwards toward the Father. It was at this point that I began to notice my *garment*. I was wearing a white robe with a small belt around the waist. There were no wrinkles or spots within the robe, and no sand on it. The robe kept out the effects of the climate and I felt no heat at all. As for my feet, I don't recall them as touching the ground at any time. One aspect of this robe that has deeply impressed me is the fact that it felt different from the clothes or 'robes' we normally wear. With the clothes we usually wear we can feel the separation from our body. Furthermore, the fact that we have to change them daily, testifies to us that they are not really a part of our being. They are only temporary coverings until the permanent garment is put on. This robe, however, was *part of my being*. It was inseparable from my body. There was no sense of division or separateness. Is this not the picture of the corruptible putting on the incorruptible, the mortal putting on the immortal — the putting on the Lord Jesus Christ who is formed within us! Is this not but the fulfillment of Romans 8:23 in regard to the complete redemption of the body? The sons and daughters of God clothed with the incorruptible, immortal, resurrected body of Christ, covered with the glory of God! And these go forth ministering from that incorruptible realm of *pure spirit*, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

"From this we should understand that putting on the robe — the incorruptible, immortal glory of God — is actually our *union with the robe*, making us complete, perfect, and lacking nothing! It is interesting to note that the robe comes forth from the inner working of the Father Himself. It is He who weaves each and every strand into a whole, complete unit. It is brought forth from within as the Lord Jesus Christ is formed within us, revealed in fuller detail day by day. This is the Father's work, and it is beautiful to behold! The robe is out of our innermost being and part of our entire being.

"The next thing I noticed was my thought processes and how they worked. The mind seemed to operate on a completely different realm from what we are accustomed to. This reveals that the mind of Christ was in full operation. This is the new mind and heart promised by the Father. The mind that was in Christ Jesus was the mind of the Father. And it was this mind that was in operation within me. This is the renewed mind of which Paul spoke. It is this mind that the Father is perfecting within His sons and daughters. And it is this mind that sought the Father for rain for a dry village!

"As I raised my hands upward and intercession for the people began, the Father was seen in a large white cloud which began producing rain clouds. Almost immediately these clouds began pouring rain down upon the village. It was rain in abundance that watered the ground and filled their wells. I can't say what the words I spoke were, but they had so much power and authority in them that the elements themselves were brought to obedience. As the rains came, the man who guided me through the village had an astonished look upon his face. He asked, 'How did you do this?' It was at this point that I awoke.

"As I have continued to meditate on this it has begun to transform my attitude, my understanding, my life, and all that is within me. It has become strong meat in times of testing. The scripture, which states that 'it does not yet appear what we shall be,' comes to mind in reference to this dream and witnesses to my spirit about the things shortly to come to pass. How beautiful it is when the Father pulls back some of the veil and shows us these things! To see the ministry of the sons and daughters of God coming into their own, being clothed with the glory of God, and delivering creation from the bondage of sin and death is wonderful to behold. I will never forget the robe, which He revealed, and how it was part of my being, and covered and protected all of my being. Ah, the sons and daughters with the mind of Christ shall lack nothing!" — end quote.

## POWER WITHOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS

"I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right" (Isa. 45:19). God is righteous. That means He is *always right*. He is never wrong. That is what righteousness is — it is rightness. God is always right in everything He says and does. He never makes a mistake. He cannot be wrong because He is absolute righteousness. God's rightness is not based on a set of laws or a code of ethics, but is rooted within His very nature. He acts out of divine wisdom, infinite knowledge and understanding, unbounded goodness and unconditional love. Righteousness is right attitude, right desire, right motive, right living, right actions, a total rightness in all things according to God's standard and as the expression of God's nature. The sons of God are called, set apart, taught, processed and transformed to be *like Him* in all of our ways — *that*, precious friend of mine, is righteousness! This is the righteousness that we *hunger and thirst* after! This is the righteousness that we now *seek*! This is the righteousness by which the sons of God shall judge the world! When you receive the *spirit of sonship* you receive the *right spirit*, or Holy Spirit, and you are destined to right being and right doing; you are destined to righteousness. Christ is the right spirit, the **spirit of righteousness**. What a goal God has set before us! What a calling!

Righteousness is the first and foremost stone in the foundation of God's Kingdom. We can only qualify to rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom as we thoroughly understand and gladly embrace the great truth that "**the throne is established by righteousness**" (Prov. 16:12). "**Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom**" (Heb. 1:8). The Kingdom of God is a glorious Kingdom of righteousness! The righteousness of the Kingdom is now being wrought in the personalities of all those blessed sons of God who shall share the throne of His heavenly dominion. The Psalmist assures us, "**The Lord shall endure for ever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness**" (Ps. 9:7-8). The deepest cry of every son of God is, "**Give the king Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the**

king's son. He shall *judge Thy people with righteousness*, and Thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness" (Ps. 72:1-3).

Only with the mind of the Spirit may we imagine a world ruled by a government such as is prophesied in the ninety-sixth Psalm: "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: He shall *judge the people righteously*. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall *judge the world with righteousness*, and the people with His truth" (Ps. 96:10-13). God shall indeed judge the whole world in righteousness, and this He shall do through His sonship company. It is of this many-membered Christ, God's glorious Christ, Head and body, that the prophet speaks when he says, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him...and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with *righteousness* shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth...and *righteousness* shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Isa. 11:2-5).

Many well-known ministers have gone down the tubes during the last fifty years because the righteousness of the Kingdom of God was never fulfilled in their deepest hearts. They were great preachers, spell-binding orators, magnificent pulpiteers, had powerful gifts of God operating in their lives, with charisma dripping off their fingertips. Hundreds and thousands would come to hear them when they showed up. But their word wasn't trustworthy; you couldn't depend on them. They would not live within their means, nor pay their honest debts. They glibly asked their followers for thousands of dollars in donations and willingly resorted to every sordid trick and sob story to persuade people to give more and more money. They bilked widows of their life-savings, and then left behind a disgraceful trail of unpaid bills and questionable dealings. Some were caught in bed with another man's wife, or ran off with the organist, deserting their own wife and children. Some divorced and remarried again and again. I remember one preacher who, every time he came to town, had a different wife! Now, don't misunderstand my words. I am not criticizing any brother or sister who has been divorced and remarried. I am talking about men who are merely *womanizers* hiding behind a mask of pretended *spirituality*. Others were caught with prostitutes or in homosexual acts. Others sank into the filth of free love, wife-swapping, and group sex — *in the name of the Lord!* One died in a hotel room of acute alcoholism. Even the mighty evangelist whose signs, wonders, and miracle exploits shook the country of Argentina, and whose vision of the sonship ministry remains unparalleled to this day, finally ended his life as an alcoholic, only remembering through his booze the glory days of the past. Another became obsessed with weird and strange doctrines and illusions of grandeur. He founded a cult and built a tabernacle with a golden throne surrounded by the twenty-four elders. Another went to jail for arson. And, of course, the whole world knows about Jimmy Jones and the Jonestown tragedy! Others had violent tempers, lying tongues, deceptive methods, kingdom-building spirit, and egos inflated with pride. What an apt description Peter gives of men who have *gifts and power without righteousness*: "...having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right ways, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of *unrighteousness*" (II Pet. 2:14-15). What shame and reproach these bring on the Kingdom of God by their unholy actions!

From time to time I meet these folk who call themselves sons of God. They can discern what God is doing in this hour, they see beautiful revelation truths. They can thrill your heart with the message they preach. They understand the deep mysteries of the Kingdom of God. But somehow the anointing has never gotten down into their *feet!* They cannot walk in what they see. They see it, they talk it, but they can't **walk it**. Their personal lives are a disaster area. There is a weakness in their ability to follow in the footsteps of the firstborn Son who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace, wisdom and strength. They cannot walk out the wisdom, nature, power or will of God on the earth plane. They can talk about being overcomers and rattle on endlessly about the victorious life, sonship, kingship and priesthood, ruling and reigning, but they cannot demonstrate a life of victory under pressure or in the nitty-gritty of everyday living. Their head knowledge is powerful, but their walk is weak and a reproach to the Kingdom of God. What a disgrace it is to have people who can preach the sonship message, teach the glories of the third day, the third feast, the Melchizedek Order and the Kingdom of

God, who know the scriptures well, have beautiful revelations, and ability to influence people with the truth — and yet cannot WALK IT OUT!

The one who preaches and teaches, but does not partake of what he gives forth, who testifies to one thing and lives another, has little or no influence when he attempts to share with others the life of Christ. None judge our relationship with God by our knowledge of the Bible, by our revelations, experiences, or our testimonies. The Christ life must be **walked out** in our lives, manifested in our daily walk in the home, on our block, at the job, and before those who see us the most.

In the wonderful Song of Solomon the Shulamite's beloved says to her, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" (S. of S. 7:1). The word for feet is in the Hebrew PAAMAH meaning not only feet but also steps or footsteps. It comes from the word PAAM which means "to impel or agitate; to move." Ferrar Fenton translates, "How fine your steps are in your slippers!" Goodspeed renders, "How beautiful are your steps in sandals, O rapturous maiden!" Another translation says, "How beautiful your steps have become in your sandals, O willing daughter!" "Steps" indicate action which is taking place. It is not a matter of the beauty of her feet, but of her steps, or her walk. This is the beauty of her action and her movement. Praise God, He is beautifying the steps of His chosen ones as He enables them more and more to walk out in the external realm the living word that He has planted deep within the inner man. It requires the quickening and sanctifying power of HIS LIFE WITHIN, and the enduement of the Holy Spirit in the mind of Christ to enable us to BE OUR MESSAGE, our whole life surrendered to manifest that message, a state of being that proclaims the truth **as we walk** whether we ever utter a word or not. We praise God for the teaching and preaching of the word of the Kingdom by faithful ministries, this is an aspect of God's working, but remember, dear ones, God must not only anoint our ear to hear and our mouth to speak, but He must anoint our feet to so walk out the life of the Kingdom that every action, every deed, every expression, all that we **are** becomes a declaration of HIM, manifesting HIM, revealing HIM.

Ah, the problem has been that throughout long ages men have sought the **power** of the Kingdom of God apart from the **righteousness** of the Kingdom. Jesus revealed something of the mighty power of the Kingdom of God when He commissioned His disciples with this authoritative word: "As ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:7-8). Men have asked for, and have graciously received, an anointing of that Kingdom power, and have gone forth to do exploits in His name, but in the great majority of cases they neither asked nor sought for, nor did they receive, the corresponding righteousness of the Kingdom. To possess power without righteousness is a blueprint for tragedy! It means that men will do the works of God, but cannot live the life of God. They possess authority without character. Such will honor God for a season with their mighty works, but just as sure as the pig will return to his wallowing, and the dog to his vomit, just that certain is it that these will ultimately corrupt the power they have received, bringing shame and reproach upon the name of the Lord by their unrighteous conduct. The only way to get rid of the external purulence is to clean up the internal corruption. "A new heart also will I put within you."

Let us now take heed to the exhortation of Jesus, the pattern Son. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33). Seek — until you find and put on the righteousness of the Kingdom! Pursue it relentlessly. Make it your top priority. Settle for nothing less. That is the pathway to sonship! That is the route to the throne! In the "gift" realm you can receive a measure of power without righteousness. A gift is a gift and is given because of the *goodness of the giver*, not because of the *worthiness of the recipient*. There are no special requirements laid upon those who receive gifts, for it is the Spirit Himself who divides to every man severally as **He wills**. One does not have to qualify in order to receive a gift from God. The great Giver distributes according to His own purpose. That dispensation of power is free, by pure grace. But the sonship that God is raising up in the earth in this hour, to set creation free, is not of the gift realm! Learn this, oh man, and you will know the law of the Kingdom. Sons of God will not and cannot receive the **omnipotence of God** apart from the **righteousness of God**. Should the kings and priests of God's Kingdom receive unlimited power without absolute righteousness, the Kingdom of God would soon shipwreck upon the shoals of carnality and Self, as has every spiritual move of God from the days of Adam in Eden until now! The pattern Son who came in the fullness of Divine Life was also pure, undefiled, harmless, sinless, and not of this world.

The righteousness of the Kingdom is neither a moral standard nor a code of ethics. God's righteousness is JESUS CHRIST. Apart from the inworking of His holy nature and His beautiful character all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags and putrefying sores. Christ is made unto us righteousness (I Cor. 1:30) and we are made the righteousness of God in Him (II Cor. 5:21). When we talk about the righteousness of the Kingdom of God, we have to explain what kind of righteousness we are talking about. There are two kinds of righteousness set forth in the scriptures that pertain to believers. The first kind is **imputed righteousness**. The second kind is **imparted righteousness**. They are not the same!

"Abraham believed God, and it was *counted unto him* for righteousness...he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was well able to perform. Therefore it was *imputed* unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (**Rom. 4:3,20-24**). So by believing in Yahweh who raised our Lord from the dead we have righteousness **imputed unto us**. It is wonderful to have our sins forgiven and not imputed against us any more, and to have the righteousness of God **reckoned to us** by faith! But having righteousness imputed to us doesn't MAKE US RIGHTEOUS. We are only **counted** as righteous for *His sake*. We can have His righteousness imputed to us and still be very unrighteous in our nature, thoughts and actions, doing many things wrong, and few things right.

God loves all His little children unto whom He has imputed the righteousness of Christ by faith. And they are His no matter how they are living today. But He doesn't want to leave us in this unrighteous state! He wants to **make us righteous!** He want to **impart** His righteousness to us, not just **impute** it. "*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*" (**II Cor. 5:21**). There is a world of difference between being **counted righteous** and being **made righteous**. Every son of God is to possess and become the righteousness of God, to **be righteous as He is righteous**, to be holy as He is holy. Who wouldn't want to become this righteousness? Who would not desire to always be right in all we think, in all we say and in all we do — to never again think anything wrong or have any wrong ideas, desires or motives; but to always be right in everything. What a blessed state! Impossible? Not at all! It is what God has planned for us and is working on in us. Of this very truth the Psalmist wrote when he said, "He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's (nature's) sake." He leads me in the paths that will bring me to this glorious state. Blessed be the Lord!

Salvation begins with imputed righteousness. Most Christians, however, stop right there and never **press on** in God to know the blessedness of **imparted righteousness**. Imputed righteousness is like money charged to your account in the bank. But imparted righteousness is like money paid out of the account *into your hands*. Imputed righteousness is potential righteousness, whereas imparted righteousness is actual righteousness. You can know the joy of sins forgiven and the wonder of being a child of God with imputed righteousness, but only by the INWARD POWER OF IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS can one be brought into the image of Jesus Christ, which is the image of God. What is imparted righteousness? Our beloved brother Peter explains the wonderful process, saying, "*Besides this...ADD TO YOUR FAITH virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*" (**II Pet. 1:5-11**).

Why does he say, "Add to your faith?" Peter is telling us that once we have believed, we are at the point of beginning in righteousness. Imputed righteousness is enough to save us from hell, but it is not sufficient to give us an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God and bring us to God's throne of dominion and power. We must have imputed righteousness, but we must **add** to that what the Bible describes as **fulfilled** righteousness or **expressed** righteousness. The righteousness that is imputed to us as a free gift must now find expression or fulfillment in our lives. This is what Paul was saying when he wrote, "*For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the*

flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be **FULFILLED (or EXPRESSED)** in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:2-4).

I thank God today that there is a righteousness, a divine righteousness that God can impart to men, and which can exalt a man to the image and likeness of God. In no other way can men ever be exalted or lifted up out of the power of sin, self, sorrow and death. So I gladly and thankfully this day record this truth that the righteousness of which I speak is the righteousness of God, which by faith we may possess; not only a righteousness imputed, in which we can trust for our salvation, but a righteousness **IMPARTED, INWORKED INTO THE NATURE**. All very good is this talk about imputed righteousness, but I cannot — will not — settle for a righteousness that is only imputed. If it is not **imparted**, it is not a **power within us** at all. I thank God for the word of the Master Himself who told us that this Kingdom of God would be within us, and defined it. He said that we are to **SEEK THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS**. He said that we are to **HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS**. And Paul excellently words it when he says, "The kingdom of God is **righteousness in the Holy Ghost**."

There is something deep within me that tells me that the Kingdom of God for the next age and the ages beyond is not going to be launched from the same old launching pad we have used for the past two thousand years. It is going to be as different from the systems and methods and experiences of the existing church order as the ministry of Jesus Christ of Nazareth was different from the legalistic forms and ritualistic ceremonies of the priesthood, scribes, and Pharisees of that day. The past two millenniums of church history has been an age of limitation, mixture, immaturity and imperfection. But when the manifested sons of God arise in the fullness of the glory, power and dominion of the glorified Christ, they shall not appear on the scene as weak, carnal men rejoicing in an imputed righteousness, but they shall go forth to meet all the needs of a groaning creation by the fullness of **HIS INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE** dwelling within them. There shall be a glorious victory, and there will be no failure!

Even as I write, thousands of saints, yea, tens of thousands, a mighty army is being touched by the fire from off the altar of God. A great Kingdom of Priests is being set ablaze with the life and love and power of God that will cause the nations of the world to turn to the living God as we enter the next stage of God's great redemptive and restorative process. Too long have men occupied themselves in religious efforts to embalm the spirit of yesterday's revival, wrapping it in the grave clothes of ecclesiastical systems and securing it in sepulchers that speak only of the past. Even now, a move of God of world-wide dimensions is in the making. It is being formed **in a people**, a **SONSHIP COMPANY** that is **becoming** the embodiment and personification of all HE IS. Ah, this will not be a revival of evangelistic crusades, television shows, concerts, bus ministries, or building of church buildings and programs, but the overflow of divine passion and power from people who are so consecrated to God that their hearts and minds have been filled with HIMSELF. Already bright clouds are gathering on the horizon, and if you have eyes to see you can see clouds of a multitude of witnesses to the deep and vital work God is doing in the lives of His apprehended ones in preparation for the **manifestation of the sons of God**.

The sky rivers are running full, and great glory is about to break forth upon the earth. The people of earth are unaware of it, the church systems know nothing about it, but if you are hearing from God it is time to gird up your loins, like Elijah of old, and run before the chariots. In due time the clouds shall burst and empty themselves upon the earth, and what has been revelation shall become reality. Let your heart be lifted high, for God is on the move, beyond His doings of any previous generation or age, and this can be **YOUR HOUR OF MANIFESTATION!** Only that will erupt and overflow from God's people which has first been **inworked** by Father's hand. Do not belittle or depreciate this day when it may seem so little is happening in your midst. The accent of the Spirit is not on the external works and gifts of a dying order; His concern is with the inner development of the Christ, the inworking of all He is, our **becoming** the essence and substance of His nature and character. For what God shall pour out through His sons is not the gifts they have received, but the life that has been formed within. Right now, in this holy moment of the calm before the storm, the greatest service we can give to others is to die out to all our ego-self and all our feeble religious efforts, that the living of HIS LIFE becomes its own declaration of all that He is and can do, to His glory and praise!

We see a terrible lack of things being right, or in divine order, in the world and in the church. There is a divine order for creation, for life on this earth. There is a proper order for animal life, vegetable life, and human life.

But through sin and death all things are out of order, in terrible chaos. The curse must be lifted, every enemy put under our feet. Divine order for the universe must be restored! All creation is groaning and crying for release from the curse of sin and decay and death. And everything hinges on that body of sons that is to be manifested in a perfect state of divine order. "Divine order" is not some order of church ministry, but the resurrection and the life! The Son of God has come to bring many sons to His glory. They will have the mind of Christ. They will have overcome all things and conquered every enemy within and without. They will possess within themselves the total inworking of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. They will have all power in heaven and in earth, just as does their glorious Head. They will have the power of creation, the power to reproduce themselves in others, even as our precious Lord now has and is creating in us. And this shall be done until all the world and every creature has been rebirthed into the image of God.

Today we see an imperfect church, living an imperfect life, receiving an imperfect seed (corrupted word) from an imperfect ministry, and bringing forth imperfect children who are all their life time subject to carnality, sin, limitation, sorrow and death, as well as rebukes, chastisements and scourgings to bring them to sonship. Of course we know that the pure word of God is perfect, but if the preachers were preaching that perfect word, if they were planting the *incorruptible word* into the hearts of the Lord's people, their children would be born perfect. And this shall be accomplished, for the Christ shall yet present unto Himself a *glorious people* without spot or wrinkle, having no blemish, and within their mouths (word) shall be found no guile. Then when a perfect company of sons puts a perfect and pure seed (or word) into a perfect church, the world will be evangelized completely with converts that are birthed out of darkness right into the life and likeness of God!

That which God is bringing forth for the next age will be perfect, it will be sinless, deathless, and gloriously victorious! There will be no weakness or failure in all of God's holy mountain! The sons of God shall not go out with power to heal the sick, cast out devils, and do signs and wonders, but with no power to be honest, pure and holy. You won't have to worry about them swindling you out of your money, or seducing your wife, or being caught in some homosexual act, or lying, cheating, deceiving, or swelling up with pride and pompousness like a frog, or building another tower of Mystery Babylon around their ministry. **God won't do it that way this time!** You can have imperfect apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and Christians, but you can't have IMPERFECT MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD! The sons of God won't carry on their cars the bumper sticker that proclaims, "I'm not perfect — *just forgiven!*" If God were to give unlimited power into the hands of men with character flaws, imperfect lives, and corrupt hearts, they would become the most despicable race of devils, monsters, and tyrants the world has ever known. They would wreck the Kingdom of God in short order and creation would never be set free.

There is a great and important lesson for the sons of God in the following experience related by Brother Bob Torango. "I'll never forget the time that I preached in a big-time church in Downy, California. This was in the early 1970's and I was preaching the *sons of God* and *restitution* message at a little store-front church. It turned out that the people from the big church down the road started to hear the message and packed the little place out. After about a week of this, the pastor of the big church paid me a call and asked me to come to his church since most of his people were attending my services anyway. I prayed about it and the Lord told me to go. I was scared to death! T. L. Osborn was supposed to be following me the next week, and I hadn't ever preached to so many people at one time in my life. Like John, I was viewing all of this with great admiration (Rev. 17:6). All the musicians were very professional, the people all dressed sharp, the pews were padded, the carpet was luxurious, the pastor and his wife looked like movie stars. I was in awe!

"I proceeded to preach for a couple of nights and about the third night the pastor got me alone in his study. He started out by telling me he knew I was preaching *sons of God* and *reconciliation* and that he believed in this message himself, but he couldn't risk preaching it from the pulpit because he would lose his church. He then told me that he would like to sponsor me to start preaching on the big-time circuit, but I had to get some gimmicks incorporated into my ministry. He asked me if I couldn't start some orphanage somewhere just so that I could present it to the people as something to give to, the understanding being that the **money** would never reach the fake orphanage, but would be used for my own needs. He said that he admired my ministry and that I had great potential on the 'circuit' of big churches he was affiliated with, but I had to do a lot of work on my offering taking. He said he would be willing to train me in the art of getting money out of the people, and before long I would be driving a big fancy car just like him and all the other big time evangelists. Needless to

say, I shut my meeting down with him and told him he wouldn't have to worry about losing his church because he had lost it already, along with any decency he might have had!

"When I left that office I was so sick I had to struggle to keep from throwing up. MONEY! More preachers have sold their souls for it than for any other single thing. The reason is simple. MONEY in itself is not evil, such as an act of fornication, drunkenness, and other vices. Everyone needs MONEY and therein lies the subtleness of its seduction. Don't think that I wasn't impressed with the splendor of that church, because I was! I actually thought God was going to allow my ministry to reach more people and that the message of *life* could be heard and believed upon by the masses. Along with this I got to thinking that maybe I deserved to live a better lifestyle, since my wife and I had struggled with our finances for so many years; and after all, the laborer was worthy of a greater hire. My eyes were fixed on the wonder of the Whore, and I was finding all kinds of justification for getting connected to the CIRCUIT! As a young evangelist, it was the invitation to the big dance, an offering of the big enchilada, and I could have arrived at the top of the world!

"The big wake-up call was when I realized what I would have to do in order to get that greater hire. Something happens to a person when confronted with riches. A change comes over us when put in a position of possible wealth. I know we all swear we would never change if we suddenly were made wealthy, but invariably we do. There is a root of evil in us all, and the Bible declares it to be 'the love of **money**!' The church today has sold out its heavenly inheritance for a little earthly lucre. God has offered us a 'far more exceeding weight of glory,' but our eyes are filled with the things being offered to us by a seducing spirit that has convinced many a prophet to become her paid servant. Woe to the prophets that prophesy for **money**, and do not speak the words that come from God!

"The biggest money-making machine in the modern church is the world-wide satellite TV networks. They run twenty-four hours every day and reach millions of people with the message, 'Tis more blessed to give than to receive.' I know they do good works and all of that. I know that they reach souls for the Lord, but with what hidden motives? They look like one big happy family on television, don't they? Smiling and joking and bragging on each other. Call me a cynic if you want, but I would dare to say that the conversation off camera isn't quite so congenial! I would venture to say that their time is spent on the following questions. Who's No. 1? Who's getting more air-time than the other? Who draws more money? Who gets more mail? Who's on the host's right hand this week and who is on the left, and who gets dropped because of poor ratings? Without question, these are the topics of discussion in the back rooms of the studios, and they involve positioning and posturing for the opportunity to make more MONEY!

"Cutthroat competition is on the religious shows just as much as on the worldly shows. That's Entertainment! And it is **money** that speaks the loudest. When the bills come due, and we are taking millions of dollars here, then men and women do strange things to keep from losing the almighty dollar. Beg, borrow, and steal are just a few of the things. God help us all to guard against the stench of this Harlot system. Yes, they preach the word, they sing beautiful songs, they pray for the sick and the sick recover, but notice that nothing is done without the mention of MONEY! If we all knew how much money was brought in by the Christian Networks we would all be amazed. Bob Tilton, Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker and others have been thrust into the spotlight by their escapades in schemes to make more MONEY. They have opened up a Pandora's box in a system that produced mansions worth millions of dollars, bank accounts known and others never known filled with thousands upon thousands of dollars, and lifestyles worthy of the rich and famous. All of this is on public record. Why would we believe that anything is different with those that are in that same arena but haven't been exposed? I hate to say it, but the present church system has sold itself out to MONEY!

"Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel...the heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest' (Micah 3:9-12). Notice that the word of judgment is to the Heads, Princes, Priests, and Prophets. It is the *leadership* that is making merchandise of the house of God! Mystery Babylon in Revelation 17 has made a league with the 'merchants' and the 'kings' of the earth. They all love Babylon because Babylon has made them rich! She is the answer to their lust for MONEY. The apostle Paul ran into this same love for

money when the makers and sellers of idols in Ephesus caused a riot among the people because Paul's preaching put fear in their hearts that their craft of making silver idols to the Goddess Diana would dry up. Their concern was the making of MONEY, not in truth or error. You can be sure that the same concerns are in the leaders of the modern Fundamental Church. When faced with truth that doesn't profit them financially they will suddenly grow very fervent in their fight against heresy. In truth they are seeing a financial risk in preaching things that demand the people to do more than sit in their pews and 'Amen' the preacher and pay their tithes and offerings. The concern is over MONEY, not heresy!

"Everything that Babylon concerns herself with is a *business venture cloaked in religion*. She is a harlot. What is the difference between a wife and a harlot? They both have physical relations with a man, but one is an act of love and the other is an act of business. The act is the same, but the difference is the exchange of MONEY. Babylon is in love with only one thing — MONEY. She uses everything else to get more wealth and thereby she spends money to make more money. Think about it. Whenever a particular TV Network host and hostess have a guest speaker or singer on their program, they display the name and address of the guest on the television screen and urge the viewing audience to write to that address. This accomplishes two things. First, it indebts the guest to the hosts financially. In order to get more of this money, they must extol the virtues of the system that is feeding them. It is extremely hard to obey the Lord when He is telling you to bite the hand that feeds you! This is how Babylon keeps her secret motives secret. The unwitting ministry become an accessory to the crime and end up covering over the whorish aspects of the system.

"The second thing this accomplishes is the merchandising of the gospel. When they display the name and address of the guest on the screen it in effect puts a giant machine into motion. In the business world this is viewed as a financial bonanza. All of us get mountains of junk mail in our mail box. This mail is sent by companies that buy mailing lists and send out bulk advertising to thousands of people in hopes of getting a small percentage to respond. A response of four to six people out of every one hundred is considered enough to make a financial killing. The same thing on television. Companies pay an unbelievable amount of money for just thirty seconds of advertising during a show. With this in mind, you can see the financial consequences of having ones name and address displayed on a television screen where every telecast of this religious TV Network reaches millions of people world-wide. So you thought they were all just singing and preaching for the love of Jesus? The bare truth is that they are sitting on a gold mine!

"There have been some ministers who are supposedly preaching a *kingdom-lite* message (of the low-fat, low-substance variety) that have been allowed on this Network with high hopes of reaching many more people with the message of the Kingdom. Sadly, they start out full of alarming statements of truth, then after a period of time, just enough time to get used to a more luxuriant lifestyle, their message becomes milky and barely discernible as *Kingdom*. Oh, the power of MONEY! It must never be underestimated! If I could have the ear of every minister of Present Truth I would cry aloud to them of the danger of MONEY.

"I have seen the henchmen of the television networks that try their best to convince God's people that Jesus preached we should all be millionaires. It would be downright hilarious if it wasn't so sad to see these business people flashing diamond rings and Rolex watches at the screen while telling us that Jesus loved money and we should too. If we would just sow a little seed their way, in the form of cold cash, why we could have a harvest of Cadillacs and mansions in no time. A flash of white teeth, an honest Abe face, slick Hollywood settings, and who wouldn't believe them and send in your name and address to receive your free set of teaching tapes, absolutely *free*, for a love offering of \$50.00! Heaven help us. What will be these poor minister's state of mind if the money market collapses? People threw themselves out of high-rise windows during the Great Depression. MONEY is their god, and if it is taken away they will be without hope. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God!

"If you doubt that the church is in this bad of shape, let me remind you that religion has the history of spawning some of the greatest con-men and con-women known to mankind. I knew a minister that came to Detroit who had the gimmick of having a cross appear in the middle of his forehead at a set time of the service. The people would go nuts and run up to the offering barrel with money in their hands. It was done with a chemical applied to the skin that caused blood to come to the surface in 45 minutes. Add to this the fact that one of the most respected ministers on the Christian Television Networks locked himself in a prayer tower and declared that

God would take him home if he didn't receive an amount in the millions of dollars, and it is plain that the *love of money* has had its toll on the leaders of the Charismatic movement.

"Our greatest test will not be devils, or men, or dragons. Our greatest test is going to be how we handle the finances of the Kingdom. One cannot imagine the lure of filthy lucre! It will cause your message to change, your ministry to lose its edge, your vision to dull. If not handled with extreme care, it will impair your judgment of right and wrong. Over the years my wife and I have had many preachers of the present truth tell us they are going to go to the harlot system and deliver it from its Babylonian ways. Unfailingly, each one has changed their message just enough to be accepted among the princes and merchants of Babylon. How easy it is to become a star to the lesser orders! The people are so hungry in the pews, you could throw them crumbs of the Kingdom and they would think they are eating steak. Each preacher that has gone to the Whore has been wooed by her compliments and favors. They soon end up driving better cars, living in better houses, getting larger offerings. What's wrong with that? you ask. Don't they deserve all those things? Yes, they do. My question is, from my own experiences, What did they have to do to get them?

"Let us be perfectly honest and frank about what we preach. It is a message that is contrary to the nature of men. It grates against the religious spirit. It reveals the man of sin in the temple, puts the spirit of Antichrist on the judgment seat of God, shines a piercing light upon the hypocrisy of a corrupt leadership, says 'Woe, woe, woe' to the prophets who prophesy to please the flesh of men instead of God, demands the beheading of every priest who stands in the Holy Place and declares himself to be the mouth-piece of God, expounds on the futility of men who preach about God without ever having a personal experience of His all-saving love and grace. This message calls the foolish and weak and rejects the wise and strong, leads the believer of it on a trail that crosses raging rivers, climbs horrendous mountains, winds through dry, hot deserts, careens through the camp of every giant and dragon in the land, takes us to the very mouth of death and hell, brings us within a heart-beat of certain destruction, walks us through the valley of the shadow of death, and drives us into the wilderness. Doesn't sound like the kind of message you could build a mega-church on, now does it? The bare truth is, you can't, and you won't!

"God is out to get a generation for Himself. Let the children play, but you priests of the Most High get yourselves up into the mountain and wait upon the Lord! In the stillness, in the quiet of the secret place of the Most High, there is a Word that will change our lives. If we will avail ourselves of this word, Babylon will have no power over us. Our eyes will be for the Lord only. Our only purpose will be to bring honor and glory and majesty to His name. When we have been delivered from the love of **money**, then we will be ready to lead the people to the next summit. Otherwise we will only lead them to hell" — end quote.

In one of his books George Warnock offered up this timely prayer to God: "Lord, how we need the power and authority of Heaven to minister to the needs of suffering humanity, and to deliver your sheep that have been scattered and bruised in the wilderness of life. But Lord! Do not, we pray, place in our trust any measure of authority and power that is not counterbalanced with an equal measure of grace, and humility, and meekness, and patience, and kindness, and longsuffering, and mercy, and wisdom. Keep this power and authority in Thine own hands, we pray, as the sword of Goliath was taken out of the hands of David, wrapped in a priestly garment, and hidden away in the Sanctuary till he was prepared of God to have it permanently, and to use it wisely. Continue to hold us in the hollow of Thy hand as a sharp sword, to be used of Thee at Thy discretion. Continue to polish us like the shaft of the arrow, and keep us in Thy quiver, that when Thou dost see fit to send us forth we shall not miss the mark, but we shall strike through the heart of the enemy unerringly. Keep Thy power unto Thyself alone, for Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory...and may we only partake of it as we come into harmony and union with Thyself. Amen!"

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 37**  
**THE PEACE OF THE KINGDOM**  
**THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART THIRTY-SEVEN**

**THE PEACE OF CHRIST**  
**WHERE THERE IS NO PEACE**  
**LET PEACE RULE**  
**PEACE ON EARTH**  
**SONS OF PEACE**

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and *peace*, and joy in the Holy Ghost"  
(Rom. 14:17).

The Kingdom of God is *peace* — peace in the heart, peace of soul, peace with God, peace between men, peace between nations, peace everywhere, under all conditions, and at all times. What is peace? Is peace real? What is its appearance? Have you ever seen peace? Is it long or short? Is it fat or skinny? Ah, peace is *spirit*. You cannot see peace apart from its effect upon people and circumstances. You can know when peace is present. You can sense peace, but you cannot touch or handle it. There is more than one level of peace. There is a *physical* peace that people experience in the absence of any discomfort or pain, when the body is well and full of vitality. There is a *soulish* peace which men experience in a psychological way. It is a peace generated out of the conditioning or influencing of the mind, will, emotions and desires. It is the peace attained on a restful vacation, in the silence of the evening watching a sunset, on a psychologist's couch, hiking a mountain trail, in religious exercises like transcendental meditation, or by taking Prozac. These and many other things give peace — but none of them have anything whatever to do with the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God is not just peace — it is peace **IN THE HOLY GHOST!** It is God's peace. It is heaven's peace. It is divine peace. It is peace that *passeth understanding*. It is peace that rules our lives and keeps our hearts in the very midst of calamity, pain, disappointment, trouble, problems, persecutions, difficulties and testings. It is a peace so deep that it comes only out of the **spirit**. It holds us steady, calm and confident in the blasts of hell. It is peace in the Holy Ghost. It is the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven!

Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, is the Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, resides within His elect, the body of Christ. Comfort does not make peace. The peace that we experience in the absence of conflict *is not Kingdom peace*. Anybody can have peace when all is going well and there are no cross-currents, opposition, trouble or conflict. Learn this and you will know a great truth: Peace is more than the absence of war! The peace of God is unaffected by any external conditions. If your peace flees in the face of trouble, agitation, or calamity, what you have is not peace — it is merely the calm between storms. Because you are not being blessed by HIS PEACE, but are satisfied with a sense of comfort which you perceive to be peace, you speak peace but are totally uninvolved with those situations which *prove peace*. You don't want to be disturbed. You have no desire to be challenged. You don't want anything to disturb your "peace." But there is one in the midst of us, in our very midst, *within*, who has abundance of peace for every situation. It is Christ who *is our life*. The Christ within is the Prince of Peace! Christ will arise in you and minister out of you in the face of any pressure, displaying His power and victory through you. Oh, yes! You will be blessed as the embodiment, expression and revelation of Kingdom peace and all men will rise up and call you a son of God!

Some time ago I read the story of an artists' colony that had a contest to see which artist could paint a picture that would best represent peace. Many artists entered the contest. There were three pictures that were outstanding, and the judges went back and forth among these pictures. The judges stopped in front of one which they admired. It was a picture of a meadow, a peaceful meadow. In that meadow was a flock of sheep, mirrored in a placid lake nearby. They said, "My, that certainly is a picture of peace." Then they went to the second picture which was of the sea with a sheltered harbor in which was a sailing ship. The sails were down, the sea was calm. It was peaceful. The vessel had come through the storm and was now in the harbor, and all

was peace. What a picture of peace! Then they came to the third picture, which had as its background a mountainside. A storm had broken on the mountain, winds were howling and tossing the trees to and fro. Out of a rock grew a little stubby bush. In this bush was a nest, on which sat a little bird. Winds were swaying that little bush, but the bird was sitting on the nest in perfect calm and peace. The judges stood there for a few moments, then said, "This is the one that should win. This is peace — *peace in the midst of storm!*"

**If a wren can cling to a spray a-swing  
In a mad May wind, and sing and sing,  
As if she'd burst for joy, why cannot I  
Contented lie in HIS quiet arms,  
Beneath His sky, unmoved by earth's annoy?**

Among the many visions given to Annie of Argentina is this one in which she witnesses the blessed and awesome throne of peace in the Kingdom of God. She relates, "As I drew near to Him in the Cloud, the ineffable peace which continually and totally controls everything within the Cloud as it reigns in power and great sovereignty, and which is the essence and substance of God, filled my heart completely. Resting in Him in that place of peace, I came into such peace, both in my mind and in my inner spirit that worlds could have collapsed all around me, and I wouldn't even have felt the slightest disturbance. Later, He took me into another place of great peace, which was in the midst of violent commotions. Both the place of peace and the environs of violent commotions that surrounded it were a part and substance of His spiritual being. This center of peace, which was concentrated in essence, and power was relatively small in comparison with the stormy commotions and violence, so tremendously filled with energy, which surrounded it; so it appeared like a heart of peace within a place of stormy excitements. In fine balance and harmony, these two total extremes were dwelling side by side, and seemed to feed one another."

## THE PEACE OF CHRIST

**"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (Jn. 14:27).** It was a very sorrowful night when these words were spoken, and the hearts of Jesus' disciples were troubled, these men who for three years had lived with and loved the Master. He had told them that He was going to leave them, and was going up to Jerusalem to suffer and die. He was about to pass through His agony in Gethsemane. He was about to pass through the pain in the Praetorium; to be taken from Herod to the High Priest, and from the High Priest to Herod; then back to Pilate, then scourged, mocked, and crowned with thorns. It was all before Him, to bear His cross to Calvary, and then with His expiring breath to cry, "*Tetelestai! — It is finished!*" To depart into the world of spirits, and His body to be wrapped in grave clothes and laid in the darkness of the tomb. They were greatly perplexed, they who had thought of Him as the Triumphant King; they who knew His power to be absolutely without limits. Had they not seen Him chain the lightnings, still the storm, and say, "Peace, be still!" to the angry waves of Galilee, rebuking the power of the air that stirred the little lake and so terrific a storm. They had seen His elemental powers; that He held the thunderbolts in His hands, the winds in His fists, and the waters were just as a drop in the hollow of His hand. They had seen Him open the eyes of the blind. They had seen Him feed the multitudes. They had seen Him raise the dead. They knew Him to be the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And when He talked about dying, about going up to Jerusalem to die, they did not understand. They were perplexed! They were not very wise men. They were not very well educated men. They were not even very spiritual men. They were honest and ignorant, but Jesus had been teaching them for three years, and they thought they knew all about Him and His gospel of the Kingdom of God. And now He says to them, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." This was Christ's last will and testament. This was His only legacy. He had nothing else to leave. He was the poorest of the poor. He had no material possessions or wealth of any kind to divide amongst the men He loved. So He bequeathed to them the one thing which was in His power to give. He gave them HIS PEACE!

Well did George Hawtin write, "The world proclaims peace when no peace exists either in their hearts or in the world. The sages tell us that peace is the absence of war, and many other such clever and eloquent things, none of which even remotely describe His peace that flows like a river amid the wilderness of this warring world. The calm assurance that let Jesus sleep when the violent storm was swamping the boat, the godly confidence that gave the rest of a dreamless sleep to Peter as he lay between two soldiers, awaiting death on

the morrow, is the peace that Jesus gives. Love, joy, and peace — the fruit for our personal blessedness, growing richly on the branches of the true and living vine!"

Words are but a poor vehicle, at best, for the glorious truths concerning the things of the kingdom realm of God. The peace of God is not a finite attribute, which can be glibly defined by human speech. It is known in all its blessed fullness only by those who *live in union* with the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, in that wonderful statement in **Philippians 4:7** says, "*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" What kind of peace is this that Paul speaks of here? I must admit that I do not know, I cannot comprehend what that peace is. If you were to ask me I could not tell you. Were I to fast and pray about it for forty days I still would not be able to explain it. If I could *tell* you what kind of peace it is, then it would not *be* that kind of peace, for it is the kind of peace that **passes understanding** — therefore you cannot describe it. If it passes understanding, that means that you cannot get it in college. You can't get it in seminary. You can't get it from the professor. You can't get it from the psychologist. You can't even get it from the preacher. But I have experienced that peace, I know that it exists! In God there are many levels of peace, but this transcends them all! It is far above anything that the natural man can imagine, but those who trust in God and walk in the Spirit experience it — though they cannot explain it to another. And it keeps the heart of all those who follow on to know the Lord. It is the peace of the Kingdom of God! "*For the kingdom of God is...peace...in the Holy Ghost*" (**Rom. 14:17**).

It is the peace of *God* that passeth understanding. This peace is God's very own nature transmitted to those who are *born of God*. The dwelling place of a *son of God* is *in the Father* and the dwelling place of the Father is *in the sons*. There is where peace is known. The natural mind cannot understand such a truth as this, for it has become so distorted by its human ways of looking at things that it discards everything that is beyond the realm of its petty comprehension. Only the mind enlightened by the Spirit of God can understand the deep significance of the wonderful message of the heavenly angels on that blessed night of Christ's birth in the Judean hills at Bethlehem. "*Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men*" (**Lk. 2:14**). Such was the song of the celestial choir heard by the shepherds of the Judean hills. And never has there been any greater song ever sung within the hearing of human ears. Like music, its words have wafted down to inspire men through nearly twenty centuries of sorrows; and still it bears its note of highest triumph in spite of wars, rumors of wars, the overturn of dynasties and kingdoms, and many other grave problems that face humanity at this very moment.

The question follows: Why did not the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, bring "peace on earth"? We all know it did nothing of the kind. As a matter of fact the world at large knew nothing about the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, until a long time after His sojourn on earth. To be sure, a good many heard of Jesus, the miracle-worker in Israel, during His brief ministry there; but at best they simply took Him for another prophet or teacher, if they seriously considered His mission at all. The whole world of that day could not well fit Him into its affairs. And they still can't today!

The Amplified Bible gives a beautiful rendering of the angelic song which is a precious aid to understanding. It reads, "Peace on earth, **among men with whom He is well pleased.**" What a word that is! We have no right to lift "peace on earth" out of its context. God is "well pleased" first of all with His *firstborn Son*. And that firstborn Son is now the Prince of Peace. The greatest truths of God are always simply stated and easily understood by those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith. "This is my beloved Son, *in whom I am well pleased,*" the Father witnessed by His voice out of heaven. And in the moment that God is given the throne of our life and is glorified in His sons, at that very moment, straightway, God begins to be *well pleased with His sons*.

God is not well pleased with the godless masses of China, Russia, Africa, Europe, or the United States of America today. God is not well pleased with the world of believers who are all too willing to proclaim the praise of God with their lips and raise their hands in seeming consecration, even while they wear the gaudy garments of Babylonish religion, running greedily after the error of Balaam for gain, and prostituting the holy truths of God with the unholy methods and techniques of the world. God is *well pleased* with those who seek only His will, His ways and His glory. God is *well pleased* with those who reject the fleeting pleasures of sin and the worthless glitter of the prestige and position of this world. God is *well pleased* with those who forsake the

excitement and noise of the crowd, who abandon listening to all manner of fantastic oratory, who in their hearts are no longer entertained by man-made programs, soulful concerts, so-called Christian television shows, and carnal schemes of a church system that has forsaken the leading of the Spirit of God. The Father is *well pleased* with those who see His hand in all the happenings of their lives and give no place or glory or credit to the devil. The Father is *well pleased* with those whose only desire out of a pure heart is to please Him and apprehend that for which they also have been apprehended of Christ Jesus. The Father is *well pleased* with those who put first things first and walk daily after the spirit and not after the flesh. The Father is *well pleased* with those who stop seeking *gifts* and start seeking the *Giver*. God is *well pleased* with those who stop seeking *things* and start seeking the *Lord Himself*.

If the people of God today would stop following after preachers and personalities, turning a deaf ear to the slick advertising of unscrupulous men who love to promote themselves, if they would forget about revivals and crusades and supposed signs and wonders and begin to turn the knob of their prayer closet door, seeking not to run here and there, and do this and that, but seeking to enter into harmony with the mind of Him who worketh all things after the counsels of His own will, to do only those things they see the Father doing, to speak only those things they hear of the Father, then all the world would know that the Father is glorified in His *sons* even as He is glorified in His *Son*. Let us seek God that He might fashion our lives according to His eternal wisdom, that in us He might be *well pleased*! When the Father is well pleased with us as His very own sons then shall the heavenly mystery of "peace on earth" be fulfilled **in us**. The essential thing about peace is not what happens outwardly. There cannot be "peace on earth" in the sense of freedom from war, fear, oppression and exploitation until there is **peace among men in whom the Father is well pleased**. Ah, that is the foundation of peace! When the Father is well pleased in us, there is then peace in *our earth*, peace between us and God, and peace between us and all men. The firstfruits of His peace in the earth is the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD — the SONS OF PEACE. Ah, peace **is** coming to this earth and the whole world! It is coming through a people that is peace. They have surrendered all their problems, doubts and fears into the hands of the One who they have learned can be fully trusted. He has revealed His love and His power to them and they have rested in it. They are becoming channels for His grace and glory to flow through unto all the ends of the earth. They are *peacemakers* and they are called the sons of God.

## WHERE THERE IS NO PEACE

The sons of God are the sons of peace, for only those whose lives are established in the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom are *qualified* to rule and reign in power in the Kingdom, to minister peace unto all mankind. Have you ever wondered what it is that causes emotional and psychological problems, including anger, rage, and depression? It is *lack* — lack of *peace* and *joy*! Any honest psychologist or psychiatrist will tell you that most people come to them saying, "I am disturbed. I am at unrest. I am miserable. I cannot get along with others. I am very unhappy. Life is wretched. I cannot face my problems. I cannot handle my responsibilities. I cannot control my feelings and emotions. Living in this world is unbearable." Translation: "I have no peace. I have no joy. Hence, I have a multitude of overwhelming problems!"

How does a son of God have real and complete peace and joy? Oh, what peace we often forfeit because we *seek peace* instead of seeking the Prince of Peace! **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn. 14:27)**. What poverty we must endure because we *seek peace* instead of *seeking Him*! When will we ever learn the secret of these words: "For **He is our peace...**" Everything, my friend, is in Jesus, and Jesus is *everything*.

We are living in an hour when our stressed-out world and many worldly Christians are seeking peace on the psychologist's couch. Do you really believe that there is some person who out of his carnal knowledge and experience can add something to your spiritual life that the power of Jesus Christ and the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God leave out? That is what lies at the heart of all error and cultism. That is what is at the heart of all the mind-sciences — as if some man could add something to Christ — a man such as Carl Jung, psychoanalyst, or Sigmund Freud — great intellectual minds with a certain show of deep soulful perception and knowledge, but not enlightened by any means by the spirit of Truth in Christ Jesus, merely intellectual postulations about the **mechanics of old Adam's life**. Some of them are very wise things, perhaps, on a carnal, human level, but completely void of the wisdom and power of Christ. The men who spawned the

theories of psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis, were for the most part unbelievers, humanists, agnostics and atheists. I do not hesitate to tell you that these theories were birthed out of the incredible darkness of the carnal mind and there is one thing of importance that we must clearly understand: **"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God!" (I Cor. 3:19).**

Therefore, how can one expect those systems developed out of the realm of the carnal mind and out of the godless wisdom of *this world* to add something to the understanding and ability of the Christ within? Christ Himself *is* the way, the truth, and the life. Furthermore, He is the *only way*, the *whole truth*, and the *fullness of life*. How, therefore, could anything outside of Christ minister life to us? If there is any life to be obtained outside of the Lord Himself, then there is no reason to come to Him that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. We are called to maintain our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, the firstborn among many brethren, the Pattern Son, and the Head of the body, and grow up in Him into a spiritual dynamic, transforming reality by the power of Christ — not through carnal formulas or science falsely so called. Psychology is able to **analyze the nature of old Adam**, but it offers **no solution to the problem**, because the solution can be found only in the power of the Kingdom of God!

Of a truth I know that there is only one answer to every question, the very same answer to every question is *Christ*, for Christ is *All*. If we will cease trying to work our way out of our problems by trust in human wisdom, and instead ask God for His wisdom, and seek Him with all of our heart, He will give us His wisdom, and thus shall the **mind of Christ begin to dwell in us** and operate in us. If God dwells in His people, then we must begin to live with that knowledge foremost in our hearts, depending **no more** on the solutions of the carnal mind. Where peace is needed in any situation, we must steadfastly draw upon the peace that He is within ourselves. Where joy is needed, it must flow forth out of His life within us, for peace and joy are the fruits of His Spirit within. We must know that Christ Himself from His riches in glory is the supplier of *all our lack*. With Him we are the *possessor of all things*. Seek *Him* while mortifying yourself. Let His mind dwell in you while casting out your own. Recognize His hand in all the happenings of your life. It is in those who draw their all from His presence that Christ *lives and moves and has His being*, and all such *live and move and have their being in Him*.

Even when saints follow Christ's bidding, they will face hardships and testings. For example, Jesus' disciples were doing God's will when they took Him across the lake, for He had commanded them to do so. Yet they were buffeted by a dreadful tempest, and they seemed to be in danger of drowning. A storm — and Christ on board! It seems a contradiction. Wouldn't His presence assure a peaceful journey? Wouldn't His very presence keep the winds and the waves from their violence? Not at all! Life frequently becomes more difficult after a person has entered into relationship with Christ, and the further one goes in God, the more severe the testings! But a storm — and Christ *asleep*! That even deepens our perplexity! Our Lord's silence, the frustrating delays, the mysteries of His dealings — these are too profound for our natural minds to understand. Yet we can be certain that His purpose in testing our faith is to strengthen it. How He does this in each of us is His business. If we were choosing our route to perfection, I'm sure we would select an easier path, protecting those very things that need to be dealt with. God will surely fulfill His plan for us through our struggles, and His deliverance will lead us to new dimensions of faith and victory.

Needless fears beset the disciples because they did not trust Jesus' words. If they had just thought for a moment, they would have remembered that He had said, "Let us go over unto the other side." He didn't say, "Let us go to the middle of the lake and be drowned." They should have been saying to the raging waves, You can do us no harm, for Christ the mighty God is on board!" And today we are passing over! We are passing over the sea of life, passing over from death to life, from mortality to immortality, from fear to faith, from the carnal mind to the mind of Christ, from corruption to incorruption, from being the sons of men to being the sons of God. And what a stormy voyage this is! But Christ the Lord is in our ship and *He will bring us safely to the other side!*

The word of the Lord declares, **"Thou rulest the RAGING OF THE SEA: when the waves thereof arise, THOU STILLTEST THEM" (Ps. 89:9).** Many centuries ago the Spirit of God inspired these beautiful words of promise, **"The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high IS MIGHTIER THAN THE NOISE OF MANY WATERS, yea, than the MIGHTY WAVES OF THE**

**SEA" (Ps. 93:3-4).** Praise God! He rules the **inner raging of the sea** and He stills **all its tempests!** That unstable nature within, so quickly moved by the storms created by the carnal mind, the torrents of passion, the streams of vain imaginations, the waves of frustration and fear, the winds of doubt and unbelief, the turbulent emotions of body and soul — all are quieted by the Lord, the Spirit, who arises within in peace, confidence, trust and faith to **rule the raging of the sea.** And then follows the calm, the state described by Paul, — **"that we be no more tossed to and fro with every wind...but may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, even Christ"** (Eph. 4:14-15). The Spirit of God within is great peace, overflowing joy, unfailing love, unwavering righteousness and omnipotent power. It is only necessary then to gain the *conscious awareness* of the presence and life of God as the essence of our being, to know that this life is the law of our reality. As we come to know the spirit of our life in Christ all inner and outer tempests are stilled, the sea is calmed, and the dragon in the sea vanishes over the horizon.

When the beloved John beheld in vision the unveiling of Christ — Christ the Head and Christ the body — he also saw "a throne set in heaven" with Christ upon the throne. **"And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal..."** (Rev. 4:1-6). In contrast to this we read, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57:20). Now we come to an amazing word which may be hard for the natural mind to interpret, but when men seek the face of the Lord He sends His Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness of the carnal mind that He may reveal the things that pertain to the Kingdom of God. The promise is made, **"In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish *leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent, and HE SHALL SLAY THE DRAGON THAT IS IN THE SEA*"** (Isa. 27:1). Truly this is the serpent that dwells within all mankind, the bestial nature within the Adamic man, the inner force which opposes the spirit and tries to bind us to earthly things, keeping us from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. My soul rejoices with joy unspeakable in the blessed knowledge that God has promised deliverance for all mankind as this **sea-dwelling beast** is slain with the mighty, strong sword of the Lord — THE WORD OF GOD! As surely as the raging sea represents multitudes of restless, clamoring, surging, sinning humanity (Rev. 17:15), so does the exquisite sea of glass before the throne of God represent an assembled throng of quickened and transformed saints IN WHOSE HEARTS THE PEACE OF GOD RULES. This great **sea of redeemed men** is calm and serene, tranquil and quiet, transformed "even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The sea-dwelling beast has been dealt with. The inner nature of man has been transformed and the sea is now like glass!

The "sword of the Lord" is the Word of God, the living and energetic Word, the almighty Word by which He slays the dragon in the sea. When the bestial nature which once brought forth raging waves of the sea is conquered, the sea of man becomes peaceful and serene, expressing the peace of the Kingdom of God. In the earth today there are two companies of "sea people" — those of the *troubled sea* and the *sea of glass people*. Thank God, amidst all the trouble, distress, sorrow, problems and pressures of this world system there is a **sea of glass**, a people abiding in the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! These are "before the throne" — willing subjects of the Lordship of the indwelling Spirit. The first mark of the Kingdom of God is Christ as King. If Christ is the Prince of Peace, then peace is a dimension of the Kingdom of God.

The mark of what a kingdom is, is to be seen in its king. Christ now reigns on the throne of the Father, and that throne is individualized as the power of His presence in the heart of every saint. There is an *embodiment*, a *manifestation* of the Kingdom; its power is seen in the lives of those in whom it rules. The Christ lives and dwells and rules within our hearts! The blessed firstborn Son proclaimed to those called to be His *many brethren*: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." As you acquire peace in your heart from God by the spirit of sonship, I have good news for you! You have received a dispensation of the Kingdom of God, for that is what the Kingdom is. As the peace of God reigns in your heart, in the midst of all the problems and pressures, in a world of turmoil and fear, the Prince of Peace has ascended His throne and reigns. Peace is spirit. The Kingdom of God is spiritual because God is spirit, and never forget, my beloved — *spirit* is REAL! *Peace* is REAL! The Kingdom of God is a spiritual dimension available to men upon this earth. It is within you as the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Spirit-rule in and through you. Even now God is bringing many sons to walk in the conscious awareness of the Kingdom and minister its glorious and eternal reality to all mankind now and in the age and the ages to come until the whole earth and the universe and every man and every creature in all realms is filled with the peace of His Kingdom. Hallelujah!

How the world needs this peace! Men's hearts are failing them today for fear in looking after those things which are coming upon the earth. The land is filled with violence, moral breakdown, broken homes, corruption and evil men in government, wars and rumors of wars, gang warfare, drugs, drunkenness, rebellion, ever-increasing degradation, sin, sorrow and death. Ah, the TROUBLED SEA! How often the raging waves of that sea beat with fury within our own breasts in the form of doubts, fears, frustrations, anxieties, sorrow and confusion. Thank God, there is another sea, the sea of glass, the power of the Lord's Spirit within us to minister peace in the midst of the tempest — a strong and mighty Word of the Lord to slay the dragon in the sea. When the work is finished in us we shall stand upon this sea of glass having the harps of God, singing a new song before the throne, with the Father's name written in our foreheads, forever redeemed from the earth and from the sea of Adam's life, with no guile in our mouth, the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb.

## LET PEACE RULE

One of the most instructive admonitions about peace is found in **Colossians 3:15** wherein Paul says, "**And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body.**" The Amplified Bible expresses the original even more clearly, "And let the peace from the Christ rule — act as umpire continually — in your hearts, deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds — in that peaceful state to which as members of Christ's body you were also called to live." Let the peace of God "act as an umpire" — that is the word in the Greek — in your hearts. How beautiful! That peace is within the heart of every son of God. Ah, my beloved, when you find it necessary to decide between two or more courses of action, let the peace of God act as the umpire and make a ruling in the matter! This is a blessed principle of the Kingdom of God. It is the **rule of God by peace!**

Sometimes there are decisions to make, actions to take, doors open before us, and one is in a quandary as to which way to go. Do I go here or there, do I do it this way or that? The Spirit doesn't speak a clear word, there is no dream or vision, no prophet to say, "Thus saith the Lord!" and no word of knowledge or wisdom from any source. But if you will look to peace — let peace act as the umpire — the peace of God in the depth of your spirit will tell you what to do. When considering some of your options there will be unrest in your heart, question marks, and a red flag in your spirit telling you that is not the way. But there will also be a way that genders peace. Examine your heart — do you have peace in your heart? Listen to peace! Let the peace of God act as the umpire and decide the issue. And never violate this *rule of peace*.

Sometimes a course of action *looks* reasonable, *sounds* like the intelligent thing to do, and may even *appeal* to the senses of the soul, our own desires. Don't listen to your *head* — listen to your *heart!* Let the peace of God *rule in your heart*. That is the word. Go with your heart — for out of it are the issues of life! When we ignore the heart, when we do something just because it looks reasonable, appears profitable, or because there is pressure from without, we will usually regret it. Many times people are talked into something when they don't really have peace in their heart about it. It pays to go with your heart! The peace of God *in your heart* will act as the umpire, deciding and settling all questions that arise in your mind and emotions. If there is no peace in your heart, wait until peace comes. Just wait! The umpire will eventually show up! Let peace rule and peace will be the outcome.

## PEACE ON EARTH

Peace! What a strange ironic ring that word has in these days in which we live! Peace, the dream of man in all ages, like a will-o'-the-wisp, beckons now here and now there, only to vanish in the clouds of powder smoke. Able men, great men, and wise men have tried to bring a lasting peace to the nations of earth, only to see their peace go up in blood and smoke. The universal cry of the human heart in this hour at the end of the age is for *peace* — not merely a cessation of hostilities for a time, not merely an armistice, which is but a breathing spell for the next battle, but an abiding and lasting peace, when the wealth of the nations shall not be dissipated in vast arms races, but be used for the good and betterment of mankind.

The ministry of the sons of God will bring to earth **universal peace**. The scriptures are very clear about this, and we have the blessed witness of the Holy Spirit within ourselves that this is truth indeed. For two thousand years the only "peace on earth, goodwill toward men" has been experienced by a small minority of earth's

teeming millions, born-again saints of God who have walked in the Spirit. The history of the world has continued on in the wrath of man, filled day and night with sounds of strife and sights of blood. Instead of God's hush of peace, the world has heard the clash of arms and the explosions of war, hell, and destruction, many of which have been *religious wars* fought in the name of Him who is the Prince of Peace! History faithfully confirms what I say when I insist that the greatest instigator for war has been *religion* all down through history. The Moslem fanatics, the Jewish zealots, the Christian crusaders, the Roman Catholic Inquisition are but a few. The whole Middle East is at this time a religious time bomb. Jerusalem is its fuse. And the recent conflicts in Bosnia, Serbia, and Kosovo were religious conflicts which have been going on for hundreds of years between the Orthodox Christians and the Moslems in Eastern Europe.

Instead of "goodwill" on earth, every generation has heard the shout of conquest, the groan of torn and dying men, and the sob of bereaved loved ones. The earth, to which the firstborn Son of God was sent, has been stained with the blood of millions and still the war-cloud hangs dark and heavy over all nations. How mankind has sought and longed for peace! A recent article that came across my desk states, "High ideals are expressed by the statue outside of the United Nations headquarters in New York City. Former U.N. Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld addressed a gathering at the ceremony for the unveiling of the bronze statue by Russian sculptor Ergieniy Vuchetich. Commenting on the event, the U.N. Office of Public Information stated, 'The statue is in bronze and represents the figure of a man holding a hammer in one hand, and in the other, a sword which he is making into a plowshare, symbolizing man's desire to put an end to war and convert the means of destruction into creative tools for the benefit of all mankind.' The heroic figure of a man beating his sword into a plowshare was inspired by the words of Isaiah. The vision of peace that he saw showed that **the nations would 'beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks' (Isa. 2:4)** How ironic that this statue was presented as a gift to the United Nations by the then Soviet Union who would be one of the biggest threats to worldwide peace of the 20th century! Luxembourg also sent a gift to the United Nations. It was a revolver with a twisted knot in its barrel" — end quote.

The greatest monument to future peace is not the statue at the United Nations. No, it is the peace of God now being formed in the lives of God's elect! Peace on earth will only come when every man is quickened and transformed by the power of God through the Sons of Peace! It is when "the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains" that the prophetic mysteries spoken by the prophet shall unfold before our wondering eyes and "He shall judge among the *nations*, and shall rebuke many people: and *they* (the nations) shall beat *their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore*" (Isa. 2:2-4).

Has that prophecy been fulfilled? Even in times of peace today the nations do not stop "learning war." Even so-called Christian America has its West Point and Annapolis and continually tests new war machinery and implements of destruction. **War does not bring peace!** The opposite of peace cannot produce peace! The carnal mind does not understand this simple principle. Such knowledge is too high for it. I tell you today by the word of the Lord that there never has been, nor can there ever be, **a war to end all wars!** It is a contradiction. It is an absurdity. It is an impossibility. War and peace are *irreconcilable opposites!* The seeds of the next war are always sown in the last war. Only *peace can make peace.* Peace IS! "My peace I give unto you." Only the ministry of the Sons of Peace can bring peace to earth. Peace shall not come through war — it shall come through the mighty, overwhelming outpouring and dispensation of the peace of God into the life of mankind. God has brought us to the Kingdom for such a time as this!

The notion that man by war can establish peace on earth is one of the most profound stupidities of the carnal mind. And the idea that man apart from the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost can bring peace to the world is another human error no less astounding. These efforts have been earnestly and fervently pursued by many great, powerful, influential, eloquent, and able men in every generation and age, but never has one been able to accomplish it! In the following words of a well-known preacher, penned *shortly after the First World War*, we see manifest the folly of the ill-founded hope of establishing peace apart from the regeneration of every human heart. He said to a crowd on Thanksgiving Day, "And what abundant reason we have for gratitude because of what has been done by the peacemakers since last we observed this day. Not since the World War ended has the prospect of peace been so bright and heartening as it is at this hour. Since 1918 the path of peace has been as the path of the just which is 'as a shining light that shineth more and more

unto the perfect day.' Since then seven milestones have been set up along the way to peace on earth and good will among men. I have not the time to linger by each of these milestones. I but name them and let them speak for themselves.

**"The milestones are: (1) The League of Nations, 1920, with its fifty-five members among the nations of earth. (2) The Disarmament Conference at Washington, 1921. A friendly gesture in which America showed her faith. (3) Locarno, 1925. (4) The World Conference of Christians at Stockholm, 1925, with thirty-seven nations represented. (5) The oversea flight in 1927 of Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, the *Lone Eagle* who came like a good angel from the skies, a messenger of peace and goodwill to Europe. (6) The Pact of Paris, 1928, when war was declared an outlaw and the greatest nations of the earth through their representatives affixed their signatures. (7) The recent friendly conference between President Hoover and Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald.**

"I dare to dream a dream. It is the year 1969, and I see a veteran of the Great War, a member of the American Legion, holding on his knee his first great-grandchild. It is World Peace Day, the anniversary of the day when the last nation became a signatory of the treaty outlawing war. Flags are flying, bands of music are playing. I hear the little boy asking questions, a habit of little boys everywhere. 'Granddad,' he asks, toying with the old man's military medal, 'were you really in the war, that last great war?' 'Yes, my boy,' the veteran replies. 'It seems as a dream that men once fought one another like wild beasts, but it can never happen again, and some day you'll read the story how brave men and true fought the bloodless battles of peace. It was a long, hard fight, almost as hard as the fighting by land and sea where men suffered and died host upon host. A glorious company of heroic men, gave their lives pioneering for peace, and a like company of noble women went to early graves that peace on earth might come" — end quote.

Only a few short years after this optimistic sermon was delivered the hellish fury of the Second World War broke out on planet earth! This man's hopes were cruelly dashed to pieces on the rock of reality. He speaks of a peace that comes by the efforts of unregenerated men through the sacrifice of war followed by the nations *outlawing war!* But He says nothing about Christ and His peace, nothing of the peace of the Kingdom of God, nothing of the things that *bring peace* into men's lives — salvation, deliverance, regeneration, the work of the Holy Spirit, transformation into the image of God, and putting on the mind of Christ. Ah, the silence is deafening! He is like the woman in the song who is "looking for love in all the wrong places." Of a certainty I know that peace does not come by heroic men giving their lives on bloody battlefields! History proves in eloquent and unrefutable terms that war breeds more war. Never forget it, write it forever upon the tablets of your mind, and let it be as a frontlet between your eyes, my beloved — peace does not come by war or by force or by the earnest efforts of natural, carnal, sinful Adamic men.

## THE SONS OF PEACE

To be filled with God's peace, to be fully at peace with God, with ourselves and others, to have peace in every situation and circumstance of life, and with everything else in this world and throughout the unbounded heavens is the goal of sonship. That is what the Kingdom of God is all about in our lives! If there is any one thing, within or without, that troubles us and denies us His peace, then the Kingdom of God is not fully established within us. The Lord is now establishing peace among His elect in Zion. He is now publishing peace and salvation in Zion, and is bringing good tidings of great things to us, by His Spirit. **"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem...how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:1,7).**

In Hebrews 12:22 we read that we are now come unto mount Zion. To correctly unlock the great revelation and reality of this mount Zion we need to go back and look at the shadow. Israel was God's land, the whole nation of His people. In Israel there was the city of Jerusalem, the capital city, the seat of government comprising all the ruling class. Yet in Jerusalem there was only one who, with his household, dwelt on mount Zion. He was the king. Mount Zion is the highest mount in Jerusalem, and David the king established his throne there. His was the highest pinnacle of glory attainable. But that Zion was only a shadow of the true mount Zion to which we are come in the Spirit. David was king over natural Israel. Christ is King over spiritual Israel. David dwelt on

the natural mount Zion. Therefore Christ dwells on the spiritual mount Zion. And this spiritual Zion is composed of those who in union with Christ the Head have reached the very highest pinnacle attainable in the heavenly Jerusalem, those who have followed the Lord all the way to His throne. **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne"** (Rev. 3:21).

In Revelation 14:1-5 we find a company of 144,000 standing with the Lamb upon mount Zion. And this company standing with their Lord can represent nothing other than those who have followed the Lamb all the way from death on mount Calvary to the glory and exaltation of mount Zion. God has but one throne, and those who share that throne share it in the heights of the spiritual mount Zion. **"The Lord shall reign over them in Zion, from henceforth, even for ever"** (Mic. 4:7; Isa. 24:23).

All who are dwelling in the high and holy realm of Zion, are hearing the voice of the Son of God! Good tidings of great things, of full salvation, of perfection of holiness and power, the reign of Christ, and the peace of the Kingdom of God, are now being declared in Zion. **"For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon Himself shall His crown flourish"** (Ps. 132:13-14, 17-18). **"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Let mount Zion rejoice...walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces..."** (Ps. 48:1-2, 8, 11-13).

When that word becomes life to us by the Spirit, the Lord then fills us with the joy, peace, holiness and power of mount Zion. Then those qualities, including His peace, shall flow out of us to fill, first, the city of God, then the whole land of God's own people, and finally the whole earth and all nations. Haggai prophesied, saying of the glory of the latter house, the spiritual temple of living stones, each stone a quickened, living son of God, **"And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts"** (Hag. 2:9). When the peace of God has filled the house of the Lord, His peace shall then flow out of the house, bringing true and lasting peace to all the peoples and nations of the world.

The peace of God can only be ministered to the inhabitants of earth by the authority of Christ in the glory and power of His Kingdom of sons and daughters. Another prophet prophesied, **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, THY KING COMETH unto thee...and He shall speak peace unto the heathen, and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth"** (Zech. 9:9-10). Christ our King rules from the top down, from the height of His throne in the heavenlies down to the lowest valley and the deepest hell. Our King comes first to mount Zion, the sons of God; then to Jerusalem, the true church, the bride of Christ; next to the land of Israel, that is, all the people of God on whatever spiritual level they may be; and finally to the rest of mankind in the ends of the earth.

These are the four elements or components in the scope and economy of the Kingdom of God: Mount Zion, Jerusalem, the land, and the world. Mount Zion was in Jerusalem, Jerusalem was in the land, and the land was in the world. All things in every realm are gathered up in those four areas, as typified by the natural Israel of old in the midst of the earth. In Christ's coming to Zion to be perfectly and fully formed in the sons of God, the reign of Christ is then evident in the lives of His elect. When He fully rules and reigns in our lives, the reign of Christ then progresses to spiritual Jerusalem, which is the realm of the daughters of Zion, the true church which is the bride of Christ. This takes in all those who truly love the Lord, are baptized in the Holy Spirit, and are led by His Spirit in the measure they know, though they are not fully overcoming sons of God. From there the Kingdom progresses to the whole land which is all nominal Christians who name the name of the Lord, acknowledging Him as Savior, be they Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, or any other denomination in Christianity. From the land the reign of Christ finally spreads to the rest of mankind, to every tongue, and people, and kindred, and nation, until He fully reigns over all. During this age it has not been God's purpose to bring to pass the fullness of the glory and power and consummation of His Kingdom on earth. During this age which even now is swiftly drawing to a close and merging into the greater glory of the dawning age, God's purpose has been centered in His church, in the *calling out of the nations of a people for His name*. The gospel has indeed been

sent to every nation and every people over the face of the whole earth, but not to save or bring the rule of the Kingdom of God over every nation, rather to *call out* of each nation a people for Himself (Acts 15:13-18). This people is formed on various spiritual levels and stages of development all the way from little children to the fully matured sons of God. They may be classified as mount Zion (sons), Jerusalem (bride), and the land (children).

In this end of the age the reign of Christ has now come to Zion, to confirm and seal His reign in the lives of His elect, preparing them for power, dominion, authority and rulership as kings and priests unto God after the order of Melchizedek, thus setting the stage for the coming of His Kingdom to the other companies of His people and to all the ends of the earth. In due time the Lord shall manifest His Kingdom in Jerusalem, to reign in and over all who love Him and love His appearing. What a day it will be when all the Pentecostal and Charismatic believers in the whole world are cleansed from all their religious and denominational idols, from all the error and false doctrines that have clung to them like a death shroud, from all their carnality and fleshly methods of meetings, programs, and evangelism, and are filled with the fullness of the righteousness, peace and joy of the Kingdom, matured in Christ Jesus, submitted to His Lordship, and put on the wisdom, knowledge, understanding, faith and glory of the wonderful mind of Christ! Oh, yes! What a day! And that, precious friend of mine, will be the *next stage* in the progression and unfolding of the Kingdom of God on earth.

When God's spiritual Jerusalem has been brought fully under the sway of His Kingdom dominion, it shall then be brought to those who make up the "land," all Christians who acknowledge Jesus as Saviour. And finally, the Kingdom will come to all the kindreds and nations of the whole world who now lie completely *outside* of the territory of God's people. When the reign of Christ has fully come to those who in this hour have received the call to sonship, which is mount Zion, and to all the other truly born-again believers in Jerusalem, which is the bride of Christ, and to all the so-called Christians of the world who dwell in some area of God's land, then He shall simply "speak peace to the heathen." When God speaks, His omnipotent and creative word brings forth that which did not previously exist. God proclaims by the power of His word, "Let there be!" and the Light of Christ shines to dispel all the darkness everywhere. God speaks and the hatred, ignorance, vanity, violence and sinfulness of man is forever crushed by the emergence of a new nature of life and transformation within. By His breath the beast in man is slain, even the dragon in the sea, and the former tyrant masters of the flesh, the world and the devil are replaced with Himself. When God speaks He sends forth His delivering, quickening, regenerating spirit of power and might and changes everything. And when God speaks peace to the nations, all the peoples of the earth — the Buddhists, the Hindus, the Moslems, the Communists, and all others, from the least to the greatest — shall bow in humble and worshipful obedience before God's Christ.

When God speaks peace to the nations they shall indeed beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, neither shall nation lift up sword against nation anymore forever. This wonderful result will not be achieved through peace conferences or treaties of any kind, nor by any police action or military force either by the United Nations or by the church systems or by Jesus riding out of the sky on a white horse with a sword of destruction proceeding out of His mouth. Oh, no! It shall come by the **mighty spiritual power** of God's spirit of peace and salvation flowing out of a people in whom this Kingdom peace and Kingdom power has been perfected — the SONS OF PEACE. We who are spiritually minded are on a path leading to true Life and Peace. With every experience in Christ we are becoming more like Christ. We are truly becoming peacemakers in the Kingdom of God. And we shall, in Father's time, bring the peaceful state of the Kingdom of God to earth. Oh, let us believe God, and expect Him to do great and mighty things in this wonderful new Day of the Lord!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 38**  
**THE JOY OF THE KINGDOM**  
BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART THIRTY-EIGHT**

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"  
(Rom. 14:17).

The Kingdom of God is *joy*! Can joy be found in the world today? Certainly. But just as there is more than one kind of righteousness and more than one kind of peace, there is more than one type of joy. A Swedish massage or the sensual pleasures of sex are examples of *physical joy*. There is also a superficial *soulish joy* experienced by every man, woman and child on earth irrespective of whether they be saint or sinner, moral or immoral, or what god they serve. It is the joy of children playing, the joy of a loved one coming home, the joy of a wedding, the joy of a newborn baby, the joy of the amusement park and the dance floor, the joy of delightful children who are an honor to their parents, the joy of accomplishment and recognition. Soulsh joy is often a *religious joy* inspired by the singing of peppy choruses over and over and the clapping of the hands. There is nothing wrong with such joy, but if it can be "worked up" it is soulsh, not spiritual. While such expressions of praise and thanksgiving may be done "as unto the Lord" they should not be confused with the joy of the Kingdom of God.

What, I ask, do melodious quartets, robed choirs, sweet-sounding instrumentals, hand-clapping, foot-stomping, guitar strumming, singing and shouting and dancing have in common with the transforming glory that radiated from the countenance of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, before whose dazzling presence and blazing majesty John the apostle *fell as one dead* on the isle of Patmos? While these manifestations may be wonderful experiences of the soul delighting itself in the Lord, they are not worthy to be compared with the surpassing glory of **joy in the Holy Ghost — the JOY OF THE KINGDOM!** I think that in the presence of the supernal and ineffable glory of God's Christ that John witnessed on the mount of Transfiguration and on the isle of Patmos, the beat of the music would fall deathly silent, every tongue would cleave in dumbness to the roof of its mouth, every song would be mystically hushed, every hand would hang limp, and all faces would fall as dead men before the wonder of His glory and the majesty of His power. Silence would mysteriously impose itself upon the soul and all *soulsh joy* would appear but crude expressions of unskilled dissonance.

Many good things bring soulsh joy to our lives, but none of these have any relationship to the Kingdom of God. You see, the Kingdom of God is not merely joy — it is joy IN THE HOLY GHOST! It is God's joy. It is heaven's joy. It is divine joy. It is spiritual joy. It is joy *unspeakable* and it is *full of glory*. We are the people of God, His chosen elect in the earth to accomplish His Kingdom purposes. We are the vessels that contain the Spirit of God. We are the embodiment of God's Christ. To have a conscious revelation of what Christ is in us arouses the consciousness of the Kingdom of God. When we walk in the Spirit we are walking in the mind of Christ and in the power of the Kingdom of Heaven! "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the *sons of God*" (Rom. 8:17). The sons of God are also called "the sons of the Kingdom" (Mat. 13:38). When the Holy Spirit rules us, what other son could we be? The Spirit of Christ has come to rule our senses and our body. Christ is being raised up within us as the personality and power of our lives. We can now live and walk above every storm and trouble, above all weakness and limitation, yea, above even sin and death! Tears are wiped away from off all faces and sorrow and sighing flee away as the Kingdom rules our lives! It is here that we know and experience the profound and eternal *spiritual joy* that **is the Kingdom of God!**

Joy is the sentiment and feeling of the man who, by virtue of the indwelling of divine life, shares the emotions of God Himself. God is *spirit*, therefore the emotions of God are *spiritual*. God is the eternal God and His Kingdom is everlasting. His joy, therefore, is constant, unaffected and unmoved by the changing course of events, for it has as its source the unchanging God. The Lord joys in His own perfections, unable as the perfect

One to rejoice in anything less than the perfect. By spiritual birth and divine nature man is enabled to share the joy God has in Himself, unmoved by the swirling currents of ever-changing events in the outer world.

Often today we see the bumper sticker proclaiming "Happiness is..." and whatever the natural man relishes is added to those words. Only with the mind of the spirit may we discern the deep truth that *happiness* is the distorted Self's substitute for *joy*. *Happi-ness* is related to *happen-ings*. It depends on the nature of the happenings around man, whether they please him, suit his fancy, and meet his soulish standards and physical cravings. If they do, then he is *happy*. If they run cross-currents with the desires of the Self, then he futilely wishes that they would *unhappen*, and caught in that vice of circumstances he becomes *unhappy*. As someone has said, "Life becomes a desert following the mirage of happiness, a fantasy where all people, events, and even God are doing what the individual man wishes them to do. Happiness is the ultimate of the distorted ego, the harmonizing of all the self-willing Self."

Malcomb Smith has aptly written, "In this futile pursuit (for happiness) man will change jobs, neighborhoods, countries, wife or husband, and even his religion. But all that he finds is a passing emotion described as 'the passing pleasures of sin' (Heb. 11:25). Proverbs describes this kind of happiness as the burning of kindling sticks. It blazes and then is left as a heap of ashes. So man lives in the ashes of the brief moments of happiness. He is bored, complaining and unthankful. The attitude toward life in the darkness trains men in unthankfulness. Every detail of life that does not fit into the framework of self is the subject of complaint. In fact, complaint becomes the basic language of the lie. With some it has become their only language and way of life, passing all moments through the grid of their distorted self, expressed in a tirade of complaint. The inhabitants of the darkness are withered humans, mere ghosts of what they were created to be."

Joy, on the other hand, can only be known through relationship with God. The sweet singer of Israel intoned it in these words, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence there is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). In union with God the sons of God share the joy that God has in Himself! The Lord never changes or fluctuates in any way. He IS. "I am that I am." Nothing can influence or affect God in any way. The Lord is never upset, disturbed, frustrated, complaining, or in despair due to any happening of events. He is sovereignly in control of all things in the heavens and in the earth, and works all things after the counsel of His own will. All things were created by Him and for His pleasure, and all fulfill His will and accomplish His purpose. In the unaffected, indestructible, infinite joy of His divine nature He rejoices in all His ways and works! This is the joy of the Lord! This is the joy of the Kingdom of God! As we come into harmony with the mind of Christ and the will of the Father we learn that God is always in control, that nothing can happen outside of God's will, that all our steps are ordered of the Lord, and that everything God does in us is to further our growth and development in Him. How He does this in each of us is His business! It is more than obvious that if we were perfecting ourselves we would often choose a different course and with our limited knowledge and immature wisdom would make a mess of it, protecting those very things that need to be dealt with and conveniently by-passing the most important lessons to be learned. But once we truly embrace His way, His will, and His time, we are undergirded with that *eternal joy* that endures the cross, despises the shame, and prevails to be highly exalted, seated with Christ Jesus the Lord on the throne of divine glory and universal power!

Jesus bequeathed this joy to His disciples. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn. 15:11). "These things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn. 17:13). The first thing that strikes us in this passage is the claim of Jesus to the possession of joy. He speaks not of the joy that was His in the morning tide of life when He romped with youthful abandonment over the hills of Galilee, before He set out on His seemingly impossible mission. Nor was He looking back to the joy that was His in the early days of His sonship ministry when eager and enthusiastic multitudes first thronged about Him. He speaks of joy as a present and abiding possession. Though He is even now under the shadow of the cross, though suffering and death are blowing their chill breath in His face, though His whole life now seems to be falling in ruins about Him, He is yet able to look at it all with confident eyes and rejoicing heart. He sees as the Father sees, He knows as the Father knows, for He is the first *manifested Son of God*. The song in His heart cannot be hushed! The joy that has characterized all His yesterdays is with Him still. And what a deep and satisfying joy that is! It is the joy of sonship to God! It is the joy of the eternal Spirit! It is the joy of the Kingdom of God! It is not the joy of emotions worked up by

singing a chorus twenty-five times amid passionate exhortations to worship — it is rather joy rooted in divine calling, divine knowledge, divine purpose, divine will, and divine nature. The joy of Jesus was not happiness dependent upon *happenings*, or *stirred emotions*, but a new kind of joy, a higher dimension of joy, a deeper current of joy, the joy of the Kingdom of God!

The story is recorded of saint Francis of Assisi, how on one winter day when he and brother Leo were walking along the road to Assisi from Perugia, Francis called out to Leo in the bitter cold, telling him what perfect joy was *not*. "Brother Leo, even if a Friar Minor gives sight to the blind, makes the lame walk, drives out devils, gives hearing back to the deaf, and restores speech to the dumb, and what is more brings back to life a man who has been dead four days, write that perfect joy is not in that." Brother Leo in great amazement asked him, "Father, I beg you in God's name tell me where perfect joy *is* to be found!" And Francis replied, "When we come to the Portiuncula, soaked by the rain and frozen by the cold, all soiled with mud and suffering from hunger, and we ring at the gate of our Friary and the brother porter comes and says angrily: 'Who are you?' And we say, 'We are two of your brothers.' And he contradicts us saying, 'You are not telling the truth. Go away!' And he does not open for us, but makes us stand outside in the snow and rain, cold and hungry until night falls — then if we endure all of those insults and cruel rebuffs patiently, without being troubled and without complaining, and if we reflect humbly and lovingly that the porter really knows us, oh, brother Leo, write that perfect joy is to be found there!"

The joy of Jesus' disciples could never, under any circumstances, become *unjoy*, it was more powerful than all the sorrows that could assault it. Its source and reality was in the unchanging God. Their joy was not rooted in their possessions, location, circumstances, human relationships, or favors bestowed upon them. At times they suffered persecution and loss of all things, they were hated, maligned, and even put to death. But they did not retaliate, complain, or go about with a persecution complex. They did not simply *endure* — they *rejoiced!* "*For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven (the realm of the spirit) a better and an enduring substance*" (Heb. 10:34). Ah, these followers of Christ had discovered a *new reality*, not one of earthly things and values and happenings, but the life of God Himself and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This better and enduring substance is Christ raised up within us as our very own reality! It is not something out beyond the stars to be obtained after we die, but the heavenly realities within the spirit in our inner man.

This is the same joy in the Spirit that Habakkuk expressed: "*Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: YET WILL I REJOICE IN THE LORD, I WILL JOY IN THE GOD OF MY SALVATION!*" (Hab. 3:17-18). Such a lifestyle and language of joy does not just happen. To come up on mount Zion, to reign with Christ as the sons of God, is to follow Him whom God has "*anointed with the oil of gladness above all Thy companions*" (Heb. 1:9). This wonderful oil of gladness *flows from Christ the Head to Christ the body*. The oil of gladness is the anointing of the joy of the Kingdom of Heaven! It is the joy that belongs only to the sons of God! I think that many who read these lines are, through the deep dealings of the Father, coming to know this joy of the Kingdom in a very real and precious way. Those who have received the call to sonship, those who have experienced the strippings and purgings, those unto whom the Lord Himself has come as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, those elect ones who have followed on to know the Lord, know experientially what I am talking about!

Oh, that men would awaken to the truth that the Kingdom of God **is joy** in the Holy Ghost! Oh, that men might see where reality dwells! Oh, that men's eyes might be opened to see that their search for joy in the things of the earthly body and the outer world is but to chase rainbows and grasp the emptiness of bubbles in their hands! We must beware how we compare the Kingdom of God with earthly kingdoms, lest we thereby not merely see what blessings are to be expected in a kingdom, but come to expect blessings of a similar nature in the heavenly Kingdom. God's apprehended ones have come to the place in their experience where they know that the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of Heaven surpass those of earthly kingdoms as the heavens are higher than the earth! God has now blessed us with all *spiritual blessings* in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus! He is blessing us with blessings of life and immortality, the wisdom of the Godhead, the knowledge and understanding of heavenly things, the righteousness of the Holy One, the peace of God that passeth understanding, authority and power over the nations and all things, and the eternal joy of the Kingdom.

A man may feel that he is safe as to many things, but what can he know of absolute safety and permanence till he has experienced *incorruptible life*? What can he know of any of the blessings of the subject till he becomes subject to Christ? Is not the liberty, the security, the plenty we know on earth very shadowy and precarious, until we possess the eternal reality and substance of these in Christ? Until we possess that security which has heard the gates of the city of God shut behind, and has found the feet standing on the heights of Zion; which can view every circumstance without fear or apprehension, knowing whose will it is that is done in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; that security which is secure in the blessed knowledge that greater is He that is for us, than all that can be against us; that liberty of the sons of God wherewith the Son of God makes us free from all that would overcome us or drag us down from high apprehensions of our calling in God; when He gives us entrance into the wide and lasting love of God, bringing us to the very radiance of His countenance and the brightness of His glory; that plenty which is supplied by the fullness of the Godhead within us, for it is no longer I that liveth, but Christ that liveth in me; the righteousness, peace, and joy of a Kingdom where there are no unknown or forgotten masses, but where the King knows all and rules by personal inward life over each; which provides enlightenment of mind, renewal of heart, salvation of the soul, quickening of the body, supernatural strength and every grace that is needed to bring us unto the measure of the stature of the PERFECT MAN. Ah, this is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

The joy of the Kingdom consummates in the joy of the Son in the sons. There is a dimension of joy that can only be known by the *manifested sons of God*. God has anointed Jesus with the oil of gladness above all His brethren, but the fullness of His joy is known by those who are **made one in Him**. In this regard Paul Mueller wrote, "There also is a travail of spirit that relates to the appearing of Christ to His people. Jesus said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you' (Jn. 16:20-22).

"The sorrow Jesus spoke about in the last verse is the sorrow that occurs when we are no longer with Him. After Jesus spoke these words to His disciples, He was later taken by the soldiers to be crucified. Then He was buried, and was raised from the dead by the power of God. The disciples experienced sorrow because He was taken from them. But Jesus said to them, 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.' Their sorrow was replaced with joy (in part) when the Holy Spirit was given to them on the day of Pentecost. Even so do we long for His appearing and His presence. Although we know He is ever with us, we groan within as a woman with child during her travail and sorrow, longing to be more fully and completely joined to Him. And our joy is full when we experience those brief but wonderful times in His presence.

"But there is coming a greater fulfillment of the joy Jesus spoke about. Indeed, we look forward to that glorious morning when we shall be forever joined to the Lord in the glory of the manifestation of the sons of God. That will truly be the spiritual experience that will make our hearts rejoice with a joy no man can take from us. When that new morning dawns and we are fully born again of the Spirit, we shall rejoice with His super-abounding joy. We will remember no more the former times of intense processings that brought us where we now are in God. Every test and trial, which we remember now as being very difficult and trying, will be forever forgotten, to be replaced with a kind of joy which we have never yet experienced. Then our times of anguish and sorrow will be replaced with the '**joy that a Man is born into the world.**' The joy of the world is temporary and leads to death. But the joy of the fullness of the kingdom of God, which we shall share, will be permanent and will lead us to life everlasting. When that new creation 'man' is born into the world, our service to the Lord and His kingdom will then be complete. Then the whole creation will be set free from its severe bondage to corruption.

"The new Day of the kingdom of God on earth has already begun! This is the Day of the birth and manifestation of that new 'man.' Some of us have already seen the beginning of this new Day, which began at evening time during spiritual darkness, and which shall become much more glorious when the morning dawns. We have also seen the dawn, for Father has given us a foretaste of the glory and freshness of that new morning to come" — end quote.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that the joy of the Kingdom of God is not dependent on outward appearances or circumstances. "Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice," says the apostle Paul. Paul was in prison when he penned these encouraging words. "Your joy *no man taketh from you,*" Jesus promised, and He was within a few hours of the excruciating agony of the cross when He said it. But it must be the real thing and not counterfeit. This joy of the Kingdom is not an easy-going optimism that refuses to face facts. It is not the starry-eyed Charismatic joy that thinks there is to be no more trouble, suffering, or travail, that only health and prosperity and blessings galore are the right of every child of God. Kingdom joy is not a pretended mask which hides a sad heart, courageous as that may be. Nor is it callous indifference to the suffering around us. It is the **real joy** which comes from union with the Infinite and Eternal and from the deep knowing that all is in our Father's loving hands; that, come what may, things have not got out of hand; that He is working perfectly to bring forth His highest in every situation, and so it will be whether we understand it or not.

Let us hear with our hearts what the Lord Jesus says of the joy of the Kingdom of God. "**These things have I spoken unto you, that *my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full***" (Jn. 15:11). He speaks of this joy as *abiding* — a joy that is never to cease or be interrupted for a moment or disturbed by anything. "As sorrowful, yet *always rejoicing,*" are the words of the apostle Paul. These precious golden words teach us how Kingdom joy overrules the sorrows of this world, makes us sing through tears, and establishes in the inner depths, even when the outer man is cast down by disappointment or difficulties, a deep consciousness of a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Only with the pure joy of the Kingdom can the scripture be fulfilled in us, "**Count it *all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience***" (James 1:2-3). Only with the living joy of the Kingdom can we "**think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but *rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy***" (I Pet. 4:12-13). There can be no doubt that the saints in Thessalonica had received a foretaste of this Kingdom joy when Paul wrote to them, "**And ye became followers of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, *with joy in the Holy Ghost***" (I Thes. 1:6).

Some time ago brother Bennie Skinner preached a message on joy so powerful, so beautiful, that I feel to share a portion of it with you here. The rest of this teaching will be the words of Brother Skinner.

"**For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost**" (Rom. 14:17). The Kingdom of God is not in externals — not in what you eat, what you drink, what you put on, what you take off, where you go, what you do — but the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy **in the Holy Ghost**. That should give us a clue as to how to get joy. Paul tells us in **Galatians 5:22**, "**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...**" If you don't have joy, guess who can give it to you. The Holy Spirit! So why don't you just let go and let that joy that is down deep within the Kingdom of God within you, come forth! Think about this: Joy is one-third of the Kingdom of God! So if you think I'm not preaching the Kingdom when I speak of joy, you're wrong. Joy in the Holy Ghost is a third of the Kingdom — for the Kingdom of God IS righteousness, and peace, and joy!

In the book of Nehemiah we read the story of how the people of Israel were rebuilding the wall and the city of Jerusalem under the leadership of the prophet Nehemiah. And he told them, "This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:9-10). And today, as then, **the joy of the Lord is your strength!** The joy of the Lord is attractive. You like to be around people who are joyful! You don't like to be around complainers, you don't enjoy being around judgmental, critical people, you would rather not be around people who are always fearful or worried about something, you don't want to be around people who are always down and poor-mouthing about everything — **do you!** You like to be around people who are happy! "**Happy is the people whose God is the Lord**" (Ps. 144:15). I don't think that any of us has even scratched the surface yet of having the joy of the Lord.

I'm reading a book called IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS. It is written by Bruce Marchiano, the movie actor. He is Italian. It's a great book. It will touch your heart as it touched mine. He also plays the role of Jesus in a four-hour film called THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW. Bruce is a devout Christian, so are the

director and the people on the set. It is a wonderful film and I urge you to get it. It's expensive, but get it — it's a treasure. He plays Jesus, the *man of joy*! He found the joy of the Son of God. He found it by studying the life of Jesus, by acting out the role of Jesus. He was Jesus in the movie and it challenged him as he had never been challenged. He went on his face before God and begged God to let him see people like Jesus saw them, to let him feel like Jesus felt, to let him have joy like Jesus had. He sought God for it, and God gave it to him. I think that is one of the greatest movies the world has ever known, greater than THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Did you know the Bible says of the firstborn Son, that as a son He was anointed with the oil of joy above all His brethren? (Heb. 1:8-9). How do we always picture Jesus? We see Him as the King in His majesty. Everything is done serenely, with dignity and with order. His hands are always well manicured, His robe is spotlessly clean, His sandals unsoiled, His hair meticulously groomed, His demeanor perfectly controlled. I believe Jesus was first and foremost a **man**. He was brought up in the carpenter shop of Joseph until he was thirty years of age. He handled rough timber and worked with crude tools compared to the sophisticated machinery we have today. It was grime and dirt and sawdust. He had calluses on His hands, and He didn't look anything like the sanctimonious pictures you see of Jesus. But do you know what they have left out of Jesus' life? They have left out JOY. I believe Jesus laughed a lot! I believe He smiled a lot! Oh, I know that He wept and that His heart broke for people in their sorrows, far greater than we have even imagined. He saw them as sheep not having a shepherd. He wept over Jerusalem, saying, "**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!**" (Mat. 23:37). He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. I believe Jesus experienced the whole spectrum of human emotions. But preeminently I believe He had JOY! There was something about Him that was joy unspeakable and full of glory. He was full of the Holy Ghost and joy is a fruit of the Spirit.

The joy of the Lord can be yours in spite of your circumstances, in spite of your poverty, in spite of marital problems, in spite of bereavement, in spite of the loss of friends, in spite of all the persecution you get. Above and beyond it all, you can have the joy of the Lord! He IS this joy — notify your face! Tell your face that you have the joy of the Kingdom of God within you and let it reflect that joy upon your countenance. I don't have any use for a spirituality that the body doesn't get involved in. If you've got the real thing it will affect your body. We all know the Kingdom affects our spirit, and we know it affects our soul, but if it affects the spirit and soul, will it not also affect the body? When you truly have joy your whole being will be caught up into the joy of the Lord.

David prayed in the **51st Psalm**, "**Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation.**" He prayed that because he had sinned against God with Bathsheba. He took her away from her husband, Uriah, and when she got pregnant he called Uriah out from the battlefield and tried to send him home to his wife so he would think the baby Bathsheba was carrying was his own. That didn't work, so he sent Uriah to the battlefield, into the heat of the battle, where he would be killed. He did get killed, and David took Bathsheba to be his wife. Then God sent the prophet Nathan to the palace, he shook his bony prophetic finger in David's face and said, "You're the man who has committed this dastardly act — *you're the man!*" Faced with his sin, David lost the joy of the Lord's salvation. He didn't say, "Restore unto me *my* salvation," but he said, "Restore unto me the joy of *Thy* salvation." Sin in your life will rob you of the joy of the Lord! When you don't *walk* with the Lord, when you don't *seek* the Lord, when you don't *turn to* the Lord, when you don't *trust* the Lord, when you don't *obey* the Lord, you lose your joy. God never takes His joy from us, but we can lose it.

The joy of the Lord is your strength! Do you want to be strong? Then be filled with joy, for joy is your strength! What can the devil do, what can sin do, what can the flesh do, what can the world do to a son of God who is filled with the Holy Spirit and has the joy of the Lord in his life? Nothing. *Nothing*. NOTHING! You say, "Give me something *deep*. I need a *deep word*, I want a *deep revelation*." This IS deep! This is about as deep as it gets because **the Kingdom of God is joy in the Holy Ghost!** This is reality. This is where the rubber meets the road. We're not interested in high-sounding phrases, lofty doctrines, or great revelations anymore. I thank God for revelation, I've received abundance of revelation, but I want what has been revealed TO me to be revealed IN me. I want what is revealed IN me to be revealed AS me. And joy is part of it. Joy is one-third of the Kingdom of God! *That's* deep, beloved!

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). Do you want to know how to have fullness of joy? Come to the realization of HIS PRESENCE. Why don't people have Kingdom joy? Because they think God is away off up in the sky somewhere, on some distant planet, or in an invisible realm someplace other than right here inside of us. **The Kingdom of God is within you!** God dwells in you! You are the temple of God! You are the habitation of God through the spirit! Be aware of the presence of God, sanctify the Lord God *in your heart* — and in His presence is **fullness of joy!** Most of us don't even know yet what real joy is. We know very little about joy. I'm not talking about joke-cracking, back-slapping, hilarity. I'm not talking about fun and foolishness. I'm talking about **real joy**. I'm talking about joy that is joy anywhere, any time, all the time; joy when you wake up in the morning, joy when you go to bed at night, joy when everything is going wrong, and joy when everything goes right. There is a joy in the Lord that no matter what the circumstance is, no matter how dark or hopeless things appear, no matter how our world seems to be falling apart, there is a joy in the Lord that undergirds and gives stability in the face of hell itself. I have to walk in that joy. I have to manifest that joy. Because I have learned that **THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH!**

"Beautiful for situation, the *joy of the whole earth*, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:2). When we live in this high realm of the Spirit where we are filled with the joy of the Lord, we live in mount Zion, we are citizens of that heavenly city and that holy mountain — and **we are the joy of the whole earth!** There is no people in the whole earth that has joy like the people that dwells in mount Zion. Mount Zion is the governmental realm of God. It is the seat of His sovereignty and His Kingdom. It is the center of His authority and His power. Where do *you* live? What is *your* residence? I live at 777 Hallelujah Avenue. My phone number is **Jeremiah 33:3**. "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." I live in mount Zion, so I am the joy of the whole earth! When I enter a room where everyone is sitting troubled, sorrowful and dejected, I start talking. I start radiating. I start shining. In a little while the whole atmosphere in that room changes because I came in there. You say, "GOD came in there." That's what I said! He came in there in me. You ought to have seen what God was doing in there before I got there! *Nothing*.

It's like the old farmer that bought a farm. The farm was run down and dilapidated, the fences were broken down, weeds had taken over, everything was in disrepair and disarray, it was in terrible shape. After three years of toil and labor the old farmer had everything in beautiful shape. One day the preacher came by, looked over the farm, and said, "Brother Brown, the Lord has certainly done a great job on this farm!" Brother Brown replied, "Yeah, but you ought to have seen it when He had it all by Himself!" You see, beloved, God doesn't do anything apart from us. *We* are the temple of God. *We* are the priesthood of the Lord. *We* are the saviours on mount Zion (Obadiah 21). *We* are the kings upon His throne. *We* are the body of Christ. *We* are the arm of the Lord and the instrument of His hand. *We* are the government of God upon mount Zion — the **joy of the whole earth!** *We* are ordained to fill the whole earth with the joy of the Lord! There is **no other source** of joy, of the Kingdom of God, for the peoples of this earth!

"The fruit of the Spirit is...joy." Someone says, "I don't really have that much joy. I can't just *conjure up* joy." Nobody wants you to conjure up anything. You say, "I can't pretend to have joy when it's not there." Nobody wants you to pretend, either. "I can't put on a front." Nobody is asking you to put on a front. "I can't believe I have something I don't really possess." Well, you *have* joy whether you believe it or not! It's deep within you. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit is within you. The Kingdom of God is within you. The Kingdom of God **is joy**. It's joy **in the Holy Ghost**. You need to get in touch with it through the power of the Holy Spirit. Cry out to God for joy! It is at hand. It is accessible. It is abundantly available. It is in the Kingdom of God within you. The promise of God is sure, "**To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, THAT HE MIGHT BE GLORIFIED!**" (Isa. 61:3). May God perfect your joy today!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 39 THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

### PART THIRTY-NINE

#### POWER AND AUTHORITY

In our day, the truth of the power of the Kingdom of God needs to sound like a trumpet. Men's hearts are failing them for fear in looking after the things that are coming upon the earth, and many of the Lord's people are also filled with fear. The elect of God, those who are walking in the Spirit and following on to know the Lord, are seeing HIM before whom all nations are as a drop in a bucket — who with infinite care and divine purpose created the vastnesses of the limitless universe and the wheeling constellations and calleth them all by name. For who has yet arrived from the Other World to announce that God has been outsmarted by the devil, and that His Kingdom is in danger or disarray? Only One has come, and He has come with power and glory, and with a word that the Kingdom of the Father ruleth over all! To the great Roman Procurator, Pilate, who declared that he had the power to crucify the Lord of glory, Jesus said, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above" (Jn. 19:11).

Jesus was Himself the demonstration of the power of the Kingdom of God on earth! The miracles that Christ wrought while He walked the earth in flesh were His Kingdom Credentials. His miracles announced to the Jews that He was the promised Messiah, the One of whom the prophets wrote. After John the Baptist was arrested and imprisoned he sent messengers to Jesus to inquire, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus told John's inquiring disciples, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Mat. 11:2-6). The signs and wonders wrought by Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, were tangible evidence of the power that would reside in the Kingdom — power that could be seen and felt.

The miracles Jesus wrought set forth the blessings that would exist in the Kingdom realm. Jesus on another occasion said, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then *the kingdom of God is come unto you!*" Jesus clearly shows the relationship between the Kingdom and His miracles. Without miracles the Kingdom cannot be revealed. Miracles are a manifestation of possessed power, and Jesus is the firstfruits, the firstborn, the first example, and the pattern for all the holy sons of God who shall reign with Him in the Kingdom. And while we have now received the firstfruits of the Spirit, and have in fact experienced a *foretaste* of this miracle power of the Kingdom, when we have completely put off the Adamic mind, and have fully matured unto the measure of the stature of the *fullness of Christ*, and the Father witnesses to our sonship, declaring out of the heavens before men, "These are my beloved *sons*, in whom I am well pleased," then shall all the sons of God be *manifested* in power and great glory, and shall go forth doing even those "greater works" that Jesus promised His brethren. Only God can teach us these things! Truly He is training us in this very hour in the ways of His Kingdom. We have a poster on the wall of our office which says, "We Do Not Believe In Miracles — WE RELY UPON THEM!" Through experiencing the power of God daily in our lives we are learning to walk in the power of the Kingdom of God!

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and those who walked with Him in the days of His flesh *beheld His glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. They beheld Him and perceived that He was not like other men. He was totally like one *born of God*. They heard Him, they saw Him, they observed Him, they discerned Him, they touched and handled the Word of Life. Hear what they said. "For the life was *manifested — and we SAW IT!*" (I Jn. 1:1-3). The life of God was manifested right before their eyes. How did they know, what did they see, what was it that Jesus did that revealed the glory of God? Here was this man Jesus who looked like you and me, and really He could do anything He wanted. But no, He went about preaching the Kingdom of God, and doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil. How did they observe His life?

How did they know Jesus was the Son of God? Was it because He came to them and said, "I'm He!" Do you think they believed Him because He *claimed* to be God's Son? No! A thousand times, No! They saw His power, they *beheld* His glory, they *touched* the Life!

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy: and He healed them. And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan" (Mat. 4:23-25). Jesus' power was unlimited, unceasing and unstoppable. He took the time to do all those things. He didn't have any mass healings — He prayed for, and ministered to, every single one of those people individually. He touched them and imparted His life to them and healed them and blessed them. Multitudes came to Him and He had to make time for every one of them — and I don't have time for the things that clutter my life *today*! So what did Jesus do? He *sacrificed* His life doing nothing but demonstrating the power of the Kingdom of God that restores men to wholeness again. No sickness could stand in His presence. No demons could stand before Him. The elements obeyed His command. Death fled at His word. There was a funeral procession and a widow's son of Nain lay dead, and weeping they passed by Jesus, and the *dead could not stay dead*! Can you imagine the expression of those people's faces when that boy sat up on the bier! Paul said that our faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but in the **power of God — the power of the Kingdom!**

Jesus was the firstborn of God's vast family of sons. He came into the earth to reveal the glory of sonship and the power of the Kingdom of God. In Him we see what it means to be a **manifested son of God!** There was not a sickness He could not heal; there was not an evil spirit He could not cast out. They were all subject to His command, and they had to obey Him, even though they didn't want to. When the storm on the sea was great, and the wind was violent and the waves contrary, all He had to do was speak, "Peace, be still!" and the wind ceased and the waves went to rest in the bosom of the deep. Like a mother quieting her fretful child, saying, "Hush, my child, and go to sleep," and with her hand upon the child, the little one stops crying and goes to sleep; so all Jesus had to do was speak to the storm, "Hush, be quiet," and like a fretful child it quieted down and went to rest. When He needed money to pay taxes, and had none, He sent Peter to get it out of a fish's mouth. There was never a need that He could not supply. There was never a circumstance or situation He could not handle. He always had the power, the wisdom, and the means to take care of them all. This is the power of the Kingdom manifested in the Son of God, and it is the power of the Kingdom to be revealed through all the sons of God. For this *all creation earnestly and expectantly waits!*

As [George Hawtin](#) has so eloquently written, "The life which Jesus lived on earth was the greatest parable ever known. It was a parable of the KINGDOM OF GOD. He fully demonstrated by His divine life and power all the blessings that were to follow in His Kingdom. The evil things which we have learned to live with and accept as part of our very existence He conquered, putting them beneath His feet. Behold this King as He delivers those who believe from *every sickness* known to man! The word of His mouth makes the *lame man* to leap as an hart. Hear Him as He commands *deaf ears* to be unstopped and *blind eyes* to see. Listen with bated breath as *His wisdom* puts all His enemies to silence, causing them to say, 'Never man spake like this man!' Stand in awe beside the tomb of the dead while He who is the resurrection and the life calls, 'Lazarus, *come forth!*' Weep with the *forgiven woman* to whom He said, 'Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.' Feast as He *feeds the hungry multitude* with enough and to spare. Rejoice as He preaches, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' Stand in awe as He *stills the raging storm* even as He stilled the *fevered brow*. Weep with His friends as *He died*. Rejoice that He *liveth again to reign*, no more in humility and rejection in tiny Palestine, but in power and wonderful glory *over all the earth*" — end quote.

With what joy and holy wonder do I tell you today that this is the power that will again be manifested on earth through the ministry of Christ's *many brethren*, the sons of God! What a calling rests upon the firstfruits! How humbly we should seek God, how fervently we should cry out to the Lord, that His work be completed in us to bring this sonship ministry to pass in the earth! How we praise God for the in-part ministry of the church age — it has been glorious beyond words. But none can deny that the ministry of Jesus has not been fully duplicated

in all the power and glory of the Kingdom of God! Who among us can raise his hand to tell me that in him, or in his prayer group, or in his church, or in his movement, the miraculous sonship ministry of Jesus has been reproduced in all its fullness and power? Were we to make such a claim we would all be found liars. After two thousand years of the meticulous formation of the Christ body, creation *still* groans and travails, *waiting* for the *manifestation of the sons of God who shall deliver creation itself from the bondage of corruption.*

The greater ministry of the sons of God will allay every disturbing element; break the power of sin and death; put down every wrong; still every clamoring tongue; calm every raging sea; touch every inflamed sore of society; unite into harmony every quarrelsome crowd; heal every excruciating pain and suffering; pilot every tossed soul into the harbor of rest; banish all fear, malice, bigotry, and hatred in the melting fire of divine love; bind every demonic power; heal every sickness, disease, and torment; fill to the full every lack and void; impart life more abundant to all men everywhere; and give joy unspeakable and full of glory until the whole earth is full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and all creation pulsates with the scintillating life and light and love of God!

The Lord has absolute power over all nations and all mankind and is the architect of all the ages of time and the destiny of world history. The coming of the firstborn Son into the world was a mighty manifestation of omnipotent power. By the power of the Kingdom resident in Him the whole course of the nation of Israel and all the nations on earth was altered and the direction of multitudes of lives was changed as men and women repented of their sins and were brought under the sway of the Kingdom of God. By the power of His life the lives of men were completely transformed. All through the centuries since that time the seed of the Kingdom has been working in the earth, bringing forth a harvest of blessing and righteousness among men. The object of all this working and dealing is to bring forth in the earth a company of fully redeemed, transformed and matured sons of God who shall be so conformed into the express image of the firstborn Son that the manifestation of sonship shall be duplicated and fully reproduced in the power of the Kingdom. This, fully this, and nothing less than this, is the hope of all creation!

Jesus said He performed wonders "that ye may know that the Son of man hath **power on earth to forgive sins**" (**Mat. 9:6**). Whether Jesus told the palsied man, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," the result was the same. The word of the Son of God is the very same **creative word** by which the worlds were formed, therefore they are the words of omnipotence. There is nothing that word cannot do! All sin, sickness, fear, disorder, destructiveness, curse, disease, and death are included in His redemptive plan, and all equally respond to His mighty creative Word. Therefore it mattered not whether Jesus spoke to sin or to palsy, to leprosy or to winds and waves, to bread and fish or to the power of death and the grave, each obeyed His word, for it was the word of omnipotence and the power of the Kingdom.

[Paul Mueller](#) has related how they saw this mighty, all-inclusive power of God in redemption manifest to multitudes. He writes, "While ministering in West Africa several years ago, we could speak the healing power of God to the masses who would testify to being both saved and healed. If we prayed for them to be healed, the Lord saved them at the same time. If we prayed for them to be saved, they were also delivered from their diseases and bondages. This is the power of the Kingdom of God! This is the power that is resident in everyone of the elect and chosen ones! In the Lord's good time, He will speak a word of authority releasing that power within us that shall raise us up to the fullness of His life."

"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (**I Cor. 4:20**). That in no way belittles or depreciates the value of the *word* of the Kingdom. The power of God is in His word! But to have a word without power simply means that it is not the word of God, nor is it the word of the Kingdom. Jesus had a word with power, and that is why the people exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man!" Jesus' own disciples were exceedingly amazed and marveled when He commanded the wind and the waves of the sea and cried out, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" That was a word with power, and it was the word of the Kingdom and the power of the Kingdom. A word without power is impotent and bears no demonstration of the Kingdom of God. This is the power that God is now manifesting *in His people* to fulfill His wonderful purpose in redemption, which is to make man in His own image and likeness. The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. All the power of God is that power which is coming first to the elect to transform them fully into the image and glory of Christ. That is how it came in the days of the first Son. The power of God came first in the

life of Jesus to raise up within Him all the nature and glory and power of the Father, *before* showing it forth through Him to bless and restore men to God. We are experiencing the power of God within and God must first finish the work of perfecting and maturing His sons, before showing them forth to creation. The truth we should now know is that when God's sonship company is ready, fully developed, prepared and matured, this Kingdom power will flow out from them unrestrained and uninhibited — power to the full extent.

"For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but **we shall live in Him by the power of God**" (II Cor. 13:4).

"And what is **the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe**, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:19-21).

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, **according to the power which worketh in us**" (Eph. 3:20).

"**That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection**, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection out from amongst the dead" (Phil. 3:10-11),

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of **power**, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7).

"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, **who are kept by the power of God** through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:4-5).

"According as **His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness**, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us unto glory and virtue" (II Pet. 1:3).

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give **power over the nations**, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26).

All these wonderful passages and many more illustrate the great truth that it is the power of God that is now working mightily within the elect to *bring us to sonship*. Finally, the Lord's promise to the overcomer is to give him power over the nations. As precious and wonderful as that promise is, our goal is not to receive power over the nations, but to know Christ and the power of His resurrection until His life and victory are reproduced in us. To know the mighty working of His power within to transform us into the image of Christ and bring us to His full stature *is the way whereby we shall receive power over the nations*. He has given us the spirit of power! We are now being kept by His power, changed by His power, raised up by His power, and we are being given all those spiritual realities that pertain to life and godliness. That is the power that created all things and that upholds all things.

God's word of truth and power is His creative energy by which all His purpose shall be fulfilled in our lives. By His word of power, which is His truth, all carnality and unbelief shall be destroyed, and we shall enter by faith into the fullness of His life. We should always meditate up this vital truth, "**But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God**" (Jn. 1:12). Power to become sons! That is what the Spirit has revealed within us has been given unto us, and His sovereign power shall not fail to accomplish all that He has spoken concerning us. His omnipotent power shall indeed fulfill His purpose in our lives. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of **the power** may be of God, and not of us (II Cor. 4:7). What a treasure this power is within! Without it we would be helpless, hopeless, and undone. The treasure of Christ and the omnipotence of His word and working is within these earthen vessels, and though they be corrupt and of the earth now, these earthen vessels shall be subdued unto God, for He is able to change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His body of glory. There shall be a release of His life and the splendor of His life within us shall then radiate and emanate so that the glory of God shall be revealed to all flesh. This transforming power is as a treasure within us and it is beyond any value known to man. It is not our power, it is

His, but He has given it unto us. His power is the power of His fullness. Jesus Christ is declared to be "the Son of God **with power**, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). And now we are exhorted to "**be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might**" (Eph. 6:10).

The power and authority of the Kingdom of God supersedes all other existing authority. It is higher and greater than all human powers. It is greater than all spiritual powers. There are principalities and powers that have tremendous realms of authority that is why that kingdom is sometimes referred to as the "powers of darkness." But the authority of the Kingdom is far greater than all the powers of darkness, and that is why when Jesus commanded the evil spirits to go out of a man, they had to obey Him, for the authority Jesus had was greater than any authority of principalities, powers, spirits, or devils. The authority of the Kingdom is greater than all natural laws, and those who have received this authority can control the elements and abrogate any natural law by a power that is greater than all natural phenomena. That is why Jesus was able to walk on water and turn water into wine. The elements were subject to the power of His word. It is in this area that all miracles take place. A miracle is a *super-natural* happening. That means it is above and beyond the laws that control nature. A power is at work that transcends the discernable laws of the cosmos. Any miracle is just a matter of annulling the natural law by bringing into action a law and a power that is greater, that functions on a higher plane. Those who inherit the Kingdom will possess this kind of authority and power, for this is the authority and power of the Kingdom of God!

## POWER AND AUTHORITY

What is power? How can I get it? How can I use it? The deep prayer of my heart is that the Spirit of God shall reveal in the lives of God's elect the power and authority of the Christ within that will free us from all the fears, limitations and bondages that have plagued us in the past, leading us onward and upward into victory. Power, as used in the King James Version of the Bible, has two meanings. In its first meaning it is a word we use when we speak of someone having the strength to move a heavy object. For example, we think of a weight-lifter or an athlete as being powerful. A bomb, conventional or nuclear, has millions of times more power than the world's strongest superman. When this idea of power is used in the New Testament the Greek word is *dunamis*, from which we get our English words dynamite and dynamo. It speaks of God's power as explosive, His divine energy and ability to move and change all things.

I read the story of E. Stanley Jones, a great pastor of another generation, who visited an electrical generating plant — a dam. And on the tour he was shown incredible turbines which had the capacity for creating enormous power. And displayed above each turbine was the kilowatts that turbine was producing. As he walked through this plant, he noticed that there were a couple of turbines that weren't producing any power. So he asked his guide, "Tell me, why aren't these turbines producing power?" And the guide replied, "Well, there is no water flowing through them right now. We cut the water supply to those turbines. Only when the water flows through the turbines do they start of spin. And when the water flows and they spin, they create the electrical energy and the kilowatts that we need." E. Stanley Jones' eyes lit up as he realized what a perfect picture that was of the Spirit of God operating in and through our lives. When the Spirit of God flows through us we are given the energy and ability to live the life of God, accomplish the will of God and to do the works of God.

The other use of the word power is in terms of *authority*. The Greek word is *exousia*. It speaks of authority inherent in a role or office. Simply put, *dunamis* is the *ability* to do something, *exousia* is the *right* to do something. The President of the United States of America possesses in his office the authority needed, for instance, to defend the national and international interests of the United States. This authority is given him by the Constitution of our nation. The word that is understood in the church is "ordained." When a church ordains a person to teach or preach, they have empowered that person so that they have the right to act in that place. They are given authority to teach and preach and do the work of the ministry.

In the Old Testament, the king had a ring or a scepter. His seal was on his ring and at the end of his scepter. When the king gave someone his ring or his scepter, they had the king's permission to operate in his name. Anything the king's seal was affixed to, the king had given his approval to. His seal was his signature. Only the most trusted, those who had been proven to have the king's best interest at heart, were trusted with this seal.

Those trusted men were given authority to operate in the king's name. God has men He has entrusted to operate in His name. He has set His seal in their forehead. Those who receive the seal of the living God in their forehead have come into total submission to His will and His way.

It is important that we understand that *ability* or *force* does not always win out in the area of ruling and reigning. The privilege, the freedom, the *right*, the *authority of exousia* always wins out over the force of *dunamis*. Bob Torango has explained it so well in one of his writings. "The church system has preached mostly of two powers, God and the devil. If you were under bondage to something, it was either God's power or the devil's power. But there is only one true, supreme power and that is the power of God. All other powers were created *by Him and for Him* (Rom. 13:1). There are many, many delegated powers. Just as in earth we see many levels of authority and rule, so it is in heaven. '*For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers (exousia): all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist*' (Col. 1:16-17).

"As the above passage so wonderfully states it, the structure of the powers and authorities in both heaven and earth is diverse and complex, and each has been set in their place by God Almighty. He alone has given them their place in the heavens and earth, both good and evil, dark and light, death and life. All have been created by God and for God and indeed have their dominion by His divine will and purpose. God uses everything for His purpose. There is nothing that stands by its own design. All things are subject to the ultimate authority of the universe. God alone crowns dominions with invested authority and God alone strips them of that authority. They rise and fall at His command and nothing will deny Him of His will to be done. He is the potter and all else is clay. There would be no death if God did not create it and give it power. Neither would there be evil, or darkness, or an evil one, if God did not specifically design it and clothe it with an invested authority. All power that is invested power is limited, is subject to God's will and, in the ages to come, will be brought under His government and will do homage to His dominion. This final, conquering act is stated in the scriptures as *the times of restitution of all things* (Acts 3:19-21)" — end quote.

In **Luke 10:19** the Lord Jesus says, "**Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.**" It is true, the King James Version states that Christ has given us "power" to tread on serpents and scorpions, but the Greek word is *exousia* meaning **authority** or **jurisdiction**. When Jesus speaks of the "power" of the adversaries, however, He uses the word *dunamis* meaning **power**. Ah, all our adversaries have is POWER, but what the Lord gives us is AUTHORITY! The Lord gives us authority in order to deal with all the power of the enemy. We may illustrate this by an automobile moving along the road. Although with its engine, transmission and gasoline it is full of power, yet a traffic policeman has authority over it. When he blows his whistle and raises his hand the mighty engine must slow to a whisper and the car must stop. That is the difference between power and authority! Power is always subject to authority. Again, it is like an army. Although it has great power with its men, guns, tanks, airplanes, missiles and bombs, yet the general has the authority. When he gives an order, the army must obey. He has authority over the power. This reveals that authority is over power and can control power; therefore authority is greater than power!

The Son of God has given us *authority* over all the *power* of the adversary! As we understand these two terms, it becomes clear that authority without the power to act is worthless, and the power to act without authority is worthless. An army without a general has no direction, and a general without an army has no force. These two realities must be brought together within us if we are to have both God's power and God's authority operating in our lives. You cannot have one without the other. These two terms are used separately and together in the scriptures. An example of this is when Jesus dealt with the demon in the synagogue in Capernaum. "*And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! For with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out*" (Lk. 4:36). Jesus obtained both power and authority in His life. Jesus had the Father's authority within Himself, and He had the power to execute His authority. One without the other is ineffective. When the people witnessed the power and authority used together they were all amazed. The unclean spirit had power but no authority. When One with authority showed up, the spirit had to obey. His power was subject to authority. When people witness those who have obtained God's authority and power to act in a given situation, they stand amazed.

Authority depends entirely upon our standing, position and rank. With the position there is authority; without the position, there is no authority. A president-elect has no authority to run the government of the United States until he is sworn into office, until he has been installed into his position. A policeman without his uniform and not standing in the assigned post has no authority to direct traffic. A general taking leave from his duty has no authority to command an army. Likewise, our heavenly authority depends solely upon the reality of our calling and position in the order of God. All the authority of the traffic policeman mentioned earlier depends not only upon his standing at the assigned post, but also on his submitting to his superior. If he rebels against his superior, he will lose his official rights. In like manner we must not only be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, but we must also *walk in the Spirit*, being *led by the Spirit*, and *obedient to the will of the Father*. As many as are *led by the Spirit of God*, they are the *sons of God*. The ones who receive power and honor from the Father, are seated together with Christ in the heavenlies, and are submitted to HIS LORDSHIP, are then in the position to accomplish great and mighty things in the Kingdom of God! We have received a *measure* of power and authority in the church realm by the gifts and ministries of the Spirit. But there is yet to be an **official installation** of the sons of God into the realm of HIS FULLNESS, just as Jesus experienced at the river Jordan. When the Father witnesses from heaven before men, "These are my beloved *sons*, in whom *I am well pleased*," then shall the manifested sons of God go forth in the fullness of the power and authority of the Spirit to subdue the nations and deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. For this very thing the Father is preparing us in this hour!

People on various spiritual levels of development become related to one another, and to the Lord, in different ways. There is a time to submit to one another, to submit to elders, to submit to those in Christ who have been given rule over us. In a family there is a time when children must submit to their parents. We know, of course, that eventually these children grow up and in maturity, while they still honor and respect their parents, they are no longer subject to them. Today God has brought a people out of the existing church systems and is teaching them submission in the Kingdom of God. This submission is to THE KING! The firstborn Son of God was for thirty years subject to Joseph and Mary, to the law of Moses, and to the existing religious order in Israel. But when the hour of His manifestation arrived, He was drawn out of all those associations and became subject only to His heavenly Father. The Son of God was subject to no man! The Son of God was not subject to Moses! The Son of God was not subject to the High Priest! "I do only those things I see *my Father* do. I speak only those things I *hear of my Father*. I have received commandment of *my Father*."

Matthew 8:5-13 tells us of a centurion who came to ask the Lord to heal his servant's sickness. His faith was based on his knowledge of position, order, and rank. He said, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Since he himself was under authority, having authority only because he was under authority, he could command those under him. Therefore, he believed that the Lord needed only to exercise His authority and *give a word of command*, and the matter would be done. He really knew the relationship between order and authority and the power of one who spoke with authority! He knew that in order to reign, he had first to submit to the reigning. He knew that one can only rule *for* God after he has become ruled *by* God. In order to *be* the authority, he had first to *submit to* the authority. The authority for the Sons of God is THE FATHER. Christ has brought us out from under the authority of man and the systems of man in order to bring us to the Father! "No man cometh *unto the Father* but by me."

Precious friend of mine, if ever you hope to reign with Christ YOU MUST BECOME SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORITY OF GOD. And I'm not talking about becoming submitted to the *men of God*, but submitted unto *God*. I have no desire for people to come to El Paso, Texas to become "submitted" under my ministry, or to any other man or group of men. Certainly we must walk in all love, respect, and humility with our brethren, "submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5:21). But *sonship submission* is **submission to the Father through the Headship and Lordship of Jesus Christ**, for God has "put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). "And He is the Head of the body...who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things HE might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). How tragic that there are so many in this hour who are "**not holding the Head**, from whom all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

There are multitudes across the land today who loudly profess to have received the call to sonship who, rather than submitting themselves under the mighty hand of God, submit their walk with God into the hands of others who persuade them that they are more capable than themselves, or the Lord Jesus Christ, to watch for their souls. The land is filled with men calling themselves apostles, prophets, elders, shepherds, set men, and other titles, who desire to lord it over a flock or other men's lives, telling others what they can and cannot do, esteeming themselves spiritual enough to discern for everyone else what the will of the Lord is, proclaiming that they have been given *delegated authority* to rule over men's souls, though they bear no credentials other than their own word that they possess such authority. Certainly there are many precious ministries that HE has set in the body, humble examples of His word, His will, and His ways, with a flow of HIS LIFE, bearing the word of the Lord for this hour, a source of encouragement, confirmation, and strength unto all to whom they are sent, and we praise God for every one of them! And we gladly submit to the word of Christ in them! All such anointed ministries bear one signal mark of distinction: they do not draw followers after themselves, they *point all men to the Lord*; they do not ask you to blindly submit to them, but they present you unto *Him who is the Head over all things to the church*; they are not trying to build a movement or kingdom around their ministry, they are interested only in *building up the saints in the Kingdom of God*.

I speak the truth when I say that the greatest need in this hour is for the people of God, his elect, to truly KNOW THE LORD FOR THEMSELVES. Let all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship give themselves to *seeking God, walking with God, hearing from God, knowing God, and submitting unto Him in all His ways, His word, and His will*. Only then will God Himself be your Father and you will sup with Him and He with you. Ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and before you realize it you will find yourself digging deep into the storehouse of God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge and sitting with Him at His banqueting table. He will spread a table before you in the presence of your enemies, He will lead you through green pastures; He will cause you to rest beside still, cool streams; He will reveal to you fountains of living water flowing *from within*; and HE, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, will abide within you and will teach you all things and your cup will overflow with the unspeakable riches of His grace and the exceeding wonders of His glorious eternal Kingdom.

How many are submitted to men but not to God! If you would keep the position of standing, order, and rank in God's house of sons you must remember that **"Christ is a Son over His own house; whose house we are" (Heb. 3:6)**. He is the Head, He is the Great Shepherd, He is the Lord, He is the Firstborn among many brethren. I can assure you, my beloved, that to the degree that you **know Him** in intimacy of fellowship and vital union, submitting to Him in all things, you will know HIS AUTHORITY and be able to reign with Him and He will be able to reign through you in all things! It is not enough to know how God would have us think, act, and be as sons. We must know our position *in Christ* and live continually in the consciousness of His indwelling life, being in all things submitted unto God in the spirit, obeying His will as He reveals it to us. When we obey men our authority comes from men. Authority always comes from the one who has the authority over us. When we obey God the authority comes from God. And when we obey God — we **reign!**

Oh, how men thirst for power! They lie, cheat, and kill for power, but few ever attain it, and then only for a little season. Witness the great dictators of history! Of all the kings that have tried to conquer the whole world, Alexander the Great came the closest to it. But he died in a drunken stupor of a fever at the age of thirty-three, disillusioned that there were no more world's to conquer. Adolph Hitler shot himself to death in a bunker beneath the ruins of Berlin, and Benito Mussolini, after his people turned against him, died a violent death in the streets of Milan. They all die in defeat! For their purpose was not to do good, but to exercise their will over the lives of others. Power is not the result of superior talents, pleasing personalities, political clout, psychological tricks or natural cunning; neither is it the ability to brow-beat others into submission. Real power is God-given, but can only be received by relationship with Him. God-given power functions *by faith*. Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." And again He said, "Behold, I give you power over all the power of the enemy." And again, "Behold I give you authority over all devils and diseases." But God, knowing that some presumptuous men would seek to lay hold of this power, placed an infallible safeguard to the operation of faith by saying, "Faith worketh by love." Power works by faith, and faith works by love. What a law of the Kingdom that is! As you walk with Christ, you walk in the power of the Kingdom of God, for Christ *is* the power of God! As you walk in the Spirit, you are walking in the power of the Kingdom of God, for the Kingdom of God is power *in the Holy Ghost!* As you walk in love you are walking in the power of the Kingdom of God, for God *is love!* "For the kingdom of God is not *in word*, but in *power*," saith the

Lord. What does this indicate? It indicates that the Kingdom of God is vibrant. The Kingdom of God is action. The Kingdom of God is life. The Kingdom of God is transforming. The Kingdom of God is creative.

The Kingdom of God is the power of God manifest first in the personal lives of His elect, then in the world around us, unto all time and the ages of this world, then in the whole universe. The Kingdom is the power of God that changes everything in its reality, function, and influence, as determined by the Lord in His great and glorious program of creation, redemption, and the restitution of all things. The power of the Kingdom of God shall eventually change us from human to divine, from earthly to heavenly, and from mortal to immortal; then it shall in like manner change the world around us, including all the nations of men and the earth itself, and then it shall change the vast universe unto the endlessness of infinity. The elect of the Lord today is experiencing the power of the Kingdom of God within; it is the power of the Kingdom that is consuming everything within us that is foreign to the Kingdom of God. Christ is taking His throne and is now reigning in our lives! And He must continue to reign in us until He has put every enemy under His feet!

The Kingdom of God within us is the dominion and authority of God being formed in our lives. It is the omnipotent power of Christ manifest within us as He reigns on the throne of our lives to transform us into His image and stature. If we truly seek the fullness of His Kingdom with our whole heart, we shall experience the power of His Kingdom to purge us of all iniquities and present us faultless before His throne. We shall be presented before His throne as subjects of His Lordship who are qualified to ascend to His throne and sit and rule and reign with Him on His throne (Rev. 3:21). When His power has cleansed us of all that is foreign and contrary to His Kingdom, not only will He have taken His great power to reign *in* us, but He shall then proceed to rule and reign *through* us. He wisely withholds the fullness of the authority and power of His Kingdom until He has thoroughly changed us into His very own image and likeness.

The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of power, it is the Kingdom of God's power! By the power of God, which is the power of His Kingdom, God has quickened our spirits and made us alive unto Him and His spiritual world, He has delivered us out of the power of darkness, and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, He has raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. By His Kingdom power God is now saving our soul, transforming all of our emotions, will, thoughts, intents and desires. And He shall yet change these bodies of the carnal mind and the dust of the earth to become like unto His glorious body.

Jesus rose from the dead and appeared on earth in the sight of men in the body of His resurrection, which is the spiritual body of incorruption and immortality. With this clear and obvious demonstration of the power of the Kingdom of God, all doubts and fears were removed from the minds of His disciples. Now they knew that He was the King of kings! Now they knew the reality of His message of life and glory. In Him they saw the fullness of the power of the Kingdom! Again, in the end of this age, Christ's *many brethren* shall come to the fullness of His Kingdom. In them the Kingdom of God shall come with power, even the *power of His resurrection*. Then shall creation see the *manifestation of the sons of God*, just as Jesus' disciples saw Him manifested in all the glory and power of His resurrection. Christ was revealed to His disciples, and He is still revealed only to His disciples, His very own brethren. But the manifested sons of God shall be revealed *unto creation*. Christ in us is now *our* hope of glory, but Christ revealed in His many brethren is the hope of the groaning creation! Christ is now *our* life, but His life in His sons shall become the life of creation, delivering all men from the bondage of corruption, raising them up into a place in the liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:19-21).

Jesus personified the Kingdom of God! From the time of His birth until the time of His ascension He revealed within Himself all the powers of the Kingdom of God. In Him we see what the power of the Kingdom is, and what it can do, and what it *shall do* for all mankind. He is the firstfruits of the Kingdom! We are also becoming the firstfruits of His Kingdom by virtue of our calling **in Christ**. The power of the Kingdom of God was manifest in Jesus' virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His revealing the nature and purpose of the Father on earth, in the power of His word, in the signs and wonders and miracles He wrought, in His transfiguration on the mount. and in His resurrection from the dead. The glory that was manifest in His wonderful life, in His outward works of power, in the glory of His transfiguration, and in the power of His resurrection was the result of His inner condition. The power within Him was such that the brilliance of His Father's glory radiated from within and shined through His garments on the holy mount. The Amplified Bible states that Jesus "became resplendent with divine brightness." It is the same divine brightness that blinded Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus

and totally transformed and revolutionized his life! It is that same divine brightness that shall outshine from within us just as it did with Jesus, and that is the power of the Kingdom of God! If you think the Kingdom is merely establishing righteousness on the earth by divine force for a thousand years, you have completely missed **the power** of the Kingdom! Oh, yes, the Kingdom will bring righteousness to the nations — but **much, much more!** The fullness of the *power of His resurrection* is what we long to experience; it is that same power for which the whole creation groans and travails, by which *all things*, and *all men*, and *all creatures*, and *all worlds*, above and beneath, shall be given an entrance into the holy, righteous, divine, incorruptible, immortal, eternal SPIRITUAL WORLD OF GOD!

*This is the power of the Kingdom of God*

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 40**  
**THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY**

**DOMINION OF SOUL AND SPIRIT**

By His perfect life of love and His trust in His heavenly Father, Jesus demonstrated that He lived in the Kingdom of God. By His sonship ministry Jesus brought the power of the Kingdom of God into human experience as He forgave sins, cast out devils, healed the sick, raised the dead, and transformed men's lives. As the Son of God He had authority to share what belonged to Him with His chosen disciples. Thus, He shared with these the powers of the Kingdom of God. There was a day when the seventy followers whom He had sent out into the surrounding villages to preach and to heal returned to Him, with their faces eager and glowing and triumphant. "Master," they cried excitedly, "Master, it works — this new power that has been given to us — it really works! We have proved it. The darkest, foulest, most stubborn spirits are subject to us through Thy name!" Whereupon, says the Gospel writer, hearing that glad news, and understanding its deeper significance, which even they could not quite fathom, Jesus exclaimed, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven!" Obviously, Jesus was not talking about seeing the fall of a powerful archangel that supposedly fell from heaven away back before the foundations of the earth were laid or ever the stars twinkled in the night sky. Jesus did not mean that in some long ago He beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Ah, no!

He spoke of what His Father had revealed to Him about the Kingdom of God and the sonship ministry. He says that *in the Spirit* He had already seen Satan's overthrow, the power of darkness broken, destroyed, forever done for. Many years later on the barren slopes of Patmos John the Revelator in rapturous vision beheld the same scene. It was when he saw the manchild, the *manifested sons of God*, birthed and caught up to God and to His throne that "there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and *the kingdom of our God*, and the *power of His Christ*: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night" (Rev. 12:7-10).

May I point out here that John wrote of those things which "should be hereafter." John wasn't seeing the fall of Satan in the swirling mists of antiquity. It wasn't the fall of someone called Lucifer away back before the dawn of creation. No! Such theories are but carnal-minded delusions of men who have not the spirit of wisdom or revelation from God. Rather, John in the Spirit beheld the fall of Satan that could only come when **the manchild company is caught up to God and to His throne!** The truth is just this. It is only through the Kingdom ministry of *Jesus* and His *many brethren* that Satan falls as lightning from heaven. There is no other fall of Satan in all the pages of God's holy Book! When the devils were subject to Jesus and His disciples at the preaching of the Kingdom of God, Jesus saw the mystery of the Kingdom unfolding before His eyes. The ministry of the firstborn Son is the proto-type of the ministry of the son-company in preparation in this very hour! It is through the authority of *sonship ministry* that Satan is cast out of the heavens of his power. Only the sons of God can dethrone Satan! That is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

Wherever Jesus went, demons were subject to His very word. He engaged not in incantations or magical ritual as Jewish exorcists of the day were accustomed to do; but He spoke a word and the demons obeyed Him. It was not the exorcism of demons as such which amazed the people; it was the fact that He commanded the unclean spirits *with authority* and they obeyed His mere word that gave Jesus such great fame (Mk. 1:27-28).

After the Lord announced that the time for the beginning of the Kingdom had come, He went into the synagogue at Capernaum and began to teach. Immediately the people noticed something very different about this man. There was an authority in His teaching that the scribes did not have. Furthermore, a man in the

synagogue in which resided an unclean spirit began to cry out. The evil spirit could not withstand His presence nor the power of His authority. When Jesus rebuked the demon, commanding it to come out of the man, the demon cried out with a loud voice. When the people saw this happen before their eyes, they were greatly astonished. Never before had they seen an evil spirit instantly come out of anyone by the direct command of a man. None of their religious leaders, nor even the prophets, had such power. They questioned among themselves about what new doctrine or power this was.

It was true. A new power had come into operation among men. All through the Old Testament times, though the prophets had power to perform miracles and do exploits, not one person had cast a demon out of anyone by means of a direct command. What was this new power that was operating among men? Our Lord Jesus, Himself, explained it this way. He said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then *the Kingdom of God is come...*" (**Mat. 12:28**). This new authority which He was exercising over demons and over all things was the sign and proof that the Kingdom of God had begun. When He first began to preach, He had said that the Kingdom of God was drawing near, but now, after He had started to cast out demons by the power of His Word, He declared, "The Kingdom of God IS COME!" It was no longer future, but had become a present reality within and through Himself.

One of the most instructive passages of scripture in connection with the power of the Kingdom is found in Matthew's Gospel. "Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (**Mat. 12:22-28**).

This enlightening passage unfolds for us the deepest mystery of the power of Jesus Christ the Son of God, which is the power of the Kingdom of God. The Pharisees recognized in Jesus the supernatural power, but accused Him of being in league with Satan himself. Jesus replied that this was an absurd and impossible notion, for it would mean that Satan's house was divided against itself in civil strife — one part of Satan's rulers expelling the other part! The very idea was ludicrous. It would mean that Satan's kingdom was suffering an internal insurrection, a political *coup d'etat*! Very plainly Jesus set forth the eternal truth that *Satan does not cast out Satan*. Never forget that, my friend. That is the word of the King Himself! But He then hastily added these significant words, "And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whose power do your sons drive them out? For this reason they shall be your judges."

The above words reveal that there were those among the Pharisees themselves who were *exorcists*, and very naturally raised the question, Who were the Jews who were exorcists? Who were these sons of the religious leaders to whom Jesus was speaking who also cast out spirits? Both the Bible and the Jewish historian, Josephus, refer to the exorcists of the Jews. The ancient subject of exorcism has been popularized in our day by the block-buster movie, THE EXORCIST. Those who regard this current interest in exorcism as some weird phenomena may be surprised to learn about its prevalence in various cultures, including New Testament times. Exorcism was no new thing that began when Jesus came into the world. Rites of exorcism can be found in all cultures throughout all ages. The priest, the prophet, the magician, the exorcist — these have all existed as long as there has been religion, from the remotest dawn of history. All the ancient pagan religions of Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome had their exorcists. Among the Jews it was often priests who served as exorcists.

The apostle Paul on one momentous occasion met a group of these exorcists. Paul had arrived at Ephesus and a mighty move of God had broken out. Many signs and wonders were performed during the space of two years, so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them" (**Acts 19:10-12**). And then we read, from the Amplified Bible, "Then some of the traveling Jewish exorcists also undertook to call the

name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, I charge you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches! Seven sons of a certain Jewish priest named Sceva were doing this. But one evil spirit retorted, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you? Then the man in whom the evil spirit dwelt, leaped upon them, mastering them, and was so violent against them that they dashed out of that house in fear, stripped naked and wounded" (Acts 19:13-16).

These men made a trade, a profession of casting out demons. They had obviously heard about Paul and his great spiritual authority, perhaps had even witnessed it. They were trying to emulate him. These men were trying to imitate Paul and usurp his method by saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches." What happened? The evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but *who are you?*" Anyone could run into that reaction by trying to exercise spiritual authority without a deep relationship and union with Jesus! Now, these fellows were obviously not righteous either. They were professional exorcists. They were trying to usurp the power of the Kingdom of God without any union with the King of the Kingdom, Jesus. And they got what they deserved! The evil spirit in the man jumped on them and thoroughly beat them up, tearing their clothes off of them, until they fled in terror from the house naked and wounded. Of course, there was great fear in Ephesus as a result of this, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, because, in contrast, just the anointing carried in sweat rags from Paul caused demons to come out. And an entire group of professional exorcists couldn't cause it to happen!

It is now time for some deep, hard thinking. I ask you to follow me very closely with a reverent heart as I unfold a deep mystery of the Kingdom of God. There is a bewildering paradox in the things we have just read. On the one hand, Jesus says that Satan does not cast out Satan. On the other hand, Jesus says that there were men other than Himself who exorcised spirits. You see, Jesus did not deny that there were Jews who exorcised demons. And neither did He accuse *them* of being of the devil! But though He established that they were not of the devil, He also said that they were not moving in the Kingdom of God! They could not be exorcising spirits by the devil, because then Satan's kingdom would be divided. But only casting out devils by *the Spirit of God* could bring the Kingdom of God to men! This is a great mystery. You see, the Pharisees attributed Jesus' casting out of spirits to satanic power but accepted the validity of their own exorcisms. This, says Jesus, is self-contradictory! If He is casting out devils by the prince of devils, then Satan's house is in rebellion against itself. The devil does *not* cast out the devil! Now let us *understand!* There were Jews who cast out devils. Jesus Himself affirmed that they did. "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do *your children cast them out?*" Furthermore, Jesus by His own argument with the Pharisees forever established, beyond any doubt, that the Jewish exorcists did not cast out devils by satanic power, because the devil *doesn't* cast out the devil — not through Jesus, and not through anybody else! Nothing can be more certain than that. And nothing can be *clearer!*

The question follows — who were these exorcists of the Jews? By what power *did* they cast out spirits? And in what way was Jesus' ministry greater than theirs? First of all, there was a distinct difference between Jewish exorcisms and those by Jesus. It was not merely the fact of Jesus' ability to cast out demons that impressed the Pharisees: it was the manner in which He did it. **With a single command He cast out spirits!** They were helpless before His word. Luke records Jesus' words in this way, "But if I with the *finger of God* cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." What does the "finger" of God indicate? What do you convey when you take your finger and shake it in your child's face and say, "You had better do what I told you — NOW!" You are about to force the issue, aren't you? And the child understands that right well! He knows that while he may not have respected your authority, you are now ready to apply your force. You who are parents know that sometimes just your physical strength, or the power of your presence, or the parental authority that you have, is not enough to evoke the desired response. It takes the *finger of Daddy* in their face. "If I cast out devils with the finger of God, then without doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you — the omnipotent, irresistible **power of the Kingdom is here!** I am forcing the issue! You *will* obey! There is now no alternative!" The power of the Kingdom in Jesus brought the force of God against the devils, against sin, against sickness, disease and infirmity, against death, against the laws of nature, against the bigotry of man, against the delusions of religion — He forced the issue wherever He went. That was the ministry of Jesus in every realm. That is the glory of sonship. That is the power of the Kingdom. The sons of God are destined to demonstrate in all its fullness the power of the Kingdom of God!

As I have already pointed out, it was not casting out devils itself, but the awesome *authority* of Jesus' ministry, that amazed the Jews. In contrast to this, Jewish exorcism, like all the religious exorcisms of the world, involved time-honored methods and techniques, the exercise of magical practices, repetitive phrases, vociferous commands, lengthy incantations and prayers, and the expenditure of a great deal of time and energy in unending hours of warfare before the demon succumbed and finally made his departure. The "exorcists" indeed were able to exorcise demons by their elaborate and sophisticated *methods*, but Christ cast out demons through the **power of the Spirit of God**. Only when devils were cast out by the power of the Holy Spirit was it a **manifestation of the Kingdom of God**. "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come unto you." Jesus' power was the power of the Kingdom! The Jewish exorcists' power was *something else* — it was not Satan's power, but neither was it the power of God! They were merely professional exorcists. What, then, was it?

There is a world of difference between the two. Let me share an example I have read of a modern-day professional exorcism in the Catholic church. A woman who could not be helped by her psychiatrist was turned over to the priests of her church. She had dreadful spells, thinking of the most blasphemous things to do. She had been a pious woman. Now she feared that she would become completely insane. Before getting involved, the church made certain that the woman was indeed possessed. Then a priest with patience and courage was assigned the task of exorcising the evil that had taken possession of the woman. Precautions were taken to keep the affair secret so that people would not talk scandalously about her.

The woman was taken to a convent in the countryside, a peaceful place. Trouble began at once when the car, which was being driven by a priest, almost refused to run. At the convent, the woman's supper was sprinkled with holy water and taken to her. She would not eat, but started purring like a cat. She was then given unblest food to insure that she would not hurl the dishes through the window. That the demon would put up a stiff fight to keep his possession of the woman was not debated in the least. She was placed on an iron bed and held firmly by several strong nuns. When the priest made the sign of the cross over her, she sprang from the bed, flew across the room, and hung on to the wall in a mysterious fashion. It took all the strength that the nuns could exert to pull her down and replace her on the bed.

As prayers continued, dreadful howlings were heard, all kinds of loud animal noises issued from the woman's mouth so that the whole countryside heard and came running. Her body was unbelievably distorted; she went into convulsive fits and vomited all kinds of foul messes, although she had taken nothing but water and a little milk for a couple of weeks. The devil was forced to speak during the exorcistic rituals. Through this means, the exorcist discovered that many demons were in possession of the woman. Often the spirits howled. Many voices were heard — some suffering, others complaining. This went on for days. It was also discovered that the devils had entered the woman when she was but fourteen years of age, and her own father had cursed her. He was among the demons. He admitted now that he tried to force her into an incestuous relationship. His life had been debased and coarse and worthless. Then a woman demon appeared and tried to grab the Host which was on the breast of the priest.

All the prayers, all the evoking of the Trinity were repeated, but the demons kept howling, shouted obscenities, and spitted out foul matter. The priests and the nuns had to take turns going for fresh air in order to avoid collapse. This went on for days, and everyone suffered from the ugliness of the action. From early morning until late at night for twenty-three days, the exorcism went on. The possessed woman was given no solid food, but she continued to vomit excessively. At one time, she appeared to be on the brink of death, but the exorcist said she would not die. Then suddenly, after everyone was exhausted, the demons were driven out of the woman's body.

## **DOMINION OF SOUL AND SPIRIT**

Why does such "exorcism" work, although it demands much time, persistence, perseverance, and the exertion of great courage and energy? I will now tell you how it works. When Jesus cast out devils, He did so by the Spirit of God — by the force of the personality and authority of the Father who dwelt in Him. When "exorcists" exorcise spirits, they do so by the force of the personality of the human soul. The will and strength of the human soul is pitted against the will and strength of the demon personality. Do demons have power? Certainly

they do! And those who suppose that demons are only a figment of the imagination or a product of the carnal mind, have obviously never met a demon. But the power of demons *is limited*. They are not omnipotent! Many of them are, in fact, quite weak personalities, just as some men in the flesh are strong and powerful while others are frail and weak. There is working in creation a divine law giving *every creature* in the universe its own unique sphere of influence and dynamic of personality. While some demons are strong, some men also have very strong wills and powerful energy flows. I will explain more about this later on.

In contrast to the personalities of demonic spirits, let us consider the greatness of *man*, of Adam the *living soul*. It was after the vastnesses of the heavens and the wonders of the earth had come forth from the hands of Omnipotence that the almighty Creator proclaimed the awesome fiat: "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have DOMINION" (Gen. 1:26). You see, the dominion over creation was given to man. Man was made a living soul, and this man was ordained by God to rule not only the earth, but the whole vast universe with its billions of galaxies and trillions of stars, suns, planets and moons. David mentions this fact in the eighth Psalm. "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what *is man!* that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou has made Him a little lower than God (Elohim), and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet."

"Thou has put ALL THINGS under his (man's) feet." That includes the earth, the moon, the stars, and all the heavens which the Psalmist enumerates as "the works of Thy fingers" which are all placed under man. And the phrase, "under his feet," is a Hebrew term which means that man was to have authority over all His creation. He was to rule it all, govern it all, be head of it all. God made man for that intent and purpose! In the New Testament the idea is expressed even more emphatically: "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What *is man*, that Thou art mindful of him...thou madest him a little lower than God; Thou crownest him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put *all* in subjection under him, He left NOTHING that is *not* put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him" (Heb. 6:2-8). There is holy wonder to these words that is almost beyond our understanding. Nothing has been left outside of the dominion of man. Weymouth puts it this way, "Thou hast put everything in subjection under his feet. For this subjecting of *the universe* to man implies leaving nothing that is not subject to him. But we do not yet see the universe subject to him." The whole cosmos really belongs to mankind! It is his residence, it is his dominion, his sphere of authority, and everything everywhere is to be put under his control.

The man in God's image and likeness has a divine and royal destiny to exercise authority and dominion in this world and throughout the unbounded heavens. He is to be Head of it all! All that happens in the cosmos must take place through man. Forget aliens! Forget angels! Forget devils! God created all things and then man in His image and likeness, as the connecting link between God and His creation, that through man in His image and likeness the invisible God might be *seen* and *touched* and *known* by all creatures in all worlds. The face of God would be revealed for all creation to behold, in the face of man, the image and likeness of God. The likeness of God would be made known to the entire universe in and by *man*. The glory, love, grace, goodness, wisdom, knowledge, and power of God would be exercised toward every creature and world and order throughout the vastnesses of infinity through the man in the image and likeness of God!

Now follows a great mystery, which can only be understood by the mind of the Spirit. The magnificent purpose burning in the heart of God was proclaimed in these significant words uttered by the Lord God on the sixth creative day. "Let us make man in our image...and LET THEM HAVE DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26). Let us now notice just what truth is stated here. In this *shadowy type* we behold a vivid portrait of the nature and scope of the dominion given to Adam the living soul — he was to be, first, the ruler of things **beneath**, the lowest realms of the bottomless, typified by the fish swarming in the depths of the sea, and the creeping things. Next, the things upon the **earth**, typified by the cattle, and all the earth. And lastly, the things of the **heavens also**, typified by the fowl of the air.

We can surely see from this that the dominion given to Adam was not only over visible and tangible things, but also over invisible realms of principalities and powers of the spirit world. How great was this man! How

awesome his power! How sublime his authority! How vast his dominion! And should any reader of these lines doubt that this is the meaning of the allegory in the first chapter of Genesis, let him consider that our Lord Jesus Christ is the **last Adam**, the man who *is* the image and likeness of God, and this is precisely the authority and dominion committed unto Him! "And what is the exceeding greatness of His power...when He raised Him (Jesus) from the dead, and set Him *at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put ALL THINGS under His feet!*" (Col. 1:19-22). "And ye are complete in Him, **WHICH IS THE HEAD OF ALL PRINCIPALITY AND POWER**" (Col. 2:10).

[George Hawtin](#) has given this beautiful description of the glory of man. "I am firmly convinced that their beautiful, light, ethereal forms were vibrant with the life of God, that they far more resembled the glorious body Jesus manifested at the transfiguration, as recorded in Matthew 16, then they were like the bodies of humiliation in which we are now clothed and in which we painfully dwell. They knew no pain nor weariness; no physical distresses nor illnesses alarmed them. They knew nothing of hunger nor thirst nor the multiplied curses that now beset us on every hand. They were glorious creatures, illustrious in their appearance, magnificent in their bearing, respected and admired by all creatures. About them an aura shone. They ruled not through fear, but through the love of God, who was in them. They knew no fear nor terror in themselves and they imposed no dread on others. The light of God's glory filled their countenances, making them distinct from all other creatures. They knew no lusts, nor were they ravished by carnal desires. Their delight was in their Most High creator and maker. They literally walked with Him and communed with Him in the cool of the day. They knew no grievous toil nor salty sweat. Every labor was a joy and every task a glory. In the Father they lived and moved and had their being. His joy was their constant strength and His love their everlasting comfort.

"Then came the hour of transgression. Through its predestined sorrow the man with his wife and all creation about him became subject to the nightmarish alarm of the fall. Fear, timidity, anxiety, apprehension and misgiving overshadowed them like a dark cloud, filling their hearts with disquietude, despondency and despair. Fear, temerity and remorse hourly beset them. To their dismay the animals and birds, which before had trusted them implicitly, now eyed them with suspicion, fear and mistrust, for all had changed because of the blighting curse that had fallen like a convulsion upon them. Then to add trepidation to their heart-breaking sorrow, they stood aghast at the sight of their own bodies, for those bodies once radiant with life and glory were now *bodies of humiliation*, corruption and death, fitted for an existence of vanity and futility which was now to be endured by them and all creation until the blessed Redeemer should come and restore all things. The Lord, whose presence they had always loved and anticipated with joy, now was a dread to their very beings, so they hid themselves from His life-giving presence among the trees of the garden" — end quote.

When sin entered the world, Adam's power was proved to be a terrible reality, for through him the earth, with the whole race of man, and all things, was brought under the curse of sin and death. When he fell his kingdom fell with him! When he came under the dominion of sin and death he took all that he ruled with him. When Adam fell the magnitude of the damage to his race and all the earth is beyond our imagination. At the fall the awesome powers which man was given over the earth, over the universe, and over all spiritual realms, was greatly diminished. Yet, it does not mean that man now has no such power, for man still has a measure of dominion over nature and all things earthly; by soulish wisdom he is able to harness the energy of the flowing rivers, the rays of the sun, cosmic waves, electricity, and even the atom. Man can cure diseases and invent wonderful technologies. He flies through the air faster than sound and sends satellites and probes out into the darkness of space. And now by this same understanding, knowledge, authority and power he is reaching out to extend his influence and rule to worlds beyond! The power in Adam's soul was not lost absolutely — it was merely weakened, debilitated, impaired, diminished and tainted by sin's influence and the dread power of death. We must keep this one fact in mind — while Adam's dominion was greatly diminished through the fall, it was *not completely destroyed or obliterated*. Man is still the master of the earth! Although the elements threaten him, the terrors of the deep intimidate him, the roar of the lion frightens him, sickness and disease weaken him, and death finally conquers him, *man still possesses* wisdom, understanding, ingenuity, strength, ability, authority and dominion **above all the forces of nature and every creature**.

The power, which Adam had in the beginning, was tremendous beyond the finite comprehension of men who are today dissipated and weakened by six millenniums of sin and death. Adam in his bright beginning bore the

image and likeness of God without the sad effects of the fall and banishment from the Paradise of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The astonishing power of that man in the image of God was present in his soul, for the first man Adam was *made a living soul* (Gen. 2:7; I Cor. 15:45). Adam the living soul possessed awesome abilities, authority and dominion, though in actuality what he had was not to be compared to the power of the last Adam, Christ, the *quickenning Spirit*. Before his fall, Adam was able to freely and fully exercise this ability, since it was embodied in his soul.

Watchman Nee has pointed out in one of his writings that this power of Adam has become a "latent" force in his descendants. It has turned to become a kind of "hidden" power and when it is used at all, it is under the curse of sin and death, and is filtered through the flesh — the carnal mind. It is not a spiritual or divine power at all, for it is not by the Holy Ghost. It is resident in the natural man and is the *soul power* of Adam. Today in each and every person who lives on earth, from the pauper to the prince, lies this ancient and original Adamic power. This power is not in man's spirit, for the power of the spirit is the power of the **last man Adam — Christ the quickening Spirit!** The power in man today is the power of the **first man Adam — the living soul.** The power of the natural man is *soulish*. The power of the spiritual man is *spiritual*. It is also possible for a spiritual man to use his soul power, but it is impossible for a soulish man to use his spirit power.

All the ancient pagan religions, and most modern ones as well, have in their respective ways practiced the release of man's soul power. Not having been quickened by the Holy Spirit of God, in man's ignorance and spiritual darkness, he *mistakes* this soul power for spiritual power. Anything that transcends the biological functions of the body appears to the natural man to be "spiritual." Any display of apparent miraculous power to discern the presence of invisible entities, to "know" beyond acquired knowledge, to perform physical healings and outward miracles, to prophesy and predict the future, or to cast out devils — all these are deemed to be *spiritual*. Many miraculous things do happen which we cannot simply dismiss as illusion, superstition, or demonic activity. We are so prone to blame everything we can't understand on either **God** or the **devil!**

Can you not see, my friend, that there are *three* entities in our world, not *two* — God, *man*, and Satan. There are therefore three sources of power! There is *demonic* power, *soulish* power, and *spiritual* (divine) power. Lest we should lose the thread of our thought, let me remind you that Satan cannot cast out Satan, for, as our Lord has clearly taught us, his house would be divided against itself, existing in a state of anarchy. But the soulish power of *man* is able to exorcise spirits, not with the authority and effectiveness of the power of the Spirit, but is able to do this and many other marvelous things. This is plainly what Jesus taught. The many miraculous occurrences which modern parapsychologists, hypnotists, psychics, fortune tellers, mediums, and faith healers demonstrate in no way attest to their spiritual character or indicate spiritual life. They merely prove the awesome power of the *soul* which may be released by meditation and other means of mental and soulish development.

It is a fact that psychologists declare that within man is a tremendous array of power: the power of self-control, creative power, reconstructive power, the power of faith, and the power of energy transference. Let me explain the principle of this soul power. There is working in all creation what may be called "biological energy" — an energetic, influencing and impacting life-force that circulates within all living things. People are like magnets, they have a magnetic or energy field that extends beyond their skin into space. It is the emanation of the energetic life-force of the soul. A person's energy field swirls about and actually projects out toward other persons and things with which they interact. It can be projected, for instance, into plants causing the plants to either flourish or wither, depending upon whether the energy is positive or negative. This is why certain people appear to have a "green thumb" and by loving and talking to their plants can be successful in raising almost anything. Every person gives forth vibrations that can not only be felt by people, but which can be seen by animals. This explains why some people are introverts, others extroverts. Extroverts, for example, give off emanations that impact the emotions and thought patterns of people around them. They give off warm color shadows that can be seen by animals. Some people, especially those with strong psychic powers, can also see these auras of light.

Matter is composed of energy, and energy is never destroyed. Scientists have demonstrated in the laboratory the increase of the voltage of an electric current to atom-smashing velocity. Certain elements, when they are bombarded with this electrical force, can be transformed into other elements. The energy in man can, in a

similar way, be focused to produce seemingly "supernatural" phenomena. By the very power of mental concentration some persons can bend spoons, cause objects to rise and float through the air or make material objects disappear. Karate masters talk about an underlying Chi energy responsible for their seemingly impossible stunts of breaking bricks with their hands and of being able to sit in one place unmoved with several men trying to push them over. This energy is often drawn upon for physical healing and emotional well being through visualization techniques, meditation, etc. Psychic healers have learned how to intensify and regulate their own energy fields, so they can effect, in a positive way, the energy fields of their patients. Patients suffering from illness or addictions often have imbalances in their electromagnetic fields. These kind of healings take place through the transference of this soulful energy from one person (in whom it is highly developed) to another.

There is nothing "spiritual" about these vibrations of psychic power! They are no more spiritual than a chiropractic adjustment, acupuncture, aromatherapy, massage, visualization, or the treatments of an herbalist. It is both biological and soulful. It is the innate mechanics of Adam's life, of the natural man, and of the carnal mind. It is not by any means "supernatural." I do not say that we should seek it or follow after it, for man's soul power is defective and limited in the fall of man. And I speak the truth when I tell you that Satan often *uses* man's ignorance for his own ends, enticing him to develop his soul, deceptively convincing him that the power manifested is *of the Spirit*. In the very moment this takes place a *false religion is born* in which Satan is enthroned! He deceives man by making him believe that what is soulful is spiritual, that the fallen dominion of Adam is the very power of God, that the power of man's soul is in fact the power of the *divine spirit* within man, causing man to feel that he is rich in God and filled with life when in reality he has experienced *nothing of God and abides in death*. The adversary's strategy is to keep man from Life!

To rob man of life and thereby bring man under his dominion was the serpent's crafty tactic in that long ago Eden, and it should be obvious to every spiritual mind that he has not changed his method one iota from that tragic day to this present hour. This, beloved, is the dark deception in all New Age, Metaphysical, and Mind-Science religions! The adversary is now engaging this inherent soul power in man to serve as a *substitute* for the power of the Kingdom of God! He aims at substituting Christ's blood-bought salvation and the regenerating power of Christ within with the *false Christ* of old Adam's psychic force. The greatest protection for the children of God is in knowing the *difference* between *soul* and *spirit*. Soul force versus Spirit power is the battle ground today! The sons of God, by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit within, are marching to Zion! Through them shall be revealed the fullness of the **power of the Kingdom of God!**

None of the works of the soul have anything whatever to do with the Kingdom of God! Only those conversions, deliverances, healings, exorcisms, miracles, signs, wonders, discernments, teachings, experiences, visions, and prophecies that are wrought by God in the power of the Holy Spirit, through redeemed children of God, pertain to the Kingdom of God! "If I by *the Spirit of God* cast out devils, **then** is the Kingdom of God come unto you." All other apparent supernatural phenomena is soulful and will rob you of eternal reality, will rob you of the mind of Christ, the image of God, divine wisdom, heavenly glory, spiritual understanding, Holy Ghost power, incorruptible life and immortality — SONSHIP! God in His Kingdom never works with man's soul power, for it is unusable to Him. God works in the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit in our renewed spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Psychics and all who work on the soulful plane are able to use their powers *without being cleansed by the blood, without being born of the Spirit, and without being transformed in Christ Jesus*. Many are born with psychic abilities. That should be sufficient evidence for every child of God to clearly understand that such power is not the power of the Kingdom! God is calling His elect today to become developed in the authority, power and dominion of the KINGDOM OF THE SPIRIT — not the kingdom of the soul! The Kingdom of the Spirit is within Jesus Christ, the life-giving Spirit; the kingdom of the soul is within Adam, the living soul.

I would add to this thought by quoting some pertinent words from Watchman Nee. "**The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit' (I Cor. 15:45)**. Paul says here that the first Adam became a living soul. The soul is alive. It has its life, therefore it enables man to do all sorts of things. This refers to the position which Adam had. Then the apostle continues with: 'The last Adam became a *life-giving* spirit.' This word is worthy of close attention; it is most precious and significant. The difference in effects between the operations of the spirit (Christ) and the soul (Adam) is clearly given right here. The soul is itself

alive and has life within itself. The spirit, however, is able to *give life to others and cause them to live*. The soul is itself living, yet it cannot make others live. Only the spirit is capable of quickening people into life. The soul, no matter how strong it is, cannot impart life to others. **'It is the spirit,' says the Lord, 'that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing' (Jn. 6:63).**

"We must distinguish between these two operations very clearly, for this is of the utmost importance. None can work satisfactorily if he is confused on this point. Let me repeat: the soul is itself truly alive, but it cannot make others live. The spirit, on the other hand, is not only itself living but in addition gives life to others. This is why I state with such emphasis that we must lay down our soul power. All that is of the soul is of no avail. We are not quarreling over terminologies, for this is too great a principle. Although the soul is alive, it has no way to make others live. Hence in helping people, we should aim at the depth of their beings instead of merely aiding their minds. We must not work according to psychic force, since it can neither save nor profit anyone. How very careful we need to be! How we must deny whatever comes out of the soul! For it not only cannot help people, it also hinders God's work. It offends God as well as deprives Him of His glory. Many miraculous phenomena are performed by soul force instead of by God. How can they expect good and lasting results if they substitute for the power of God their own natural abilities?" — end quote.

With this thought in mind let us consider the following self-evident truth. Though weakened and diminished through the fall, there is yet inherent in the *soul of man* a residue of the awesome and expansive dominion that was given him in that long ago beginning. Man still retains a measure of the authority and power committed to him at the moment he came from the bosom of God. He came out of Eden cursed, marred and broken, but *not destroyed*. Man is still the wisest, the most glorious, and the most powerful creature of all God's vast physical creation! The light of God has fled from man's *spirit*, thrusting him into the quagmire of spiritual darkness, but deep within *man's soul* there remains a magnetism, an energy flow, a force of personality, a realm of dominion and a sphere of authority. Even the demons and spirits that indiscriminately roam earth's atmosphere recognize who man *really is*. And furthermore, a living man, with the wholeness of his being, if he understands the deep mystery of it, is greater than any disembodied spirit! Therefore, when the human soul engages in battle with a demonic personality, if persistent, tenacious, and strong-willed enough, he can progressively wear down and eventually overcome the most vicious, wicked, and vile of the spirits of darkness. THAT, precious friend of mine, **IS EXORCISM!** Exorcism is naught but the *soulish authority* of man *used in warfare* with spirit personalities. The soul of a good man, converted or not, has altogether as much authority on this earth as any dark spirit entity, especially the weaker ones.

Now, can you not see what Jesus meant when He revealed that the Jewish exorcists cast out demons, and it was **not** by the power of Satan — but neither was it by the Spirit of God! This wonderful Christ explained the divine order of the Kingdom of Heaven in these illuminating words, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, the Kingdom of God is come upon you!" Ah, casting out devils is not a manifestation of the Kingdom, but casting out devils **by the Spirit of God** is the demonstration of the power of the Kingdom of God! The exorcists cast out devils neither by the Spirit of God nor by the spirit of Satan. Oh, the wonder of it! This is a great mystery that few Christians in the whole world, and practically *no preachers*, have understood! Devils can be cast out by man, by the dominion within man's *soul*. That is precisely how all the exorcists of all the ages from Adam to this present day have exorcised spirits — through the time-honored methods and techniques cunningly and artfully invented and meticulously developed by *soulish religion*! It is written in the book of Jasher (referred to in Joshua and Second Samuel) how that in the days of Adam "Enosh lived ninety years and he begat Cainan; and Cainan grew up and he was forty years old, and he became wise and had knowledge and skill in all (human, earthly) wisdom, and he reigned over all the sons of men, and he led the sons of men to wisdom and knowledge; for Cainan was a very wise man and had understanding in all wisdom, and **with his wisdom he ruled over spirits and demons" (Jasher 2:10-11).**

As we read these words of truth, surely we must realize the true level of much of what is promoted and touted today as "deliverance ministry." Did you ever notice the contrast between so-called deliverance ministry today and the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles? There are clear and obvious marks that distinguish between what I prefer to term "exorcism" and the casting out of devils by the Spirit of God. There is indeed such a thing as demon possession. To deny this is to wickedly repudiate the ministry of the firstborn Son of God. I do not believe, however, that most of what is *called* demon possession today is really demon

possession at all. For the most part it is merely the *works of the flesh*. If you have ever seen real demon possession you know that it is far different than what the so-called "deliverance ministry" is calling possession today. They call such *fleshly* activities as fear, lust, rejection, cursing, lying, criticism, gossip, sexual fantasy, masturbation, adultery, incest, harlotry, nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, gluttony, hatred, envy, and a hundred more — *demons*! There is *no place* in the New Testament where the saints of God are exhorted to get "deliverance" from such demons. I tell you, my beloved, it's *not* in the Book! Rather, we are exhorted to **"Put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9)**, to **"Mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13)**, to **"Mortify your members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3:5)**, and **"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16)**. Read all these passages, and many more, and it is plain to see that the works of the flesh are exactly and precisely the very things the deliverance preachers are *calling* — DEVILS! And the solution the Holy Ghost gives is not in "casting them out" but in mortifying them, or putting them to death *by walking in the Spirit!*

It is my conviction that nearly all of the casting out of demons I have witnessed during my years of walking in the move of the Spirit of God has been deceptive. The vast majority of this is mere *showmanship*, *theatrics* to impress congregations of people. This has especially been true in the great healing and deliverance crusades. Sometimes the preacher will say, "There he goes, for I saw him leave!" and the audience is duly impressed. Also, the people are psychologically prepared and conditioned to *expect* particular manifestations and to act in certain ways. Many of the so-called demonic manifestations are merely clever, psychologically-induced fleshly contortions, mesmerism, and mania.

One of the foremost deliverance ministries has given the following instructions concerning the methods of casting out demons. "As one of the ministers begins to command the specific demons to go in the name of Jesus, the others in the room will be engaged in prayer, praise, singing and/or reading of scripture. This should generally be done in subdued voices. In the early stages of my deliverance ministry I would use up my voice in a few hours. I usually speak to the demons in this manner: 'Demons, I know that you are there. I know of your presence and your evil works. I tell you that you have no right to stay in this person. This person belongs to Jesus Christ.' The one being delivered should cooperate in the following ways: He should refrain from praise, prayer and speaking in tongues. There are ways of taking in the Holy Spirit, and the mouth and breath must be left free for the departure of the evil spirits. He should be encouraged to enter into the battle with his will. He can address the spirits himself and let the demons know that he is determined that they leave. Next, the person being delivered should begin to expel his breath forcefully a few times. Since the spirits come out through the breath, this will help to expel them. Or, he can force a few healthy coughs. Ordinarily this is enough to 'prime the pump' and the demons will begin to move out readily with the manifestation being sustained without conscious effort. The person may force a cough and the demons begin to yawn themselves out. Keep commanding the demons until you get results. When evil spirits depart we normally expect some sort of manifestation through the mouth or nose. Undoubtedly the most common manifestation is coughing. The cough may be dry but is often accompanied by the bringing up of phlegm. Similar material may be brought up through vomiting, drooling, spitting or foaming. Other manifestations through the mouth include crying, screaming, sighing, roaring, belching and yawning. Air may be blown through the nose. Persons who yawn or sigh out their demons, are just as delivered as those who have the more violent manifestations" — end quote.

This is definitely NOT how the firstborn Son of God cast out devils! There was no prayer, praise, sentimental background music, singing, or reading of scripture. There were no exhortations to the possessed about how they should "cooperate" for their deliverance. They were not told to breathe a certain way or not to breathe. They were not instructed to cough or yawn to aid the demons in leaving. In fact, this preacher states that the most common manifestation is coughing — the very one that is *never* mentioned in scripture! If you *induce* someone into a coughing fit, naturally they are going to cough up globs of phlegm, drool, spit, and eventually foam! You don't need to be casting out devils to get that physiological response! It makes a very entertaining show, but it doesn't mean devils have really been cast out. I do not hesitate to tell you that all such methods are, one and all, unscriptural, extra-biblical, soulish, crafty human psychological manipulations by which the human personality (soul) engages in cat and mouse games with spirits — either real or imagined. Even if the name of Jesus is used, it is still *soul power* and not the power of the Kingdom!

When Jesus demonstrated the Kingdom He spoke with absolute authority. While following the Master through the Gospels a marvelous revelation is unveiled. Not once did Satan or evil spirits persistently resist Him. They challenged and questioned Him, but they did not carry on a prolonged battle. Not one of His deliverances was

progressive with some deliverance this session and a little more the next time. Not once did He scream at devils; not once did He groan over them; not once did He use tongues or any other spiritual gift to overcome them; He commanded and they obeyed! They recognized His **absolute authority!** When Jesus spoke a word to the devils He had no need to "create an atmosphere" — HE HIMSELF **WAS** THE ATMOSPHERE! He sent forth His word and at the power of that word the spirits instantly obeyed! Jesus delivered the truly demon possessed from the evil spirits with infinitely greater authority and dispatch that we are seeing today in the Pentecostal and Charismatic circles. It was because He came in the **POWER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**, and not in the weakened, corrupted, soulish dominion of Adam!

Some time ago a precious friend and brother in the Lord wrote the following: "I get a little paper in the mail and they write about what they call a deliverance ministry. It seems to be all about demons, how to recognize them, how to find out what their names are, and how to cast them out. They talk about spirits of pride, spirits of envy, spirits of anger, and what have you. In the last paper they told of a little boy who had got delivered from a spirit of tantrums. I hope the deliverance was permanent; but I have seen many children delivered from this kind of a spirit by a trip to the woodshed, where a few applications of the board of education to the seat of knowledge took care of that spirit in a hurry. I don't know whether they got their authority from the Lord for this type of ministry or not, the Lord knoweth. I am not the judge in these matters, but I do know that Jesus said that in that day *many*, not a few, but many would say unto Him, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name have done many wonderful works, but He answered them and said, Depart from me, I never *knew you*, ye that work iniquity. He didn't know them, and He hadn't sent them nor given them that authority from Himself to do those things; nevertheless *they were able to do them*. By their profession to be acting by His authority they are usurpers of the Kingdom authority."

Let me show you some further distinguishing marks between "exorcism" and casting out devils by the Spirit of God. If it takes hours, it is exorcism; if the spirits instantly obey the word of command, it is the power of the Kingdom of God! If there is an atmosphere created with long prayers, singing, or scripture reading, it is exorcism; if a simple word gets results, it is the power of God! If the name of Jesus has to be repeated over and over again, it is exorcism; if the devils respond without hesitation or resistance to the name of Jesus, it is the Kingdom of God in demonstration! When great physical exertion is required, it is exorcism; when a calm and quiet command demands obedience, it is the Kingdom of God! If the voice is raised, as if shouting and screaming at devils — the *volume* of the verbal command — could add something to its authority, it is exorcism; the Spirit of God needs not to lift up its voice — the authority is legal, judicial, and governmental in the Kingdom of the Most High. A judge does not shout his sentence at a criminal, the tone of his voice could add nothing whatever to the authority by which he speaks. The authority is vested in his *office* — not in physical demonstrativeness. With a simple phone call and a bare whisper the President of the United States can send all the might of our military into action against an enemy. He *has* the authority, therefore it *works*. Hours of shouting, sweating, pleading, barking the same command again and again would only call into question his sanity! The Spirit of God does not need to plead, cajole, struggle, contend, or fight with any spirit, principality, or power in heaven or on earth. The Spirit is omnipotent! Jesus Christ *has all power* everywhere! That is the power of the Kingdom of God!

Any power that is so weak it has to *strive* with the devil can only be the *soul power* of man, not the power of the Kingdom! You do not have to be an exceptional saint to discern that much of the deliverance ministry today is merely exorcism — *using the name of Jesus!* Demons do not necessarily respond to the verbalization of the name Jesus. The seven sons of Sceva tried to use that name, but it didn't work. Many people in Christ's day were named Jesus. Our Lord was "Jesus of Nazareth" to specify which Jesus He was. Today millions of men in Spanish speaking countries are named Jesus. There is no power in the letters J-E-S-U-S. The authority is in the *person*, in the *spirit*, and in the *nature!* Spirits respond to the *presence*, to the *life*, to the *authority* and *power* of the Lord Jesus Christ, not to the form of His name. You can shout the name of Jesus Christ at spirits all day, but if the only authority the spirits recognize is in *your soul*, you will need to battle every inch of the way to gain the victory, if indeed you are able to overcome at all!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 41**  
**THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY-ONE**

**SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD**  
**OMNIPOTENCE OF LOVE**

I have observed in the ministry of the firstborn Son of God that there was never a problem He faced that He could not solve, never a need He could not meet, no victory He could not win, no realm of revelation, relationship or being in God that He could not possess. Some of us speak of the exploits we have done in Jesus' name, but we seldom mention all the times we have failed! Some of us fast and pray and wrest an answer from the Lord, and then run squarely into another problem we can't deal with at all. If Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, needed the fullness of the power of God, which is the Seven Spirits of God, the Spirit without measure, then we His younger brethren must have it too!

It is significant that nowhere in the four Gospels is the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ ever associated with the gifts of the Spirit. No place does it ever say that Jesus received or operated a gift of the Spirit. Although He healed multitudes, it doesn't state that He received the "gift of healing." He revealed the secrets of men's hearts, but no mention is made of either the gift of the word of knowledge or the word of wisdom. He certainly prophesied, and is referred to as a prophet, but He did not move in the "gift of prophecy." However, like most of us, I *assumed* that He did! And I could always make it fit. Every time Jesus healed someone I assumed that He exercised His gift of healing, although the scripture didn't say so. When He prophesied coming events I supposed that He spoke by the gift of prophecy, although the Holy Spirit records no mention of it. When He perceived men's thoughts and intents I took it for granted that He received a "word of knowledge," but the Bible is silent about that.

How is it that Jesus didn't move in the gifts of the Spirit? Because when you function in a "gift" of the Spirit you function in LIMITATION! Paul said of the gift realm, "*Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect (full, complete, mature) is come, then that which is in part SHALL BE DONE AWAY*" (I Cor. 13:8-10). Yes, my friend, the gifts are all **in part**. It could not be otherwise! If your friend gives you a gift, do you then possess **all the fullness of your friend**? No, what you receive is merely a fragment of his possessions or wealth. And you certainly don't possess your friend! Gifts of the Spirit are not the Holy Spirit Himself, but abilities and enablements *given by* the Spirit.

In the realm of that which is in part, in limitation, one cannot meet every need that arises. "*Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts*" (I Cor. 12:29-31). Does it say in I Corinthians 12:8, "To the **whole church** is given the word of wisdom?" or, "To the **whole church** is given the gift of healing?" No, it says, "To **one** is given," to one member of the body of Christ. Then, "**to another** is given the gift of faith, prophecy," etc. In other words, there is a distribution so that everyone does not have all the gifts. How can you meet every need if you don't possess all the power and wisdom and ability of the Holy Spirit? And how can you meet every need, even in the area of the gift you do possess, if the gift itself is *by measure*? You can't! And that is why we feel so helpless sometimes. You can try, you can fast and pray, you can think positively, you can confess and claim and step out by faith and boast of your inheritance in Christ, but you still can't meet every need, solve every problem, speak to every situation, bless every life — in the gift realm! In that realm it is always just a word here, a miracle there, a healing someplace else, a failure here and a success over there. Who can stand and deny that this is the truth!

But the ministry of Jesus was not in the gift realm, it was not in part, it was not by measure, but His ministry was the ministry of a MANIFESTED SON OF GOD in all the power and wisdom and glory of the Father! The

great secret of the ministry of Jesus was that it was not in limitation but in fullness. It was not a gift in the church realm, but the incarnation, the embodiment, the personification of the FULLNESS OF THE FATHER. This is the realm of *sonship*. And that is just why creation is not groaning for another gift of healing, or another gift of miracles, or another gift of faith, or another apostle, or another prophet, or another evangelist. Creation is in pain and travail waiting for the *manifestation of the sons of God!* Only the sons of God will possess within themselves the fullness of the **power of the Kingdom of God** as did Jesus! Only the sons of God can deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. Jesus is not the *firstborn* among many Christians or among many saints or among many church members — He is the firstborn among *many brethren!* The brethren are *like Him*. He is not bringing many gifted Christians to glory, He is not bringing many deacons to glory, He is not bringing many Sunday School teachers to glory, He is not bringing many musicians to glory, He is not bringing many preachers to glory, He is not bringing many apostles to glory, He is not bringing many prophets to glory, but He *is* bringing many SONS to glory! Hallelu-jah!

Sonship is glorious beyond anything our eyes have seen or ears have heard. Jesus Christ is the firstborn Son of God. And now all His brothers are empowered to follow Him to maturity. All will follow His steps, becoming what He is. The spiritual life of every son has the same origin as the firstborn, for all are born of God. We are being perfected by the same process, and will ultimately achieve the same result. Jesus Christ was the personification of the Father, and so shall we be. The holy nature of Jesus Christ is ours to be raised up within us. The works that He did, we shall do as well. The authority of Jesus Christ, even the dominion of the ages and all things, He will share with those who come to the measure of the stature of His fullness. Jesus possesses the totality of God's substance, and this is the heritage of every manifested son of God. The present resurrection, ascension and enthronement of Jesus Christ is a portrait of our destiny!

The sons of God are destined to inherit all things; they are selected by the Father to become the dispensers of blessing to all created realms. Thus creation groans in sympathetic birth pangs, longing for their arrival! From powerful angels in heaven, to worlds in the farthest galaxy, the universe resonates with anticipation of the glorious unveiling of the sons of God. The sons will share the fullness of the glory of their Father. They will grow up into the attributes of God as a permanent state of being. The sons of God will partake of Godlikeness, and a spiritual inheritance that is incomprehensible to natural men, even religious men, saved men, and Spirit-baptized men. This celestial race of beings shall be endowed with all the authority and capacity of God. Immortal omnipotence will flow from them as the light rays from the sun. In the days before us, those who have attained to sonship will be displayed in the blazing glory of immortality. This climatic finale is a fast approaching certainty. From the difficulties, struggles, testings and processings of this present time the son company will burst into everlasting splendor, streaming glory, wisdom and power as a shower of stars. With Jesus as the Captain, this reigning government of God shall invade the bastions of darkness and by war, yea, by spiritual warfare shall they take the rule from the kings of the earth. These are celestial kings and priests, trained and tested in conquest. They are invincible in the nature and power of the Father. Nothing shall confound them; all will succumb to their sway. This company of sons is the final world government — it will never be overthrown. They will subdue every enemy, and be the fountainhead of every blessing! They are the solution that God has ordained for the travail of earth's teeming billions. God's sons will enter into His state of being — they will become what He is in an unchangeable personal possession. This is the destiny of God's Christ, Head *and* body!

For many years now there has been a great moving of the Spirit of God across the land and around the world. It has manifested itself through many movements on various levels. We have witnessed great healing meetings, evangelistic crusades, baptism in the Holy Spirit, prophetic ministry, apostolic ministry, five-fold ministry, gifts of the Spirit, impartation through prophecy with the laying on of hands, and much more. And I have rejoiced with joy unspeakable to be a partaker in this visitation of God! But I testify to you today that not one of these ministries, *nor all of them put together*, has come within the range of the ministry of Jesus Christ, the *Son of God*. No matter which of the healing evangelists, or which of the miracle workers, or which of the prophets you watched; and no matter which church or movement with all its ministries and gifts and outreaches you observed, it did not measure up to the ministry of THE SON OF GOD. We kept saying, "We have the same anointing, the same Holy Ghost, the same power, and we can do all the works Jesus did!" And as hard as we tried, and as much as we wanted to believe it, and as faithful as we were, it still just wasn't true! We had the same anointing alright, and the same Holy Spirit, and the same power, but — we had it **by measure** — not

WITHOUT MEASURE, as Jesus did! And that is just the difference between *the church* and *sonship*! And don't get me wrong, I'm not knocking the church and I'm not belittling anything we have had or done. But my heart is desperately crying out for something more, and I certainly know that this sin-cursed world is crying out for something more! Oh, yes!

## THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD

This puzzled me for many years. Then one day the Spirit drew my attention to a passage of scripture in **Isaiah 11:1-2**. 'And there shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.' This does not say that Jesus would receive a "gift" of "a word of wisdom." It says that He received the **SPIRIT OF WISDOM**. It doesn't say that Jesus had a "gift or healing" or a "gift of miracles." He received instead, the **SPIRIT OF MIGHT**. Jesus didn't have just a "gift" of "a word of knowledge." He possessed the **SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE!** Not a fragmentary word of wisdom here, or a little sample of knowledge there, or a gift of healing operating tonight and prophecy tomorrow night. No! Upon the firstborn Son of God rested all the fullness of the Sevenfold Spirit of Sonship, as Isaiah prophesied:

*"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding;  
The Spirit of Counsel and Might,  
The Spirit of Knowledge and Fear of the Lord."*

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from THE SEVEN SPIRITS which are before His throne" (**Rev. 1:4**).

"These things saith He that hath THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (**Rev. 3:1**).

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (**Rev. 4:5**).

"In the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (**Rev. 5:6**).

For many years we did not know that God has seven Spirits! Are there really seven Spirits of God? If you say that God has seven Spirits that makes you a heretic in all church denominations! If, on the other hand, you say that God does not have seven Spirits, you contradict the word of the Lord Himself! Is the Spirit of God, then, seven or one? On the one hand, if God says there is one Spirit, then there is one Spirit. On the other hand, if God says there are seven Spirits, then there are seven Spirits. It's just that simple, my friend!

One of the keys to this mystery is found in the verse in **Revelation 4:5**. "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." In the Old Testament, the structure of the lampstand (candlestick) was quite unique: below was one lampstand, above there were seven branches, and in each branch there was a lamp (Ex. 25:31-37). It was one lampstand, yet it had seven lamps. There were seven lamps, yet it was all but one lampstand. Therefore, it is correct to say that there is one lampstand, but neither is it wrong to say that there are seven lamps! So also is the Spirit of God. There is no doubt about it, the Holy Spirit is one Spirit. "For there is...one Spirit" (**Eph. 4:4**). But this one Spirit is also called "the seven Spirits," that is, the sevenfold, the intensified fullness of the Spirit of God!

Seven, in the scriptures, was the most sacred number of the Hebrews. This number is used more often, in the Word of God, than all other numbers, with the exception of the number **one**. It is the number denoting **spiritual perfection, fullness, and completeness**. In this connection it is interesting to note that in the title "Holy Spirit" the English word "holy" comes from a root meaning "whole." Hence, the "Holy Spirit" is simply the "Whole Spirit"! The seven Spirits of God, seven denoting spiritual perfection, fullness, and completeness, are likewise a figure of the "holy" or "whole" or "complete" Spirit. Armed with the understanding that the number seven conveys the idea of unity and fullness, rather than diversity, then we can see with unclouded vision that the seven Spirits of

God are the sevenfold, intensified Spirit of the Lord — the absolute FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD! And where is the source of these seven Spirits of God? The Lord Jesus is! "In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb...having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God" (Rev. 5:6). The Lord Jesus Himself said to John on Patmos, "These things saith HE THAT HATH THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (Rev. 3:1).

This sevenfold Spirit of God is the fullness of the wisdom, knowledge, glory, nature, and power of God! This is the Spirit without measure. This is the SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD. This is the SEVENFOLD BRIGHTNESS OF GOD'S GLORY! This is the power of the Kingdom of God! "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6). This is why Jesus could know all things, have all revelation, heal every disease, cast out every devil, discern every thought and intent of men's hearts, command all elements of nature, raise the dead even after they were deteriorated and stinking, and could Himself die and rise again from the dead! Some of us have been able to do a very limited amount of this. And all of us together have been able to do only a small amount of this! Some of us have had a gift of healing and have healed some sick people, but who has healed them all, and who has healed them every time? And how many have stayed healed? Some of us have been healed ourselves, but we got sick again of something else. Jesus never got sick! Some of us have prophesied, but who among us has had every word we spoke come to pass? Some of us have had wonderful miracles of supply, but which of us has walked on the sea, fed a multitude from five loaves and two fishes, or turned water into wine? Some have had their countenances lighted with the joy of the Lord, but who has stood on the mount of Transfiguration with even their raiment shining as the brightness of the noon-day sun?

Is the elect of God to end this dispensation in failure and defeat? Is a little flock of faithful saints to undergo an emergency "evacuation" via a "rapture" off the planet at the last moment just before the devil takes over the whole world? Not if the word of God is true! The prophet Daniel prophesied of these days, "But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32). God is going to have a people that will be "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Yes, a people who, in the darkness of this hour, shall "arise and shine" until the nations come to their light and kings to the **brightness of their rising** (Isa. 60:1-3). Some folks say that the "rapture" is the next thing on the agenda that God must deliver us out of this mess, and that Jesus may come and snatch us away at *any minute*. Now you can forget about that! Jesus is not going to come crashing down through the clouds at any minute! He is not coming to take us away so the antichrist and the devil can do their thing on earth. Oh, no!

In **Hebrews 10:12-13** we read, "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth **expecting TILL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE HIS FOOTSTOOL.**" Now that doesn't say that Jesus is going to come again and take us all to heaven. And it doesn't say that Jesus is coming again to *make His enemies His footstool*. No, it plainly says He **won't come again until His enemies have been made His footstool!** So, if the devil is getting ready to take over the world, Jesus *can't come*. It's just as simple as that. Jesus has been on the throne in the spiritual heavens of God for two thousand years *expecting...expecting His body on earth to put all enemies under His feet*. For you see, the Head is in heaven, and the feet are on earth. "**Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool**" (Isa. 66:1). The feet of God's Christ are the elect of God upon earth when the fullness of the body of Christ comes forth on the earth. When a child is born, the head is the first member to come forth and the feet are the last members to be born. The head gives direction to the body, but the body does the work, and the feet carry the body to its appointed place, and they are the members that actively "**tread** on serpents and on scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." This is all talking about the many-membered body of Christ. Those members who are the feet company are the ones appointed of God to **put all things under God's Christ**. The members of the feet company are the only members of the Christ body on earth today, at the end of the age. For this reason, the feet company is uniquely chosen to usher in the new age and the next stage of the Kingdom of God on earth! Not only shall the feet company arise in power and great glory to do warfare, but the rest of the body also shall be arrayed in spiritual attire to fulfill their role as the body of Christ goes out to do battle in the name of the Lord.

What a glorious day this is! Christ shall lead His army by the power of His indwelling Spirit, which is the completed and glorified body of Christ, into total and complete victory everywhere. This work has already begun in us! It is *within us* first that every enemy must be put under foot. We know this work is going on, for we

are being thoroughly processed, purged, prepared and strengthened by the Spirit. The Christ has arisen within us and is leading us and shall continue to lead us victoriously in battle until every enemy is defeated, within and without, and put under His feet. Then Christ shall be Lord and King indeed in all places and to all people. Our glorious Head is *still* seated at the right hand of God in the heavens, He is *still expecting* the job to be done, He is still expecting every enemy to be put under His feet company, and they shall be, praise His name! The glory of the Lord will shine from within us when His work in us is finished, and the feet of the Lord's army shall march radiantly and triumphantly throughout the whole earth in the power of His might. After speaking of how the body of Christ shall arise and shine in the fullness of the glory of the Lord, the prophet Isaiah declares, "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down **at the soles of thy feet**; and they shall call thee, the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:14). Why should it be that the enemies of Christ will bow down at the **soles of His feet**? Because the feet company of the body of Christ shall have done their work well! They are putting Satan under them and are overcoming him, thus destroying his power and bringing deliverance to every captive. What a hope! What a vision! And what a responsibility is ours!

We read in **Acts 3:20-21**, "And He shall send Jesus Christ...whom the heaven **must retain until the times of the restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." All right...what is our job then? Is it to *pray for Jesus to come*, or look up in the sky expecting Him to come, or is it our job to go out and RESTORE ALL THINGS TO GOD? It is not Jesus who is coming back to bring the Kingdom, for the prophecy is sure: "But **THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL TAKE THE KINGDOM, and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever**" (Dan. 7:17-18). Only under the sevenfold intensified fullness of the Spirit of God can this mighty work be accomplished! It cannot be done with only the firstfruits of the Spirit, which is the baptism in the Spirit we have now received. If the firstfruits of the Spirit, the earnest (down-payment) of the Spirit, the Spirit by measure, could subdue every enemy and restore all things surely it would have done so sometime in two thousand years! You see, God's people greatly misunderstand the *purpose* of the firstfruits of the Spirit. It is not to bring the Kingdom to the whole earth, or to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. The gifts and ministries of the Spirit given to the church are for "the *perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love*" (Eph. 4:12,16). All these things relate to the development of the body of Christ, not the deliverance of creation. The calling, formation and edifying of the body of Christ is a wonderful ministry! But in these significant days God is stirring and preparing the hearts of His sons to move into the fullness of the sevenfold Spirit of Sonship, which is the **power of the Kingdom of God!**

"For Him whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (Jn. 3:34). The firstborn Son of God was not limited in any way, for He received the Spirit without measure. He did not have all nine gifts of the Spirit, as I have heard some men say. He didn't have "gifts" at all! The Father didn't give His Son "gifts," He gave Him the **fullness of the Giver of the gifts — the fullness of God Himself!** "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." And, "for whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). "**As my Father has sent me, so send I you**" (Jn. 20:21). God is **sending sons** in this new Day of the Lord, and if He is not sending **sons** then He has no one else to send, for every other church, revival, movement, outpouring, method, endeavor, program, and effort has fallen short of putting all enemies under His feet and bringing the Kingdom of God to pass in all the earth. The New Testament Church didn't accomplish it, great as were the ministries of the apostles of our Lord! The great missionary efforts of the 19th century didn't accomplish it, neither has the Pentecostal, Latter Rain, or Charismatic movements of our generation. They have all failed for they have all been *in part*. Creation is still waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! The only way for us to be sons of God is for God to give us the Spirit without measure. This belongs to those who are called to sonship. This is the anointing that God would send in this hour. God is separating a people unto Himself for this very high and holy purpose! If it tarry we shall wait for it, and we shall seek it with all of our hearts. Nothing else can satisfy. There is no hope for creation and no hope for the sons in the failed callings of yesterday!

In his marvelous visions on the isle of Patmos the beloved John saw the risen, glorified Lamb of God in the midst of the throne having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD SENT  
KINGDOM OF GOD, THE, Part 41, The Power Of The Kingdom [J. Preston Eby] ~ BIBLE STUDY 5

**FORTH INTO ALL THE EARTH.** You can never come to share His throne without possessing the seven Spirits of the Lamb upon the throne! Those under this sevenfold anointing, sent forth into all the earth, are those who in His dominion shall bring deliverance to the whole creation. How often we ask, "Why have we still been faced with failure? Why have we been so limited? Why have we not seen more happening?" I will tell you why! There is nothing worse than a *partial success*. There is nothing worse than seeing a few more people saved, a few more people healed, a few more people delivered, a few more people blessed, a few more baptized in the Spirit, a few more gifts and manifestations of the Spirit, because any believer, church, or minister who has that kind of *partial success* will think, "Praise God, this is great," and will then **settle for it**. All of us are made that way! If you have just enough to show that you are alive and that God is still working, you are satisfied. It is hard to believe that God has more for us, or that He requires more of us.

I will tell you what God is doing in this hour. He is doing just the opposite to what most folk believe He is doing! Most people believe that we are seeing a greater and more powerful moving of God today than ever before in history. That is not true! Don't you believe it, and don't settle for that. We are seeing many people affected by the move of the Spirit of God, we are seeing great numbers of people involved in the blessings the Lord is pouring forth, but we are not seeing greater miracles today than ever before, or greater demonstrations of power, or greater wisdom, or greater righteousness, or truly earth-shaking, world-impacting, nation-saving, Kingdom-bringing ministry. And for some of us upon whom the dealings of the Lord have been heavy, there has been a separation from even that which *appears* to be the great moving of God in the land. We have been called out of all the fervor and out of all the activity and all the blessings of the church systems. And this is of God! The Lord has limited us, He has weakened our strength and cut off the flow of deliverance, He has stripped and pruned us back to the trunk, and He is facing us with an intensified problem until we are beginning to realize: Oh God, we can do nothing to meet the need! We are nothing as we ought to be! The challenge is too great for us! God is doing this that we might not trust any longer in our PARTIAL SUCCESS, that we might not rest in the limitations of the *in-part* realm of the Spirit, but that we shall cry out unto the Lord until He arises mightily within His chosen ones and brings forth in us THE SEVENFOLD BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GLORY! God is raising up a people in this new Day who is willing to turn from the hustle and bustle of religion's feverish activity, to turn aside from the snare of blessings of limitation, to wait upon God, to sanctify the Lord God *in their hearts*, so that when God moves afresh He shall have a people prepared to show forth the fullness of His glory in the SEVENFOLD BRIGHTNESS OF HIS INTENSIFIED POWER.

Paul certainly had the realization of such an incomprehensible fullness in mind when he wrote to the saints in Ephesus, "[May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory...that you may be filled through all your being unto all the fullness of God, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself](#)" (Eph. 3:16,19). The King James Version reads, "That you might be filled *with* all the fullness of God," but a better translation from the original is, "That you might be filled *unto* all the fullness of God." This speaks of eternal *increase* unto the unfathomable and inexhaustible!

It has been my privilege at various times over many years to stand on the Pacific Coast and look out over the broad expanse of the largest ocean on this planet. The glorious stretches of shore, sky, and sea are wonderful. Imagination quickens and thrills as our littleness is placed alongside the immensity of the unending expanse. Suppose I were to take a pint jar to the edge of the water, lean down and allow the ocean to run into the jar. It will take just one gesture to fill that jar with the Pacific Ocean. But how could I fill that jar *unto all the fullness* of the Ocean? If I carry my bottle back to Texas, to someone who has never looked upon the ocean, and tell him that he can now see and understand the ocean because I have it in my bottle, in fact my bottle is *filled* with the ocean, he will not see what the ocean really is. All he will see is a pint of sea water! There will be none of the mighty sweep of distance, none of the power of the waves, none of the swelling of the ocean surfaces, none of its blue beauty, and none of the wonders of its depths. I cannot put into a bottle the breaking of the surf or the vast reaches of the sea!

Such a sampling, sea water in a jar, would fit the meaning of Paul's words if he said, "filled *with* all the fullness of God," if we understood merely that God means to fill us to our capacity with Himself, putting in just that small measure that we can contain. But in keeping with the untranslatable signification of the Greek word PLEROMA, which is the word for *fullness*, it would be necessary to put THE WHOLE OF THE OCEAN in the bottle, and then, and *only then*, could we understand what God purposes to reveal in, upon, and through that

glorious body of sons who come to His very image, likeness, and dominion. Each and every son shall contain the full measure of God in all that He is, just as does the firstborn Son. God does not purpose to make each of us little "samples" of Deity. He does not look upon us as little children who shall display "pints" of His power. He purposes to increase and enlarge each of our capacities forever and ever. We are to be filled UNTO all the fullness of God! This is the glory of sonship! This is the power of the Kingdom of God!

As one has written, "And lest there be some fearful saints, who still think the measure of our heritage must be confined within certain limits, then God tells us exactly what those limitations are: '...and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power to usward** who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, **far above** all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named...' (Eph. 2:19-21). There is the measure of the power that is available to the saints! Not merely the power that Moses demonstrated in Egypt, or at the Red Sea; not the power that Joshua had when he commanded the sun and the moon to stand still; not the power that Elijah had when he locked the heavens for three and a half years, and then opened them again; not the power that Elisha exercised when he caused the iron to swim, the waters to be healed, the hungry to be fed, the dead to be raised; not the power that Daniel had in the lion's den, or Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had in the fiery furnace; and not even the power that Jesus revealed in His earthly ministry when He healed the sick, cast out devils, walked on the sea, called back the dead. The power available is even the 'working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ WHEN HE RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, AND SET HIM AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES...' And still we could go on, for Paul continues to enlarge upon the immensity of this power which *Christ now has*, and which is ours: power and authority over all principalities and powers, even power to put 'all things **under His feet**'" — end quote.

The realities of the Kingdom of God are not to be found in the things you know about God nor in the knowledge and understanding you acquire even of the "deeper truths" of sonship, reconciliation, etc. One knows that a person is in the Kingdom of God because of the *life* that emanates through him by the inworkings of the Spirit of God. The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Ah, you may be able to preach like Paul, understand all the mysteries, and explain all the revelations God has given for this Day. But the correct understanding of all these things is not the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God is the power of God to transform you into the image of God, grow you up into the fullness of God, and then minister that to the blind, lost, and dying creation.

The Kingdom of God IS POWER. We learn in **I Corinthians 1:24** that "**Christ is the power of God.**" Therefore, Christ and the Kingdom are synonymous! The power of the Kingdom is the power of Christ, and God's Christ is His **anointed**, the body that possesses all the fullness of the power of the Lord! There is nothing clearer in the history of this world than that Christ is power. He has made new men and women of tens of millions. He has turned them right around and set their faces toward God. That is the hardest task in the universe! To create a world is nothing compared with the creating of one soul in the image of God. The victories of Alexander the Great, Caesar, and Napoleon were child's play in comparison. Their power could crush men into a feigned submission, but it could not penetrate the inner nature and change the secret heart and will and soul. This is what Christ has done again and again!

Have you ever tried to reform some person held in the grasp of sexual perversion, alcohol, drugs, a violent or devious disposition, or some other sin? Motive after motive you try to instill in him — the injury he is doing to himself, his self-respect, the love of friends and family, his place in this world or the next — all in vain. For a moment the poor sinful feet make a struggle to lift themselves out of the mire, and then sink back deeper. A sense of despair comes over you: you feel as though there were nothing to which to appeal. You feel helpless, and it seems the situation is hopeless. And then one day a new heart, a new will, a new spirit is given by the sovereign operation of God; the man stands up in the glory of Christ. If you ask him the secret, he will tell you with Paul that CHRIST is the power of God unto salvation!

Now, believe me, there is nothing worth calling power compared with the power that can accomplish that. To break a man's spirit; to reverse his will; to turn the currents of his heart; to make him love what he formerly hated; to set his spirit triumphantly superior to sin and weakness and sorrow and death; to translate him into

the Kingdom of the Son and give him seating in heavenly places; to make him a son of the Most High with a calling to glory and virtue: whoever can work these transformations is strong beyond all that the mighty of the earth have ever conceived as power. And Christ has done it again and again. But now, in the fullness of time, this mighty Christ is coming *in many sons brought to glory*, in the fullness of His sovereignty to do this, not apart from them, but through them, for they are called to rule and reign, they are called to share His throne and exercise His regal authority; they are equipped to subdue all things, to put every enemy under foot, to take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom forever and ever, to restore all things and deliver all men and all creatures and all worlds from the bondage of corruption, until every last soul in heaven, earth, and hell has been re-created in the image of God, and the whole vast universe is filled with the fullness of His Life and Light and Love. THIS IS THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

## THE OMNIPOTENCE OF LOVE

Many a sermon has been preached on the power of God, and I suppose most of them have missed the mark, but it is very important that we realize that His power is not something separate from His love. The Pattern Son has made it very plain that the power of God is not that of force, violence, or compulsion, but the power of love which "never fails." The death of Jesus on the cross was one of the most momentous hours of all history and it was there on Calvary that Jesus demonstrated that the power of God is the Omnipotence of Love — "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Love is all-powerful and power is love in action. It would do us all a world of good to make this eternal connection between love and power! Have we, in our desire to reign with Him, forgotten that the God who reigns over all IS LOVE?

The failure to distinguish between the power of force and violence and the omnipotence of love is the cause of all the hideous doctrines of the church systems and the mis-guided questionings of unbelievers. It is the answer to those who say, "If God is omnipotent, why does He not stop war, sin, suffering, and all forms of evil?" The omnipotence of love is something far grander and more noble than the power of force, though it is slower in operation. And it IS omnipotence, for with God's Love, **all things are possible!** As we learn to know the power and ways of Love we find a gradual change in our attitude about and toward all things. We realize that it is not so much a matter of our getting possession of God's power and using it in our daily life and ministry, but more a matter of God's power getting possession of us and using us. We realize that there are incredible potentialities within each of us who have the Spirit of the Christ because God is love and Christ is the power of God. Christ in you is sufficient to overcome all difficulties within and without, and to use them as stepping stones to the throne; power to be adequate for every situation; power to become all that He has apprehended you to become; yea, power to become the sons of God! There is no limit!

As I have mentioned earlier, Paul talks about the power of God revealed in the gifts of the Spirit (I Cor. 12 & 14). At the time of the great move of the Spirit that came in 1948 I was just a boy and I remember hearing my father and another Pentecostal minister talking about it, and the only thing they said about it was that the brethren in that move were laying hands on people and imparting the gifts of the Spirit. I don't even remember whether they were criticizing it or merely discussing it. I do know they never entered into it. And I'm sure they were unaware that my young ears were eagerly drinking in their every word! The part of the conversation I overheard lasted only a few minutes at most, but in the brief moment that they spoke of those wonderful things *something leaped within my spirit*, as the babe leaped in Elizabeth's womb, and I said within myself, "I'm going to find those people!" By a strange series of events the Lord sovereignly arranged the circumstances so that not long afterwards I did indeed come into contact with that move of the Spirit of God. It was wonderful and glorious beyond words and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable as the Lord set my young life aflame and imparted a ministry in the gift realm.

By the time I was fifteen years old I was off preaching more than I was attending school. The Lord wrought remarkable healings and impressive miracles through the laying on of my hands, and multitudes were baptized in the Spirit by the laying on of hands. Prophecy flowed like a river and the Lord revealed to us the order by which the body of Christ would be edified and strengthened by the ministry of each member. We rejoiced greatly in the mighty power of God in the miraculous released by the faith of the Son of God sent forth into our lives. We saw the body of Christ begin to come together, and we sang and praised God as the glory of the Lord flooded our souls. But I testify to you today that, glorious as it was, none of this was the goal or the end of

the purpose God had in mind! You see, God's purpose is not to save and heal and thrill and bless and deliver some people. The real goal and the true purpose is the preparing of a people to **inherit the Kingdom!** The purpose is not a great "end-time revival," but the birth of a manchild to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Many have gotten side-tracked and failed to *go on* to the fulfillment of the purpose, so taken are they with the *gift realm* that they camp there and refuse to move on in God!

The apostle Paul continues on in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians speaking about the gifts developed to their fullness. I will paraphrase some of this and use my own words. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am nothing but a big noise." Then he talks about the gift of prophecy, after which he goes on *beyond the gifts* and talks about understanding *all* the mysteries of God, and having *all* knowledge, and *all* faith, so that we could remove mountains. Who wouldn't want to know *all* about the mysteries of God, and have *all* knowledge and *all* faith, and be able to move mountains! What giants we would be in the things of the Spirit! We would have the answer to every problem. We would know all there is to know about everything. There would be nothing that could stand before us, not even death itself. There would be nothing we could not do. How great that would be! Who wouldn't desire to attain unto this height! And who has ever reached it but the firstborn Son of God? But were we to attain to even this place, if we did not have **love**, we would be — NOTHING! In the eyes of men we would be great, and what multitudes we could attract. But in the sight of God we would be absolutely NOTHING. That is what Paul says, and all that we had attained would profit us nothing at all. Love is ALL!

So this is what the Holy Spirit is testifying to us here. Covet earnestly the best gifts, and desire spiritual gifts, they are a great blessing and edification along the journey, but don't make them your goal. And don't get your desires and pursuit all wrapped up in mysteries and knowledge and faith and miracle-working power — but follow after love, make **love** your quest, as one translation puts it. Make love your goal, that is the only thing that really counts, and without it nothing else is of any value. Why is this? Because the greatest power of God is LOVE. Whether there be tongues, they will cease; whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. Miracles, great and wonderful and necessary though they be, do not add anything to us personally. Though they bring great blessings into our lives and bodies and circumstances, and turn our focus upon the goodness of God, they do not do anything toward **transforming us** into the image of God. They do nothing in bringing about the metamorphosis into the nature of Christ. They do not impart unto us the mind of Christ. In fact, sometimes gifts and power have the opposite effect, building up our *ego*, which God is working to destroy. They could increase our pride and build up our old carnal nature, and turn us away from the true purpose of God in our sonship.

We are wrong to suppose that gifts of the Spirit are proof of a man's or woman's godliness or greatness in God. We need to recall the definition of *gift*. A gift is "something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation." If it is a gift, then it cannot be earned. If I give someone a check for \$10,000.00, that gift says nothing about what that person looks like, what kind of person they are, what they do, or their relationship to me. It does not say whether they are honest or deceitful, hardworking or lazy, wise or foolish, a friend or an enemy. It indicates that for some reason, known only to me, I am moved to be generous and helpful. A gift is not given because of the goodness or worthiness of the recipient, but because of the goodness and purpose of the giver! A gift says nothing about the recipient, but much about the donor.

And so it is in the Kingdom of God! While we were yet sinners and enemies in our minds by wicked works, God commended His love toward us and *gave* His only begotten Son to us! We were not worthy. We could do nothing to earn or merit His favor. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." A gift is not a merit badge, not a badge of honor. A gift is free! There is no qualifying! There are no requirements! It is given only out of the heart of generosity and love of the giver! The *gift* of the Holy Ghost, and all the *gifts* of the Spirit are just that — they are gifts. They make no statement about the holiness, character, worthiness, spiritual status, maturity or destiny of the recipient. Rather, they reflect the grace and power of God! God has given some of His gifts to the greatest of scoundrels! God is not gifts. The Government of God does not operate by gifts. God graciously gives gifts, but gifts do not reveal the depths of His heart nor manifest the fullness of His power. A man might give someone a brand new Mercedes. That would not disclose his true wealth. He might be broke after giving the gift, or he could be a multi-millionaire. Our Father is incredibly rich beyond anything we have ever seen in any of His gifts! God IS love! Love is what God IS. Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail.

But love **never fails!** Love is omnipotent! Love will transform our natures and change us from the carnal, corruptible creatures that we are, into the incorruptible and divine. Love is ALL! Gifts can bless men in a variety of ways, but only love can reconcile all, redeem all, restore all, transform all, and finally make God ALL IN ALL. *That* is the omnipotence of love! *That* is the power of the Kingdom of God!

How beautifully brother Carl Schwing has expressed the outcome of the reign of God through the *sons of Love*: "There will be a shaking of heaven and earth, mankind, and all creation as there never was before. The angels will sing the Song of the Sons. The saints shall wave their palms of victory, and their shouts of joy shall thunder through the universe. And from this shaking shall come the new heaven and the new earth. All the heavenly lights shall be the reflection of the Light of the Lamb, and the glory of the Sons. The earth shall be a Paradise of God, and all nature shall speak of the kingdom, the power, and the glory of our everlasting Father and His glorified Sons...as once again they walk and talk amid their handiwork. All mankind shall stand in the Light of Saving Grace and partake freely of the Liberty of the Sons of God. And the house of hell shall be desolate. Hallelujah!

"The empty graves of the saints will bear the flowers of the earth. From the battlefields of man shall rise the anthems of freedom and peace. No cities or buildings...no temples or shrines; like dust they were carried away in the wind. The land will be free and the beauty thereof, untold. At last shall man and beast dwell together in the love of life. The Son of Beginnings shall rise in the sky, and the Light of Eternal Day shall nourish all things...and there is no night there! Hallelujah!

"This, my brothers, is the Kingdom of God and His Christ Sons. This is the Kingdom, which existed before all things. This is the Kingdom that will always be, and the increase thereof shall be endless...and the seed of the sons, innumerable. This Kingdom is holy, because He is holy...it is spirit, for He is spirit...it is eternal, for He is eternal...it is the expression of the Father and His Sons. Its resources are infinite, its rule is boundless, and its purposes are immutable. All shall live within the gates of this City of the Kingdom. The government of the Sons will be the fruit of the Spirit, and the Word of the Father will be the Lord of the land. Many secrets remain in the House of the Rising Sons. Hallelujah!" — end quote.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 42**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM**  
**BY: J. PRESTON EBY**

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY-TWO**

**THE PROGRESSION OF THE KINGDOM**  
**LIKE A SEED**

A Pentecostal, Charismatic or Fundamentalist Christian who has been fed the "dispensationalist" scheme of things has only a future concept of the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, there are those who preach a "right now" word about the Kingdom, the present reality of the Kingdom, but conclude that the present expression and manifestation of the Kingdom is all there is. They have no concept of any progressive or future dimensions of the Kingdom. I do not hesitate to tell you, my beloved, if what I have seen of the Kingdom up till now is *all there is*, then the Kingdom will never be victorious, triumphing in all realms! If the present activity and power of the Kingdom is all there is, I believe I have reason to fear that it will *never* break in pieces, subdue and consume all other kingdoms as the prophets have prophesied, and all nations will *never* come to worship before the Lord, God's will will *never* be fully done *on earth* as it is in heaven, and God will *never* be all in all!

Those who read these lines are, for the most part, God's very elect, a people beloved of the Father, a people chosen and predestinated to sonship, the most enlightened and obedient people out of all the children of God on the face of the earth. But if what you and I currently have in God is *all there is*, then the power and glory of the Kingdom is most limited, and the hope of creation is cut off. There is a glory *yet to be revealed in us!* There is a manifestation of the sons of God that all creation is *still* groaning and travailing to see. There is an age, and there are *ages yet to come* of Kingdom increase, for it is in those glorious *ages to come* that God shall put on display before the whole creation, in and through the saints, what are the riches of His grace and kindness toward all men (Eph. 2:7), and of the *increase* of His government and peace there shall be *no end* (Isa. 9:7), and in the *dispensation of the fullness of times* He shall gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him (Eph. 1:10).

Unknown to mankind as a whole, yet clearly revealed in the prophecies of the scriptures, the plan of God for man's salvation, transformation and eternal happiness has been progressing steadily onward in an orderly and systematic manner. The experience of evil, man's participation in the heartbreak of sin and the anguish of death, God's dealings with Israel, the sending of the Son of God into the world as the Redeemer, the formation of the Church and the preparation of the sons of God have all been *steps* in God's great plan. They have all been paving the way for the glory that *shall be revealed* when God shall set His hand to save all the nations, restore all things, and fill the whole earth with His glory as the waters cover the sea.

We can only grasp God's great plan of the ages when we understand that God has a *goal* and a *timetable* by which He works, and His dealings with men are different at various times and stages of history, according to the need, in order to advance His Kingdom program. God has manifested His power and glory in different ways at different times and for different purposes. As the great pendulum of the ages has relentlessly ticked away the centuries and millenniums one second at a time, God's Kingdom has come, and continues to come from glory to glory, from realm to realm, from stage to stage, until it shall be all-triumphant and all-encompassing. The great and glorious *consummation* of the Kingdom has not yet come, but it is coming, it is on the way, and it is right on schedule. When God's timetable reaches a certain point, His dealings with mankind will again undergo a dramatic change. His power and glory will be manifested in an altogether different way from what it has been during the age now ending. We are right now standing at the point of transition into the new age of God's great Kingdom purposes!

Every time God brings a fresh revelation and new experience to His people many of them are prone to say, "This is IT! This is the ultimate truth and the crowning glory of God! This is what it is going to be!" At the beginning of this past century when God brought the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, many

of those people believed that such was the last great move of God. They had come out of Holiness and Evangelical Churches and the Lord led them into a blessed new experience. Very quickly they settled down in it. For fifty years they organized and systematized it and Pentecost became one of the more respected denominations among the church systems.

In 1948 God moved again with power and great glory. It was called "Latter Rain." Rain, whether it be the former or the latter, or showers between, is the Lord coming to His people. The Lord Himself came in the Rain! When this outpouring began, again we found many people believing that was it, this was God's greatest and final move, and thousands have settled for the blessings and manifestations which characterized that move of the Spirit as being permanent. Already the clammy arms of the sectarian octopus have crushed its vitality and sucked the life-blood from it.

So God moves on! God brought Luther out of the Roman Catholic denomination, but God did not desire to stop there. The Holy Spirit drew the Wesleys out of the Church of England, but again He did not stop there. Latter Rain was unquestionably a shower of great refreshing and quickening power, but God did not stop there, and He is not stopping with any of the present-day movings, manifestations or dealings of His Spirit. His pathway is ever onward and upward, *from glory to glory*. What anticipation this stirs in our hearts! The fact is — there will never be any stopping with God for He ever moves ahead, and "of the **increase of His government and peace THERE SHALL BE NO END**" (Isa. 9:7).

The present emphasis of the Holy Spirit is upon the imminent manifestation of the sons of God. We are privileged to be living in blessed days of preparation for this grandest of all events, days fraught with holy and awesome responsibility for God's elect. But I would be remiss if I failed to acquaint the saints with the fact that even the placing of the sons of God is not the last revelation, nor the final act, in God's great drama of the ages. It is easy for the apprehended ones to settle down in the beautiful hope of sonship to God. But God will move on, beloved, making sonship, too, but a stepping-stone to realms higher and grander, for, as sonship is not the ultimate reality or position in the natural life, neither is it in the spiritual life. We praise God for the call to sonship, and with bated breath await the glory of its unveiling, but the crowning glory of God remains to be demonstrated in the age of the ages yet to come. Saints of all ages have stood in awe, wondering in great amazement as in spirit they caught faint glimpses of the divine mystery of God's purpose of the ages, and deep within my ransomed being lies the sacred knowledge that even this marvelous reality of sonship, glorious and far-reaching as it is, is NOT THE ULTIMATE IN GOD!

God has put His hand to the task; He is ready to grasp the *whole world* and, through the ministry of the manifested sons of God, switch it onto another track, changing its course and destination. I tell you, dear ones, we are not waiting nor preparing our hearts in this hour to behold the *dawn* of the Kingdom; as sons of God we are laborers together with God in inaugurating the **next stage** of the Kingdom. We shall work and work, minister and minister, reign and reconcile and bless and deliver and transform all nations and all men and all realms and all worlds and all ages until we accomplish **the end**. "Then cometh **the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death**" (I Cor. 15:24-26). If it takes a week, a month, a year, a decade, a century, a millennium, a billion years or a trillion years, it matters not one whit — the Kingdom of God shall increase and expand and triumph until that blessed day when from pole to pole and from sea to sea and throughout all the unbounded heavens everywhere God shall be ALL IN ALL.

Let the truth sink deeply into the heart of every saint of God who now reads these lines, the great and glorious truth that GOD HAS A PLAN. God's plan is His *aionian* plan, His wonderful PLAN OF THE AGES. God is not an experimenter doing test procedures and making trial runs, driven to His wit's end by clever and cunning enemies, just doing the best He can as occasion demands. Let the notion forever perish from our minds that God is something like a chess player arduously straining for opportunities to out-manuever an expert opponent (the devil). Oh, no! The great Architect of the ages drew out His plan before ever He commenced the vast work of creation and redemption, and those plans were complete, in both principals and details, long before He spoke the first angel or atom into existence. The wonderful goal of creation, and the methods and means for attaining that goal, were settled before ever a star twinkled in the night sky or brook babbled over

mountain rocks. In this wise and magnificent plan the UNSEARCHABLE WISDOM of God is exhibited, His INEXHAUSTIBLE RESOURCES revealed, His INFALLIBLE JUDGMENT displayed, and His IRRESISTIBLE POWER manifested. And now, in the midst of our present distresses and travail, our faith quietly rests in the blessed assurance that the end will justify God in all His ways. The triumphant declaration of the prophet is, "As for God, His way is perfect," and "He maketh my way perfect" (Ps. 18:30, 32).

## THE PROGRESSION OF THE KINGDOM

From the very heart of events from the morning of creation there can be observed a *gradual development* of everything that came from the hands of the omnipotent Creator. From the lips of the almighty Elohim came that irresistible command of the word of God, "Let there be!" And there was. But it was not a single command, the heavens and the earth were not formed in an instant nor fashioned in one day, by one divine word. Again and again there issued forth the majestic proclamation, "Let." "Let there be light." "Let there be a firmament." "Let the waters be gathered." "Let there be lights in the firmament." "Let the waters bring forth." "Let the earth bring forth." "Let us make man." Dispensations had come and gone with their Cain and Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the prophets before our Lord Jesus explained to the inquiring Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And now through the dreary years of every century since Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God with power and birthed His anointed body in the earth, the blessed Holy Spirit has been planting within the believing hearts of men and women the seed and power of that ever-increasing Kingdom and, wonder of wonders, yet true to God's progressive purpose of the ages, that incorruptible seed is ready to bring forth a company of *sons of God* in the fullness of the nature, power and glory of God's firstborn Son and Christ.

It cannot be otherwise! All things have a beginning, followed by various stages of development, formation, growth, and increase until ultimately comes the fullness and perfection. Space travel did not begin by sending a man to the moon. Men first jumped off cliffs, trying to fly with crude, homemade wings. Then men flew in balloons. The Wright brothers invented the first airplane, and other types of aircrafts followed until the Russians startled the world by sending their Sputnik into orbit around the earth, inaugurating the space age. Today we are sending space probes throughout our solar system, and it is only a matter of time, if God permits, until Star Trek will move from science fiction to living reality. Can we not clearly see by this how it is that each and every step was *required* in the grand and epochal work of creation and redemption. For six thousand years the race has witnessed the natural evolution of civilization, human government, science, economics, medicine, and technology. Nothing ever happens overnight! But all things move inexorably *forward*.

How old is this earth of ours? How long were each of the creative "days" in which the word of God brought forth the things now seen and enjoyed by mankind? Nobody knows of a certainty, but the evidence is on the side of antiquity, a million years might be conservative. It takes a vast stretch of time — eons, indeed — to produce coal and diamonds and a variety of other natural resources of earth. It reminds me of a story I read once about a little boy with a small shovel. He was trying to clear a pathway through deep, new-fallen snow in front of his house. A man paused to observe the child's enormous task. "Little boy," he inquired, "how can someone as small as you expect to finish a task as big as this?" The boy looked up and replied confidently, "Little by little, that's how!" And he continued shoveling. Progression is a divine principle rooted in the very way of our omniscient Creator! He took *seven days* (epochs, periods) to create this world in all its beauty and splendor. Notice how He began by creating first the grass, then the herbs, and then the trees, followed by the sea creatures, then the winged fowl, then cattle, then the great beasts, and finally the greatest miracle and crowning work of all — man in the likeness and image of God! The implications of such a marvelous, precise and determinate *process* is staggering to the imagination, and it is small wonder that our elder brother, whose name is **The Word of God**, by whom and through whom all things were made, has instructed us with these words of wisdom and understanding, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; *first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*" (Mk. 4:26-28).

God is revealing His Kingdom plan to us piece by piece, revelation by revelation, and from each piece of the puzzle revealed to us, we know that the entire, completed picture will be beyond our wildest imaginations! I do

not profess today to have all the pieces of the puzzle nor to understand all the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. But of one thing I am very confident — I *do* possess the *next piece* of the puzzle! And so do all the sons of God! I can assure you today that the next thing on God's agenda is the manifestation of the sons of God! The ministry of God's Son-company will bring to pass the subduing of the *living nations* of earth to the dominion and glory of the Kingdom until the heavenly words are fully fulfilled, "**The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages!**" (Rev. 11:15).

When our lovely Lord Jesus came into this sin-cursed world bringing the word and power of the Kingdom, He ushered in a new and glorious age. But it should be clearly evident to all who have eyes to see and hearts to understand that the blessings of the new order did not, and have not, come to all men. Even in Jesus' day not all the blind received their sight, not all the lame were healed, not all lepers were cleansed, not all demons were cast out, and only a few dead were raised. Multitudes of deformed, sick, diseased, tormented, sinful, lost, and dead men in Palestine remained untouched by the life of the new-born Kingdom of God. Rome remained pagan and the unnumbered millions of humanity of all the nations throughout the ends of the earth had not even heard that God had sent a Redeemer and a Christ! The saving power of the Kingdom was not universally operative. It was resident only in Jesus and His "little flock" of footstep followers. The mighty signs of the Kingdom wrought by Jesus and His early disciples were but a token, an earnest, a parable and prophecy, not the fullness nor the consummation.

It is very doubtful that any in those days had the remotest idea that it was the Father's intention to take the next two thousand years to complete the great work of preparing the *kings of the Kingdom*. Jesus came to bring in the new age of *the Church*, the *seedbed* in which the Kingdom could grow and develop to its **next stage**. When the conditions are fully ripe for this **next stage** of the Kingdom, *this age will completely pass away*. How our glad hearts rejoice in the sacred knowledge that we are standing even now at the door of the *next new age* and the *greater glory* of the Kingdom that it brings! Oh, the wonder of it! Sonship! Sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ receiving power over *the nations* to rule them with a rod of iron! Sonship is the hope of all creation and the joy of the Father's heart. The manifestation of the sons of God is now ready to bring to fruition the desire of all nations. The hopes and dreams of all the years for peace and righteousness and blessing and life upon the teeming billions of the nations of this benighted planet are met in the unveiling of God's sons, the *increase of the Kingdom* for the new age.

When all the ages have passed, and the sun has set on every progressive stage of the unfolding of God's glorious Kingdom, there will be no more deaf or blind or leprous or demon possessed or crime or violence or wars or sin anywhere. Death shall be swallowed up in life! Here we discover the mysterious law of the Kingdom. Its blessings entered the old age of the law, introducing a new order of life for all who would believe. This new order of the Spirit that Jesus brought is not the final age, nor even the age *before* the last age! The blessing and glory of each new age is rooted in the previous age and springs forth from it. The new age of the Kingdom upon the nations is not by any stretch of the imagination the closing dispensation in God's great plan of the ages. Oh, no! A new age is hidden in this present age, as the blade is hidden in the seed, and another even more glorious age is hidden in the new age now dawning, just as the stalk is hidden in the blade. Another age will proceed from that age and on and on and on until the *dispensation of the fullness of times* (Eph. 1:10). Thus did the Holy Spirit speak through the apostle Paul, "**But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: and hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show** (demonstrate, put on display, reveal) **the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus...that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things into Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him**" (Eph. 2:4-7; 1:10). The issue is not in doubt. The Kingdom of God moves onward from stage to stage, from age to age, to its inevitable triumph: THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS.

Well did [Paul Mueller](#) write: "As the ages unfold in harmonious and ordered progression, all the attributes of God will likewise unfold to be revealed in a vast and increasing manifestation. As we have already shown, grace is increasing as is righteousness, peace and joy. When one age ends, the spiritual characteristics of that dying age do not end. Rather, each divine aspect of the previous age is raised up to a higher spiritual level of fulfillment and is then carried over into the next age. Thus, the grace of God will not end with this age, but will

increase because the Lord has raised it up to a higher order. All the other attributes of the divine nature that we have known in the past will not decrease but will be fulfilled in a greater measure, and manifest in increasing fullness to the saints of the new order." Amen and amen!

It is impossible that our Father of grace, mercy, love and power should endure forever the moral entanglements and spiritual darkness of the world. Creation would be a tragic failure if nothing better than our mixed circumstances of good and evil, of truth and error, or light and darkness were to continue forever. The present condition of the world does not justify its existence or vindicate the creation of man. There is something better to eventuate! The present is only tolerable **as a stage** in the vast process of God's creative genius. The forecast of scripture anticipates a time when evil will have run its course, and when all that remains obstinately and persistently evil shall meet with swift, severe, stern measures of judgment and doom. Jesus came into the world to "seek and to save that which was lost," to be the "Saviour of the world," and to "give life to the world." He was born, He lived, He taught, He labored, He worked miracles, He gave Himself a sacrifice for sin, He died, He rose, He ascended up far above all heavens, He poured out His Spirit, He sent forth His apostles to establish His Church, to raise up His body in the earth. And is that *all*? If so, *it is not enough!*

The very purpose of the Christ's coming demands something more. We are not satisfied with such a climax. So far as it goes, it is well, but it does not go far enough. Sin, sickness and death still stalk **the world**. If Jesus came to be the Saviour of **the world**, to give life to **the world**, but **the world** still lies in the power of the evil one, and is "not of the Father," — something is missing! The nations are angry and there are wars and rumors of wars. Deceit, plunder, greed, lust, hatred, bigotry, tyranny, sorrow, pain, trouble and poverty plague all peoples and nations. If what we have had for two thousand years is all there is, and the last thing we are to see on earth is a miserable handful of Christians getting ready to die or be evacuated away to some far-off heaven somewhere, then Jesus' mission was a failure, and He might as well have remained in heaven so far as **planet earth** is concerned. If the ages of the future are to go on in endless repetition of what has been; if the age-long battle between Christ and Belial, between righteousness and evil, between the Church and the world is to continue forever with only slight advantages to one side or the other, but without a definite outcome of victory for one of the sides; if there is to be no progress or decisive and triumphant conclusion to the fact of Jesus Christ being the SAVIOUR OF **THE WORLD**, and the PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF **THE EARTH**, then there is an incompleteness about the entire message of the Kingdom of God which is not to be reconciled with the omniscience and omnipotence of our heavenly Father. What is begun *here* on this planet is to be finished *here!* If Christ came to save the world and rule all nations with a rod of iron, then His work is not finished until the world *is* saved, and the nations *are* subjected to His glorious rule!

There should be no need to remind any who read these lines that there is much more to come for this sin-weary world! It is somewhat like touring a beautiful and spacious mansion. Entry into the foyer is only the beginning. It would be unfair and misleading to judge the whole house by what is first seen, or to conclude that nothing more remains to be seen. Likewise, it is unfair to judge the whole Kingdom of God from the standpoint of this present *Church age*. This age has been but the foyer, the introduction to the grand and glorious Kingdom of God! The extent of the riches of God's kindness and the excellence of His glory will only be revealed in the age and the ages to come as the Kingdom expands, unfolds, and intensifies from glory to glory. This age is but a small segment of the rule of God for the ages! This age is not the whole stage for that rule. It is merely the scenes in the First Act. In these few scenes a great drama is being played — the outcome, however, is assured, for the Finger of God has been lifted up in the person of Jesus Christ. These scenes will give way to greater scenes when "the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," and all creation shouts for joy at the manifestation of God's sons!

For those who lived during the Second World War and suffered the terrible consequences of that conflict, one of the most important days of this past century was D-Day. That was the day when the Allied Forces landed on the beaches of Normandy and won the decisive battle against Hitler's army. True, it would still take another year for V-Day, or Victory Day, to occur, but it was D-Day that delivered the death blow to the Nazi enemy and guaranteed its ultimate defeat. For all of us who live with sin, sorrow and death and who suffer the terrible consequences of their destructive power, the most important day in all human history took place some two thousand years ago just outside Jerusalem. That was our spiritual D-Day! For when Jesus walked out of the tomb alive He won within Himself and for every son of God and for all humanity the decisive battle over satan,

sin, and death! Ah, we still see the effects of these enemies in our violence-filled world, in our broken-down and abusive relationships, in our weaknesses and fears, in our disease-ridden and aging bodies, and self-centered attitudes. But as surely as there has been a D-Day in the Kingdom of God, just that certain it is that there shall also be a V-Day! That's where the sons of God stand at this moment — between D-Day and V-Day! The battle is on, but the victory is sure, and the sons of God are pressing their way forward to overcome all things in this great Day of the Lord. This glorious victory will herald the day of manifestation and usher in to the visible world the **next stage** of THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM!

Long centuries ago in far-away Babylon the aged prophet Daniel received this challenging and assuring word from the Lord: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is the bright Morning Star (Rev. 22:16). There are many other stars besides the Morning Star in God's glorious celestial realm, His spiritual heavens. Here the signification of stars is identified with the saints. Each member of God's elect is one star in God's spiritual universe. You are a star in God's economy! You are appointed to have an eonian fixed position in God's heavenly Kingdom as a star, as a shining one, as a luminary. There are different degrees of glory to the stars, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead" (I Cor. 15:41-42). As one star outshines another in glory so is it in the incorruptible Kingdom realm of God. Stars have different dimensions of glory. The greatest of all stars signified to us is as the Sun Himself, Jesus Christ our Lord. But there is a vast multitude of stars possessing differing degrees of glory in the Kingdom of God — but they are all called "wise" stars and they all "turn many to righteousness," therefore they burn as bright lights in the Father's Kingdom. Stars are bright lights that give light where there is darkness.

I am sure most of my readers are familiar with the old song, "Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?" There is no scripture to indicate that the saints will wear "starry crowns," but there is scripture which is greater by far! It is the privilege of all who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to dwell upon the bright hope of this marvelous promise, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever." God's universe embraces all places. This little world of ours, and each star and sun and planet and moon are but tiny grains of sand on the seashore of infinity. Each one is small indeed in relation to all the rest of the systems, and in relation to limitless space. A conception of its magnitude can be gathered only from the stellar worlds themselves. What are those stars, in the likeness of which the wise teachers of righteousness are to shine to the age and beyond? How much brightness, and majesty, and length of days is involved in this analogy?

There are stars, as, for instance, Arcturus, which emits light equivalent to one hundred fifty-eight of our suns; Capella, one hundred eighty-five; and so on, until at last we reach the great star Rigel, in the constellation of Orion, which floods the celestial spaces with a brilliance fifteen thousand times that of the ponderous orb which lights and controls our solar system! Why, then, does it not appear more luminous to us? Ah, its distance is equivalent to thirty-three million diameters of the earth's orbit; and the latter is one hundred eighty-six million miles! Figures are weak to express such distances and sizes. It will be sufficient to say that its glowing light must traverse space as only light travels — one hundred eighty-six thousand miles a second — for a period of more than ten years before it reaches this world of ours. There are many other stars, which are hundreds of light years from our solar system. A few years pass away, and all things earthly gather the mold of age and the odor of decay as the desert winds blow the swirling sands over the crumbling ruins of ancient empires. But the stars shine on in their glory as in the beginning. Centuries and cycles have gone by, kingdoms have arisen and slowly pass away. Yet the stars' brightness is not dimmed, nor their force abated. The dew of youth still seems fresh upon them. No faltering motion reveals the decrepitude of age. These shine on in undiminished glory through all the ages of time, for they are the lights of **the ages**.

Thus shall those wise and blessed sons of God shine who turn the inhabitants of the world to righteousness. Thus shall their ministry and their years roll on from age to age until that wonderful age of the ages, the dispensation of the fullness of times wherein everything in heaven and on earth and throughout all realms is gathered together into one in God's Christ and God becomes All-in-all. What glories lie beyond this, we cannot yet know, but methinks there will be more worlds, further universes, vast new creations from the hands of God and His sons who, in Christ, become the Word by which the creative power of God brings forth His pleasure

and purpose forever. God has always been a Creator, for He has always been all that He is. God will always be a Creator, for should He stop creating, He would cease to **be God!**

Of this we may be sure: We who are redeemed have entered a progressive institution, a Kingdom in which stagnation will never enter. We will ever go on "from glory to glory," for "of the *increase* of His government...THERE SHALL BE NO END!" We will never come to the place where we can sit down with folded hands and say, "This is the end." The end of one creation, of one order, of one plan of the ages, will only bring us to the next. We who have been born into the heavenly realm, have entered a stage of action, we have become active agents in the greatest development program ever conceived. A whole universe awaits our touch and guiding hand. "What is *man*, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou hast put **all things** in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left N-O-T-H-I-N-G that is not put under him. But we see *not yet* all things put under him (man). But we see **Jesus crowned...**" (Heb. 2:6-9). Surely these words can mean nothing less than UNIVERSAL DOMINION! Away out there in the blue is a Kingdom of life and light and love for every son of God to explore and develop and perfect. And if ever, in all the countless ages to come, that Kingdom should become too small or overcrowded for its citizens, let us remember that we, being as He is, are therefore, one and all, the very same kind of Beings as He who simply spoke the word, and lo! the present worlds appeared. Being like Him, we will also be creators, one and all, and not destroyers, as in our human state. "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM."

God says that men enter His heavenly Kingdom by being born into it (Jn. 3:5). Men do not die to go to heaven, they are born there. And then after they are born into that state — after they become heavenly beings — they can lay up, by their obedience to the heavenly Father, heavenly riches which will not only be a place, but royal pomp and splendor and majesty and dominion beyond compare. Sonship does not only entitle one to residence in God's limitless and eternal domain, but to the ownership and rule of that domain. Ah, the sons of God are **heirs of God** and **joint-heirs with Christ their Lord**, who is the heir of **all things!** Oh, that it were possible to lift men up above the shadows, and give them just a glimpse of something higher! Mortal minds are so entirely inadequate; human eyes so dim; human ears so dull!

Heaven is not a mansion over the hilltop, nor the gratifying of the needs and desires of this vessel of clay. It is not that which will bring creature comfort. It is not a state of eternal creature enjoyment and rest. The celestial realm is something infinitely higher. It is eminence, power, majesty, glory. It is becoming the same kind of a Being as the One who made the worlds (Jn. 10:34-36; I Jn. 3:2), and will bring, not inactive rest with fluttering wings and strumming harps, but activities and accomplishments far surpassing that of earth's mundane limitations. And it includes kingship and priesthood over God's eternal and infinite domain. It is dominion and power and influence far above that which carnal minds can contemplate or even imagine. And then the place which we receive after entering this heavenly state is not heaven, but that which we receive as a consequence of our entrance into the celestial sphere. The place is the reward which faithful heavenly beings will receive as their very own, a part of their inheritance, heavenly real estate!

The stars are distant lights. They shine in other spheres. There is no doubt that vast numbers of these stars are "suns" like unto our own, the centers of great solar systems, with heavenly bodies that revolve around them, perhaps populated by beings of which we know nothing at this present time. Thus will it be in the Kingdom of the Son, in the spiritual heavens of God's universal and eternal dominion. Each son of God will be a star, a sun, shining forth in living and everlasting luster. Each member of the elect will faithfully radiate his beams of life and light and love, shining in those spheres, which the omniscient Father shall allot to them. Thus each shall become the central star of a spiritual solar system composed of myriads of creatures in God's glorious creation, which revolve around them, unto whom they shine as the revelation of God's nature, glory and power. And thus shall the scripture be fulfilled, "Then shall the righteous **SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN** in the Kingdom of **THEIR FATHER**. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat. 13:43). The Kingdom does not become the Kingdom of "the Father" until Christ, having put all enemies under His feet, including the last enemy death, delivers up the Kingdom to God, **EVEN THE FATHER**, and God becomes all in all (I Cor. 15:24-28). What glorious and ineffable prospects lie before us!

## LIKE A SEED

The Word of God contains mysteries, which little by little are opened to us like the opening of a rose. In His wonderful Kingdom parables Jesus revealed the great mystery of the *progression of the Kingdom* from stage to stage and realm to realm. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (Mat. 13:31-32). Again, "Behold a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds (the word of the Kingdom) fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them. Some fell upon stony places...some fell among thorns...but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat. 13:3-9). And yet again, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way..." (Mat. 13:24-25).

In this illuminating teaching Jesus reveals to His disciples the nature of the Kingdom of God. He teaches them how to know the *mysteries* of the Kingdom. What mystery is it? Ah, before anything else, it is the truth that the Kingdom comes **as a seed** into the midst of men, seemingly the smallest, most insignificant, weakest and most defenseless thing there is. It can be devoured by the fowls, it can be choked by the thorns, it can be scorched by the sun, and sometimes it can hardly be distinguished from the tares. That is the secret of the Kingdom! But just as life lies hidden within a seed, and springs forth in power and unfolds in beauty and substance to become a mighty tree, so the Kingdom of God has entered this world in the person of Jesus Christ and now the world is full of the redemptive power of God.

What a wonderful thing is vegetation! Look at this tiny acorn. Little sign does it give of the vital energy locked up within it — the costly diamond is more promising! But plant that diamond, plant it carefully in the richest of soil, under the most favorable conditions. Let your descendants ten thousand years hence visit the spot. No dazzling tree is there, flashing with countless jeweled leaves. Nothing is there but just what you planted — an unchanged, cold, dead diamond, perhaps much depreciated in value. But the acorn — an autumn wind sweeps through the forest; that little brown, seemingly dead acorn falls to the ground. The hoof of a browsing deer presses it beneath the sod. There it lies in its grave an unnoticed thing. But the germ of a great life is in it. The winter chill breaks away, amidst spring showers the sun warms the earth, the finger of its secret power touches its inner life, and, lo, the little brown nut is quickened, swells, bursts, roots, springs forth, grows, develops, and by the time your descendants visit the spot the whole earth is filled with mighty oaks! As the acorn embodies the tree in embryo, but is not the oak tree *in extenso*, so is the Kingdom in this age within the hearts and lives of God's elect. But God's elect shall, in due time, fill the earth with the power and glory of the Kingdom.

The mighty king Nebuchadnezzar beheld in a dream the same wonderful truth under another figure, and the aged prophet Daniel interpreted the king's dream with these words, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34-35). The revelation in this instructive experience of Nebuchadnezzar is that the Kingdom of God comes into the earth, smites the kingdoms of man until they no longer exist as the kingdoms of man, and the Kingdom of God increases until its glory and dominion fill the whole earth.

God has a wonderful plan **for the earth!** The firstborn Son of God came **into the world**, the cross of Christ was placed in **this world**, and Christ arose **here**, and poured out His Spirit **here**, and began to conquer the hearts of men **here**, and to build the new society of His Kingdom **here**. It is this effective power of the **increase of the Kingdom in the earth** that Jesus unfolds in His parables of the mustard seed and the other seeds. The seed is planted **in the earth**. The seed is very small but the tree is very great, the birds lodge in its branches and people seek shelter under its leaves. The Kingdom seeks the people and the ends of the earth and the heights of the heavens and the depths of the underworld. The Kingdom of God, which began as a small seed in these vessels of earth, has the very life of God in it. The Kingdom seed, which is Christ, is growing within us to become a great tree **in the earth**. The growing, increasing, and expanding Kingdom of God **in the earth** is forcing man out of the picture. And the mighty and all-glorious Kingdom of God shall continue to grow and

expand **in the earth**, and in the whole universe, until there is nothing else, but only GOD. He shall fill all things with the glory that He is, until He shall truly be all in all.

A dear brother with whom we correspond shared the following in one of his letters. "I recently took a sack of acorns to my Sunday School class and passed them out. I asked the class what they could see in them. Then I compared the acorn to the word of the Kingdom. Starting small it produces an oak tree, which then produces many trees, which produce a forest. When man rightly "divides" the Word, bringing his chain saws, then planers, table top saws, jig saws, etc., from one acorn comes a fine home, then a subdivision, then an entire city. Inside the homes the acorn produces trim, shelves, closets, and beautiful furniture. All from one acorn, one seed — and that seed is Christ!"

The notion that there is but one single age of the Kingdom, or the "Kingdom Age" as it is called, is foreign to scripture and contradictory to God's great purpose. God's Kingdom plan is a "plan of the ages," not one "Kingdom Age." The ages of the Kingdom of God stretch into infinity! "**Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:7)**. That doesn't sound like *one age* or a *mere thousand years* to me! Ah, the purpose of God is a purpose that encompasses the ages, and the Kingdom of God is a Kingdom that progresses and triumphs *through the ages*. As Jesus taught, it is like a farmer planting his seed in the soil. He makes the field ready and plants the seed in the ground. The seed lies buried under the earth, lost from sight, of course. If I had my way, I would expect a field full of corn tomorrow morning! After all, I put a lot of time and energy and money to prepare this soil and plant this seed. I did the right thing. I sowed the seed. An experienced farmer understands, however, that it is going to take *time* for the seed to sprout, to grow, to develop through all its stages, and ultimately bear fruit at harvest. The consummation doesn't come immediately nor instantly, but in season. Seedtime and harvest! That is God's method of operation in everything He does. It's been this way since the beginning, when God took six "days" to fashion the heavens and the earth, and it will continue to be His way throughout all the limitless ages. The Lord is ambitious. He enjoys growth and expansion! That is the way of His plan and purpose, always. Do not despair, precious one, if the work of God in you seems very slow. As long as there is some progress, however infinitesimal it may appear to the eye, GOD IS AT WORK! He will never leave you nor forsake you, He will not abandon the work of His hands, nor will He turn from His purpose in you. God will complete that good work He has begun in you! Oh, yes, He will! You see, this is the deep mystery of the Kingdom of God. Jesus has taught us that it comes like silent leaven, grows like a grain of mustard seed, develops like corn, which is "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Of the increase of His government and peace *within you* and in all the earth beneath and the heavens above, there shall be NO END! Eternal increase! God has only gotten started!

I heard a brother relate the following experience. He said, "It was 1977, and I really lost half my crop. It was a bad, bad year. It was so wet, I couldn't get half of it harvested and it didn't develop. So, at the end of the year, in October, I would walk through the fields and try to pick up a bushel here and a piece there. Then, I saw standing by itself a most extraordinary soybean plant. I walked over and I was shocked by its size and its good looks. I went and I carefully picked off the pods. There were 202 pods and I opened them and I counted out 503 soybeans and I took them home. I kept them in a pan all winter, and they dried out. The next spring they just seemed special to me. In 1978 I took those 503 soybeans and I planted them in a little plot behind my house. When October came I harvested 32 pounds! 32 pounds! I dried them out in the winter, and in 1979 I took those 32 pounds and planted them on one acre. When October came, I harvested. I had 2,419 pounds. Well, next spring was 1980 and I took those 2,419 pounds and planted them on 68 acres, which was all the land I had available. In October I harvested 2,100 bushels and cashed it out for \$15,000 dollars! Now, one bean stalk four years later, \$15,000 dollars. Not too bad, is it?"

What a beautiful modern day parable this is of the Kingdom of God! The extraordinary seed this farmer discovered in his field in the midst of desolation and ruin represents the only good seed to ever spring forth in the presence of the sin, darkness and death of earth's benighted ages. This good seed, this extraordinary seed, is our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who is the *Word of God*. It is a very good seed, for it is the germ of spiritual life. It is the *incorruptible seed*. When this seed was planted in the earth it began to grow vigorously and brought forth first the glory of the early Church. Then, from move to move, from visitation to visitation, from revival to revival, from dealing to dealing this seed has grown and multiplied and reproduced in the earth and now it is time for the *cash crop* that will bring blessing to all the families of the earth — the manifested sons of

God. The sons are the increase of the Kingdom of God within the Lord's elect. Within that first, extraordinary seed was a preview of the Kingdom when Christ with His entire body of sons will appear in the glory of sonship. And that, precious friend of mine, is how the Kingdom of God will also increase and expand from age to age throughout the ages of the ages with the unending increase of God! Think about it! Just as Jesus was the first seed for this age, bringing forth a harvest of many sons, so the sons are the first seed for the next age. What an increase of the Kingdom they will bring! And the harvest out of the age now dawning will be the seedbed for the age that follows after that. And of the *increase* of His Kingdom there shall be NO END!

**Man's God gets bigger each time a man grows.  
His Lord becomes greater, the more a man knows.  
One time, a lone mountain, His total domain.  
He grew with His people, Their gain was His gain.  
In Israel's small country, they centered His grace.  
He stayed with His people, their place was His place.  
He grew with their concepts, He grew with each thought.  
Bigger and bigger grew all that He wrought.  
From sacrificed creatures...to sacrificed wills.  
From temple that held Him...to heavens to fill.  
From war with the heathen...to love for all men.  
He grew, and He grew, and He grew...again.  
I know God is constant...His size cannot change.  
And never, no mountain, could limit His range.  
God's quart in our pint? Such greatness in man?  
God shows us as much, each day, as He can.  
A soul that is hard...sees not the Lord's kindness.  
A person that's rude...sees not the Lord's fineness.  
As children we're apt to misunderstand.  
So oft' misinterpret, the heav'nly command.  
We limit God's size... 'cause we are so stunted.  
It's not the Lord's fault, that we are thus runted.  
As we grow in grace...as we grow in love...  
So groweth our God...we keep learning of!**

**By Bob Robin (Used by permission)**

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 43 THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

### PART FORTY-THREE

As I begin this message on THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM I am moved to share these words from the pen of brother [Paul Mueller](#). He writes, "With each revelation and manifestation of Christ to His people, the Truth that He is increases, the Life that He is increases, and the Light of His glory increases, so that we know Him in greater fullness than we did previously. When Christ appears to His elect, as He is doing now, He comes in His *increased presence*. How wonderful to know the Christ of increasing truth, life, light and glory! He was revealed and manifested as the Latter Rain in 1948-1953 (Hos. 6:3). Since then, Christ has been revealed and manifested as the Living Word. He appeared within us as the Living Word, not in a manifestation of outward glory as in previous visitations, but to impart His word of truth in a hidden manifestation of Himself. And to know and experience Him in His greater glory as the King of kings and Lord of lords, as the One who increases in glory, is more spectacular than any previous manifestation of Christ. His glory, as revealed in us now, will do more for the needy of the world and for the creation than anything of the past. Also, the work of the Holy Spirit within us is to guide us into all truth, and show us things to come (Jn. 16:13). And when He shows us things to come, we have no desire to continue in the old ways of the past. Therefore, the glories of the past dim and fade from view when compared with the glory of His present revelation and manifestation. The glory of Christ increases with each revelation of Himself (Isa. 9:7). Thus, the revelation and manifestation of Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords is a far greater glory" — end quote.

The increase of God's Kingdom extends to all realms everywhere, but the reality and power of the increase of God's government is first experienced in our individual lives. Each of us is a microcosm of the macrocosm. You say, "How do I get to the place of maturity and fullness in the Kingdom?" Well, as I heard brother Bennie Skinner say one time, you don't get there by pulling an acorn out of your pocket now and then, and saying, "I've got an oak tree. Everybody look at my oak tree!" There are a lot of people that are presuming things, they are talking as though they have arrived, or they are settling for the measure they have and are calling it manifested sonship. They are manifested sons, they say, and they have even now entered into the fullness of God, they have already put on incorruption and immortality — but they haven't even planted the acorn yet! They have heard the message of sonship and the kingdom, they have been quickened in the revelation of this word, they can spout out all the terminology and doctrine of it, and speak all the high-sounding phrases and clichés, but live a low-sounding life. "Amen, brother Eby, that's the truth if I ever heard it!" they shout, and then go on living their carnal lives. They have their oak tree in an acorn — their sonship exists in the seed that has been placed in their hearts, but they have not planted the acorn. The power and glory of the Kingdom are not growing, developing and increasing within them. The word of the Lord to you today is: **Plant the acorn!** Water the acorn, fertilize the acorn, cultivate the acorn, let it grow, let it mature, and your potential as a son of God will unfold. The acorn will become a mighty oak tree spreading its branches through the heavens. I say today to all who read these lines, Come on up to mount Zion, come on up to your place in the throne, come on up to your full potential in the Kingdom. Expose your acorn to the conditions that will cause it to germinate, grow, develop and increase, and your branches will reach to heaven and your branches and leaves will overshadow and bless humanity.

The government of God is the Kingdom of God. His Kingdom is His authority, His lordship, His *rule*. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into our spirit is the seed or life-germ of His Kingdom. That is the beginning of His Kingdom within. We have already noted how Jesus described His Kingdom as a tiny grain of mustard seed, which is the smallest seed of them all, but it grows to be the biggest of plants. It becomes a tree, big enough for the birds to come and nest in its branches. The coming of the life of God into our spirit is the beginning of the Kingdom and it is the gift of God. "**Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom**" (Lk. 12:32). That germ of life, which is the word of life, comes into our spirit and it immediately changes our spirit. When there is no change in an individual's spirit, in his spiritual consciousness,

Christ has not come in. That is the first beginning of His government and His peace. By the operation of God we become a member of God's New Creation Man.

The Kingdom is birthed into us in an infinitesimally small beginning. But it comes with sufficient power to begin to change our lives! The government of God begins in that undistinguished place where the spirit of Christ takes root in the inner life. Little by little we begin to become aware of what God wants in our life, and the paths of obedience begin to be learned. The desire is created within us, by the new genetic makeup of our new mind, to want to do His will. We want to do what He wants us to do and to be what He wants us to be. It is right there that the church systems begin to lay upon the Lord's people their own man-made laws, creeds, commandments, rules, regulations, traditions, rituals, works, and a whole world of religious tomfoolery, and leads the child of God down the dead end street of man-made religion. But if the child of God will turn a deaf ear to the seductive voice of the gaudy harlot of the church systems, and hear only the voice of Christ by the Spirit, the Christ in him will continue to give him more light and understanding, and the Kingdom of God will grow and increase within him. As we walk in the light that the Spirit brings, the Kingdom of God increases and develops from stage to stage, from glory to glory within our lives.

Within the indwelling Spirit of God we possess that which has the power to open up, unfold and develop the government of God in our lives. But we do not have the rule of God's government within us just because we have Christ within us, or just because we speak in tongues, receive blessings, miracles, answers to prayer, or have some gifts of the Spirit. All of those are mere *blessings* and *gifts*. We do not have His **governmental rule** operating within us and through us until we have spiritually matured, becoming an *overcomer* by the conquering power of His life and nature! There is not a man or woman on the face of the earth today who has received spiritual authority and power to rule for God apart from putting on the mind of Christ and being an overcomer. Men have received great and wonderful *gifts* of the Spirit while still weak and immature (babes), but not KINGDOM AUTHORITY AND POWER. There is a great difference!

We can never rule anything until first we overcome it *within ourselves*. To "overcome" means to COME UP OVER THAT WHICH IS OVER US. The term implies the existence of obstacles in the pathway of the righteousness, peace, joy, and power of the Kingdom of God. When, within ourselves, we rise up above the circumstance, above the problem, so that it no longer harasses, troubles or controls us, we are then ready to begin to *control it*; to no longer be the victim of circumstances, but the master of them. Ah, my beloved, come up over what the religious systems have fed you! Come up over your own pride and inherent weaknesses! Come up over your timidity, fears, and carnal mindedness! Come up over the desire to build a reputation for your name! Come up over the myriad pressures from within and without! Come up over the old order of religious thinking, understanding, and works of the past! Come up over the world of turmoil and confusion about you! You are called to be an OVER-COMER. Come over that wall! Come over into the Kingdom of God and a realm of complete victory. If we cannot come out victoriously over ourselves and over the little temptations and frustrations of our fleshly life, and if we cannot stay out of the harlot's house (church systems) how can the Lord trust us to reign over that which is without? What kind of warriors would we make? How much could He depend upon us? He will give us the place for which we are prepared and qualified; we must set our faces to be overcomers if we are to sit with Him upon His throne and reign with Him over all things.

As sons of the Most High, we have access to the same strength that enabled Jesus to live an overcoming life — and to conquer even death. He has given to us that same authority and power that gave Him victory of sin, self, religion, death, hell and the grave. Have you ever wondered what would happen if Jesus would come and trade places with you? If suddenly He would come to dwell in *your body*? I have often wondered what He would do if He had my circumstances, my weaknesses, my lusts, my fears, my pressures, my problems. If the Master came to me and said, "Move over, I am coming to live in your house for a season," I do not doubt that in a short period He would have all my problems straightened out and all my weaknesses and turmoil under control. He would overcome all of the things that I struggle with. But the wonderful truth is, dear one, HE HAS COME! HE DOES LIVE IN MY BODY! AND HE LIVES IN YOURS! "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." (Gal. 2:20). "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9). Ah, He is right here within each one of us and He is fully able to be the power of our life as we yield to Him. This is the wonderful victory Christ is bringing to His elect in this hour as He comes within us as King of kings and Lord of

lords! He has come in lesser ways in the past, to do lesser things, but He is coming in great power and in great glory in this hour within those who are apprehended to be kings in His Kingdom.

You see, until Christ in you becomes your very life you won't know anything about the government of God except that it will some day rule over you. You will have to be subject. There are subjects in the Kingdom, and there are kings who rule over the subjects. You will be under those who are over you in the Lord, you will have to learn to be submissive, you will be required to take a servant's place, you will hardly be qualified to be called a "friend," because a friend knows his master's will (Jn. 15:15). The servant never shares the inside information and intimate thoughts, plans, and purposes of his master, he just does what he's told. That is where the vast majority of Christians are today! They are mere children in the family of God. Even the preachers and great personalities and super-stars of the church orders today are only babes in the family of God. They cannot lead you into the Kingdom of God. They are busily engaged in playing their little religious church games, and in making great names for themselves, and making great claims for their ministries; but their spiritual minds are darkened, having no understanding of what God is *really doing*, no vision of the purposes, principles, potentials, powers and responsibilities of sonship in the Kingdom of God.

Come hither into the *son realm*, into the *throne zone*, and learn the ways of God's government! All things are given by the Father into the hands of the Son. "He that **overcometh shall inherit all things**; and I will be his God, and he shall be **my son**" (Rev. 21:7). "To him that **overcometh** shall I grant to **sit with me in my throne**, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). "And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers" (Rev. 2:26-27).

It is in the realm of *sonship*, this realm of *maturity*, this realm of *overcoming*, that the increase of God's government is known. As Christ's life grows within us His government increases within. We find that we are able to reign over all His enemies within ourselves. We all have inherited characteristics, have learned ways, acquired traits, developed habits and personality quirks carried over from childhood, that are in opposition to the laws of the Kingdom of God. His government must increase within us until all those things are so ruled over by the mind of Christ that no one would ever suspect that they ever existed in our life. Many who know me would be surprised to hear that at one time in my life I suffered from an inferiority complex! Some people have been stubborn all their life and rebellious. They started in that rebellion in their teenage and never outgrew it. They've been stubborn, rebellious and bull-headed all their life. They want to have their own way. Some have fallen again and again to the lusts of their flesh, to greed, immorality, drunkenness, etc. But by the indwelling life of Christ you have been given power to lay down your life, and there is another government that is progressively being raised up within you, and as this government unfolds within you, you find that that stubborn will is broken, that rebellion is conquered in you, all your weaknesses are mastered within yourself. The increase of His government within delivers us from all the enemies of His Kingdom. Christ is King in us. He *rules!* He *delivers!* He is mighty to *save to the uttermost!*

Some people are naturally shy. You say, "Good morning," to them and they blush. You look into their eyes and they drop their head. They are so bound up with timidity that they are limited in every way. The increase of His government within will deliver you from that timidity! Other people are loud-mouthed, overbearing, and obnoxious. Every time you get within sight of them you hear their mouths. Yakity, yakity, yak...it goes all the time. The truth is that they are covering up something deep within them that is very painful — often a deep-seated insecurity. That person is trying to compensate outwardly for a deep inner lack. But when Christ the King unfolds within us sufficiently He "equalizes" us, bringing balance, harmony, sufficiency. His Lordship brings stability and wholeness. He fills up the valleys and brings down the high places, He makes the rough places smooth and the crooked places straight. The government of God can take the vilest of men — whoremongers, murderers, thieves, blasphemers, liars, haters, violent men whose lives have been marred and ruined by sin and disobedience and dissipation — and transform them into gentle, gracious, lovely, honest, clean, caring, humble, beautiful saints of the Most High God. THAT IS THE POWER OF HIS GOVERNMENT WITHIN! It is the power of God's divine life and nature wrought in the lives of men and women.

God purposes that His government rule not only *in* us, but *through* us. The government of God through us can bring peace in our homes. You can bring peace to your home if you want it. You may have an unsaved husband, or an unsaved wife. Or there may be all kinds of personality conflicts and clashing of wills in your

marriage or between parents and children. Just because a man and woman are married doesn't mean they don't have personality conflicts. Just because they are saved, baptized in the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues and sing in the spirit doesn't mean they don't have personality conflicts. They may love each other deeply and still have personality conflicts. When the personality conflicts outweigh their love for one another the marriage ends in divorce. But the increase of His government in our lives will bring peace in the home! We cry out for peace in the world, and dream of the day when the sons of God will bring it, but let us begin by bringing the wonderful peace of God's glorious Kingdom into our homes! The Kingdom of God will bring peace to your children. It will bring stability and blessing at difficult times. Someone may say, "But brother Eby, you don't know what I have to put up with, you don't know how impossible things are!" Well, then, have we not found an enemy that God's Kingdom cannot destroy? Have we not discovered something that the life of sonship cannot overcome and conquer?

I say to you today by the authority of God — if God's Kingdom is coming in you, if His government is increasing in you, then His government is absolutely capable of ruling in righteousness and peace and deliverance in your situation and circumstance. I do not say it will all happen overnight or tomorrow. But nothing is too hard for the government of the almighty Christ! You do not have to settle for things as they are. YOU can change them! He that is in you is mighty, and He will make you an overcomer right where you are. You must overcome *within yourself* before you can expect to see changes in those about you. God will flood your heart with a divine love that will go the second mile, that will swallow up all anger, resentment, hostility and reactions, that will give itself for the blessing of your mate, or your children, or your in-laws, or your neighbor, or your boss, no matter how difficult or ungodly they are. God will give you a heart to serve them in love, to be gracious, kind, merciful, compassionate, and forgiving. LOVE is the power of the Kingdom of God! You have been apprehended as a King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. You have power to reconcile, to bless, to redeem, to change, to transform all things. The overcomers are given power to rule. Unless we can first rule in our own lives, emotions, desires, circumstances, finances, problems, and life situations — how can we rule nations and worlds and galaxies!

Do we have enough of the government of God in us to influence the things around us? How much salt do we have in us? We are the salt of *the earth*! How much light shines forth out of us? We are the light of *the world*! Beloved, God wants His government to so increase in us that we change the complexion of all things about us. God is raising up His elect in this hour to sit with Christ *right now* on His throne. Oh, yes! His divine authority is beginning to operate in and through our lives in that undistinguished place where we are. Don't tell me that you are reigning in some mystical way in a high place in the spirit over Russia and Europe and Asia and Africa and America, calling the shots of what is happening in the political, social, judicial, military and economic realms, if you aren't ruling right where you are. Peace and righteousness and blessing shall be established wherever we go! It is our ministry to bring the Kingdom of God to bear on all situations great and small. The Kingdom of God is not just in word, it is not something we talk about in church, or read about in papers, and it is not a doctrine — the Kingdom of God is that power which is *working in us*. We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. We are given power to rule and reign *over the earth* (Rev. 5:10).

"Of the *increase* of His government and peace, there shall be *no end* (Isa. 9:7). Something has gotten hold of us to which there is **no end**. It is not that the Kingdom doesn't end, although that, too, is a great fact, but it is the *increase* of that government and peace that shall never end. The Kingdom of God is an **eternally increasing** government and peace! It eternally increases within us. How far does it go? It just keeps on going and expanding. There is no end to the enlargement. It never stops. It consumes your whole being, reaches out to your wife, your husband, and your children. It reaches out to your family. It reaches out to your neighbors and your friends and your enemies. It reaches out to your community and your city. It reaches out to your county and to your state. It reaches out to the United States of America. It reaches out to the nations, to continents and hemispheres and empires. It reaches out to all the ends of the earth. It extends to every planet in every solar system and to all the billions of galaxies. It is a universal Kingdom. It increases with eternal increase until everywhere throughout all the unbounded heavens every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. It increases until God is all in all. God is raising up Princes in His ever-increasing government, to bind all kings with chains and all nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written. Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels? God's *government of sons* is about ready to appear.

Just this week while writing this message a letter arrived in the mail from a dear brother in New Zealand, and his sharing stirs me deep to the depths of my spirit. He writes, "About three months ago, when in prayer, I saw a little vision which is so encouraging. Looking downwards, I saw the earth enshrouded with a plastic film-like substance, and just beneath that film was a motionless man fully dressed. The man was being pushed from below or drawn from above, somehow. The head and shoulders were protruding into the film, which was stretched to the point of almost causing it to split. On inquiring of our Father, "What is this, Lord?" understanding was given to me by Him replying, "The imminent birth of the sons of God." I understood that the earth was the womb and that the Corporate Man is in the birth canal ready to be born. Oh! What a Day lies immediately before us, my brother..."

To the saints is given the authority to baptize men with the Holy Ghost, but also to baptize them with *fire*, to cast them into the great lake of fire and brimstone which *our God is* and which *in Him we are*, to burn out of their minds, souls, and bodies the thoughts and ways and passions and wills that are contrary and hostile to the will of God. The fire of God is His all-consuming and all-powerful LOVE. Out of His love the sons of God shall send decrees and commands coming from the Most High God out of Zion. The sons of God will send decrees to individuals, to rulers, to authorities, to governments, to nations — we will even send commands to the elements as our Lord did when He spoke to the winds and the waves, hushing the gale and calming the waters with His Word.

There is no doubt about it — Jesus brought the reality of the Kingdom of God into the earth and the Kingdom has been here ever since. May I say again that this Kingdom is a progressive and growing thing. "Of the *increase* of His government and peace there shall be *no end*." "No end" transcends even the ages, reaches beyond all time as we know it, and bespeaks of **eternal increase**. That is one of the glories of the Kingdom! It has always existed, for God in His omniscient purpose and omnipotent power and dominion has always existed. Two thousand years ago Jesus brought the Kingdom *into the earth*, into the *world of men* in a unique way. But the Kingdom already existed in God, and will always exist! It will increase, grow, and expand from realm to realm throughout eternity. The universe itself reflects this divine principle of unending expansion. Exquisite measurements by the Hubble telescope have lent strong evidence to the idea that the observed expansion of the universe will continue forever. Previously, scientists who believe the galaxies and the space between them were created in a cosmic explosion about 15 billion years ago had wondered whether the swelling of space would eventually stop and all matter would eventually reverse its direction and begin to move backward, converging in the same infinitesimal point where it all began. The Hubble data suggest that the universe will keep expanding, rather than collapsing. And all the while new stars and new worlds are being birthed! Eternal increase!

There is nothing static or sterile about this Kingdom at all, but a constant, eternal growth! This wonderful reality of the Kingdom is defined in the Lord's Prayer where He taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come." One of the greatest revelations of the Kingdom that one can receive is the wonderful truth of **divine increase**. All that pertains to God and His Kingdom is increasing! The Lord and all the blessings and benefits of His Kingdom are increasing daily. Grace, mercy, goodness, wisdom, righteousness and power are increasing in the earth with each succeeding age. "*Grace and peace be multiplied unto you,*" the inspired apostle Peter wrote. To multiply is to increase! God's covenant with Abraham was, "*Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee*" (**Heb. 6:14**). Abraham has been multiplied into millions of people as the stars of the heavens for number. What increase! God is increasing Himself in His sons, just as Abraham has increased through his offspring. "*And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered...INCREASETH WITH THE INCREASE OF GOD*" (**Col. 2:19**). This is an incredible and marvelous revelation and it unlocks for us the beauty and power of God's great purpose of the ages. If we observe history, we will discover that the unfolding of God's grace and goodness and will has been intensified with each passing age, and will continue to expand and increase with each succeeding age until all is gathered up into God again, and He is all in all.

Someone has written, "If only the people of Israel would have had minds that were being renewed, as well as the spiritual degree of maturity that we have today, when they traveled for forty years through the waste-howling wilderness! But their spirits and minds were dull, for God had not given them an understanding heart, eyes to see and ears to hear. Also, we are a few thousand years and many fulfilled purposes of God beyond that day. Furthermore, the revelation of Christ, which increases with each age of time, has been increasingly

manifest from that day to this. And we are the recipients of that greater manifestation and revelation of Christ! What a process of spiritual increase from that day to this! And what tremendous spiritual growth has taken place in our lives! Only as we discern the limited spiritual growth in most Christians today can we properly appreciate the extent of our own growth in God. Yet, we are not to compare ourselves with others, for Christ is our only true, spiritual standard and example."

God in the beginning ordained in the earth the orderly progression of the seasons. Most areas of the world experience what is spoken of as a rainy or wet season and a dry season. In the land of Israel, between the early and latter rains, there was a period of great dryness and dearth. The pools dried up and the brooks ceased to flow. But there was a wise design in the dryness, even as there was a beneficent purpose in the rain. It was the time when under intense heat of the sun the grain was able to develop in a particular stage. We know from Church history that the Lord Jesus visits the earth with special outpourings of Himself from time to time, in order to accomplish the work of the Kingdom. There are seasons of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord! The reformation, the great Methodist revivals, the move of God in Scotland, the Great Awakening in America, the revival in Wales, the Pentecostal outpouring, the Latter Rain visitation, and present movings of the Spirit in various regions of the earth — the Lord's presence and power and glory comes among His people in a mighty way, but afterwards lifts for a season, so that other purposes can be accomplished. Such flowings and ebbings of divine life are according to the law and design of God.

Some necessary changes are wrought in our lives through means of blessing and glory, and others take place when we go through dry seasons or through the fires of testing and refining. So there are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and there are times when it seems He has pulled the veil over His face, hiding His presence from us. There are times when there is a forward thrust — new dimensions are opened up, great revelations stream forth, mighty power is displayed, there is blessing, quickening, growth all around, and spiritual advance is made. Then the glory lifts, the blessings diminish, the siftings and shakings commence as we are brought before His judgment seat, and that which was received with great joy is put to the test. It is during these times of "nothingness" that the elect, the remnant of the Lord is severely tried, that they may be proven and found faithful. Will the vision and deposit received during the rain now take deeper root to become a firm, stable and permanent *inward nature*, the planting of the Lord; or will the adverse circumstances and pressures from without cause the tender shoot to wither and die?

This crucial time *between* the "seasons of refreshing" will either make or break the follower of the Lord! Each refreshing begins with the Spirit of God sovereignly moving over the heads of men. God has never asked for either the approval or cooperation of any chief priest, scribe, rabbi, bishop, pope, preacher or organization when He is ready to visit His people in power. Suddenly, without warning, He thrusts forth upon the scene the thundering voice of a John the Baptist or a Luther; brings to the stage of action a Knox, a Wesley, a Whitefield; or showers from some bright cloud, refreshing rain-drops of His life and graces and gifts, unfolding the beautiful blossoms and exquisite flowers of glowing faces, transformed lives, weeping, repenting sinners, spontaneous testimonies, healings and miracles and provisions, revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, mighty blessings and powerful baptisms of grace and glory. The leaders, superintendents and bishops of the time-honored religious systems beat on their desks, rant and rave, denounce it as heresy, attribute it to the devil, label it as wild-fire, and declare that it will not last. And, of course, it *doesn't* last! In due time the fiery cloud of glory passes and the invigorating showers evaporate. But let me tell you something! Though the visitation *ends*, there is an establishment of something permanent in the earth, the thing that God was bringing forth out of His presence.

Let me illustrate. Martin Luther is gone, and much of the movement he founded has since gone into apostasy, but the *truth* the Spirit of God spoke so eloquently and powerfully through his lips remains in the earth, yea, is *established* in the earth, and millions of Christians who have nothing whatever to do with the Lutheran denominations do believe, and know, and have experienced that men are *justified by faith*. When the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues was again poured out more than a century ago, all the main-line denominations of Christendom rejected it as wild-fire or satanic manifestations. But it did not go away. God by His sovereign power *established* that glorious experience in our generation, and now, behold, most of the denominations that mocked and ridiculed the "holy-rollers" are now themselves speaking in tongues! Oh, it isn't *called* "speaking in tongues" anymore, it is now called by the more refined title "*glosalia*." And the time-honored denominations still spurn the name "Pentecostal," so it is called the "Charismatic Renewal." Then

when Christ came in 1948 as Latter Rain, all the Pentecostal denominations, without exception, rejected Him and there was a great exodus out of the denominations. "Fanaticism! Heresy! Delusions! Deception!" they cried. And they would have nothing to do with the heavenly worship, prophecy with the laying on of hands, or the message of the Kingdom of God. By 1953 the rain had ended. The great glory cloud lifted. The movement split and splintered and splintered again, and practically disappeared from off the earth. But — today in a great many Pentecostal Churches you will hear them singing the worship choruses, and singing the harmonious song of the Lord in the Spirit, and prophesying with the laying on of hands! They don't even have a clue where these things originated, where they came from. But they came from the Christ of the Latter Rain! God brought forth a manifestation of His life by the outpouring of Christ and it raised all things in all realms. And make no mistake about it — the unique things God was doing in that visitation were *established* in the earth! They have infiltrated even the very movements that rejected them. Those pressing on in God are not to remain there, but each truth and experience in God remains, like a grade or course in school, for others who are coming along progressively in God. Ah, God does have a sense of humor, doesn't He — He gets the last laugh! But the great truth is: OUR GOD IS MARCHING ON!

My father in the flesh was a Pentecostal minister, and by God's design, he was stuck in Pentecost. The Lord moved my wife and me on into a deeper move of the Spirit, into a further word, and I remember I used to talk with my dad, and of course, I wanted him to see the glorious things we were seeing in the Spirit. I wanted him to have an ear to hear, but he never could hear. So usually our discussions would end up in an argument. One day the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, and the Lord said, "Leave him alone! He is in the realm that I have appointed him to, and he will not be in another." And you know, that brought me a great peace, because now I was able to fellowship with him on the level that he could fellowship with me, without strain or condemnation, realizing that he was in the place that God ordained for him, and I was in the place that God had ordained for me.

My father died thirty-five years ago, and he passed away in the Pentecostal realm, just as the Lord had said. Shortly after he passed away, the Lord gave me a dream. In this dream I was in the living room of our home and all of my family was there, my father and mother, my brothers, my wife and my kids were all there sitting in chairs and sofas around the walls. My dad was sitting on the end of a sofa and looked exactly the way he did just before he died. Nobody was saying anything, we were just there. Suddenly my dad looked up, gazed intently across the room into my eyes, and said, "**P-r-e-a-c-h t-h-e MANCHILD!**" I then awoke out of that dream and immediately I knew two things by the Spirit. I knew that now my dad knew something that he did not know before he died. But I also knew that he *represented* a cry that comes from the very realm of death itself, the cry of the groaning creation that is groaning for the manifestation of His life. It is the cry of creation for the manifestation of the sons of God who shall deliver creation from the *bondage of corruption!*

You see, when I said that my dad was stuck in the Pentecostal realm, I didn't mean that he was stuck there forever! We are all on a journey into God which is pictured by the entrance of the priesthood into the tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness, first into the Outer Court where our sins are dealt with by the blood of the Lamb; then into the Holy place with its candlestick, table of showbread and altar of incense, where we experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit, begin to eat of the good word of God in the loaf of the body of Christ, and learn the powers of prayer and praise; and finally into the Most Holy Place of the *fullness* of God's life, nature and glory. But you see, dear one, the end of the matter is not the Outer Court, the Holy Place, or the Holiest of All. That's but a blueprint of our *progression* into God. It should be obvious to all who have eyes to see that the vast majority of Fundamentalist and Evangelical Christians never get past the Outer Court. Pentecostals and Charismatics dwell in the Holy Place. Those called to sonship have entered on into the Most Holy Place where God's glorious fullness may be known. These same heavenly realities are figured in the three feasts of Israel — Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. But the *end* of the matter is not the three steps of the tabernacle or the three stages of spiritual life experienced in the spiritual feasts of the Lord. Oh, no, that is merely a blueprint of the *redemptive process* of God! In the *end*, when God becomes All-in-all, there will be NO COMPANIES. There will not be Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, Latter Rain, the Bride of Christ, Servants of God, and Sons of God. In the end there are not people living in the Outer Court and others living in the Holy Place, while others dwell in the Most Holy Place. IN THE END THERE IS ONLY GOD ALL IN ALL, God *everything to everyone!*

You see, it's just like a school. The purpose of a school is not the school itself. The purpose of a school is that people may *progress through the grades* and eventually get *beyond* the school. Everybody that enters the

school is supposed to **graduate**! So the purpose is not to glory in the fact that I am in the first grade, or the eighth grade, or that I am a junior, sophomore, or senior. That's not the glory of it at all. The glory of it is that each grade accomplishes its purpose, brings *everyone* to the final, same accomplishment. The purpose of every step, level, and realm in God is that every man may, in God's due time, pass through all the grades and graduate into the fullness of God. We have been moving through the Feasts, and God has now brought a people to the Feast of Tabernacles. He has brought us to the Third Day. He has brought us to the Most Holy Place. Each step is but a temporary arrangement, we have been passing through the grades, and *all creation* will pass through the grades. And when every man who has ever lived, or ever shall live, has received his diploma and walked off the stage on his graduation day, God will be all in all. Hallelujah! A sign will then be posted on the door of the school, "Closed." If everybody graduates, you don't need a school anymore. Such is the *increase* of the Kingdom of God!

Spiritually, no one can hinder or stop the ongoing seasons of God as He brings forth His purposes in the earth. Historically, the purposes of God have marched forward triumphantly from age to age, from dispensation to dispensation, from dealing to dealing, unfolding God's Kingdom in the earth from realm to realm. The New Testament record begins at the period just before and at the time of the coming of Jesus into the world. Just like the seasons, "*When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son*" (Gal. 4:4). He came into the world to do away with the old dispensation and covenant of law, which had no power to bring life to dead souls and is symbolized by winter, and to usher in the new dispensation of grace, which is symbolized by spring. The law of God has never been fulfilled except in Jesus Christ. That which man could not do, Christ came and did as He walked upon earth and when He died upon Calvary. The darkness and winter of condemnation and bondage, which rested upon man, were done away by the Lord Jesus Christ, who satisfied every demand of the law. The rain of the Holy Spirit which came with the doing away of the law softened the ground and prepared it for the bringing in of a better covenant.

As we think of the faint light that the people of God had under the old dispensation, we see that it truly was winter. It was like the warmth of the sun in midwinter, when its rays can scarcely penetrate and disperse the frost in the air. There was no more power in the law to give life to one soul, than there is power and warmth in the midwinter sun to bring out the flowers of spring and the fruits of summer. In the individual this is a picture of the soul who is dead in trespasses and unbelief; full of deadness and darkness, full of fruitlessness; whose life is bleak, cold, and dead, like midwinter. When the breaking up comes, and the rays of the sun begin to fall upon the winter of death and unbelief, the clouds of doubts and fears and ignorance begin to roll away, and the warmth of the *Sun of righteousness* brings life and warmth to the soul. It is the rain that comes when the winter begins to break up that prepares the ground for the seed and fruitfulness. It is the breaking up that comes in deed conviction and dealing, with godly sorrow and repentance that prepares the heart of man for the seed of Christ and the fruit of the Kingdom. The rain cannot bring fruit any more than can the snow and winter; but it prepares the ground for the germination of the seed, which has life in it, and has life more abundant.

Dispensationally, we are standing at the *springtime* of our development into the fullness of God's Christ. As the summer comes on the Sun of righteousness arises within us and the flowers appear upon the vines of the heritage of the Lord, giving promise of a rich harvest of mature fruit upon every plant and vine that the Father has planted in His vineyard. This is the beginning of the setting up of the Kingdom of God in that earth which *we are*. Everything is either in blossom or in flower; upon the olive tree and upon the vine appear the bud, the blossom, the green fruit. Though the fruit has not yet ripened, though the "many brethren" have not yet come fully into the likeness and image of the firstborn Son, nor into the fullness of His power and glory, yet the fragrance and beauty of the first days of spring cover the Lord's vineyard; the sunshine of the Father's approval is over the vineyard of His sons. The warmth of His grace and the light of His revelation is wooing the buds to burst forth into flowers, the flowers to give place to the tiny fruit, and the immature fruit to go on to perfection. And, blessed be God! none can hinder or stop the mighty working of God in this hour to bring forth His sons and the **next stage** in the manifestation of His Kingdom.

The wonderful truth is: NO ONE CAN HINDER OR STOP THE PROCESSES OF GOD! God has a plan! At the beginning of the Church age the world was visited by events so momentous in their power and glory that all things were changed from that time onward. In the eternal realm before the ages were formed, and ages before man ever saw the light of earth's day, the almighty Lord set in motion His omniscient and immutable purpose for the ages which were to follow. As a year is filled with weeks and a week is filled with days and a

day is filled with hours, so time is filled with ages and ages with dispensations. Let all who read these lines thoroughly understand that our all-wise heavenly Father planned the events of each successive age from the very first age unto the ages of ages far beyond the comprehension of mortal man. It is not by accident or by natural evolution that the world has progressed from the darkness of paganism to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is by divine design!

The *plan of the ages* conceived in the heart of Him who purposed all things after the counsel of His own will is being worked out *one step at a time* in each succeeding age in like manner as you and I have often planned in advance the work for each successive day of a week. Is it not true that many of the wives and business people now reading this paper have plans in mind for today and tomorrow and perhaps even weeks and months into the future? I do! Each week I can tell what I, Lord willing, will be doing on each day of the week. There is mail to answer, days for study and writing, business with the printer or at the post office and numerous other things, and each week is mapped out in advance. Whether consciously or unconsciously we all plan ahead, daily and hourly working toward some human goal. There is nothing that opens the wellspring of love, of understanding and hope and faith, in the hearts of God's people like THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS PURPOSE. What infinite illumination floods our souls, what joy and satisfaction and assurance fill our hearts when by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God our great and wonderful Father is seen to be a God of purpose, knowing the end from the beginning, because He *planned* the end from the beginning! He created all things by His omnipotent power that His glorious purpose might be fulfilled. And the power that made all things is the same power that upholds all things, and fills all things, and controls all things and shall bring to a successful conclusion the divine purpose in all things.

The Kingdom of God came first of all in the person of Jesus. Then it came in 120 disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost. Then it came upon the household of Cornelius the centurion, and upon the Gentiles. But upon the rocky slopes of the isle called Patmos the beloved John saw beyond the redeemed of his day — he beheld with wonder "a great number that no man can number." John was a great mathematician, and he managed to count up to one-hundred and forty-four thousand footstep followers of the Lamb standing upon mount Zion. But that was only a representative number for the company of the manifested sons of God: as for the Church of God, gathered out of all the tribes and tongues and peoples and nations of earth, he gave up all idea of computation, and confessed that it is "a number that no man can number." When He heard them sing he said, "I heard a voice like the voice of *many waters* and like great thunder." There were so many of them that their song was like the Aegean sea lashed to fury by a tempest, nay, not one great sea in uproar, but ocean upon ocean, the Atlantic and the Pacific piled on each other, and the Indian ocean upon these, and other oceans upon these, layers of oceans, all thundering out their mightiest roar: and such will be the song of the redeemed when *every creature* which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, is heard saying, "**Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb unto the age of the ages!**" (Rev. 5:13).

There you have the glorious outcome of the increase of the Kingdom! Behold, and see, ye who laughed at His Kingdom, see how the little Lamb has become hundreds of billions! Now look ye, ye foes of Christ, who saw the handful of corn on the top of the mountains; see how the fruit thereof doth shake like Lebanon! Who can reckon the drops of the dew or the sands of the seashore? When they have counted these then shall they not have guessed at the multitude of the redeemed of earth, and of the underworld, and of the starry worlds above, that Christ shall bring to glory. And all this harvest from one grain of wheat, which except it had fallen into the ground and died would have remained alone! Oh, beloved, what a harvest from Mary's little Lamb! What fruit from that glorious Man of Nazareth! Men esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; and they made nothing of Him, and yet there sprang from Him a great and glorious and universal Kingdom filled with multitudes, which are as many as the stars of heaven! This day shall declare it without fail. Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the mystery of it! The **increase** of the Kingdom of God! What anticipation thrills our ransomed souls as we contemplate the potential of the wonderful age and the *ages to come*! God acted yesterday. He acts today. He will act tomorrow. We cannot mark the boundaries of His Kingdom any more than we can mark the boundaries of the universe. In the late 1950's a military idealist styled by the American press as an "agrarian reformer" sought to liberate the people of Cuba from the "repression" and "corruption" of President Fulgencio Batista. Fidel Castro was hailed by the New York Times as a man of high ideals, with strong ideas of liberty, democracy and social justice. Lorain and I were missionaries in Cuba during and after the Cuban revolution. Castro was in power for only a few months when it became crystal clear to us, as it was not yet to the Cuban

people, that the Castro government was an atheistic, Communist regime. But apart from the negative character of his revolution, the methods he employed in his takeover of the Caribbean island do serve as a powerful illustration of the *increase* of the Kingdom of God.

When Fidel Castro arrived in Cuba from Mexico with a handful of men to spark the revolution, he was practically unknown. He spent time gathering around him men who were fired with the same zeal as he to see their country under new government. In those early days they were only a few men with Castro as their leader. But after the creation of some "incidents" the Cuban people rapidly became aware of them and their professed objectives. Little by little fathers and sons commenced to leave their homes, families, and jobs to join Castro's forces in the mountains in order to "liberate" their country. Soon support increased, the number of rebel soldiers, sympathizers and supporters began to swell, and the passions of the Cuban people were stirred. Castro expertly organized his forces and ruled and controlled the mountain areas where his armies freely roamed. His men were well trained and equipped and fought courageously.

The area of the country under Castro's domination was declared to be the territory of "Free Cuba." It had its own government — Castro and his top aids. But most of the Cuban territory and people was still under the control of the Batista dictatorship. After several fierce battles the territory of "Free Cuba" was enlarged. We fell into that territory during the latter part of 1958, and were cut off from the outside world, from mail service, and from the rest of the island. Fighting and bombing became daily occurrences in our town. Several times a day we would run for shelter when we heard the airplanes approaching town. As Castro's advance continued, suddenly President Batista, in the dark of night, fled the country. The revolution was victorious! But — though Batista had departed, and technically the revolution has triumphed, Castro was still not "in control" of the nation. He and his troops began the long trek up the island to Havana. As soon as he arrived in the capital he began consolidating his power, taking over every function of government from the top to the bottom. Many months passed before *all things* were firmly established under the revolutionary order.

There are many things to learn from parables, both old and new, for by them truth is taught with more force than any spoken word. Almost two millenniums ago God manifested His *first Son*, the Lord Jesus Christ. The seed of God's Kingdom on earth was planted in that one man — who is the Head of all the sons of God prepared of God throughout the age. He is the leader and initiator of the Kingdom. Jesus was unknown among all the rulers and the kingdoms of earth. He gathered around Himself a handful of men from the province of Galilee in the tiny land of Israel. Into them He impregnated the revelation and life of the Kingdom. They in turn, with the resurrected and ascended Jesus directing, marched through the nations proclaiming the Kingdom of God with power and announcing that finally this Kingdom would rule from pole to pole and from sea to sea. Through the age men and women have defected from the kingdom of darkness, from the kingdoms of this world, to join themselves to the free "New World" of the Spirit, becoming citizens of God's Kingdom. For two thousand years Christ's army has been forming, being meticulously trained and adequately equipped by the power of the Holy Ghost. These sons of God have fought many battles, although these battles for the most part have been confined to the small and undistinguished territory of their *own earth* — soul and body. Long has been the preparation and persistent the struggle. And even now, at the end of the age, it still seems that the whole world lies in the lap of the evil one! But soon — yes, **very soon** — there shall be a glorious and decisive victory! Our lovely Lord Jesus Christ, together with all the glorified sons of God who through the furnace of affliction and the heat of battle have qualified to reign with Him, shall come forth into *full manifestation*. The clay feet of the image of great Babylon shall be smitten by this heaven-sent army as by a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and by them will be crushed the whole system of Babylon with its millenniums of confusion, deceit and darkness Oh, my soul! What a word! But even as the sons of God make their appearance, marching forth conquering and to conquer, not by the sword of man, but by the sword of the Spirit *which is the Word of God*, all will not yet be as it should be, and for this reason they must reign on and on and on...*until* "ALL ENEMIES are put under His feet."

We have all eternity to dwell with God and to work with people. The challenges and tasks shall extend into all ages of time, calling for redemptive ministry to flow through us to the whole creation, just as the Lord Jesus' ministry flows forth unto us today. Through us God shall wipe away all the tears of earth's teeming billions — of all who have *ever* lived and died upon this planet, and of all who shall yet live. All shall be raised up and redeemed, all shall be saved, delivered, and transformed, and all shall live in righteousness, peace and joy in the presence of God. There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more

pain. In those blessed ages sin and death and hell shall be destroyed in every creature and in every world, throughout all God's vast universe, and God shall be all in all. Praise His matchless name! Such is the *increase* of the Kingdom of God! If there is no more pain there can be no more hell, for the torment of hell is pain. If there is no crying there can be no death, for death floods our faces with tears. If there is no more sorrow there can be no sin, for sin begets heartbreak and sorrow. Oh glorious victory! Only the *increase* of God's Kingdom can bring creation to that Day!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 44**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FORTY-FOUR**

**THE ORDER OF MELCHIZADEK AND THE AGES TO COME**  
**THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH**

It is a conspicuous fact that the various errors and inconsistencies found in the King James Version of the New Testament serve to obscure any clear understanding of the teachings of the scriptures in regard to God's wonderful **plan of the ages**. One of the most inexcusable of these misleading translations is the unqualified use of the English word "world." The word "world" has a limited meaning in English, but is used by the translators as the one English rendering for at least three widely differing ideas in the Greek text. This one word, *world*, is used to translate a Greek word which means a distinct period of time such as an age, epoch, or dispensation; it is also used to translate a Greek word denoting the visible things created — the earth or the universe; and finally it is used to translate a Greek word denoting the inhabitants of the earth together with their culture, morality, customs, life style, organized society, government, etc.

One of the Greek words erroneously translated "world" is the word AION. AION denotes a specific period of time — an *eon* or an *age*. The ages are often referred to in the scriptures, and the study of the exact conditions and purposes of each of them is not a fanciful pursuit, but is rather the only foundation for any true knowledge of the development of God's plan and kingdom in the earth. It is not possible to consider all of the ages in this writing, but only a few that might be confused one with another.

The age of law, which began with the giving of the law to Israel at mount Sinai, and ended with the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is mentioned by Zacharias in his prophecy at the birth of John the Baptist: "As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world (*aion* — age) began" (Lk. 1:70). The same period is referred to by Peter in Acts 3:21, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world (*aion* — age) began." These references, as one can clearly see, are not to the creation of the **world**, as the King James rendering would indicate, but to the beginning of that particular period in which the prophets spake, beginning primarily with Moses. As a distinct period of time which was to end, the age of law is mentioned about forty times in the New Testament and is called the "world" in the King James Bible! Here are a few examples. "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world (*aion* — age, the age of law), neither in the world (*aion* — age, the church age) to come" (Mat. 12:32). "The disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world (*aion* — age)?" (Mat. 24:3). "And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world (*aion* — age) are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Lk. 16:8).

The present age of the calling out of the body of Christ, in which the grace of God has had its appearing unto salvation, began where the law ended, with the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. This age, and the fact that it, too, will end, is referred to as "world" in a number of places. A few of the passages follow: "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (*aion* — age)" (Mat. 28:20). "Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world (*aion* — age), but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:20-21). "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (*aion* — age)" (Tit. 2:12). By these and other passages it may be seen that the **present age** is a particular limited period of time in which special conditions are to prevail, and definite purposes to be realized.

In explaining one of the Kingdom parables to His disciples, Jesus mentioned that "The harvest is the end of the world (*aión* — age)" (Mat. 13:39). Because of the King James' misuse of the word "world" in this and other passages, people have latched on to this and fabricated all kinds of doctrines about the "end of the world." But the *world* is not about to end! This age will end, of course, for every age has its ending, and then gives way to the dawn of another age — so why then all the upset and fear? Furthermore, if WE ARE NOT OF THIS AGE, and have by God's grace tasted of the POWERS OF THE AGE TO COME, why do we get overly concerned about this age ending? The desire of all the Lord's people should be for that **new age** which lies before us, and however God chooses to bring this present evil age to an end, will but open the flood-gates of far greater glory to come! We say that we are not of this world/age, yet we are constantly clinging to it and fearing the doom to come upon it. Ah, how we need the Holy Spirit to guide us into ALL TRUTH, until we are ready to joyfully relinquish all of the old, to lay hold upon the new.

Judging from the mass of Christian writings and from utterances in sermons and teachings from many different doctrinal persuasions, this age is assumed by many to be the *final age*, ending with the coming of Christ, the final judgment, and the destruction of the world. Others believe that there is yet *one more age* which they term the "Kingdom Age" or the "Millennium," which will wind up God's great program on earth. These are the two errors abroad in the land today in respect to the Kingdom of God. There is a tendency among God's people to limit the Kingdom either to *this age* of the Church economy, or to the *next age* called the Millennium or the Kingdom Age. The first group can see nothing in the Kingdom beyond our present experience — except to die and go to heaven! To these the Kingdom is identical with our salvation experience and the multiplied gifts, blessings, provisions, and benefits of the Church age. This concept views the Kingdom as a "little flock" right up to the end of time, in the world, coexisting as it were with the world, yet not of the world, but never triumphing over the world. According to this view the Church and the world, or the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil, both continue as they now are right up to the end of time when Jesus comes again and terminates the whole program, destroying the present heavens and earth, casting the wicked into everlasting hell fire, and shipping the saints off to glory. In this view there is no ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God over the kingdom of darkness on earth, no consummation of the Kingdom where all kindreds and tongues and peoples and nations serve Him, and God is all in all. Instead of *consummation* these dear people settle for *termination*. God just "winds things up" and the whole program on earth comes to a jarring halt. According to this scheme the prophecy of Daniel will never be fulfilled: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall BREAK IN PIECES AND CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44). Nor, if these brethren are right, can the prophecy of Revelation 11:15 come to pass: "The kingdoms of *this world* ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

The second error recognizes no present literal Kingdom of God on earth, pushing the Kingdom off into a future age, making its present reality utterly meaningless. These people are always talking about the "*coming* Kingdom." Men with their human theology have imagined that the Kingdom of God has not yet come on earth and that it remains to be "established" during the "Millennium." People often declare in no uncertain terms that Jesus is returning to "set up" the Kingdom. They proclaim that the Kingdom is an "age" of one thousand years duration. I do not hesitate to tell you that every shred of evidence is to the contrary! All such notions are utter rubbish and have no foundation in the spirit of Truth. At this very moment, when Christians are busily looking for a one-world government under the antichrist, and the great tribulation followed by the return of Jesus and the establishment of the Kingdom, we who have followed on to know the Lord, and have sought first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, have had our hearts ravished by this blessed reality: "Who *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness and *hath* TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF HIS DEAR SON" (Col. 1:13). Let demons rage. Let fools and unbelievers hang their heads in shame. The Kingdom of God is a present reality to those who have been caught up into the high places of the Spirit! It is not a matter of *this or that*, of *here or there*, of *now or then*, of *this age* or the *next age*. The Kingdom is none of those things. It is more than all. It is *this and that*, *here and there*, *now and then*, *this age and the next* — and much, much more!

The great truth I declare to you today is that Jesus Christ came two millenniums ago and brought the Kingdom and set up and established the Kingdom in the hearts and lives of the sons of the Kingdom. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying,

**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news" (Mk. 1:14-15).** And again, **"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk. 16:16).** God has a plan for His great and glorious Kingdom! Indeed, God has a wonderful plan for this world! It is a plan of which the architectural drawings were made in eternity. It encompasses the minutest detail of all creation. I assure you that when time has run its course, and the curtain is drawn upon the final scene, we shall discover that that plan has been worked out to its tiniest detail, just as God planned it in eternity.

Upon your table today there is or should be a book we call the Bible. This book alone reveals God's secret plan of the ages. It unfolds with unerring accuracy the mysteries of ages in the dim and misty past, and points with unerring finger to the purpose of countless eons yet to come. The Christian Church as we know it has been living in a fool's paradise, propounding pet doctrines, ranting and raving about an endless eternity with golden streets and harps and white nightgowns for some and crackling, searing, tormenting flames for others, while almost completely overlooking God's wonderful PLAN OF THE AGES. Paul writes of this plan of the ages in **Ephesians 3:8-11.** **"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and make all to see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."** The word translated "eternal" in the phrase "eternal purpose" is the Greek word AIONON which means "ages." Young's Literal Translation reads, "And to cause all to see what is the fellowship of the secret that hath been hid FROM THE AGES in God, who the all things did create by Jesus Christ, that there might be made known now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenly places, through the assembly, the manifold wisdom of God, according to A PURPOSE OF THE AGES, which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord." The Emphatic Diaglott renders verse 11 thus, "According to A PLAN OF THE AGES, which He formed in the Anointed Jesus our Lord," and Rotherham says, "According to A PLAN OF THE AGES which He made in the anointed Jesus our Lord."

As men with the aid of God's Word have gazed into the vista of the future, it seems to have missed their understanding that God says very little in His Word about eternity, while devoting many hundreds of passages to His will and works wrought through THE AGES. **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2).** What tremendous statements we have here! God has spoken to us through His Son — literally, "spoke to us in Son," or, God spoke to us in One who has the character that He is a SON, revealing the realm and relationship of sonship to God. Every age has its beginning and its end, its *first days* and its *last days*. So the writer to the Hebrews tells us that God has spoken unto us in the person of His Son in "these last days," that is, in the closing days of the age of law in which Jesus came into the world. People talk about "the" last days, as though the end of our present dispensation were the only "last days" or "end time" to ever exist!

This Son is heir of all things and, blessed be God! we are joint heirs with Him. "By whom also He made the worlds." Many people believe this refers to the creative act — "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It does not refer to that at all. The word here for "worlds" is AIONAS. It means **ages** — "...by whom He framed the ages." This goes beyond His being the Creator of matter and its arrangement into multiplied billions of galaxies, stars, suns, planets and moons with their atmospheres and inhabitants. This lends purpose to everything. He is the heir who GIVES THE PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE! He planned and framed the ages, He ordained the end from the beginning; not only did He create everything, He did it for a purpose, and **"known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).** Notice — the Amplified Bible says, "But in the last of *these days* He has spoken to us in the person of a Son, whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of all things, also by and through whom He created the worlds and the reaches of space and the AGES OF TIME — that is, He made, produced, built, operated and arranged them in order!" **"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3),** but it should read, "*the ages were planned* by the word of God." God made, planned, and determined the destiny of all the ages in and by Jesus Christ.

The age we are now living in is not the last age, nor is the age to come the final age in God's vast Kingdom program. The apostle Paul tells us that God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the AGES TO COME He might show (put on display, exhibit) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (**Eph. 2:6-7**). According to these inspired words there are "ages" **yet to come** — so there can be no less than *two* ages beyond our present age and there could be many, many more! It is during these "ages to come" that God shall take the wonderful work He has so meticulously wrought in His elect throughout the past age and **put it on display** in and through them for the whole creation to behold and consider. This will certainly not be to the condemnation of creation, the masses of unregenerated men that have lived and died upon this planet, but rather redounds unto their blessing, deliverance and transformation; for it is HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US IN JESUS CHRIST that is exhibited through the saints throughout the coming ages. *Grace and kindness on display!* Think of it! That is no curse, no judgment — it can only mean salvation! The grace of God appears *unto salvation*. This glorious display is for the instruction and enlightenment of all men. What a marvelous prospect!

The Word of God is crystal clear that there is to be an *increase* of the Kingdom from age to age. The very fact that there are yet "ages to come" shows that the Kingdom advances from one age to another. Historically, every new age has superseded the previous ones, bringing greater light, a further revelation of God, and more advanced dealing with mankind. Each new age inaugurates a higher dimension of God's purposes in the earth. Nothing is clearer in the scriptures than the fact that THIS IS NOT THE LAST AGE. There is no "final windup" at the close of this present dispensation. We can expect, therefore, fresh and greater manifestations and administrations of Kingdom dominion as we move from this age into the new one now beginning. What anticipation this evokes in our hearts!

The apostle James made a statement to the council at Jerusalem in which he clearly defines the complete outline of God's purpose for the so-called age of grace and the dispensation that is to follow. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to **take out of them a people for His name**. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, AFTER THIS (after God has taken out of the nations a people for His name) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David (the fullness of God's glory in a people), which is fallen down (following the great apostasy); and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the RESIDUE OF MEN MIGHT SEEK AFTER THE LORD, and ALL THE GENTILES, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Acts 15:14-18). Dispensationally, this is one of the most significant passages in the New Testament! It gives God's divine purpose for *this age* and the *next age*. James says that the purpose of God during this age now ending has been to visit the Gentiles, or the nations, as it is in the Greek, to TAKE O-U-T O-F T-H-E-M A PEOPLE FOR HIS NAME.

One thing that nearly all Christians have missed is the fact that it has never been God's purpose to save the world during the Church age. While the gospel was to be preached as a "witness" to all nations, there is no hint of it being accepted by all. Jesus never led His disciples to expect any such result from their ministry! Wherever the preached gospel is referred to in the New Testament, its limited acceptance is at the same time made clear. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned (judged)*" (**Mk. 16:15-16**). The witness of Paul is equally clear. He says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to *everyone that believeth*" (**Rom. 1:16**). "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save *some*" (**I Cor. 9:22**). "For we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, in them that are being saved, *and in them that are perishing.*"

All through the centuries the Church has been found holding to the false hope of converting the whole world during this age. Frequently one hears preachers, especially missionaries and televangelists, speaking of "winning the world to Christ." In missionary conferences and evangelistic crusades people are admonished to go forth and "win the world." But as honest and sincere as these persons are, the fact remains that the efforts of those who walk in the spiritual feasts of Passover and Pentecost are doomed to failure. The fact remains that nowhere did the Lord tell His disciples to save the world! Rather, Jesus said, "I will build my church." And that is precisely what the Lord has been doing for the past two thousand years — *building His Church!* But never did He say that all would believe or that we should win the world to Him or sweep the nations into the Kingdom of God in the age now ending. If He would have said it, it would have happened, for He is the

omnipotent Lord with all power in heaven and in earth! The fact that the world hasn't been saved, and the nations have not been subjected to the rule of God, is the only proof needed that it has not been God's plan to do so! He who holds to the hope of converting the world by Pentecostal preaching, or by gifts of the Holy Spirit, or by well organized revival crusades, or by forty days of fasting and prayer, is running after a mere phantom. It simply won't happen!

But God *has* been calling out a people for His name — saving, delivering, teaching, purging, purifying, dealing, maturing and bringing them progressively unto the full stature of Jesus Christ. It has taken the process of two millenniums to bring His people to birth that a manchild, the manifested sons of God, might be revealed. Meanwhile, the Lord has not interfered with the downward course of the world! He has allowed the selfishness of the human race to drag it down into ever lower depths of sin and degradation. Even when His professed people, misguided by their lack of understanding, and motivated by their unscriptural and unspiritual ambitions, have established church-state systems in His name, He has not interfered. And when these have fallen, and when all the misguided efforts of those people who have tried to establish peace for the Prince of Peace by carnal warfare and bloodshed and tyranny in the Lord's name, God has still not intervened. His plans for the salvation of the world have been separate from all human efforts, and He wants the whole world, including worldly churches, to learn that apart from GOD'S CHRIST and GOD'S TIME they can accomplish nothing beyond the limited work prescribed for this dying age. He wants them to learn that in order to achieve success they must work with Him, and in keeping with *His plans*, rather than expect Him to bless *their plans* and *their efforts* to establish His Kingdom.

I once wrote articles against communism. That was because of their atheism and rejection of God and His word and His people. But I think I realize now, more than I did then, that ALL NATIONS have been *cut off* from God by God's own decree, since the time of Adam and Eve. Jesus emphasized this when He said, "**No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him**" (Jn. 6:44). Many nations have never known much if anything about God. In ancient Egypt they worshipped their fictitious gods, Isis and Osiris, about the time the ancient Chinese were worshipping their ancestors — even before the appearance of Confucianism and Taoism. The ancient Greeks and Romans had their idol gods, such as Jupiter, Diana, Hermes and others, and the ignorant worship of these gods was the state religion in almost every land and among all peoples. They had no salvation — but neither were they "lost" — God Himself had cut off the descendants of Adam. They simply were not being *judged* at all by God — nor are they even yet today! God is not now dealing with nations, He is *building His Church and bringing His sons to birth!*

Since God is not now judging the nations, WHY SHOULD YOU OR I? I know that I myself *am* being judged *now!* The temple of God is being measured in the heavens, the elect of God is being judged by the measure of the stature of Jesus Christ as the sons of God stand in this hour before the judgment seat of Christ. Some of us are called *now* and the work of the Spirit will be completed in us *now*. The world as a whole has not been called YET! Those now called to salvation to be a part of the body of the Christ are the "firstfruits" — merely the first small "harvest" of spiritual life. To all others, God said, in effect, "Go, since you have rejected me, my government, my salvation, my revelation and knowledge, GO form your own gods and your own religions and philosophies and your own cultures and moral codes and your own governments." And, for six long millenniums has the world so done! Therefore I do not judge their governments, or their religions, or their cultures. I do not go to try to "*sweep nations* into the Kingdom of God," as some say. BUT GOD **DOES** HAVE A PLAN FOR THE NATIONS and a glorious day of release and restoration into the Kingdom of God! And those called and chosen as the elect of God, as the sons of the Father in this significant hour, are being given *understanding* of the sacred secret of God — His **plan of the ages!** Out from among the billions of earth God is choosing an ELECT COMPANY to bear His name — His nature and His authority. It is here, in the true Church, which is His body, that Jesus Christ FIRST ESTABLISHES HIS GOVERNMENT that He might rule and reign on the throne of men's lives. And now soon — very soon — these sons of God shall be revealed to all creation that the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God unto these sons might be exhibited for all to see and be blessed thereby! But most Christians will not come to this! They are too busy playing Church, rejoicing that they are not going to hell or that they are going to heaven when they die, and blundering around in the carnal programs, immaturity and shame of a wretched, fleshly, religious system which falsely *calls itself* "the church." But just as the dispensation of the law, at its conclusion, brought forth that which it typified and pointed to — Jesus Christ the Son of God — so this present Church age must, in *these last days*, at its

conclusion, bring forth that for which it was intended and to which it pointed — a many-membered body of **Christ**, perfected, matured, overcoming, and full grown into the exact likeness and glory of the firstborn son of God, its Head and Lord.

God never intended that Christ should rule over all the earth and all nations during this age. His reign is confined completely to that company of footstep followers who have heard His voice and follow Him all the way unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. Baptized in His fullness these sons of God become the very embodiment of His government in the earth. This may seem to be an extremely slow method and a very small Kingdom for such a great and exalted King, but we cannot over emphasize the importance of this lowly beginning for a government whose authority is destined to "subdue ALL THINGS." So let us see that not only is God establishing His government in the lives of His elect, but through His dealings with them He is actually **FORMING THEM INTO A GOVERNMENT** — a ruling body of sons of God, kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek!

God is calling out a people to bear His name, to *be* His nature, authority and power in the earth! But — to bear His name **WHERE? WHEN? HOW?** To bear His name only through their fleeting years in the flesh? Not at all. James says, "AFTER THIS (after the Lord has completed His work of calling out a people for His name) I will return and build again the tabernacle of David... **THAT THE RESIDUE OF MEN MIGHT SEEK AFTER THE LORD, AND ALL THE NATIONS...**saith the Lord." The "residue" of men denotes "all the rest," that is, all who were not part of the "called out." I tell you, my beloved, God is now *forming a government* composed of faithful sons (the tabernacle of David) whom He shall use in the age now dawning and in the *ages* yet to come as kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek to bring God's Kingdom to pass in all the earth and in all realms. Through this glorious anointed body of sons **ALL THE REST OF MEN...ALL THE NATIONS...SHALL SEEK THE LORD.** What wonderful news that is! While the church world is getting ready to "fly away" to some far-off heaven somewhere, the sons of God are even now being prepared and equipped to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is not the "coming" of the Kingdom — it is the *next step* of "advancement" and "increase" of the Kingdom! The Kingdom has already come. It is being refined now in the hearts of all those blessed ones who have received the call to sonship. This next step of the Kingdom will come with great power and glory when the elect of God is fully matured, perfected, prepared and equipped. God, through nearly two thousand years, has been slowly, methodically, meticulously, surely and wisely choosing this body of sons, preparing them through the furnace of affliction and the discipline of testings to sit together with Him on His throne, for those that *suffer* with Him shall also *reign* with Him!

The promise is sure! "And he that **OVERCOMETH**, and keepeth my works unto the end (of the processing), to him will I give **POWER OVER THE NATIONS**: and he shall **RULE THEM** with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers" (**Rev. 2:26-27**). "To him that **OVERCOMETH** will I grant to **SIT WITH ME IN MY THRONE**, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne" (**Rev. 3:21**). "And now they sing a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the scroll and to break the seals that are on it, for You were slain and with Your blood you purchased men unto God — from every tribe and language and people and nation. And You have **MADE THEM A KINGDOM AND PRIESTS** to our God, and they shall **REIGN OVER THE EARTH!** (**Rev. 5:9-10**, Amplified).

This great truth cannot be any more forcefully presented than it is by the prophet Daniel when he writes, "These great beasts which are four, are four kingdoms (Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome), which shall arise out of the earth. But **THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL TAKE THE KINGDOM and POSSESS THE KINGDOM** for ever, even for ever and ever. I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints (throughout the Church age), and prevailed against them; **until** the Ancient of days came, and **JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN TO THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH**; and the time came that **THE SAINTS POSSESSED THE KINGDOM** (world rule). And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High...**BUT THE JUDGMENT** (of the saints) **SHALL SIT, AND THEY** (the saints) **SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS DOMINION TO CONSUME AND DESTROY IT UNTO THE END. AND THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION AND THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE** (elect) **OF THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH**, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and **ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM**" (**Dan. 7:17-18, 21-22, 25-27**).

The work of the sons of God only *begins* at the opening of the age that follows the Church age. Even as I pen these words we are in the transition of the ages, the overlapping of the ages as the old age dies and the new age is inaugurated. Already the sons of God are beginning to move in the authority of God within the high realms of the Spirit. A word is proceeding forth from their lips by the inspiration of the Spirit that is *shaping the nations* for the greater glory soon to be manifested before the face of all peoples and every nation. These sons are not filled with the darkness of man's carnal mind, but are heralds of the GOOD NEWS of the Kingdom of God! They cherish the precious truth of their Father's plan of redemption and restoration for all! They are the true sons of God, or sons of Life, Light and Love, who are by their proclamations dispelling the darkness of this long night of sin, sorrow and death. They are the sons of Zion raised up in this hour to bring *righteous judgment* into the earth! By the Spirit, they are lifting mankind from the depths of sin onto the new highway into the Kingdom of God. They are lifting up their voices as trumpets in the Most Holy Place, in the high place of the Spirit, singing the praises and victories of their King and Lord of all. By the spirit of their sonship they are crying aloud, saying to all who shall hear, "**The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!**"

As we ascend in the Spirit into the place of God's throne, we thereby rise up above all the lower realms of evil and darkness, to dispel them by the power of His word. This is the present ministry of the sons of God in the new order of the government of God on earth! As we press forward into our new Kingdom ministry, the power of all evil and darkness shall eventually be removed, to trouble the world no more. Preaching and ministering according to the old church order will avail nothing in this conquest of the nations. The five-fold ministry was given for the edification of the saints during the Church age, but only the ministry of *sonship* is given to rule the nations and restore all things to God! We are entering into a ministry in the Spirit that will manifest the power and glory of the Kingdom of God to all mankind. We are called, not merely to preach the gospel, but to **RULE AND REIGN** with Christ!

Make no mistake about it; we have an awesome responsibility! We are to **RULE** with a rod of iron, over all the enemies of Christ, including the nations and all darkness, error and evil. There is a world of difference between *edifying the saints* and *ruling the nations*. We are called of God to **REIGN** with grace and love and mercy and wisdom and power over the affairs of mankind in the earth by ministering the authority of God in the Spirit and by the Spirit. We will never understand this deep mystery of reigning in the Kingdom until we know that the work of the Kingdom of God **is spiritual work**. As Paul Mueller recently wrote, "It is work that is nothing like the carnal, religious, church works of the flesh, which have now become works of iniquity!" As we minister from this high and holy place of God's throne in the Spirit it shall come to pass that "**All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and ALL THE KINDREDS OF THE NATIONS shall worship before Thee**" (**Ps. 22:27**). That will be the blessed effect of our ministry from the throne! By this spiritual ministry from the throne we shall see and know that "**The Lord most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and THE NATIONS UNDER OUR FEET**" (**Ps. 47:2-3**).

Scripture could be piled upon scripture, but it should be clear to every honest heart that God has a plan **beyond** this age, and **beyond** the Church, the called out — a plan that includes ALL THE NATIONS OF EARTH! The age now ending has been the age of the "called out," the age for the formation of God's elect into a Kingdom of Priests. The next age is the age for that Kingdom of Priests to take authority over the nations and bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth among *all living nations*. That is the difference between the two ages! And it means a difference in *ministry*, for God is now raising up in His sons the *new ministry* for the *new age*! In the *ages beyond* God shall deal with all the billions of men who have lived and died from father Adam all the way down to this and future times. All these shall be restored to God and to life and brought into the courts of His Kingdom. It is an extraordinary and awesome thing that the Lord by revelation of the Spirit gives His sons *understanding* that what He is doing on the earth today is merely a *beginning*. Nothing is finished yet! The dawning new age will accomplish a mighty work of God in the earth, far beyond that of the previous age, but the new age will not finish God's purpose, either! We are not even approaching the end of the world, or the consummation of the ages, or the great "wind up" of God's program. Nothing is so complete, so perfect, that it is to remain unchanged from what it was in its time. What the sovereign Lord has given us is a root and not yet a tree. The Kingdom seed still must grow, the branches spread out; the blossoms will come later. In the end the fruit will come, for that is how the Kingdom develops, saith the Lord, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." This wonderful work goes on from generation to generation, from dispensation to

dispensation, from age to age, from realm to realm, from world to world, from galaxy to galaxy, until all things everywhere find their life in God.

Within this divine and glorious principle lies the nature of the Kingdom of Christ and the purpose He represents. God's Christ, Head and body, is for the redemption of creation — and how can that be completed in a day? How can that be finished in one earthly generation? How can that be accomplished in one age, or in two or three? Creation took a long time — seven incredibly long epochs called "days" in the book of Genesis. In like manner *redemption, restoration, and re-creation* — require time! It is not for just a few people or for several thousand or several million; it is not for one race, or one nation, or just for the Church; it is for all mankind, for every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, and for the whole vast creation! The Lord Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end regarding the Kingdom of God and must reign until all enemies are under His feet, all things are made new, and God is all-in-all (I Cor. 15:25-28). All must be restored to Him in the far-flung heavens above, in the earth, and under the earth. No wonder there are YET AGES TO COME!

## THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK AND THE AGES TO COME

God's house of sons is a Kingdom of Priests after the Order of Melchizedek. The Lord Jesus Christ is a King-Priest after the Order of Melchizedek, and we are the body of Christ. Thus, Christ is the Head of the Melchizedek Order of King-Priests, and we are the body of that divine and heavenly Order. Jesus has inherited that exalted position as King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and we are joint-heirs with Him. **"Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).** That throne is the throne of the Melchizedek order of King-Priests after the power of an endless life!

I would now draw your attention to the duration of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Melchizedek Priesthood is after the power of an indissoluble or indestructible life, but does that mean that the ministry of the Melchizedek Order continues forever? It is stated, **"Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 7:17).** The average person sees that word "forever" and *assumes* that it means that the Order of Melchizedek is an **eternal** Order. But this is not the case! The Greek word from which "forever" is translated is AION from which, as we have already pointed out, we get our English word *eon*. Whenever one speaks of "eons" he is not talking about eternity, for eons denote specific spans of *time*.

Any thinking person should clearly see that if you translate the word AION, which means an age, by the words *eternal* or *forever*, which have nothing to do with time, you immediately get the wrong idea. While the King James Bible says, "Thou art a priest **forever** after the order of Melchizedek," the Greek form is *eis ton aiona* which literally translated is "to the age." The Melchizedek Priesthood lasts for **time**. In this tremendous passage we see the precise duration of this Priesthood — TO THE AGE. We have no conception yet of the great and vast ages that are still ahead of us! When the ages have all been completed, then a priesthood will not be needed, but as long as time lasts, the priesthood is a necessity, for it falls within the scope of God's PLAN OF THE AGES!

A priesthood "to...THE AGE!" The true understanding of the Word of God is freighted with far more glorious meaning and depth of purpose than the shallow traditions of church creeds. While the scriptures speak of an age, and the ages, and the ages of the ages, — one age proceeding from, or out of, a previous age until all the ages have run their courses, — it also points to that glorious climatic *age of all ages*. We read the phrase, **"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1:8).** We carelessly suppose that it refers to the eternity of God's throne! But this expression, "for ever and ever," comes from the Greek, which literally reads TO THE AGE OF THE AGES. This is very familiar terminology in the Greek scriptures.

Few men have been caught away by the spirit of inspiration as was the wise king Solomon when he penned the beautiful Song of Solomon. God dropped one thousand and five songs down into the heart of Solomon, but of these, only five comprising the Song of Solomon, have been preserved and have found a place in the canon of scripture. Inspiration named it "The Song of Songs," that is, the one song which was above and beyond all the songs that have ever come from human heart and human lips. Just as the "Song of songs" was chief above them all, just as the "Holy of holies" was the Holiest place of all, just as the "King of kings" is the

greatest King of all, so all through the scriptures, though obscured by many translators, we have this remarkable phrase TO THE AGE OF THE AGES. It points to that age which shall be the most glorious of all, and which finds its type in the year of Jubilee. This is the Holy Spirit's way of expressing the superlative, and so far as God's plan of the ages is concerned this AGE OF THE AGES is **THE AGE PAR EXCELLENCE** of them all!

A simple illustration of this is our expression, "a day of days," meaning a day that comes out of previous days, but which crowns them, and embodies not only what they contained, but the full fruition of all that was elementary in them. Eternity does not emerge full grown in man's consciousness until this wonderful age, the "age of ages," is ended. This AGE OF THE AGES is that glorious climax to God's purpose and process of the ages, wherein He states, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). And when He says, "A-L-L," it is self-evident that there is nothing remaining in the whole vast universe which shall not be made new, else all is not all. "For He must reign until He hath put ALL enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15:25-26). When the last enemy is under His feet, destroyed, and there is no more death — no more physical death, no more spiritual death, no more first death, no more second death — in any creature anywhere in all God's great universe, in any heaven or in any hell, then shall God be **ALL IN ALL!** The Amplified gives, "...be **everything to everyone.**" Time comes to an end when the ages end and eternity, with God all in all, becomes a conscious reality. There is no more *change*, therefore there is no more *time*.

Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is a great priest after the Order of Melchizedek, not forever, as we have erroneously been taught, and not for just this one age of the Church dispensation, either, but *unto* THE AGE, that wonderful climatic age of all the ages, the *grand finale* of God's great plan of the ages! It cannot be made plainer than it is in Young's Literal Translation where we read, "And those indeed are many who have become priests, because by death they are hindered from remaining; and He, because of His remaining — TO THE AGE, hath the priesthood not transient, whence also He is able to save TO THE VERY END, those coming through Him unto God — ever living to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:23-25).

Great are the mediatorial and redemptive glories of God's Priesthood! What distinguishes this ministry above all others is the fact that it carries its wonderful mission to a successful, victorious conclusion. The Melchizedek Priesthood is a priesthood TO A FINALITY. The fact that there will come a day, O glorious day! when it will no longer be needed, is the highest praise that can be brought to the Melchizedek Priesthood. It will, in due time, have accomplished its mission, and finished the task God intended it to do. All other ministries retire because of their weakness and inability to bring aught to perfection. That is why God shall bring His son Company into the fullness of *incorruptible life* — the sons of God must be able to *live for the ages* in order to fulfill their role in this Priesthood of the Ages. All creation is standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own! All creation is in travail and pain waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! All creation is groaning together for each of God's elect to come to their adoption — to wit, the **redemption of the body!** And this is because the creation itself *also* shall be delivered from the *bondage of corruption* into the glorious liberty from sin, sorrow, limitation and death, which is the liberty of the sons of God!

The priests of the old covenant all died, so that even the good and faithful priests were not able to stay on the scene to see that God's purpose was fully fulfilled in His people Israel. They could never bring anything to perfection because of death! But the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek retires with honors — having accomplished its glorious mission! Oh, how it drags the Christ's highest honors in the dust to distort God's Word so that His priesthood is eternal and His reign everlasting! Christ does not reign forever, my friend, for "He must reign **till** He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He (the Father) hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith that all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And **when** all things shall be subdued **unto Him**, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:25-28). May God forgive the ignorant zeal which seeks to gild the glory of His crowns with the tarnished tinsel of man's imagination! What He starts He will finish, and what He commences He will consummate, praise His wonderful name!

One of the main arguments of the book of Hebrews is that the Aaronic priesthood and sacrificial ritual "brought nothing to completion." It was a treadmill of repetitive service, which could not make the participants perfect.

But Christ's Melchizedek Priesthood does and will bring mankind into perfect harmony with God, however many ages it takes, for He continues to live and remains a priest unto "THE AGE." During the Church age the Lord Jesus has been the *only* priest of that High Order, a priest for *us*, His younger brethren, to bring *us* to the perfection of His incorruptible life. But now we, together with Him, shall make up that priesthood for the age and the ages to come. Oh yes! We shall REIGN WITH HIM. "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign over the earth" (Rev. 5:10). In and through His body of sons He is well able to complete the work and bring the priestly service to a close! If the Melchizedek Priesthood should continue forever, then His priesthood would be just as impotent as Aaron's, never able to obtain its objective. Hence Christ, and those who share His Priesthood, are priests after the order of Melchizedek "*eis ton aiona*" — to the age. WITH WHAT ANTICIPATION DO WE AWAIT THAT GLORIOUS AGE! WITH WHAT JOY DO WE GIVE OURSELVES TO SERVE IN THIS MELCHIZEDEKIAN ORDER TO BRING THAT AGE TO PASS! At last, at long last, praise God, the Royal Priesthood will be able to say with finality, IT IS FINISHED! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

That God might advance His Kingdom from one stage to another He has by omniscient wisdom designed dispensations, epochs, and ages. From time to time He brings about a change in dispensations, which means the bringing forth of new means, methods, and revelations, always richer and more glorious and powerful and earth-shattering than the previous ones. There always lies between the closing of one age and the opening of another, a short period which partakes of the powers and methods of both ages, and is especially filled with dramatic manifestations of God's activity. We are now in the very throes of such a time, which lies between the age of the building in the earth of the many-membered Christ body and the age when the Kingdom shall subdue and break in pieces all the governments and nations of man. The rule of the Kingdom of God over the nations is about to open in power and great glory! This new age that is even now dawning will see the most extraordinary move of God, so vast in proportions, so dynamic in power, so revolutionary in its effects that it will transform all the present cultures and society of mankind, switch the currents of civilization, and alter the structure of the nations. This earth will receive such dramatic shock, such a global earthquake, such a divine impact of wisdom and glory and power that the whole world will be changed, completely remodeled.

This revolution will come through the manifestation of the sons of God and will penetrate and judge the motives, character, intents, activities, and institutions of the whole world! This marvelous work and ministry will be wrought by a company of King-Priests after the Order of Melchizedek. This sonship ministry will be the most awesome and powerful ministry the Lord has ever unleashed on the earth. Nothing will be able to stand before it! It will consume and break in pieces the whole fabric of the nations. The economic, cultural, educational, military, ecclesiastical and political structures that man has erected by the carnal mind and fleshly wisdom will disintegrate before the very eyes of all men. These sons of the Most High are even now being prepared and empowered with the mightiest weapon in the universe — the sword of the Spirit which is *the living word of God!* All things and all creatures obey the command of the word of the Most High God! At His word creation springs forth and darkness flees from before His face.

"The Lord shall utter His voice (speak His word) before His army: for His camp is very great: for He that is strong executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:11). This army of God is earth's deliverers and the Lord's restoration hosts; not a revival crusade, not a political action committee, not a movement or organization, not a regiment of soldiers, but a *spiritual company of divine origin and formation* — invincible and all-conquering! These are the marching men and women of God progressing through the ages, tramping the corridors of God's purposes, binding time and eternity together, fulfilling their mission, bringing the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Wherever the desperate needs of men are, from India's vast land, teeming with hundreds of millions, from Africa's dark juju ceremonialism, from the igloos of Iceland to the farthest reaches of Tierra del Fuego, from Wall Street to the Great Wall of China, from the ivory-covered halls of learning in Paris, or Cambridge, to the dusty roads of the commonplace of all nations — wherever man may be found — the sons of God shall bring the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of Heaven with power and great glory!

## THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

What a high and holy calling! "But God, who is *rich in mercy...hath quickened us together with Christ...that in the ages to come He might SHOW the exceeding riches of His grace...*" (Eph. 2:4-7). Those dear people

who teach and preach that the day of grace will soon be ended know nothing at all of grace, nor do they understand that God Himself *is* grace. He is the God of *all* grace. You may as well say that God can die as to say that grace will end. So vast, so marvelous are the wonders of His grace, it will require the ages to come to continue to unfold these wonders, and He has purposed that there shall be *a people* through whom He would give this demonstration. "That in the ages to come He might **show...**" "Show" is from a Greek word meaning "to exhibit, to put on display like a work of art, to demonstrate." The Amplified Bible reads, "He did this that He might CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE *through the ages to come* the immeasurable (limitless, surpassing) riches of His free grace..." Kenneth Wuest translates, "In order that He might EXHIBIT...in the ages that pile themselves upon one another in continuous succession the surpassing wealth of His grace..." What a word! "Show...demonstrate...exhibit the riches of His grace" — unto whom? Not to those who already know it, for they *are* the demonstration! For those who have experienced His grace to demonstrate that grace unto themselves would be useless nonsense. Ah, but to demonstrate it to those who do not know it! To the whole vast creation of men and realms and worlds and universes who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Ah, God is preparing a divine show for all the earth, indeed for the entire universe. The mighty Barnum, in describing his circus, said it was THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH. True, Mr. Barnum was a great showman and, for its kind, he had a great show, but God is the Master Showman and He is preparing to give the world THE GREATEST SHOW IT HAS EVER SEEN. It is a theatrical of MERCY and GRACE and LOVE in a world of wrath and despair and sin and death. This will be God's master stroke as the curtain rises on creation's greatest drama — God's Great Show — **THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD!** Praise His name, once the finishing touch is put on the last stone of His living temple of Kings and Priests, the firstfruits of His redemption, in ages yet to come He shall put His grace and kindness and wisdom and power inwrought in us ON DISPLAY so that the entire creation may walk across the stage of His cosmic theater and behold and see and finally come to *understand* and *appreciate* **what God has provided for all men in Christ.**

Our ears have heard the sound of the trumpet and we cannot, dare not, settle for anything less, we must follow on to know the Lord in all His glorious fullness, to put on the mind of Christ, to be transformed into His image, to drink deeply of His incorruptible life, so that we in turn may be His Givers unto all. Let us not sell creation short in these days! All creation is groaning and travailing together in pain to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Mankind is sick and tired of sin and fear and hatred and sorrow and pain and empty religious platitudes, rituals, ceremonies, doctrines and programs. The whole race is gripped by the most intense desire *to receive*, there is everywhere an unprecedented hunger for deliverance, life and reality. Let us not deny the Lord who purchased us to be a Kingdom of Priests by settling for something less, a comfortable position in the church realm, or a mansion over the hilltop. While we seek no glory of our own, there is, nevertheless, great wealth and heavenly glory for all who fulfill the will of God. You never lose with God!

The compelling passion of my life is to be filled with all the fullness of God and come to the image of Jesus Christ. The deep cry of my heart is for the satisfaction of knowing that my life counts for God. As God knows my heart, it is not a selfish desire. The reason I want to be like Jesus is because I love Him so, but also because it is the *only way* I can ever be used in the restoration of the fallen creation. I see the needs of the world around me, and realize that I am practically powerless to do anything about it. Oh yes, I can pray, and give a little, and believe God, and see occasional conversions, deliverances, and blessings. But anyone who says they have reached the place where their ministry is meeting the needs of the world is either blind to the needs of humanity, a proud hypocrite, or a compulsive liar. "Lord Jesus! Breathe Thy Spirit into all who read these lines until we are like Thee in all of Thy ways that Thou mayest be glorified and all creation blessed. Make us a center of omnipotent God! May the great river of Thy love and grace and power flow, and flow, and flow until the outflow of Thyself from our center knows no circumference, enveloping all creation in Thy life and light and love. Amen!"

God will make the reality ours. And it shall bring the *increase* of His Kingdom into the next age and unto the ages to come. Blessed be His name!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 45**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FORTY-FIVE**

**THE WORK OF GOD IN THE NATIONS**

From the dawn of history right down to the present time men have dreamed of a golden age when peace and prosperity, health and happiness should be blessed realities among all peoples of every kindred and tongue and people and nation on earth. Poets, philosophers and prophets have sung and spoken of harmony and brotherhood when all strife and discord should cease and the earth should be reborn. Plato wrote of an ideal republic, and the Lord Chancellor of England in the reign of king Henry the Eighth described a glorious Utopia one day to be established among all nations throughout the world. The ancient Hebrew prophets prophesied of a time when the nations would beat their swords into plowshares, men would live so long that one who died at an hundred years of age would be a mere child, and the whole earth would be full of the glory of the Lord. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of others, politicians, military generals, ministers, and visionaries of all kinds have predicted the arrival of the Golden Age, the Utopia to come. Were all these men suffering from delusions or merely indulging in wishful thinking? Shall these things be, or is it in vain that men look forward to the coming of a nobler, truer, happier, more blessed and righteous order in the world? If such a vision is to be relegated to the realm of fiction and fantasy, or if such realities exist only in the realm of the spirit or in some bright glory-world above, then it is useless for us to pray, "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, AS IN HEAVEN SO IN EARTH.*"

Oftentimes when a motel or restaurant is poorly managed and thereby develops a bad reputation, its business falls off and the owner is forced to sell or vacate. The first thing the new manager does is to put up a huge sign conspicuously located, reading, UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT. This is what will happen to this planet soon! Truly things are in a bad, distressful and deplorable condition. The manager, old Adam with his carnal mind, human reasoning, and sinful nature, has been wicked and deceitful, selfish and immoral, causing strife, heartaches, wars, deaths, tragedies, pains, troubles and sorrows everywhere. Thank God his lease is about up! The first man Adam's days are numbered, and the second man, who is the last Adam, is about to take over this earth, and will become its new manager, if you please, as is indicated in the following verses: "*I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give unto thee *the nations* for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*" (Ps. 2:7-9). This is the destiny of all the sons of God!

God is not one bit interested in whisking us off this planet and hiding us from the devil in some far-off heaven somewhere. But He is vitally concerned with making us overcomers, the sons of God in the midst of the land, to inherit all nations and rule them with a rod of iron. "He that overcometh shall *inherit all things*; and I will be his God, and he shall be *my son*." It is not God's purpose to burn up the earth and destroy the nations of men that He has created to inhabit the earth, exiling billions of men and women into eternal damnation in the abyss of hell. Oh, *no!* It is His purpose to *heal* the nations! "*And the leaves of the tree (of life) are for the healing of the nations*" (Rev. 22:2). "*And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it (the City of God)*" (Rev. 21:24). God is going to destroy the sin and rebellion in the world, but He is going to bring healing to the nations. The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings for all men and for all the nations!

Only with great difficulty can we *even imagine* what the world will be like under the ministry and rule of the *manifested sons of God*. It's wonderful to look at what's in that new world, but it's almost as great to think of what's *not* there. Satan and all his cronies will be missing (Rev. 20:1-3). The Kingdom of Heaven on earth will have no crack houses or rehabilitation centers, no police stations or courthouses or prisons, no locks or alarms. "*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom): for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*" (Isa. 11:9). In the new world there will be no guns, no

missile factories, no abortion clinics, no sirens wailing, no ambulances, no hospitals, no cancer clinics, no morgues or funeral parlors. "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4). The shroud of Turin is an ancient burial cloth that shows the wounds and facial features of a crucified man. Certain analysts think it has undergone a kind of radiation. Some Christians believe it is the shroud in which Jesus was buried, and that gets them excited. But I'm not so excited about any shroud Jesus may have preserved. I'm excited about the shroud Jesus *destroys*. "On this mountain He shall destroy the shroud that enfolds *all peoples*, the sheet that covers *all nations*; He will swallow up death forever. The sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from off *all faces*" (Isa. 25:7-8).

At the present time men are, on account of sin, made to be afraid of one another. This is really the meaning of all the policemen, the detectives, the FBI, the CIA, security guards and neighborhood watch programs. All these exist in order to protect us from violence, injury and violation at the hands of our fellow-men. This is the meaning, too, of all the carefully and strongly constructed locks, bars, and security systems in our houses and businesses, to protect us from thieves and rapists and murderers and others who would molest us. This is the meaning of the millions of soldiers who are trained in the art of warfare, as well as the great navies patrolling the seas, the air force flying the skies and the satellites scanning the globe. They exist for the purpose of affording protection from hostile invaders or terrorists bent on coming to take away our freedoms and power and position on the earth. This is the meaning of the large burglar-proof safes made to be so specially strong and secure that men cannot steal away our treasures and wealth.

I am reminded of something I read some time ago. Standing before a masterpiece in a national museum, a tourist says in a snide tone, "I don't see anything in that!" Then another tourist, looking at the same work of art, replies thoughtfully, "Don't you wish you could?" As we witness our nation and society deteriorating year after year, and as we read and see reports that confirm our worst fears, ordinary citizens tend to sigh in despair and say, "I see no reason for hope." And as they despair, we hear the still small voice of the Spirit asking, "Don't you wish you could?" Thank God for the hope of creation! According to the apostle Paul's teaching in the eighth chapter of Romans the hope of all creation is the *manifestation of the sons of God*. Together we can praise God that this present evil order is shortly to come to an end. The world, which for ages has been marred by sin and ruled in unrighteousness, is to experience the rule of heaven. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That is the prayer of *sons*! That will make this earth of ours like heaven, because heaven's conditions will prevail and God's will shall be done here — everywhere and in all things. Isn't that simple, now? Isn't that much more reasonable than going into this theological blackout and thinking that this world is sort of a diving-board from which men jump into either eternal torment, or up into the clouds somewhere? Doesn't the gospel of the Kingdom of God fill your soul with the realism of God's great plan and give you a redemptive vision? Ah, it will give you an incentive to fulfill the will of God here and now upon the earth!

The first great work of the new age is the manifestation of the sons of God. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). The spectacle will be absolutely unique and glorious, as the Saviour of the world, the King of kings and Lord of lords, comes to be revealed in the fullness of His love, righteousness, power and glory in the splendor of myriads of glorified sons of God! The sons of God will hold in their unerring hands the reins of government over all the earth! The mighty Christ within us knows all languages. He certainly understands and knows all hearts with all their hopes, dreams, desires, and ambitions, whether good or bad. He is the fountainhead of all wisdom and grace and power, and foreknows all things from the beginning. Morning stars shall again sing together, and all the sons of God shall shout for joy, when Jesus comes to be revealed in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.

The disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were greatly perplexed when Jesus died. But then He arose the conquering Christ! The fact of the Christ's resurrection is historic. The man who disputes it disputes the best established fact in history. He was seen by those who despaired of His existence. He ate with them. He drank with them. He walked with them in a bloodless body. He talked to the despondent and broken-hearted apostles, the eleven, for nearly forty days. It was impossible to be deceived. He spoke, and was heard and seen on one occasion by five hundred, most of whom were living at the time that Paul made the declaration that they knew Christ and had seen Him after His resurrection. He proved His resurrection by telling them that if they would go to Jerusalem and enter into an upper room, and wait for the promise of the Father, the Holy

Spirit's power would come. The promised outpouring took place. Christ went up and the Holy Ghost came down. They saw Him go and they saw Him come. It shook the place where they were sitting. The divine earthquake shook Jerusalem. It shook Israel. It shook the Roman empire until it fell, to rise no more. It shook the world. The Spirit's power came. The Christ returned in mighty Spirit-power. He ascended up far above all heavens that He might return as the Spirit to *fill all things* (Eph. 4:10). He who *is* the Truth came again as the Spirit of Truth. He came as an indwelling Life. Men who were weak became strong. Men who were wicked murderers and devils were transformed into men of virtue and power with God. Men who were illogical became great and mighty reasoners. Men who were feeble stood up, and in their spiritual majesty tower today above all the men of their time. All history substantiates the claim. Every philosopher and potentate of their time had to recognize them so that Peter, Paul, James, John, and many of their successors, became the mightiest Powers even in a heathen Empire.

The day had dawned, the shadows were fleeing away, darkness dispelled. We would but deceive ourselves were we to conclude that the conflict of the ages between Christ and Satan, between truth and error, between light and darkness, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between life and death *has ended*. The second thousand years are drawing to a close since Jesus came, died, conquered death, and poured out His life-giving Spirit and, blessed be His name, He pursues His mission still and reigns in majesty over His Kingdom by entering into these temples of clay, and filling our spirits, and souls, and bodies with His own eternal presence and power, making us one with Him, members of His very own body, of His flesh, of His bone, of His blood. He has gathered millions into His gospel net of salvation that out from their midst He may birth a vast company of sons who have put on the mind of Christ, been conformed into His image, with the Law of His Life inscribed upon the tables of their hearts, that they may then be filled with the *fullness* of His Spirit. And the hour is wonderfully nigh at hand when there shall be a further transformation, even the bodies of His elect sons shall be changed in likeness unto His body of glory as this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality, so that we, who were destined from the beginning to be the revelation of HIMSELF to creation, may **complete** His mighty work for the redemption of humanity.

And now, a new Day has dawned! Thank God, a few of His chosen ones have arisen to behold the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn. A new age has arrived. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with *men* (humanity, mankind), and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their (mankind's) eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW" (Rev. 21:3-4). Blessed promises of a mighty deliverance, which by the Spirit we even now begin to see fulfilled. The time has come for the *nations* to hear the voice of the Son of God and live! There shall be a glorious victory as the devil that has *deceived all nations* is bound with the great chain of the word of God through His sons. The *un-deceiving* of the *nations* means a new mentality, new understanding, new thought processes, the unveiling of the **truth** about all things in the minds of the vast multitudes of earth. The light of divine truth and reality will at last shine into the speculations of science, the theories of education, the practice of commerce, the world of politics, the dogmas of religion, and *all things* will be MADE NEW! What anticipation this evokes in our hearts! "And it shall come to pass, that...*all nations...shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles*" (Zech. 14:16). This scripture reveals that it is by the ministry of those who have partaken of, and entered experientially into, the FEAST OF TABERNACLES, that the *nations* shall be brought into living relationship with the Lord! Ah, those walking only in the feast of Passover (Fundamentalists and Evangelicals) or the feast of Pentecost (Pentecostals and Charismatics) can never get this job done! Only those who press on into the *fullness* of God will have the power to rule the nations! "And the *nations...shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it...and there shall be no more curse*" (Rev. 21:24; 22:3).

The ministry and rule of sonship is ready to be poured out upon the nations of this world. What a perfect *luxury of blessing* shall come upon all mankind! The ministry of Christ revealed in the four Gospels, shall be intensified by tens of thousands of manifest sons of God in the midst of the earth! "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose...they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in

the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert" (Isa. 35:1,2,5,6). When the mighty work of salvation, restoration, and transformation is complete there will be none of those painful and debilitating diseases, which now plague mankind. There will be no cancers wasting away the frame, no multiple sclerosis, multiple dystrophy, or Parkinson's disease destroying the nervous system. Because streams of healing and deliverance shall flow out to earth's needy, helpless and hopeless, there shall be no need of medicine, and drug stores will disappear. We shall need no doctors and the great clinics and hospitals of our cities and towns will have no patients who need treatment, surgeries, or nursing. From every mental hospital the inmates will stream forth shouting for joy at finding that God's Christ has touched their minds with His omnipotent hand of love and power. From every prison in the world will leap forth prisoners of each sex and every age to testify to the saving, delivering, transforming work of God in their lives, breaking completely and forever the shackles of sin and Satan, turning thieves, murderers and rapists into men of mildness, righteousness and compassion. The power of sin and death being broken, the undertaker will look in vain for corpses and will find it the hardest thing in the world to keep his business open.

NOW HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! When God's *spiritual work* of mind, will, heart, nature and character is finished in each of His sons, the *sign* that the hour for the manifestation of the sons of God has arrived will be given throughout the whole earth. On a day much like today, those who have been fully awakened within and transformed into His likeness in spirit and soul, will step into another dimension. Suddenly, instantaneously and simultaneously **every sickness and disease in each and every body of all the sons of God will be totally and permanently healed**. This will be the most astounding *mass-miracle* of the ages! A shuddering will run through their bodies. In an instant these sons will burst into the resplendence of the shimmering glory of God brighter than the noonday sun. Incorruptible life will surge forth from within quickening their mortal bodies with vibrant, self-perpetuating life. Their minds will at the same time be expanded with divine wisdom and understanding. All things will become open and known. The secrets of the universe will become as clear as the letters of the alphabet. Creative power will flow from their mouths and their hands. The secrets of men's hearts will be revealed and they will know all that is within man; but they will not be permitted to speak these things, only mercy, grace and omnipotent love will flow forth to mankind! But the *very first sign* that the hour of manifestation has arrived will be the sudden, instantaneous, and simultaneous **healing of every sickness and disease in the body of every son!** You can watch for *that sign* that the day of full manifestation *is here!* Some will not receive this word, but it does not matter. The sign *will* be fulfilled, and glorious shall be the Day unto those who are appointed to it!

The lovely Christ who two millenniums ago spoke to the winds and waves and with a word hushed the sea's mad raging, will through the authority of the many sons He has brought to glory control the climates of the world, giving freedom from howling tempests, raging hurricanes, devastating tornadoes, destructive floods, and desolating droughts. By the *increase* of His *Kingdom* and *peace* ferocity in man and beast and nature will cease and "the sucking child will play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den," unharmed. The natural mind can barely comprehend what the world will be like when there is no hatred, strife, bigotry, broken homes, domestic violence, child or spouse abuse, alcohol or drug abuse, no war nor crime, no soldiers nor policemen, no doctors nor hospitals, no beggars nor homeless people, nor hungry people, nor children with bloated stomachs, no suicides, no election frauds nor stealing and buying votes, no wicked scams, no pornography nor prostitution, no adultery nor fornication. All people of all nations will speak of God's Christ as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, *for everyone will be righteous!* The nations will be spiritually clean. Righteousness will fill the Kingdom. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The laws of God will be in the hearts of the people. The Spirit will be poured out on all flesh, and the joy and peace which God *intended* for man to enjoy will be restored to him. The Kingdom of God shall triumph over all and there shall be **no more curse**.

During the age now ending the dealing of God has been with His *Church*, and not with the *nations*. The nations have been affected, of course, but only in an overflow of blessing from the work and righteousness of God in His people. The Kingdom in its present state does not rule over the nations of the earth, but the nations, for the most part, have a rule *over the Church*. The nations have persecuted the Church, and still do. The nations have placed limitations upon the Church. In most countries the church systems are even *chartered by the government!* The apostle Paul admonished the saints to be obedient to kings and rulers, and to submit to every ordinance of man for conscience' sake. Christ now rules in the hearts and lives of His chosen ones *in the midst*

*of His enemies.* But the day is coming when He will rule through His Kingdom Sons *over His enemies.* While world governments exist under the supervision of God for the good of mankind, those governments are not by any stretch of the imagination a reflection of the Kingdom of God! The spiritual forces that influence them are often the malignant spirits from realms of darkness, and most of their activities are manifestations of the carnal mind, works of the flesh. No government on earth today is truly Christian. No, not one! Human progress without God has always been progress in evil, not good. His upward progress, progress in return to God, has not been discernible at all through the centuries. God turned the world over to man to govern. But man ruined the world through sin, wrecked his happiness, and sold his life for death. There can be no such thing as upward progress apart from God! With every invention of man evil only multiplies. With all the medical knowledge and great hospitals man's wisdom has built, there are more sick people today than ever. In the past century of man's "enlightened civilization" more people have died in treacherous, bloody wars than in all the wars from the beginning of time put together. Man has tried to rule the earth, and failed. He is failing now. The vast experience of six thousand years is now nearly complete. With pollution pouring into our atmosphere, soil, rivers, lakes, and oceans; with atomic bombs stockpiled by more and more nations, and terrorists stalking the earth with fanatical zeal, the case is most manifestly going against man.

At this crisis we now stand. We are on the verge of momentous events. We are at the close of a long series of experiments made by Adam the banished. And we find the world more wicked and more lawless than at the first. Peace does not reign among the nations. Misrule has not departed. Righteousness is not ruling the world, nor our own nation. Holiness does not beautify the homes of men. Man has found no cure for the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart. Sin and sorrow rage on, and he is powerless. The curse still rests on the earth and poisons the air. Man cannot check it. The thorn and thistle, the prickly memorials of the first sin, still shoot up. And the thorns and thistles in the garden of men's lives are thicker and taller than ever. Disease still scourges the body. Man cannot drive it out. Death still smites down its daily myriads. Men cannot disarm or check it. The grave still receives the loved, and preys upon the young and the beautiful.

These are the fruits of the first Adam's doings, and this is the powerlessness of his children to remove so much as one in ten thousand evils! It has been manifestly demonstrated that man can ruin, but not restore, the world. His attempts at restoration have resulted only in greater evils. Every invention of science has ultimately proven detrimental to the earth and to the lives of mankind. His antibiotics produce super-viruses more deadly than before. His automobiles and airplanes spew pollutants into the atmosphere. His chemicals spread sickness, deformity and death throughout the planet. His television and movies destroy the moral conscience of both children and adults. His food additives and prescription drugs kill hundreds of thousands, yea, millions annually. His guns and bombs and sophisticated implements of war have killed millions, and are still killing today in every corner of the globe. But this progress in evil has a limit. God has set bounds which He will not allow it to pass! He will not allow this earth to become altogether a hell. Even now He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder thereof He restrains. We are now nearing the boundaries of man's evil. The second man, the last Adam, has been formed in the earth as a many-membered body, and is now at hand and with Him the kingdom and the glory. This Man is ready to assume the dominion that was given to man in that long ago beginning. He will bring the cure. He will knit the broken world. He will subdue and subject it, beginning with the hearts of men. He will break man's rebellion with a word of power and life — a rod of iron. He will redeem, reconcile, and restore mankind to the fellowship of God. He will teach men the ways of righteousness and bind their hearts to the will of the Father. He will rebuke disease and sorrow. He will bind death. He will rifle the grave. He will deliver creation. And on His righteous peaceful throne He will rule until God is all in all.

The sons of God are now waiting in the wings. That is the essence of their action. They patiently watch as the men of this dying age are moving helter-skelter. These sons know in their enlightened minds that all the feverish activities of the world's rulers is but the last frantic stages of a mad rush to save the world of mankind from destruction by the formation of a "new world order" already in view, a true City of Man, built by man's ingenuity for man — this, finally, is the avowed goal they forecast for themselves, shimmering on the mountains of the future. But God's holy sons are waiting — growing in the knowledge, wisdom, nature, and power of their heavenly Father — but not for that City of Man that man is building, the modern-day Tower of Babel, for that city will not be built, at least not as men have configured it. The Kingdom of God will come upon the nations after all the efforts of Transnationalists and Internationalists, of the Trilateralists and Illuminatis, of

liberals and humanists, of globalists and ecumentalists have come to utter shipwreck upon the shoals of the treachery, deceit, greed, bigotry, wretchedness and wickedness of the *human heart*.

The day is coming, Oh glorious Day! when God's nature and glory and power and rule will no longer be found only in God's elect, no longer in a tiny minority of people in every city, state, province and nation, but in *all people of all the nations*. There will not any more be one people redeemed, but all people redeemed; not one land glowing with the glory of God, but all lands radiating His life; not one nation owning Christ as King, but all nations become the Kingdom of God through the wonder-working achievements of the sons of God. That great day is coming, the world will do the will of God, for Christ is not only the redeemer of His called and chosen people, but He is the SAVIOUR OF T-H-E W-O-R-L-D. For Him the banners of all people shall wave in the breeze; to Him shall the kings and presidents and prime ministers and rulers bow themselves, and unto Him shall the gladdened hearts of the children of men uplift their songs of triumph.

He who came to redeem **the world** will not fail! To deny that the world and the nations of earth will be gathered into the Kingdom of God is to wickedly deny Christ His victory. The Kingdom of God is for the world, and the world is for the Kingdom of God. Make no mistake about it: Christ our Lord shall be King of *all kings* and Lord of *all lords*! Onward, ever onward, rolls the glorious song of redemption, and to the sons of God who yearn to see the glory of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, I say: The world, and the whole of it, for God and His sons! No less will satisfy the Father. No less will satisfy His sons!

Someone has eloquently written: "What a scene of unimaginable grandeur that will be, when at last *all nations* are gathered to His feet! That will include the people from all the European States, from Iceland in the far north to Greece in the south, and from Portugal in the west to Russia in the east. There will be the people from Algeria, Morocco, and the Atlas Mountains of the Sahara; from the great lakes of Central Africa, from the banks of the Niger, the Calabar, the Congo, and the Zambesi rivers; and from the upland of South Africa. There will be gathered to Christ the people from Israel, Jordan, and Arabia; India will contribute her millions; and even from closed lands like Nepal, Sikkim, and Tibet, Christ will gather His inheritance. From the Islands of Indonesia they will come — Java, Sumatra, Bali, Celebes, Lombok, Soembawa, Borneo, and the rest — and they will be gathered to the feet of the Redeemer. From the teeming millions of Central Asia, from China, Japan, Korea, and Mongolia, there will be an immense home going to the Saviour. From the myriad islands of the Pacific, the peoples of Polynesia and Melanesia will be gathered to the Lord who redeemed them. From Australia and New Zealand there will be multitudes who will join in the glad song of praise. Every republic of Central and South America, and the West Indies — Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and the Lesser Antilles, they will come. From the far-off forests and lakes of Canada and the plains of the United States and the mountains of Mexico there will be a similar homegoing. This gathering to Christ will be overwhelmingly splendid!" — Author unknown.

This is how the Christ will be revealed in His saints in this hour: Christ is coming in *power* and in *great glory*! He is coming to *judge the earth* with righteousness! I am not talking about military power or political power. I am not talking about power in the way men know power — NO! The power of the Kingdom is **spiritual power**. It is power greater than Pentecostal power, for Pentecostal power is but the *earnest* of the Spirit. Christ is coming in the power of *sonship*, the power of the Man of Galilee multiplied and intensified in a many-membered body tens of thousands of times. The mighty works of Jesus of Nazareth were but a sample, a swatch, a preview, a foretaste of the glory of God's Christ, Head and body. The Christ Himself prophesied of this greater glory of sonship to come when He said, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and *greater works* than these shall ye do..." And again, "**He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father**" (Rev. 21:7; 2:26-27). He says that He intends to come to this little planet (in His elect) and finally **put down the rebellion** that has broken out — He will **break the nations** with a rod of iron and smash them to shivers like the vessels of a potter. Maybe you don't like that. Well, you take it up with Him. He said it, and He is going to do it just that way.

Suppose Jesus came back to this earth tomorrow like He came two thousand years ago, the man of Galilee, the carpenter of Nazareth, the gentle Jesus. Suppose He were here. Suppose He went to the Communist

Party Headquarters in Beijing, China and knocked on the door. Whoever keeps the store over there would come and say, "Yes?" He would say, "I'm Jesus. I'm here to take over." Do you think they would say, "My, we have been expecting you!" No, they'd put Him before a firing squad in the morning. My friend, how do you think He could take over if He came to China today? He would have to break them with a rod of iron! Now suppose He goes to France, England, and Germany. There are no strong men in these nations anymore, but some ambitious men rule those countries. They don't want Him. Their constitutions make no provision for the transfer of power to God's Christ. Suppose He came to the United States of America. He could never be King because we have no king, and He could not be President unless He ran in the primaries of the Democratic or Republican parties. And if He wanted to put prayer and truth and righteousness in the schools, in the courts, and in the halls of government they would brand Him an unconstitutional right-wing fringe fanatic and He would never make it past the first primary in New Hampshire.

Suppose He went over to Rome. I was there some years ago and walked the halls of the Vatican, stood under the dome of Saint Peter's, and paused in the revered quietness of the Sistine Chapel. Suppose our Lord would go and knock on the door of the Vatican. The man with the long white garment would come to the door, and the Lord Jesus would say, "I'm here to take over." What do you think he would say? I think he would say, "Now look, you've come a little too soon. I'm preparing a mass, and my pope-mobile is being readied for a historic trip to Asia, and we have two thousand years of tradition and orthodoxy and organization to back up what we are doing. I don't need you." I don't think he would want Him. Now maybe you think the nations' reactions would be different. Perhaps you are saying, "Oh, they would take Him." Then *why don't they take Him?* They do not because they won't have Him! Suppose He went to the World Council of Churches today, and He said to Protestantism, "I'm here to take over." Would they receive Him? They would not! Suppose He went to Hollywood and New York and announced to the heads of the movie industry and the news media, "I'm here to take over." They would hate Him, they would reject Him, they would ridicule Him, they would mock Him, they would make jokes about Him on the Tonight Show and on the David Letterman Show, laugh Him to scorn, sue Him, call the SWAT team and have Him hauled away!

When Christ comes in His sons He is coming with power and great glory, with wonder-working power, paralyzing, mood-altering, will-subduing, rebellion-breaking, mind-changing, heart-transforming, mighty *regenerating power!* Let me quote it again: **"And he that overcometh...to him will I give POWER OVER THE NATIONS: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; AS THE VESSELS OF A POTTER SHALL THEY BE BROKEN TO SHIVERS..."** When all the sons of God are manifest vengeance against evil and all the institutions of the carnal minds of men will be the first order of business. Only the sons of God can rend the shroud of darkness and death that hangs over the whole earth. These magnificent beings will possess the power of God to chase the darkness away. After they have broken the power of sin and satan, the sons will begin a heavenly restoration. As kings and priests of the incorruptible Order of Melchizedek they will with divine authority correct every physical and spiritual disorder. This wonderful company will shimmer with celestial glory, and the life of light will emanate from them to illuminate and quicken all men. These sons of God are the living government of God, the essence of His heart and throne. They are the chosen and proven, the called and tested, the nobodies who walked closely with God and are elevated to the heights of His Kingdom. All the firstborn sons of God will step into magnificent permanence and find themselves clothed with the glory of universal power.

These sons will arise in the midst of the earth out of every hamlet and cove, from the deserts and rain forests, from the valleys and the mountains, from every town and city, from every province and state and every nation on earth and will be gathered together by the power of the Holy Ghost to form the governing council of the new world order of the Kingdom of God. Jesus will stand in His rightful place at the helm of this invincible body. Every son of God will be the brother of Jesus Christ, birthed in the image of their Father. These are fantastic beings, focused, strong, powerful, mighty, formidable, overwhelming, supreme, conquering warriors who love creation and rule the created realms with all the power of God. As an invading army of celestial kings they shall advance to subdue the earth. In tumult and conflict, in reconciliation and restoration, their truth and light will cover the land.

No device of men — money, worldly wisdom, political clout, military genius — shall deter this unstoppable army of the body of Christ. They will crush the ignorance of carnality, and abolish the power of darkness in the

hearts of men. The glorified sons of God will fear not to slay, for they are also the resurrection and the life. Their actions are wisdom, their weapons are truth, and their motives are love. They will dispense the knowledge of the holy as a clear stream, to bring forth judgment unto victory. All the peoples of the nations will become their possession (Ps. 2:8). Then shall the teeming millions of earth know peace in a new and unspeakable tranquillity, for righteousness shall be established in every heart and in every institution. All creation shall rest as the nations beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. This is the plan of God for all the nations of this earth, and its implementation is the legacy, ministry, and destiny of Jesus the Christ.

## THE WORK OF GOD IN THE NATIONS

The scriptures reveal many wonderful promises and much enlightening revelation concerning the rule of God over the nations. THESE PROPHECIES HAVE NEVER YET BEEN FULFILLED. By no stretch of the imagination can any development or condition during the Church age be construed as fulfilling these beautiful prophecies. The glorious Kingdom of God will break in pieces and subdue *all other kingdoms, kings, rulers, lordships, religions and gods* and replace them with one glorious Kingdom of God *in this earth*.

Nothing is more evident in the Word of God than the fact that God has a great and wonderful plan which He is working out among the nations of earth. Many saints recognize that God has a predestined purpose in the life of each of His people, an appointed end for Israel, an eternal purpose for the Church, and a foreordained plan for the overcoming sons of God. But we fail in our understanding of God's wonderful plan of the ages until we understand the great truth that the Lord has a determined plan and purpose for ALL THE NATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS OF MEN UPON THE EARTH.

From the very dawn of human history God has had the formation, development and destiny of NATIONS in mind and purpose. God has always been actively *dealing with nations*. I am indebted to Dr. Harry Rimmer for the following information. The present nations of earth had their origins in the early days following the Great Flood. In Genesis chapter ten is found a most remarkable and comprehensive list of the descendants of Noah who became the heads of the families and tribes which subsequently developed into nations. Even higher critics have often admitted that the tenth chapter of Genesis is a remarkably accurate historical document. There is no comparable catalog of ancient nations available from any other source. It is unparalleled in its antiquity and comprehensiveness. You would do well to read the entire chapter. Here is the one link between the historic nations of antiquity and the prehistoric time of Noah and the antediluvians. The grandsons and great-grandsons of Noah are listed, each of whom is identified with the city or country established by his descendants. It has been possible in many cases to identify the names in Genesis ten with nations and peoples known to antiquity, especially as revealed by archaeology.

An interesting verse is found in **Genesis 10:25**. "And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was *Peleg*; FOR IN HIS DAYS WAS THE EARTH DIVIDED; and his brother's name was Joktan." Peleg — or rather, the event associated with his name — is of special interest at this point. "In his days was the earth divided." Evidently this was a memorable event, and Eber named his son in commemoration of it. The name Peleg means "division." Almost nothing else is said about Peleg apart from mention of his family line and how long he lived. The fact that the earth was *divided* in his days seems the only possible item of distinction that can knowingly be attributed to Peleg himself. The important thing concerns the meaning of this indicated "division of the earth." It is obvious that this division was the division of the peoples that took place at the Tower of Babel, rather than some cataclysmic splitting of the continents. We have such statements as this: "*From these were the isles (coasts) of the Gentiles (nations) DIVIDED IN THEIR LANDS; everyone after his tongue, after their families, in their NATIONS,*" and again, "*These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their NATIONS: and by these were THE NATIONS DIVIDED in the earth after the flood*" (**Gen. 10:5,32**).

The descendants of Noah migrated over the whole face of the earth, forming tribe after tribe, city after city, and nation after nation. Let all men know that it is the Almighty God who is the designer and architect of all the nations of the world! The time periods and localities in which nations flourish have all been pre-arranged by the will of Him who "*worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*" (**Eph. 1:11**). The truth of this cannot be

made any plainer than it is by Moses in **Deuteronomy 32:8**: "When the *Most High* divided the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, HE SET the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Paul refers to this verse in **Acts 17:26-27**: "And (God) hath made of one blood **all nations** of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and **hath determined the times appointed**, and the **bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord.**" This reveals that it was God who, from the beginning, set the national boundaries of ALL NATIONS. These boundaries were established in relation to Israel and with a view to their being able to *seek after the Lord*. While these things have not fully played themselves out, yet it is remarkable that the ancient land of Canaan was originally reserved by the wisdom and goodness of the Lord for the possession of His special people, Israel, and the display of the most stupendous signs and wonders. The theater was small, but wonderfully suited for the convenient observation of the whole human race — at the junction of the two continents of Asia and Africa, and almost in sight of Europe. From this spot as from a common center the reports of God's wonderful works, of His mighty power and awesome glory, of the glad tidings of salvation through the ministry, death, and resurrection of His firstborn Son, of the wonder-filled outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as the footstep followers of Jesus were set ablaze by the life and power of their glorified Lord, might be rapidly and easily wafted to every part of the globe. Yes, God set the bounds of habitation for all nations and planted Israel at the crossroads, to the end that all nations might seek after the Lord! What a plan!

Can we not see by this that out of Israel came Christ; out of Christ has come the Church, which is His bride (Eph. 5:23-32); and out of the Church is birthed the Manchild, the holy sons of God who are destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5) and bring deliverance to the whole creation that it might be fulfilled which was promised to father Abraham: "**And in thy seed shall ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED**" (**Gen. 22:18**). ALL NATIONS — *shall be blessed!* From the very beginning God not only *designed the nations* of men that dwell upon the earth, He also *planned* and *purposed* to BLESS THEM — each and every one of them! Not only Israel, not only the Church, but the nations themselves must come under the gracious hand of God in blessing and quickening. Oh, the wonder of it!

One of the prophets of ancient Israel sang of this hope in the spirit of prophecy: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among ALL NATIONS. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let ALL the people praise Thee! O let THE NATIONS be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations *upon earth*...yea, ALL KINGS shall fall down before Him: ALL NATIONS SHALL SERVE HIM" (**Ps. 67:1-4; 72:11**). The day is surely coming when all nations shall be joined to the Lord and fulfill their obligations to Him as their Maker and Saviour. "Arise, O God, *judge the earth*: for Thou shalt INHERIT ALL NATIONS. ALL NATIONS whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great and doest wondrous things" (**Ps. 82:8; 86:9-10**).

Many precious "fragments" reveal God's ultimate purpose for mankind, when "ALL the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and ALL KINDREDS OF THE NATIONS shall worship before Thee, for the kingdom is the Lord's, and HE is the governor *among the nations*" (**Ps. 22:27-28**). In the beautiful second Psalm the Father says to His Son: "Ask of me, and I WILL GIVE THEE THE NATIONS for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (**Ps. 2:8**). Surely the will and plan of God is revealed in this most gracious request, and surely this was the purpose for which Jesus came and was sent. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of THE WORLD" (**I Jn. 4:14**). With this divine plan in view, well may the Lord's people triumphantly sing, "O let THE NATIONS be glad and sing for joy, for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and GOVERN THE NATIONS UPON EARTH...and ALL the ends of the earth shall fear Him" (**Ps. 67:4-7**). "ALL NATIONS SHALL CALL HIM BLESSED...and blessed be His glorious name forever, and let THE WHOLE EARTH be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen" (**Ps. 72:17-19**).

If you are truly destined to stand among the company of the sons of God you assuredly share the thrill of the heavenly vibration in these inspired words: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain (government) of the house of the Lord (the priesthood of God) shall be established in the tops of the mountains (strong kingdoms, super- powers), and it shall be exalted above the hills (smaller kingdoms, third-world nations); and people shall flow unto it. And MANY NATIONS shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain (government) of the Lord, and to the house (priesthood) of the God of Jacob; and He will teach

us His ways, and we (the nations) will walk in His paths: for the law (authority) of the Lord shall go forth of Zion (the sons of God), and the (living) word of God from Jerusalem (the bride of Christ). And He shall JUDGE among the people, and rebuke STRONG NATIONS afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they *learn war anymore*" (Mic. 4:1-3). Blessed beyond my puny ability to articulate shall be that day when it shall come to pass that "He shall sprinkle (cleanse, sanctify) MANY NATIONS; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them they shall see; and that which they had not heard they shall consider" (Isa. 52:15).

The same ecstatic exclamation of joy and gladness at the prospects of God's salvation poured out upon the nations is commanded by the prophet in these words, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And MANY NATIONS SHALL BE JOINED TO THE LORD in that day, and shall be my people" (Zech. 2:10-11).

The *national message* of the Bible is one of the most neglected themes of the church systems. It is possible erroneously to limit God and His program of redemption to a narrow personal and individualistic interpretation. In the light of such a profound array of scriptures as those we have just considered (and there are many, many more!), I am at a complete loss to understand how anyone who knows God at all could fail to grasp the living hope that a radiant age of splendor, in which Christ and His glorious body shall rule and reign and subdue *all enemies* and *all nations* and *all things* unto God, is coming. A careful study of the scriptures reveals an outline of the *progressive expansion* of God's Priesthood Ministry in the earth. Its headings are:

1. In Genesis we have the Priesthood for the Individual.
2. In Exodus and Job we have the Priesthood for the Household.
3. In Exodus and Leviticus the Priesthood for the Nation.
4. In Hebrews the Priesthood for the Church.
5. In Revelation the Priesthood for the Nations.
6. In Colossians 1, Romans 8, & Hebrews 2 we have the Priesthood for the Universe — all of creation.

The first four of the above orders are now fulfilled and we are standing at the very beginning of the fifth — a Priesthood for the nations! Has this wonderful reconciliation of the nations been accomplished? History shouts aloud that it has not — not yet! God has called Israel, built His Church, and brought His sons to birth, but He has not yet **saved all the nations**. The kingdoms of *this world* have not yet been broken to pieces and consumed *into* the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom *under the whole heaven* has not yet been given to the saints of the Most High. All dominions do not yet serve and obey Him. All nations have not been subdued unto Him nor do all nations come before Him to serve and worship Him. China does not! Tibet does not! Iraq does not! Iran does not! Egypt does not! The European nations as a whole do not! In fact, only the Church worships and serves Him — not *any* nations! But fear not, dear ones, for a people is prepared to take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom and reign until the kingdoms of this world *are become* the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ!

On the rocky slopes of the isle called Patmos the beloved John beheld in spirit the wonder-filled scene of God's throne with its Kingly or Royal Priesthood. He beheld, and lo, "the four beasts (kingship) and the four and twenty elders (priesthood) fell down before the Lamb, having everyone of them harps...and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS: and we shall REIGN ON THE EARTH" (Rev. 5:8-10).

We have come to a period of the world, and to a condition, for which there are no precedents. There are no instructions left for guidance in the details of the restoration of all things, beginning with the deliverance of the

nations and their entrance into the Kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit has given no exact direction concerning the manner in which the priesthood for the nations is to minister or its work to be effected. We have, in the Word of God, abundant instructions for the "in part" realm of Church age ministry. It is not difficult to learn how to function in the body of Christ as an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, deacon, bishop, elder, or to move in the gifts of the Spirit. But I defy any theologian to find anything that will give direct help, even in the words of Jesus Himself, concerning how to reign as King-Priests over the nations! He left that for the Holy Spirit to teach to the elect company of overcomers who should be the heirs of the Kingdom of God. We have come to that hour. Ah, we can only learn these sacred and secret things by being TAUGHT OF HIM! "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth...and He will SHOW YOU THINGS TO COME" (Jn. 16:12-13).

We think we have seen some wonderful moves of God, and we have, but we haven't even scratched the surface, we haven't seen anything yet that faintly resembles the glorious things God will do in the days that lie before us. With all its multiplied missionary programs and evangelistic efforts the Church has not yet even started on world evangelism. God is laying a groundwork and teaching, processing, qualifying, equipping, and empowering His people for the coming invasion of all the world. He must do something unprecedented for us first, so that we will be ready. We don't have all that we need for this great work, but God is quickening us for it. He is stripping away our dependence upon money, methods, and materials, drawing us to move out of that and into HIS REALM. The realm of God is the realm of *Spirit*. It is the realm of *Being*. God is teaching us the ways of His Spirit.

The word came to Phillip the evangelist in Samaria to go down into the desert to meet the Ethiopian eunuch. Phillip didn't say, "Lord, I haven't got a helicopter, how can I go down there? Give me time to mail out a newsletter to my partners in faith and raise the money for the trip. How am I going to find one man in all that vast desert, and anyway, Lord, I've got a big revival going here in Samaria." Phillip did not speak like that at all, but he obeyed the Lord and went immediately. God TRANSPORTED HIM BY THE SPIRIT into the desert and pointed out the chariot and said, "Go and join yourself to that chariot." Phillip had to run and outrun the horses to get into the chariot. And when God was through with him, the Spirit took him up and he was "found" at a place called Azotus.

Can we believe that when God wants any of His sons in any place, HE will put them there? God, omnipotent in power, need pay no attention to iron or bamboo curtains. He need not take into consideration national borders or immigration or passport offices. He is in no way restricted by man-made laws and regulations. We are talking about the miracle working power of God and a level of resurrection life to be manifested in the ministry of the sons of God after the Order of Melchizedek! We have really known little of the Melchizedek Order, but God is teaching! We have not experienced the fullness of this, but God is working! We have yet to see a pure, unadulterated move of the Spirit with everyone in total subjection to the mind and will of God, but we are going to. It is coming in this hour. Some are already beginning to walk in these realms with baby steps. Giant leaps lie before us!

We have not yet witnessed the magnitude of ministry that shall be revealed through the King-Priests of the Melchizedekian Order. At times God has raised up mighty men and, as it were, pulled apart but a little the veil, giving a glimpse of the force of a ministry filled with the fullness of His power, the harbinger of greater things to come. Such a man was Charles Finney, an attorney, who upon being apprehended of the Lord left his vocation, waited upon, and then followed the Lord. When he entered into a town often all the taverns and houses of prostitution and other hell-holes would close, not because of some law, nor out of respect for religious gatherings, but because there was no longer any need for them, there weren't any customers, the whole town had turned to God! One man wrote of Finney, "No one has ever approached the gigantic stature of the mighty Charles Finney, who alone, without an evangelistic society, without a radio or television program, without a computer, without 10,000 partners to *appeal to* or a business manager WON TWO AND A HALF MILLION SOULS TO CHRIST. A hundred like Finney WOULD WIN THE ENTIRE AMERICAN NATION." And do I have some good news for you! God is going to turn 144,000 incorruptible sons of God, with a thousand times more power than Charles Finney, loose on this sin-cursed world!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 46**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]  
BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY-SIX**

**THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW DAY**  
**WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH**

The day when the kingdoms of this world indeed become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ is the day when all nations are ruled by the authority of the many-membered Christ of God. That time has already begun! Everything that God did in the millenniums and centuries that preceded this Day was designed to bring us to this Day. Everything Jesus Christ did on earth and has since done from the heavens was designed to bring us to this Day. All that God has done in the lives of His elect up to this present moment was designed to bring us to this Day. Oh, what glory! What a Day this is!

Periods do not suddenly burst upon us. They come by degrees, as the darkness of the night steals upon us at the close of the day, or the dawn of the morning chases the darkness away. There are days and nights in the world's history. We are entering a wonderful day in the world's history — when the saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom unto the age of the ages, and all dominions shall serve Him. Prophecies which have been spoken by holy men of God since the world began are being fulfilled in these days. Mysteries which have been sealed up in the Book of God for millenniums are now being opened. Streams of events which had their source in the dim, remote past are now converging in a mighty river of divine destiny, which is rushing on with irresistible swiftness to the dispensation of the fullness of times.

**The Kingdom now advances,  
The great Messiah reigns,  
And virgins join in dances  
On Zion's blissful plains.**

**How happy we, who live to see  
The glorious Day increasing!  
Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks,  
Be thankful without ceasing.**

Nothing in the world today is as when God made it. Everything has been interfered with and changed in a greater or less degree by the power of sin and death. God pronounced everything good when it came from His hands, as He made it. Before things can be restored as they were at the beginning they must be shaken to pieces and changed. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers..." (Rev. 2:26-27). "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new..." (Rev. 21:5). When the sons of God reign on this earth everything is to be good and pure and beautiful. There is to be no sin and no sickness and no death. Death is the last evil to be abolished. Sickness and disease and sin and self and wickedness will be destroyed first. Some do not believe that God will rule the nations or that creation will be restored to its pristine glory. They entertain the notion that there is only the new creation and that the old will never be subjected to and swallowed up into the new. Their idea is that the natural creation will simply pass from existence, it will be annihilated. But that is not the testimony of scripture nor is it the heart of the Father! The truth is that the old things pass away by being changed and made new. That is why the scriptures tell us that Jesus came to be the Savior of the world, to reconcile all things, to restore all things, and to make all things new! There is a world of difference between making all new things, or making all things — NEW! The sons of God are being prepared at this very hour in the bosom of the Father to deliver creation from the tyranny of sin and death — the bondage of corruption.

If I believed that this world was to continue to be misruled and misgoverned as it is, that the abominable press and vile politicians and greedy money-lords and devilish religions would continue forever to curse this earth, I should despair of the whole plan of redemption. Redemption means a "buying back." Reconciliation means to "restore to a previous harmony." Restoration means a "return to a former condition or state." I proclaim to you today the great truth that Christ the Lord is the Redeemer, the Reconciler, the Restorer of — THE WORLD! He is all this because He is the world's Creator and Owner. God has never given it up. Righteousness, purity, peace and power are in God. The gospel which our Lord Jesus, the Christ, came and preached as Good News to planet earth is the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven coming down to earth that the will of God might be done in earth as it is in heaven! Any other gospel is a spurious gospel that denies the work of God in redemption, reconciliation, and restoration.

The apostle Peter, speaking of these things, wrote, "The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (II Pet. 3:7). But Peter had prefaced these ominous words with the following illustration. "By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Pet. 3:5-6). The heavens and earth of old perished, but they were not obliterated out of existence! When righteous Noah stepped out of the ark that bright morning he stepped onto the soil of the very same earth that existed before the flood, and at night he gazed into the star-spangled splendor of the same heavens above. Yet — all was changed! Was it not a new heaven and a new earth by being purged through the overflowing waters of the flood from the wickedness and corrupt order that previously pervaded it? With what joy and satisfaction do we now entertain the precious promise, "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. 65:17). Hallelujah! What a wonderful thing that God will so thoroughly cleanse our own little world and the whole vast cosmos that even our minds will be purged from the remembrance of it! God will make such a good job of His work, that the past will be completely obliterated and never thought of any more! God shall not end this present evil world and call forth the new by destroying either His creatures or His creation. Not one thing, not one precious person shall be lost! He shall bring this world to an end and establish new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness by MAKING A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S N-E-W — changed, purified, and transformed by the fire of His Word!

The coming "world" will be one that will see the fullness of God in operation through His sons, the demonstration of the mighty power of the Kingdom of God! It is not a mansion over the hilltop, nor a cabin in the corner of glory-land, nor white night gowns, nor harps, nor palm branches, nor dangling feet in some celestial stream. There is a job to be done! A battle to be fought! A victory to be won! Enemies to be conquered! "And there shall be no more death." This is not a hope for heaven, this is God's will for humanity on the earth, and this is what our call to sonship is all about. It would be a most beautiful thing if all the saints of God could have an open vision that would enable them to understand the glory of God's purpose on earth, and His election in man.

We read in Hebrews 6:5 of those who during this age have "tasted the powers of the world to come." The Rotherham translation renders this, "the mighty works of a coming age." The Interlinear Greek New Testament says, "The works of power of the age to come." How reminiscent that is of our Lord's beautiful promise, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL YE DO..." But have the followers of Jesus during this past age really done any greater works than our Lord Jesus did? The book of Acts certainly doesn't record them! Neither do the epistles. Nor does Church history. The apostles actually never did any works even as great as feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two fish, turning water into wine, or hushing the raging sea with a word. And, my friend, after a century of the restoration to the Church of the baptism in the Holy Spirit; after fifty years of the restoration of all nine gifts of the Spirit and the five-fold ministry, and the prophetic flow — have you seen any greater works than raising the dead, cleansing lepers, and walking on water? You know you haven't! But Peter prophesied of the MIGHTY WORKS OF A COMING AGE — GREATER WORKS THAN JESUS DID TWO MILLENNIUMS AGO! And all the miraculous, the power and the glory, the visions and revelations we have experienced in all previous visitations of the Spirit of the Lord have been merely a small taste, a sampling, an appetizer of the glory and power of that coming age! Why, beloved, we have only seen the firstfruits of what God will do through His enChristed body upon this earth! The hospitals emptied, the dead raised incorruptible, natures changed, the crucial problems of poverty, crime, strife, violence, war, corruption, and natural disasters solved, the whole world-system transformed, the

elemental forces of nature harnessed and controlled by the power of a spoken word — and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL YOU SEE as the glorious mind of Christ rules and reigns over the earth through the manifest sons of God! The fullness of what we have just had a taste will be the normal works on behalf of humanity during that wonderful world to come. The next dispensation is to be so different as to be the very reverse of the present one in almost every particular. Rejoice, O ye saints of the Lord, for the end of the world is upon us! "Behold, I make all things new!" saith the Lord.

## THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW DAY

These are tremendous and exciting times in which our lot is cast; days full of momentous happenings, when an era is closing and a new chapter in our human history is opening; when, whether we like it or do not, the world we have known is vanishing; and another and very different one is taking shape before our eyes. The Spirit of God these days is summoning the elect of the Lord, each in his own place, to play his part with faith and valor, that the purpose of God in this Day be not hindered; but that we may prove worthy of the daring trust God has put in us, and may so respond to it, that this great earth with its billions of people and more than two hundred nations may be gathered into His arms of love. And to no one does this call come more plainly or more powerfully than to those called to be the sons of God!

While a few years one way or the other is a small matter in relation to the unnumbered ages in God's vast universal plan, it seems clear now that we have entered upon a definite change in dispensations. Therefore we can say by revelation of the Spirit that certain aspects of the old economy are now passing away and those of the new age are coming in. Mighty changes are taking place in the earth, and man supposes that he is doing it! But it is God all the time. All is according to God's plan and is the design of His hands as He moves by His Spirit among the inhabitants of the earth.

Recently I read one of Paul Mueller's powerful exhortations wherein he wrote, "Father has a purpose for each age, a purpose that may not be revealed until the time for the administration of that purpose has arrived. The mystery of Christ that was revealed to Paul was not made known in previous ages. Not until the new day of grace dawned did the Lord reveal His plan for that age. So it is with the new age of the dominion of the kingdom of God in the earth! The new truths and the great mysteries for this age shall soon be revealed to those who have ceased walking in the ways of the dead past. The firstfruits of the kingdom, who have been awakened by the appearing of Christ, the Day Star, in them, shall hear the fresh, new word of the kingdom. The prophet Micah prophesied that the first dominion of the kingdom shall come to the remnant of Jerusalem (Mic. 4:8). And indeed it is! And, like Paul in His day, we shall hear a fresh, new word. It will be a revelation of the mystery for this new age of the kingdom of God on earth, making clear Father's plan for this age.

"New Truths, revealing Father's new administrative order for the new age, are necessary for every age. With the dawning of the new age of the kingdom of God, the Lord shall reveal new truths for the administration of His purposes for this age. The new administrative order for the church was revealed to Paul. That was new truth that Paul declared was 'not made known to the sons of men' in other ages. The truth Paul received was indeed new truth. Men of earth never before heard such truths as Paul received by revelation of the Spirit. Paul wrote to the Romans, telling them that the mystery he received 'was kept secret since the world began' (Rom. 16:25). So it is in this time of the dawning of the new day of the Lord! There is a fresh, anointed word of truth for today that has also been kept secret since the world began. Think of it! We shall hear a fresh word from the Lord that no other person has ever heard before! Like the revelation of the mystery given to Paul in his day, we also shall receive a fresh new word of kingdom authority and administrative purpose. That new word shall shake Christendom and the world, and bring the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God to many more people. Doesn't it excite you and encourage you in God to know that He has chosen you to receive the new truths of His kingdom, truths that mortal man never heard before? Are you ready for this new kingdom word? Have you repented of the past with all its dead forms and ceremonies? Are you emptied of all the religious, church-age plans and works of man that are now obsolete so that you may receive Father's new administrative order for this new age of the kingdom of God?

"When Jesus spoke to the people in parables, He said He did it 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world' (Mt. 13:35). Did you know that the Lord keeps secrets from His people, secrets that

are reserved for its time of fulfillment? Well, He does! And did you also know that God reveals His secrets to those chosen before hand, to those whose eyes and ears He has opened? Indeed, He does! The fact is, the truth I am writing at this very moment is fresh truth. If you can receive this truth, then it is obvious that the Father has given you hearing ears and seeing eyes, to both hear and see the fresh, new, secret word of the kingdom, and enter into its fulfillment. This word has been hidden and kept secret from former generations and those of previous ages. That fresh, new word is specifically reserved for this 'day' of our transformation and the dominion of the kingdom of God in the earth. It shall be revealed to those who love Him; to those who have hearing ears; to those who have entered into His rest, and have ceased the dead works of the past ages of man. New kingdom truths and mysteries are being revealed and are now coming forth out of Zion. That new word of the kingdom will reveal more clearly how we are to walk to be in full harmony with our Father and His kingdom purposes in this new day. A new, fresh, anointed word of Christ, who is light and life, shall flow out of Zion to impart that life and light to all whose hearts have been prepared in advance" — end quote.

The only people who have ever marched on with God in this world-plan have been those who have listened to His voice, heard what He said, obeyed His commands and believed and did all that this absolute surrender to His will involved. Such people in ages past were the faith heroes referred to in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. It was greatly illuminating to me when I first saw that everyone of the individuals mentioned there stood at the junction, threshold or crisis of a dispensation. You can verify that for yourself by turning to every stage of history associated with such people as Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, etc. The names are not casually or indiscriminately selected by the inspired writer. He sees that they were pioneers in faith, that they lived ahead of their times, that they perceived what God had arranged to do, and come what may they walked on in the promises and purposes of God and did exploits in His name. Each in turned condemned the world of the previous age, and brought in a new day of God's purposes through their faith and obedience. And each brought in and established a new administrative order for the new day! And now — the sons of God have come to such a time as this!

In the gross darkness of this present hour I do not believe the age is ending simply because I observe great changes in the outer world in technology, lifestyle, and in the order of the nations. Oh, no! It is true, we have in one remarkable century come all the way from the horse and buggy to the atomic, space and computer age. We have passed through two world wars that have changed the social, economic and political structure of the world. Nearly all of the kings and thrones of Europe and the whole world passed away during the twentieth century, being replaced by an entirely new governmental order in the earth. The former ruling houses of Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, China, Japan, India, Egypt, Portugal, Hungary, Turkey, Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Iran and a number of other nations are completely destroyed. Who could have foreseen such things?

Yet none of this convinces me that we have entered a New Day! Nor does the fact that the calendar has turned over to the year two thousand convince me! The revelation of the Spirit is not communicated by reading Newsweek magazine or by doing intellectual, carnal-minded studies of chronologies, times, and cycles. If it can be "figured out" with the natural mind, it is not a revelation of the Holy Ghost! It is the voice of the Father by the Spirit, the living word of God that convinces me we are standing in the threshold of a new age! Believe me, the sun is now setting on the Church age with its administrative order of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. The transcendent glory of that brighter and greater age ruled by King-Priests after the Order of Melchizedek is even now dawning upon us! Some of God's sons are already rising up into high realms of the Spirit, into the throne-zone of the heavenlies, and are speaking a governmental word to the nations by which they are being shaped for the hour that is at hand. Marvelous things are happening among those who hear the Father's voice and receive the revelation of His purposes for this time! In 1984 by revelation of God I began a ministry to Russia in and by the Spirit and saw the collapse of Communism there just as the word of the Lord showed me. Everything that has happened there has been according to that word of the Lord and the proclaiming of it! Later I declared in the presence of brethren that Mikhail Gorbachev was a dead man politically, and within three months he was removed from office and has never been able to regain power. When the present distress in Russia has run its course there will be an unprecedented, sovereign move of God in that country that will bring multitudes into living relationship with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. The sons of God are beginning to reign in the heavenlies, and earth is being impacted by their authority and dominion!

Ah, precious ones, we are receiving a fresh word from the throne! We know that we are standing at the transition of ages, and that the manchild is being caught up unto God and His throne, not by claiming a scripture or by embracing a doctrine, but because the Holy Spirit has powerfully spoken and testified of it among vast numbers of the Lord's elect in recent years. It is a revelation "come down from heaven" and proclaimed in the "power of the Spirit." Those who cannot see the change in dispensations, and know nothing of the sons of God ruling in the heavens, have not heard from God. The present work of the Spirit has to do with the Kingdom of God increasing into the new age, not established just in the lives of the elect body of Christ, but through them upon all the nations and peoples of the earth. It is a new day and a new work! It is a new kind of ministry! And it will change again in the near future. In the previous age the Lord's dealings have been for the formation of His body, the sons of God. In the dawning age the Lord's dealings will be through the manifest sons of God, gathered out of the previous age, for the increase of His Kingdom and peace throughout the earth. Of the increase of His Kingdom and of His peace there shall be no end! From age to age the Kingdom shall increase, first in the

Lord's people, then in all the earth, and finally throughout all the endless vastnesses of infinity forever more!

Since the great Latter Rain outpouring of the Spirit in 1948 God has thundered by the mouth of His holy apostles and prophets throughout the whole world proclaiming that GOD'S NEW DAY IS HERE! One of the many prophetic songs given by the Spirit in the years of that wonderful coming of Christ to His people eloquently expresses the word the Lord began to speak and has continued to speak through the years:

**The time has come to take the Kingdom,  
Rise up ye strong, 'tis Christ's command;  
For every power and dominion  
Is given now into your hands!**

**Ye that have ears to hear the trumpet,  
Ye that have hearts to understand;  
The time has come to take the Kingdom,  
Rise up ye strong, possess the land!**

**Another is this:**

**In the year of Jubilee, in the year of Jubilee,  
The prisons shall be opened, the captives all set free;  
What a mighty restoration, what a mighty victory,  
The sons of God appearing in the year of Jubilee!**

These are not the words of man, they are the words of the Holy Spirit! These words were written under the inspiration of the Spirit at the time of a sovereign, supernatural move of God and are inspired just as the scriptures of old were inspired when holy men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit. Within them is contained the message the almighty Father is conveying to His very own sons for this significant hour. When Elohim created the earth in the beginning, the inspired record states, "And God said." Ten times in the first chapter of Genesis our heavenly Father's creative acts began with the speaking of a word. "And God said..." Each creative "day" began with that same statement. The very first creative word spoken was the wonderful command, "Let there be light!" Light then appeared out of incomprehensible darkness, flooding space and illuminating the earth. Again and again we read, "And God said..." Each "day" was brought forth by the creative word of the Lord. By His creative word of power, our Father spoke every day, epoch, and age into existence. One scripture tells us that it was by His word that God framed the ages (Heb. 1:2). This is the wonderful pattern set forth in Genesis. The Genesis "days" therefore become the example for all the age-days that follow. And now, it is our Father's word that has begun another new Day, even the day of the advancement of His Kingdom to deliver, redeem, and restore all nations under the government of God's sons! By that same spiritual process, in the power of His word, the Lord has proclaimed the end of the old age of Church order and the dawn of the new age of His manifest sons. The change came by the Spirit, when Father released His creative word of Kingdom power and authority into the hearts of His elect. We have heard that word! We have received that message! We have said "Amen" to the proclamation! We have presented

ourselves before the Father for His new work! We have been given our orders! That is why the excitement of the so-called "revival" realm holds nothing for us anymore. Father reveals His words to those whose ears He has opened. All those elect, who worship the Lord by ascending to His holy mountain, are hearing the mighty declarations of His creative word, announcing God's great purpose in the transition of the ages, and the new order to be revealed through His kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek.

From our vantage point in the Spirit we can see that we are living in a wonderful era when the old age is swiftly grinding to a halt. The next age of greater glory, light and life is appearing on the horizon. As the sun of the new age arises, the trumpet sounds heralding the dawn of the new day. That trumpet is the prophetic voice now sounding forth alerting the Lord's elect to the hour that has arrived and the work now to be done.

At a specific moment appointed by God, John the Baptist emerged from the wilderness of Judea proclaiming, "The kingdom of God is at hand!" In like manner, so are the Lord's anointed messengers of this hour called to announce the next stage of the manifestation of God's Kingdom in the earth. The purpose for John's ministry was to alert the people to the hour that was at hand, which was the fixed time, the predetermined hour, as ordained by the omniscient mind of God, when God would move to bring forth His Kingdom among men. His mission was to announce the coming of Jesus and the Kingdom. As soon as John appeared among the people sounding forth his message, Jesus laid aside all His other activities, left the carpenter shop in Nazareth, and came forward to make Himself known.

With the preaching of John, the time appointed for the appearance of the Kingdom was at hand. It was the time for the King of the Kingdom to be revealed. Thus the scriptures declare, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4). The time allotted for the age of the law and the prophets ended the day the Father witnessed, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." The precise time had now arrived for the coming forth of a new day with a new administration of the Lord's purpose. No longer would the age of law with its ceremonies, commandments, and priesthood be the standard by which men would worship and serve God, and by which the administrative order would function. A new day had come, and it was time to turn from the dead past to the new thing the Lord was doing. And now, with the sounding of the prophetic trumpet in our generation, a new day is being announced, and all who are among the wise and chosen will heed the prophetic call of the Lord!

When Jesus came THE WHOLE PRIESTHOOD WAS WRONG! When John the Baptist began his preaching, strange as it may seem, he was the ONLY MAN IN ALL THE WORLD who had the right message! Everyone was out of spiritual step but John, and when Jesus began also to preach, they were the only two who had the message of the hour. Today we are standing at the transition of the ages and God is raising up men and women over the nation and around the world to proclaim the message for this Day. But we must be able to forget the things of the past and look only to God's purpose in this Day. We cannot put new wine in old bottles, nor can we patch old garments with new cloth. Just as Jesus and John announced the inception of the Kingdom two millenniums ago, so the apostles of the Kingdom in this day are announcing the arrival of the next stage in the increase of the Kingdom.

It is now time for the apostles of the Kingdom to be sent forth into all the earth! These apostles of the Kingdom are the firstfruits company. In these firstfruits the foundations of the Kingdom are being laid. It is to these — to the elect remnant of the Lord — that the first dominion or reign of the Kingdom of God comes. Christ must first rule and reign in the lives of His elect before He can reign in the lives of anyone else. And when Christ fully reigns in our lives, the scepter, or ruling authority of the Kingdom of God, is then bestowed upon us. According to the measure that Christ reigns in our lives He has given us the authority to reign with Him from His spiritual throne in the heavenlies. And according to the measure that His life, wisdom, grace, nature, power and purposes are established in our lives WE ARE GIVEN THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN! How wonderful and complete is the plan of our God!

Those people who have received a revelation of God's purposes in sonship received it not from man, but by revelation of the Spirit of Truth. It is God Himself who has delivered a vast company of saints from the bondage of Babylon's harlot system into which the whole church world has been taken captive, bringing them out into the pure light of His truth — yea, the light which Jesus Himself is. It is God Himself who has washed away the darkness and confusion of the false doctrines and silly delusions and static creeds and vain traditions of the

church systems which for years held the Lord's people in a spiritually starved and stunted condition and shut them up from the light of God's eternal purpose. It is God Himself who has opened the eyes and unstopped the ears of the called-out elect, teaching them more in weeks and months than they were able to learn in all the years they were held in bondage to church teaching and the doctrines of men. It is God Himself who has opened within our hearts the heavenly vision of the Kingdom of God and given us the beautiful promise and hope of sonship, which is the high calling of God in Christ. It is God Himself who has declared in the hearing of our ears and within our very hearts that we have entered into the transition of the ages, and the hour is wonderfully nigh at hand for the manifest sons of God to arise and bring the Kingdom to all the nations of earth. It is God Himself who has set the agenda!

In these awesome days of Father's dealings we have waited in His presence until all earthly voices were stilled, until the mundane sounds of earthly interests and pursuits were silent, until we could, in the wonder of His presence, hear Him whisper to our hearts the revelation of His will and the instructions of His purpose. May God disturb His people from the paralyzing lethargy, laziness, slumber and death of the carnal mind! Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light! The promises, challenges, and opportunities of God's New Day are upon us, and only those who with abandon embrace the Day, forsaking the things of the past orders and all of Egypt's bondage, shall attain to the glory, power and victory which is freely offered to those who follow the Lamb upon mount Zion.

God has called us to have a role in establishing the new order of the Kingdom of God over the nations. God is offering to His called-out in this hour something He has never offered to any other generation before, He is giving us an open invitation to participate in the activity that will lead to the prize of all the ages. It is greater than anything He has ever done from the time of Adam to the present, and it will never be done again! It has never been done before, because it is God's NEW THING. He's inviting a people to obey Him, to follow on to know Him, to be His sons and daughters indeed for the deliverance of all creation. Beware lest old order brethren rob you and steal this hope from you. It's very important that we not let anyone rob us of this reward. It's our inheritance! The inheritance is the absolute fullness of God to deliver creation!

God is preparing a people He will put His stamp of approval on and endorse with all His wisdom, power, and majesty. The voice will come from heaven and say, "These are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye them!" You who have been thoroughly processed by the Father have His likeness, you bear His image, and He will put His full endorsement upon you to represent His Kingdom purpose in the earth. We are called to live such a life and walk in such a dimension of righteousness, peace, joy, and power in the Kingdom of God that we can testify, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." It will take a life of total abandonment to walk with God as sons and express His nature in the earth before all men and nations. It has been said that we beheld the Savior and became the saved, we beheld the Redeemer and became the redeemed, we beheld the Healer and became the healed, we beheld the Baptiser and became the baptized, and now it is time to behold the Father and become the expression of the glory of Fatherhood in the earth! We must not bear a message about the Father, we must be the message!

**Beyond thy fondest expectation are the days that lie before,  
No mortals have ever seen them, no days like these in store.**

**Like the days that are in heaven, they have come upon the earth;  
Mankind has never seen them... 'tis His Kingdom come to birth.**

**Like the sound of many waters, like the voice no man has heard,  
So the former things are ending; it's the Newness of His Word.**

**It's the revelation of His glory spoken of so long ago,  
Every knee to Him is bending, every heart in Him aglow.**

**And shall ye not know it? Former things I take away;  
Every bondage shall be broken, 'tis God's new Sabbath Day.**

**'Tis the Feast of Tabernacles, it's the year of Jubilee,**

**The sons of God appearing, all creation is set free.**

**Great is the Lord! And greatly to be praised,  
Beyond all expectation, the new creation raised;**

**The glory of New Jerusalem is descending from above,  
It's the fullness of the Father, it's the fullness of His Love.**

**Expectation has been granted to all the nations of the earth,  
It's the glory of the Father, NEW CREATION BROUGHT TO BIRTH!  
— Jack Hodgdon.**

## **WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH**

Through the cunning of the adversary, both the world and the popular church have been robbed of the blessed assurances of the time when God's **RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENTS** break forth in the earth. Most people know that the Bible tells of a "judgment day," but the average person, believer or unbeliever, regards it only with a certain sense of fear and dread. Because of this fear there is, to them, no more unwelcome tidings than that the Lord is coming to **JUDGE THE EARTH**. Many tremble inwardly at the thought of God's judgments, and in this mind put them far from them, preferring not even to hear the subject mentioned. At various times in the past many people have become terror-stricken when some unusual event or terrible calamity has occurred, because they have supposed that the event signaled the finale for our planet with billions of people suddenly thrust into eternal damnation. They have absolutely no idea of the wonderful blessings in store for a sin-weary world under the glorious reign of the sons of God filled with all the nature, wisdom, grace, power, and glory of God!

The end of divine judgment — no matter its form, no matter its subject — is to bring the whole universe into harmony with His will. With what optimism did the holy prophets and apostles regard the coming of the Lord in judgment! Note the expectation in Isaiah's spirit as he announces: "Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for Thee...with my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early: for when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world **WILL LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS**" (**Isa. 26:8-9**). Here Isaiah assures us that the day when God's judgments are in the earth will be a most glorious and desirable day, a day in which the inhabitants of the world **W-I-L-L LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS**! How opposite to the idea entertained by many that when God's judgments come into the earth the inhabitants of the world will finally "get what they deserve" and be sent into oblivion or damnation.

If the desire of your heart is anything like the desire of my heart, this is a blessed thought and a wonderful assurance: The inhabitants of the world **W-I-L-L LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS**! How my ransomed soul yearns to behold the wonder of such a thing! Every time I scan the headlines of the morning paper I am seized with an intense longing that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Oft times as I watch the evening newscast my spirit is mightily moved within to intercede earnestly that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. As I drive across this great land of ours; as I walk the streets of our cities and towns, observing the condition of those about, my spirit groans with unutterable supplications that the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness! What a marvelous provision of our omniscient and loving Father that, to this very end, He has ordained judgment to come forth in the earth. Bless His name!

While the Lord has permitted the devil, the great adversary, to rule in the hearts of "the children of disobedience" for a season, He has never ceased to plan and purpose for the ultimate release and blessing of mankind. In fact, throughout all the thousands of years during which He has refrained from interfering on any large scale with the reign of sin, darkness, and death, God has been laying the groundwork for a glorious day of deliverance! Our heavenly Father God has been quietly dealing with His apprehended ones, processing, purging, purifying, perfecting, teaching, training, equipping and preparing them for the day of battle and overthrow of Satan's kingdom. He has done this without any fanfare! Just as Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, was prepared in His "Nazareth," the "place of no good thing," so today the Lord has a remnant, unseen, unobserved, and as yet unheralded, hidden away from all the activity of the world and of popular religion, in the secret place of the Most High in the Spirit, learning the ways of the Father, taught and instructed in the

principles of His Kingdom, changed and transformed in mind, heart, desire and purpose, brought under the Lordship of their King and High Priest, in preparation for the day when the great Commander shouts, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee! And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. All they gather themselves together, they come to thee. The abundance of the sea (multitudes) shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the nations shall come unto thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the nations, and that their kings may be brought. They shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:1-14).

The ways of the Kingdom are not at all like the ways of the Church. The ministry of sonship is not in any way like the Church age ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Sonship is the new administration for the new age! The order of the new age will be altogether different from the order of the passing age! George Hawtin graphically articulated this wonderful truth when he wrote in his paper, The Page, "Some years ago it was revealed to me that the evangelization of the nations during the coming age would be accomplished in exactly the opposite way to the method used in this age. In the church age the commission has been, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.' In the next age entire nations will come to Jerusalem and to Zion to seek and find the Lord. What could be more certain than the words spoken by Micah the prophet when he said, 'But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains (Zion) and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow into it and many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord (Zion), and to the house of the God of Jacob and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' (Mic. 4:1-2)."

The terms Zion and Jerusalem as well as the mountain of the Lord and the house of the God of Jacob speak prophetically and spiritually of kingship and priesthood. John the Revelator beheld the 144,000 sons of God standing on mount Zion having the Father's name written in their foreheads. Mount Zion, the highest hill in Jerusalem, spiritually represents the very highest pinnacle attainable in God's Kingdom. Such are the ruling class prefigured by king David of old who dwelt on the natural mount Zion in the earthly Jerusalem. From there he reigned. This company, standing on mount Zion, following the Lamb of the throne, can represent nothing other than those who have followed Jesus all the way, who have put on the mind of Christ and the nature of the Father, and shall now reign with Him on His throne forevermore. The house of the Lord, on the other hand, bespeaks of the temple on mount Moriah in Jerusalem with its order of sacrifices and priesthood. The two together are God's ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, or God's KINGLY PRIESTHOOD, the kings and priests after the Order of Melchizedek. Kingship and priesthood, embodied together in the ministry of sonship, constitute the new governmental order for the new age!

During this church age, by the ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers the Lord has sought the people. The Lord has sought the people in this way because the members of His body must be gathered out of the world. But in the new age, when the Kingdom of God comes upon the nations, He will pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplication and the billions of earth will come, as nations, to seek the wisdom, goodness, life and glory of the Lord revealed in His sons. What an indescribable wonder! You see, when the Lord removes the veil, the covering that has been cast over the minds of all people, then all men will see in a clear light and will come to God's holy nation to seek His face. Centuries ago the prophet Isaiah wrote with great clarity of this same wonder, saying, "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations which knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee" (Isa. 55:5-6). This is a glorious promise revealing that entire nations will run to seek the Lord, because He has glorified His sons upon mount Zion.

I have already quoted earlier the passage from Isaiah, chapter sixty, which clearly agrees and bears witness to this great truth. Time and space forbid me to even try to quote all the passages that speak of the universal conversion of the seeking nations in the day when God's sons are revealed. Therefore I will quote only one more and pass on. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, It shall come to pass that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations

(industrialized super-powers) shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem (God's governmental people), and to pray (seeking the blessings and benefits of His Kingdom) before the Lord" (Zech. 8:20-23).

What a marvel that will be when the "Great Commission" has fully come to an end! No longer will the Lord say, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." It is an historical fact that each of the first apostles to whom that word was spoken, left Judea and carried the word of Christ to different parts of the world. According to histories I have read Peter went to Babylon, Thomas to India, James to Spain, Andrew to Scythia, John to Asia, Philip to France, Thaddeus and Bartholomew to Armenia and Persia, Matthew to Ethiopia and Parthia and Macedonia, James the less to Syria, Jude to Armenia, Syria, and northern Persia, Simon the Zealot to Armenia. The dispensing of the Word in Asia Minor, Greece and Rome by Paul is a well-documented fact and there is some evidence that he went as far as Britain in his spreading of the gospel. Thus, the Great Commission was completely fulfilled in the days of the early Church and continued to be carried out throughout the age now called by many the age of grace.

That was a wise and wonderful plan for this age when God was "calling out a people" from among the nations for His name. Those who were sent were never able to reach all the people, and it was only "whosoever believeth" that responded to their word. That is how Christ built His Church! No one could improve on that method for doing the job the Lord required for that age. But now in the new Day the residue of men, earth's teeming masses, and all the nations of the world are being called upon to COME TO THE LORD. Billions of the world's darkened, dejected, weary, and oppressed souls shall come streaming into the Kingdom of God. The sons of God are the Light that shall shine upon them (Isa. 60:1-22; Rev. 21:24) and the voice that shall bid them come. We are also the "gates" through whom the multitudes of earth's needy shall enter the New Jerusalem City of God (Rev. 21:25). That glorious event shall so overshadow and eclipse all previous spiritual visitations, outpourings, and revivals, that none of our old church age terminology will be adequate to describe it. God will indeed have to give us a new vocabulary!

In this new age of the Kingdom all our former ideas, opinions and methods of evangelism will have to be discarded. The emphasis of the past age has been upon GO and DO. Constantly we were going places and doing things for God! But, thank God, the order is changing! God is doing a new thing! He is establishing a new order in the earth! And we will have to change with God! And we will change, because we will be changed! All the old religious methods of the past age are passing away! The time of raising money and sending missionaries and establishing churches is ending. I do not say that it has ended; it is a good plan as long as God is calling out a people for His name. But the new age demands an intensified program of God to harvest all the nations into the Kingdom of God!

Instead of sending messengers to go into all the world, the Lord will so pour out the spirit of grace and supplication upon all the nations of the world through the ministry of the manifest sons of God that it will cause billions of earth's sick and sinning and dying people to flow like a mighty river into God's Kingdom, to find rest for their weary souls. We may think we have witnessed mighty manifestations of God's power and glory in the past, but we haven't seen anything yet!

I was greatly inspired by the following testimony of Paul Mueller which I share in closing these thoughts. "I grew up on a farm; before the Lord called me to serve Him, I was a farmer. About fifty years ago, the Lord gave me a vision of a great harvest field. In that vision, I saw a field of ripened grain being harvested by old, outmoded means. The farmers were using a hand scythe, cutting the grain and then bundling it all by hand, as farmers once did before the invention of binders and combines. But then, the Lord let me see that He had a large combine being prepared on the side of that field, waiting for the right time for it to be used. I was encouraged when the Lord revealed to me that that massive combine represented the new thing He would do in the earth. By the Spirit, I saw that the Lord was preparing a people who would represent Him and His kingdom purposes in the earth. They would be used of the Lord to gather in the ripened harvest of the world's billions. In due time, the multitudes of the world will be as ripened grain to be gathered into the kingdom by His massive, spiritual 'combine.' They will all be fully prepared and ready to come to the Lord. With heavenly eloquence and vision the prophets prophesied of this time. We are now living in the hour when much of the prophetic word of the Lord shall come to pass. And we are the people God has chosen to fulfill His purposes!" — end quote.

Even with the light of divine revelation it is difficult to imagine the wonderful sight of whole nations coming to the Lord! Think what it will be like! One day a nation is communist, filled with people spouting by rote the godless line of Lenin or Mao. The lives of the people are tightly controlled by that totalitarian system, with all its restrictions and tyranny. But then, the sons of God speak a word from the throne of the heavenlies releasing a mighty flood of the Spirit of the Lord over that nation, and the whole nation is set free by the power of God. The glory of the Lord appears to millions of people, and the truth of Christ is unveiled to their minds and hearts. All the people of that nation will turn to the Lord to love, worship, and serve Him. They will seek God in the persons of His sons, and there will be a dispensation of life, light and love unto them. In the sons of God they will see and learn and know the ways of the Lord, the will of the Lord, and all aspects of their national life will become transformed by the wisdom and nature of God. With one mighty sweep of His Spirit, God has changed a communist nation into a nation that loves and serves the true and living God! The Kingdom of God has then come to that people and nation.

What wonders shall be wrought when our Father has glorified His sons with the glory of Christ! All the nations of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, bowing before the feet of this glorious Christ, confessing Him as their Savior, Lord, Redeemer and King, to worship Him in spirit and in truth. And since it is nations, and not individuals, that shall come to the Lord, it is obvious that they shall not come to a geographical location. There will be no literal, physical throne nor any literal, earthly city. The government of God is a glorified people reigning in and by the Spirit from heavenly places in Christ Jesus! But they shall COME to the mountain of the Lord's power, to the beautiful and spiritual temple of living stones, to a kingdom of priests and an holy nation, glorified in the midst of the earth. It is an absurd impossibility to imagine whole nations coming to a literal mount Zion, or to great crusades in buildings or stadiums, which are all so limited. Such carnal thinking is a remnant from the old age now passing, and has no place in the new order of the Kingdom of God upon the nations. God will not repeat the limited methods of the past, for they cannot prevail to do the work that must be done in this new Day.

The Lord is doing a new thing in the earth. The manifestation of the sons of God is the next thing on the agenda in God's Kingdom program. This manifestation will bring multitudes, even many nations at a time, into the greater glory of the fullness of God dwelling among men. What a marvelous plan, revealed and confirmed now by the Spirit of the Living God within our hearts! We know God's purpose because He has called us and chosen us to be a vital part of the redemption and restoration all things. We wait in holy expectation!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 46**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FORTY-SEVEN**

**THE GLORY OF MANIFESTED SONSHIP**

Even though we have heard that we are living in such a day of miracles and sensational happenings that people are shock-proof, let me remind you that people are not shock-proof! Soon a series of prophetic fulfillments of a sensational nature will be transpiring right here on this earth that will shock millions of people who thought themselves to be shock-proof heretofore! Truly, we are living in a day of miracles. Every time we look at a newborn baby we are looking at a miracle, and every time we see a giant plane take off the ground into the air with hundreds of people on board, we are looking at a miracle. I have seen paralyzed people jump out of wheelchairs, tumors and goiters disappear before my eyes, and gasoline created in the tank of my automobile. However, these will fade into insignificance, compared to the miracles that are just ahead.

The prophetic word of the Lord gives promise of a time when the Lord will move in a marvelous and unprecedented way by His Spirit. At that time the Lord will restore all that was lost through the ages past and the long night of man's selfhood, sin, sorrow and death. There is an event soon to take place, which shall overshadow and eclipse all former, partial, manifestations of God's glory and power in the earth. The glories of this great event will inspire, initiate, and bring to fulfillment the times of the restitution of all things. The grandeur, the splendor, the glory and the great power of God to be manifest at the time of this event is impossible for us to comprehend presently, for we are still living and moving in the realm of the "firstfruits" of God's Spirit. The grand and glorious event to which we refer is the manifestation of the sons of God.

The supernal glories that lie like towering sierras before us are beyond compare. The grandest event of all time is now at the doors! For almost two thousand years the Lord has been gathering out of all nations and peoples an elect body, refining its members in the furnace of affliction, transforming them in mind and heart by the deep dealings of His Spirit, preparing them by experience and in wisdom and knowledge to possess the reins of the government of the world. And while we rejoice and praise God for all the mighty visitations of the past, and those glorious movings of the Spirit we have experienced in our life-time, yet we know by the word of the Lord that the next great move of God will be greater than all — the manifestation of God through His many sons. Nothing is more certain than that. The Spirit witnesses all across the land and around the world that the long awaited unveiling of God's sons is at hand. The unveiling of the in-Christed is upon us! The cry of the groaning creation and the prayer of the travailing saint are joined with the unutterable longings of the Holy Spirit, all crying in unison and harmony for the arising of God's deliverers. The desire of all nations is at hand. The next stage of the Kingdom of God is ready to unfold!

Let the mountains reverberate with the sound of the message, let the hills shout aloud for joy, and all the trees of the forest clap their hands! For we now stand on the threshold of a new dimension of the Kingdom of God, and we must be prepared to receive HIM in fullness. As we earnestly look for His appearing, we are to receive ALL THAT HE IS, for when He appears in His glory in His manifest sons, all the traditions of yesterday will be swept away and the realms of limitation swallowed up in His surpassing glory. I cannot overemphasize this great and important truth: When Christ appears in the fullness of Himself in His many brethren, we must be prepared to receive Him on a higher plane than we have known Him hitherto. We cannot tell Him what portion of Him we will receive and what portion we will not receive. WE WILL RECEIVE AND MANIFEST HIM IN FULLNESS, and without any reservations or preconceived ideas, or we will not receive Him at all. Either we will walk in the power and glory of His sonship, or we will miss the glory. Should we cling to the ministries and methods of the past, we will not be manifest sons. Vast multitudes of Christians will not stand in this new glory because of their tradition — but their time of visitation will come later. But for those who are willing to pay the price, to be thoroughly purged of all that is of the flesh, and disposed to turn loose of the past religious traditions, the old forms and ceremonies, the former means and methods, and the stagnant remains of

yesterday's visitations, there awaits great glory and heavenly wealth, and a world-shaking ministry beyond the comprehension of mortal mind.

Some of us have surely noticed that in every generation and age God is doing two different kinds of work — a general work and a specific work. For instance, in Noah's day there is no doubt that God was acting in diverse ways and on different levels, doing numerous general things in the earth. He certainly was caring for His creation and we know that His Spirit was striving with all mankind (Gen. 6:3). But God was also doing a very specific thing. The Lord appeared to Noah and gave him His word for the new day He would bring to pass. The Lord told Noah that because of man's wickedness He was going to destroy all flesh by a flood, except his family, and that he should build an ark to save his family and two of every kind of creature on earth. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord! He was a just man and perfect in his generation. He walked faithfully with God and became related to God in that specific thing He was doing in the earth at that time.

To fulfill God's purpose required that Noah build an ark on dry ground in a world where rain had never been seen. Nobody really knew what a flood was, for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. The face of the earth was watered nightly by a mist that the Lord caused to cover the land. No one had ever seen a rainbow, for there was never sufficient moisture in the air by day. After receiving his instructions from the Lord, Noah labored faithfully to build the ark. With every stroke of his hammer Noah was judging that generation. I do not doubt that the scoffers mocked Noah and ridiculed him for building such a huge monstrosity which he maintained would one day float above the mountains and save his family from death. With no rain in sight, the mockers had a hundred years to laugh at Noah, taunt him, shout obscenities at him, while calling him a stupid and crazy old man. But when the flood came and the waters overflowed the earth, their mocking came to an abrupt end. God's word to Noah, and Noah's involvement with that specific thing God was doing in that generation, judged the whole world and brought the dawn of a new age. When the flood was over, Noah and his family stepped out of the ark to see a new earth that was cleansed of the evil of previous times.

Ah, time fails me to speak of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, Jeremiah and a host of others who dared to become related to God in that specific work He was doing in their day. It is easy to be related to God in the general things He is doing. Today God is moving in the earth to touch and bless and use people on many different levels of His purposes. Vast multitudes of believers throng to the activities of these general movings of God. You will always find the crowd at the general move of God! But we live in a unique period of the history of the world, just as Noah and others did. And in our generation, as in theirs, God has a SPECIFIC PURPOSE in mind, that one precise, unique, special and transcendental work which He is performing for the advancement of His Kingdom into the new age. The masses of Christians flocking to the meetings, crusades, projects and activities of the church systems in this hour are related to God only in the general things He is accomplishing in the earth.

There is a people unto whom the Lord has appeared and to whom the Lord has given His word for the New Day. For this reason we are a people to be conformed to a higher standard — a people made in His image and likeness, trained in His ways, instructed in His purposes, initiated into His sacred secrets, devoted to His will. The apostle Paul also lived in a unique period. He was called to bridge the gap between the old and the new. Paul was called and ordained and equipped to establish a new order in the earth. So is it in this Day! The specific purpose of God in our generation is to bring the many-membered body of Christ to maturity, to birth the company of the manifest sons of God, to bridge the gap between the old Church age and the new age of the Kingdom of God upon the nations. I speak as a prophetic voice in the earth in this generation. The manifestation of glory and power and righteousness that will be manifested in this Day will eclipse all former moves. Who can carry on with the programs of man anymore, who can wade in the shallows of former visitations once he has received the vision of what shall be realized as God's people launch out into the deep. The last or most recent "shower of blessing" came as the great outpouring of the Lord as Latter Rain during the years 1948-1953. The effect and blessing of that outpouring is with us still and various smaller showers have fallen also. But the celestial deluge is yet to come in GREAT POWER AND GLORY. Glorious beyond words to describe was that wonderful outpouring of God's Spirit at Pentecost, but no language of men below nor of mighty angels above can begin to describe the SURPASSING GLORY of the manifestation of God in this New Day. The "waters to swim in" are coming, the outpouring of the fullness of the spirit and life of the almighty

Christ of God, and compared to these waters the former outpourings are but trickling streams compared to the vast ocean currents beyond the power of man to either produce or control.

Here me now and believe me later — if you cannot believe me now — soon there will come the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all creation has groaned for long millenniums and ages. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed from the living, completed temple of His body. His glory shall flow out and fill the earth. His power shall shake the nations and all nations shall come and worship before Him. The harvest of this age shall be gathered. Everything shall live whithersoever the River cometh. The Spirit of God has witnessed to many thousands of saints around the world in this hour that a NEW DAY is upon the horizon. The next great move of God is even now at hand. There will not be another revival. There will not be another visitation. It is not the hour for the restoration of the New Testament Church. All that has already been accomplished! A new day dawns. God is marching on. He shall do an entirely new thing in the earth. A new age lies directly before us. The manifestation of God's sons is at hand. That has never happened before! A new and unspeakably wonderful stage of the Kingdom of God is upon us! In this New Day the ministry of the fullness of the Spirit of God shall be released through many sons in reconciliation, blessing, and transformation unto all the ends of the earth! It shall bring a deliverance and change beyond any the world has ever witnessed.

There can be no hanging on to the things of the past. There must be a clean break away from all of the old order, not only the orders of men, but the old order of God Himself. We must forsake all that has waxed old and is ready to vanish away that we may attain to that specific thing God has called us to. For my part, nothing short of attaining will satisfy! We must attain without counting any cost. It means the loss of friends and fellowship. It means misunderstanding among our relations and often the closest members of our family. Those who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God (Rom. 8:14). All others will go the way of the flesh, receiving their instructions and guidance, not from the Spirit, but from carnal-minded preachers, childish, immature Christians, and apostate church systems. Do you want to share in the Kingdom? Then there are responsibilities for you which Martin Luther, John Wesley, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, and all the other orders of the past and present have not had. Therefore, for you to live an earnest and dedicated Christian life as these have, is not enough. Did not the generation of Jews, on whom the end came in the days of Christ Jesus — the generation that saw or might have seen the glory that came with the new activity of God in those days — have responsibilities their fathers did not have? And were they not judged accordingly?

Unless we are enlightened by the Spirit and given eyes to see as God sees, and hearts to understand as God understands, our minds will be filled with the darkness and spiritual foolishness of these times. The Christ within should always be our guide! The Christ within will open our eyes and cause us to see new things in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Then we will see this great Day and Father's Kingdom purposes to which His chosen, faithful and mature sons are called. Only when we are enlightened by the light of Christ are we able to look beyond the feverish religious activities of the carnal church world and the evil and darkness of these times, to see the hope and purpose and glory of a people prepared to rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom — in this Day!

When this people arises in the earth the Kingdom of God shall prevail through an altogether new ministry for the new age. Yet many of those who yearn for the manifestation of God's sons are left feeling much like the expectant woman whose due date for delivery of her baby has come and gone. All the signs are there that there is a baby — the tummy is swollen so tight it can't be pinched, the baby is kicking, the water may even have broken and contractions begun — yet the birth has not followed. At such a time the mother may wonder if things could go on like that indefinitely. It seems almost unbearable, the waiting grows intolerable, the nights long and depressing. Still, all signs give assurance that the hoped for event will take place. And, praise God, it surely shall! We are getting very near the end of our journey. For some of us it has been long, hard, and treacherous; the road often rough and stony, feet becoming torn and wounded. But the glad news is this, the morning is at hand, the day is dawning, the glory of the Lord is arising upon the elect, and the overcomers are ready to be clothed with His resurrection and immortality. We have been set apart from birth. We were always "different" from others. We were in the world, at times we were part of the world, and for a season we enjoyed the pleasures of the world. Yet something within us pulled us away and led us to the spiritual...to the unseen...to the eternal. HE was always with us. Through all the steps of our growth and development in the

spirit we always sensed...knew...that there was more. We were never satisfied at any stage of the journey, with any church or move or ministry. We were irresistibly impelled onward to things we did not yet see nor comprehend.

Carl Schwing wrote of the beauty of this great truth, "There is a field, a very lovely field, where the lilies grow. They stand tall in the sunlight and dance freely in the wind; white trumpet-shaped flowers with the fragrance of a rare perfume. They neither labor nor toil...they are free from things like that. They simply do what they were created to do; they grow and become beautiful and are admired by every passerby. But sadly there comes a cold gray day when the flowers fade and all of their loveliness is gone. Yet deep within the cold dark earth they rest, until summer's sun. I have often wondered if the lilies know that someday the sun will rise to set no more, and that they will bloom forever in the Father's lovely field. Ah, then shall they be free from change and decay. They will be free to live on and on, and be a thousand times lovelier than they were before. I must share a secret: I know that they know...for they moan for the hour of the Manifestation of the Sons of God.

"There is another field...the earth which we are. And deep within that cold harsh earth there is hidden an inner son. Within this son dwells all the mysteries of the ages. All the wisdom and knowledge of the Father dwells in him. He is the 'inner being' out of which the River of Life shall flow. He is the emancipator that the whole creation cries out for. He is a son of God's Christ. And now he rests within the body of flesh...till the call of the Rising Son. This, my beloved, is the unrest which you feel. The earth, which you are, is being shaken by the knowledge of the inner truth. This is the feeling we have of something breaking forth. The stone of flesh is soon to be rolled away. The light of God is swelling within you and His Kingdom is being prepared to come forth. Even now the Rock is grinding to powder the kingdoms of the world. Even now we can hear the songs of the Kingdom as we dwell in the presence of the Father. Even now the Kingdom Light is shining forth from our eyes (understanding). Even now upon the horizon we can see the coming of the Manifestation of the Sons of God...and they shall live on and on, and be a thousand times lovelier than they were before. They will be the eternal glory of the Father, the pillars of His House, and the joy of all creation. They, with their Elder Brother, form the Son of God by whom all things were created, redeemed and restored. Who can be compared to these Holy Lilies of the Field? Hallelujah!"

There is coming a new and fresh and full revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The night is falling on the present order. Already we are seeing evidence of the dawning of a new day breaking forth upon us as thousands of the Lord's elect are arising to behold the first rays of the dawn and to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn. There is a mighty cry in our hearts for the Lord to move in an altogether new way in our lives and in the earth. Many things are happening in the Pentecostal and Charismatic realms today, but I do not hesitate to tell you that all of those things are but stale "left overs" from previous visitations. We are due for a fresh move and a new work of God in the earth in this hour! So the night is coming upon the religious realms, bringing an end to particular forms of the movings and operations of the Spirit of God. Though all the manifestations of the past have been precious and needful, yet our God in this hour is moving on. A new manifestation and revelation of the Christ is coming in the midst of us, and I hear and see the signs that He is beginning to come. We are living in the early dawn of the fullness of the APPEARING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. This appearing will be through the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God. It will not just save and heal and bless people, it will deliver creation from the bondage of corruption. It will bring full salvation, spirit, soul and body! This truth is burning within my bones, pulsating within my bosom. I am being quickened by these things. My one desire is to be available to be a part of this appearing of the Lord that is preparing the sons of God for the wind-up of this age and the inauguration of a far greater age of glory.

We must be willing to move with God into the new, and that means to be completely released from, separated from, stripped from the old. Oh! How we try to bring the old along into the new, to adapt the old methods, the old order of the church systems to the new order of sonship and the Kingdom of God. But God will not have that, my friend. It is human nature to want to fit the passing into the mold of the new. Have you ever noticed, for example, how it worked in the automotive industry. How many of you remember what the first automobiles looked like? If you do, then you remember they looked exactly like horse-drawn carriages without the horses! When the designer sat down to draw up a concept for this new vehicle of transportation known as an automobile, he was so hitched to the past that he came forth, not with a new vehicle at all, but merely with a

reproduction of an old one. The first automobiles were made to resemble horse-drawn carriages — right down to the sockets for the whips!

Every time there is a change in the working of God we are thrown into a crisis situation. There is something about us that is never quite prepared for change. There is always that shock of seeing a cherished order vanish, while wondering what the next order will be. But this is how it is. The Lord reveals His glory and it accomplishes a purpose. Then the end of that day comes. The night steals in upon that era. God is ready for a new order, a new day, another greater phase of His workings. Again, even as I pen these lines, there is a fresh revelation and working of God in the earth. Again there is a "going forth" of Jesus Christ, released in a fuller form through a many-membered body of mature and transformed sons of God.

I must speak very frankly, my friends. The next move of God, the manifestation of the sons of God, will not come through those who are waiting for a rapture to whisk them away to the skies. It will come through people who are crying out from the depths of their spirits, "Oh God, visit us afresh. Do a new thing! We need YOU! Creation groans for a mighty deliverance! Come, Lord Jesus, move through us on a higher order, a higher dimension of your power and glory. Come to your temple in fullness. Come in the manifestation of your sonship. Come! that we might behold you as you are and be changed into your image, clothed with your life and immortality. The whole earth is waiting with bated breath for the glory of the Lord to be revealed. Come! and cause righteousness and praise and incorruption to spring forth before all nations!"

## **THE GLORY OF MANIFESTED SONSHIP**

Old as it is, there is always something new, something prophetic, in the miracle of the coming of spring. No man of us, unless he be utterly dead of soul, but feels a new thrill and throb of heart as he witnesses the wonder of the world renewed. "Behold, I make all things new" is a text of which nature writes a new lesson every year, lest we forget. Gently the earth, but yesterday so gray and winter-worn, is bathed in sunlight; silently a new life wells up from within, and the wonder is wrought. The dead grasses are gone, they are reborn in living green; the stark trees adorned in elaborate foliage and ornate blossoms. Since time began this demonstration has touched the heart of man with new hope that, if God so reclothes the grass which perishes, shall He not much more by a mightier ministry renew the men made in His image together with all creation?

The word of God clearly teaches that the manifestation of the sons of God at the close of this age brings FULL SALVATION — salvation for spirit, soul, and body. The purpose of this manifestation is two-fold: first, to bring full redemption to God's elect; second, to bring deliverance to all peoples, tongues, kindreds and nations, to those now living as well as to those vast multitudes who have lived and died throughout the ages, until sin, sickness, sorrow, darkness, pain and death shall exist no more anywhere in God's unbounded universe, worlds without end. Let us notice how the apostle Paul reveals this purpose of God in the following words: "For even the whole creation waits expectantly and longs earnestly for God's sons to be made known — waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship. For the creation was subjected to frailty — to futility, condemned to frustration — not because of some intentional fault on its part, but by the will of Him who so subjected it. Yet with the hope that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children. We know that the whole creation has been moaning together in the pains of labor until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves too, who have and enjoy the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit — a foretaste of the blissful things to come — groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, WHICH WILL REVEAL OUR ADOPTION, OUR MANIFESTATION AS GOD'S SONS" (Rom. 8:19-23, Amplified).

As our Lord did after His resurrection, so will the sons of God do. We will be in glorified bodies and we will belong to the heavenly world, but we will appear and take part in earthly life and show forth the fullness of the power and glory of His resurrection right here on earth. This is Christ coming to be revealed in the fullness of Himself among all peoples and over all nations. Our Lord's life on earth after His resurrection gives us an illustration of what resurrection life ultimately means. He was in a place simply by willing to be there, regardless of space, time, or of material obstructions. He had access to heaven and to earth. This is the destiny of all the sons of God! Since this is the truth concerning the resurrection of the firstborn son of God, it follows that this is the glory that shall be manifested when all the sons of God are glorified. Furthermore, the glory of the Lord to

be manifested on this earth when all the sons of God are transformed and glorified shall be much more magnificent than it was when Jesus was glorified. Jesus was glorified to ascend and pour out the firstfruits of the Spirit; the sons of God shall be glorified to express in the earth the fullness of the Spirit and to deliver all creation from the bondage of corruption.

Although the glory of the Lord revealed and manifested when Jesus was glorified was awesome, there is a glory coming that shall be greater by far! For it shall not be just one son glorified, but many sons brought to glory. The whole creation is standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons glorified and manifested! Every created thing is waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the family of God. Deliverance from corruption means the abolition of death — resurrection life for everyone and everything. Oh, the mystery of it! Oh, the wonder of it! Imagine the glory to be revealed when all the sons of God are transformed and glorified! And not to ascend to heaven in a cloud, but to minister deliverance, transformation and glory to the whole creation! Truly this is the promised "coming" of our Lord Jesus Christ. That great event will be the transformation and glorification of the entire body of Christ, resulting in creation's deliverance from the bondage of decay and death, into the glorious liberty and victory of the very sons of God. And what a triumphant victory that shall be!

Most Christians today are expecting the "end of the world." I cannot but feel astonished that any serious Bible student should have his mind fettered with the common and vulgar notion that the great Creator and our heavenly Father intends to destroy the earth and creation. God so loved the world that He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. The Christ came and consecrated even this earth by His presence, and by spilling upon it His life's blood. He drenched the very soil with His precious, divine blood! There is a special consecration upon the earth, which makes it revolting to think of its being handed over to oblivion. God created it to be inhabited and established it that it be not moved. The footsteps of the Son of God upon its soil, the breathing of its atmosphere by His lungs, the wearing of its dust upon His person, the warming of its fluids in His arteries, and above all, the glorification of its atoms and particles by the resurrection of His earth-body, ought to be enough to satisfy us that neither the devil nor destruction will ever possess it. It is the place where the Son of God took the earth into His very existence, where He was born and reared, and where He taught, and slept, and suffered, and died. It is the territory on which Divine Love and Mercy have poured out the costliest sacrifice the universe has ever known. It is the chosen theater of the most momentous deeds that have ever attracted the adoring interest of angels. It has furnished the body, the death-place, the grave, and the glorious resurrection and triumph of Jesus Christ. And how is it to be delivered over to everlasting nothingness? Perish what may, a world so consecrated can never be blotted out, or cease to be one of the most cherished orbs in God's great creation!

God has purposed that the Christ shall be glorified in the whole creation, in the earth and throughout the unbounded heavens, to the whole extent of His grace. He has already glorified Him in the realm above all heavens. He will now glorify Him where He lived in poverty, where He had nowhere to lay His head, and where He gave His life a ransom for all. As He, in humility and obedience, went down below all that God created, He has been raised as man above all that is created. ALL between those depths and those heights, ALL, I say, must own His authority, ALL must be gathered beneath Him as head over all things, ALL must be infused with His divine life, ALL must be delivered from the bondage of corruption. That is the testimony of the written Word and it is the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the mouths of His holy apostles and prophets in this Day. What unspeakable joy! What immeasurable glory!

Many of the Lord's people are caught up in prophecies of gloom and doom, predictions of the destruction that they believe will come upon the earth. But these are messages that come out of the darkness of men's carnal minds and soulish imaginations. Such teachings pertain to the blindness of religion. God's plan is not to destroy the earth or the universe, but to redeem and restore it. The whole purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ with the glorious gospel of the Kingdom of God is to bring forth a new earth filled with righteousness in the lives of all mankind, and not to destroy the earth or the world that He has graced with His divine presence and atoning blood. God's elect are destined to be the agents and ministers of that restoration! If we know what time it is on God's great prophetic clock, we will understand that it is time for one age to end and another more glorious age to begin right here on earth. We will then stir ourselves from the blessings and orders of the dying age and arise to become related to God in His purposes for the new age. We will put away all those

prophecies of gloom and doom, of the destruction of the earth and multiplied billions of people with it. We will then seek the Lord for His appearing in us, for we are the hope of the restoration of all things. Certainly there will be judgments, but not unto destruction and everlasting doom, rather unto correction and salvation. Yes, Great Babylon will fall, but will be replaced by the light and the rule and the glory of God's New Jerusalem people and His sons who reign from mount Zion. And what a Day of deliverance this shall bring when the sons of God begin to reign!

As Carl Schwing has written, "It has been appointed to the sons of God to establish the New Heaven and the New Earth in righteousness and peace. The high places shall shout for joy and leap with gladness; the low places shall be filled with blessing, honor and glory unto the Lord. And like a mighty river the Word of the Lord shall go forth, baptizing all things in the light and life of the Son of God. All creation shall gather before the Father to proclaim His power and might. Everything that has breath shall glorify the Lord. Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that God's Christ is Lord and King over all...unto the eternal praise of the Father. Knowing that such glory lies just ahead, should we not lose sight of all else? Even now our inner son can ascend to the place of his former birth and eat of the feast that has been prepared. Even now we can walk at the Father's side amid the Paradise of our former dwelling.

"Though all the powers of the world and of religion oppose the hand of the Lord, He shall, through the sons of His Christ, bring forth His good pleasure. Not one portion of His plan will be altered, not one among His creation will be able to resist His authority. Among the lightening and the thundering of the Father's infinite glory, the sons shall send forth the proclamation of freedom, to establish the justice and goodness of the Lord. Life, and love, and grace, shall burn as a purifying flame throughout all creation, until God is all and in all. The New Age dawns before us; bask freely in the rays of this earthly morning. Let thy spirit soar upon the wings of the Spirit to the place known only to the sons of God. Enter into the peace and stillness of the age; enter into the rest of the Greater Sabbath. Where we are, there is light; for He who is our light hath enlightened us with Himself. He is the True Light, born from the Divine Energy of the Supreme Being. He is the Light that conquers all darkness; the Light that shall lead all creation into the City of Life. He is the Eternal Light that rises as the Morning Star within our hearts."

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; for to make in Himself of twain ONE NEW MAN" (Eph. 2:14-15). "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). God is making a new man, a perfect man. There is going to be a new man after a new order. This new man is a new creation in the Christ. That is God's purpose for calling us, for birthing us, for filling us with His Spirit, for dealing and changing and transforming us from glory to glory into His own image and likeness. And here is what this new many-membered man is for: A NEW MAN FOR A NEW AGE. For two thousand years God has been fashioning and forming this new man in Christ. This new man is the new Adam, the second man, the head and authority and ruler over God's vast creation.

Through our many years in the pews of Babylon all we ever heard was "the end of the world, the end of the world, the end of the world is coming!" So we grew up looking for the end of the world. All the preachers ever thought about, it seems, was the "end of the world." Now I am going to tell you something folks — there isn't going to be any end of the world! Someone, to make it spiritual, says, "Well, my world has ended!" That may well be, but the truth is the Bible does not speak of the end of the world. If you will look up all those scriptures in the King James Bible where Jesus spoke of "the end of the world," you will discover that in the original Jesus never said "the end of the world" at all; He just said "the end of the age." The Greek word is AION, meaning an eon or an age. Ages end, but the world does not end. Jesus Christ is THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD! Look up the times where Jesus spoke of "those who would be accounted worthy to attain the next world," etc. Check it, and you will find that in the Greek text Jesus didn't say anything about a world to come, but He said, "those that are accounted worthy to attain THAT AGE." And THAT AGE is going to be right here, beloved!

There isn't going to be an end of the world. You might as well stop packing your suitcase and testing your wings and praying God to kill you and take you to heaven. We have far too many Christians in the world today with dying faith, but they don't have any living faith. They're always wanting to die and go off to heaven to be with the Lord. That is, until they get a dizzy spell or chest pains, then they rush down to the hospital and spend

their very last dime to keep from flying away out there to be with the Lord! It gets rather ridiculous. They talk about going away to heaven to be with the Lord, they sing about going to heaven, they preach about going to heaven, they shout about going to heaven, they clap about going to heaven, then do positively everything they can to KEEP FROM GOING TO HEAVEN! They go to every doctor, enter every hospital, swallow every pill, pass through every healing line, and call the saints far and near to fast and pray — so they won't have to go off to be with the Lord! Ah, something is wrong, very wrong, somewhere!

Should I die, certainly my desire is to be with the Lord. But I am with the Lord even now! My vision is not to die in order to go and be with the Lord, but to live and reveal the life and the power of God here upon this earth. God is raising up a people in this hour with a vision for LIVING, not so they can stick around to see their great-grandchildren, or go on another cruise, or raise another garden — but because of an inner consciousness of the mind of Christ that the Spirit of God doesn't want us out there, He wants us right here bringing in this NEW AGE! There will be no end of this world, only the end of an age. The end of an age bespeaks of change, transition, progress, furtherance, upward movement, breakthrough, growth, advancement, enlargement, increase, new order. When God's new man has come to perfection, to the full measure of the stature of Christ, then the age in which the carnal mind and wicked heart of man has ruled over the world will end, and the new age will be brought in, in which God's many-membered man will be ruler over all this world that God has created for the sons of God right here. Hallelujah! God is making a covenant in this Day with His chosen elect, a covenant of miracles, a covenant of power, a covenant of glory, a covenant of life. He is going to keep His word and we will see miracles, signs, and wonders on a higher plane and of a higher caliber than we have ever seen before. It won't elevate men in the flesh, making one man a superstar, another man "God's man of faith and power for the hour," or "God's handmaid for the age." It will bring the sons of God into the ministry that will exalt Jesus Christ and bring His kingship and dominion into the earth in mighty power and glory. This sonship ministry will begin in the Spirit and it will end in the Spirit. It will not parade across a stage with theatrics and showmanship. Flesh can have no part in this Day!

The manifestation of the sons of God will break suddenly and rapidly upon the scene. It will begin to happen everywhere at the same time, spontaneously and supernaturally. The glory of God will arise upon a people, an unknown people, an unheralded people, prepared in the isolation of solitude of the wilderness experience and in the crucible of the furnace of affliction. There won't be time for anybody to come along and educate people or explain what has happened, how it is happening, that this is a move of God that is originating with this one or that one, with this movement or that movement, or who is in charge. The spontaneity and power of it will blow our minds away and defy everything we have ever learned or known about evangelism or ministry of any kind. The Lord will suddenly cause the paralytics and quadriplegics to walk and leap as an hart, the tongue of the dumb will sing for joy, the blind will see out of darkness, the deaf will hear the words of the Lord, the embalmed dead will be raised out of their coffins at the mortuaries, the secrets of men's hearts will be revealed and men will fall on their faces and admit of a truth that God is in us. The wisdom of God will pour forth like mighty Niagara of living water, the righteous will have divine information from God, the omniscience and omnipotence of God will be revealed through His people, revelation knowledge will abound in the lives of the elect, and this Word will be spoken to all men great and small, without respect of persons, from the beggar on the street to kings, presidents, prime ministers, tycoons, and men in all positions of authority will recognize that there is a God in heaven and that the sons of God have arisen in the earth!

The One who shall be glorified in this Day is the Lord Jesus Christ. God is preparing a company of sons who will walk with God in the moccasin print of their leader. The Native Americans were tremendous strategists. Those were intelligent people, and we could use them in our intelligence apparatus today. The leader would walk along and all of those who followed would walk in the leader's moccasin print. They did this to confuse the enemy. The enemy would come along and see only one set of moccasin prints, and the enemy would say, "Well, an Indian passed this way today" — one Indian. But the truth of the matter is that perhaps 120 Indians passed that way, armed with bows and arrows, but they didn't know it.

That's what our great Captain has in mind when He says in **Luke 9:23**, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." He is saying, "Whoever will be my successor, or participate in this sonship ministry, let him deny his own identity and presence in this world and follow in my footprints." We're going to see it happen on this wise. The devil and the wise men of the world will come along

and say, "Well, look at this — what's going on here?" because hospitals will be emptied, dens of iniquity will be cleaned out, great men and rulers will be astounded, all the people will be saved, healed, delivered, filled with the Spirit, and transformed in spirit, soul, and body.

You see, it's not enough to say that thousands of people made a decision for Christ or were healed. So what? That's not what the manifestation of the sons of God is about! Creation is not groaning for more Christians, Church members, or people who have been blessed or received a miracle. Creation is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God because creation is to be DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION. That is deliverance from all sin, limitation, and death in spirit, soul, and body. It means total transformation. It bespeaks of a complete metamorphosis. If thousands of people in any town or city are raised up out of hospitals, mortuaries, slum, dens of iniquity, and are healed, delivered, regenerated, changed, and transformed by the resurrection power of Jesus Christ, I want you to know that the houses of prostitution will be affected, the pornography shops will be affected, the crack houses will be affected, the medical industry will be affected, the funeral business will be affected, the work places will be affected, the homes will be affected, the schools will be affected, the lawyers will be affected, the judicial system will be affected, the city government will be affected, everything and everyone will be impacted by the Kingdom of God. God will move in such incredible and unprecedented power that the multitudes of men and women and entire nations will be swept into the Kingdom of God as it were in a Day!

It will not be said, "Billy Graham had a crusade here today," or "Benny Hinn had a great meeting and hundreds of people were healed," or "Pat Robertson shook this place with a word of knowledge," or "Preston Eby passed this way today and gave a great teaching." Oh, no! The people will declare, "It was Christ the Lord who did this — the Lord of glory passed this way and He has set us free!" Only one set of footprints, but 144,000 sons of God in the fullness of God's Christ! That's what the Lord has waited on all this time as He has prepared His sons in secret, He has had long patience for the precious fruit of the earth, until they receive the former and the latter rain, bringing forth a people conformed into the exact image of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. These sons will give all the glory to Jesus just as Jesus gave all the glory to the Father.

A brother has said that the three things which most easily destroy the ministry of preachers are the gold, the girls, and the glory. The final test is the hardest. It is because we covet the glory that there is so much petty jealousy and strife among brethren. We are so concerned that our church, our talent, our opinion, our counsel, our position, our gift or our ministry gets the recognition, the praise, and the glory. We want to get the credit. And the credit IS the glory! Many religious people cannot receive the things I now say, but, because it is the truth it will strike a chord within the hearts of all of God's elect. To pray, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory," demands full humility, brokenness and obedience. And right here is where the Kingdom laws come into operation. When we abdicate the throne of our own lives, our own strength, our own ambitions, plans and ways, the Lord makes us kings and priests unto God. When we confess that all the power is His, He makes us strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. When we refuse to touch the glory, He glorifies us with the glory He had with the Father before the world was. And this is an unfolding glory, an ever-intensifying glory that shall shine as the stars and the brightness of the firmament forever.

We are commissioned to preach the Kingdom, and commanded to do the works of the Kingdom; but we must always be careful to understand and acknowledge that the Kingdom is His, the power is His, and the glory is His. If we get a touch of the Kingdom in revelation, in preaching it, or in demonstrating its power, and use that to elevate ourselves, to gather men to us, to manipulate and control people, to build a little kingdom around our talent and ministry, or to fleece God's people of their money for our self-aggrandizement, then that is all there is. Such can never be kings and priests that reign over the earth. Such are not sonship material. Those ministries will hang their heads in shame and slither away into the woodwork in the day when the sons of God arise in the earth.

Those who splash their pictures over every page of their magazines, know nothing of what it means to walk in Jesus' footprints. They will not be a part of the sonship ministry. God has used great men, He has used superstars as they have been known, God has used men with great religious pedigrees, with magnetic personalities, charisma oozing from their pores, promotional abilities, talent and soulful powers, but the time has come when God looks back on the foolishness of these lesser orders, which have been blessed by His

mercy and grace, and no longer winks at it. He says, "Now the real thing is coming, I'm going to stand my sons up in the earth, I will pour out, not 'of' my Spirit, but I will pour out all the plenitude, all the fullness, all the majesty, and all the glory of the seven spirits of God upon all flesh, I will show the world my ways, my acts and my life, and the scripture will be fulfilled, 'All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee' (Ps. 22:27)." If what we have had up to this time is all there is in God, then the devil has already outsmarted God and won the day. But there is a ministry coming, even now it dawns upon the horizon, the heart of God is being fashioned in a whole army of people who are after His own heart. To these He is revealing the fullness of His power and His greatness and His total majesty and they are going to turn the world right side up, never to sink again into the abyss of selfhood, sin and death. God has called us to have a role in establishing this new order of the Kingdom of God. God is offering to His elect in this hour something He has never offered any generation before. He is calling us to participate in the activity that will lead to the prize of all the ages. It is greater than anything He has done from the time of Adam to the present; it will never be done again! It has never been done before, because it is God's new thing. He is calling a people to obey Him, to follow on to know Him, to be His sons and daughters indeed for the deliverance of all creation. Be aware lest old-order brethren rob you by stealing this hope from you. It is very important that we not let anyone rob us of this treasure! It's our inheritance. The inheritance is the absolute fullness of God to deliver creation.

God is preparing a people He will put His stamp of approval on and endorse with all His wisdom, power and majesty. The voice will come from heaven and say, "These are my beloved sons in whom I am well pleased — hear ye them!" You who have been thoroughly processed by the Father have His image, you bear His likeness, and He will put His full endorsement upon you to represent His Kingdom purposes in the earth. We are called to live such a life and walk in such a dimension of the righteousness, peace, joy and power of the Kingdom of Heaven that we can testify, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." It will take a life of total abandonment to walk with God as sons, expressing His nature before all men and nations. It has been said that we beheld the Savior and became the saved, we beheld the Redeemer and became the redeemed, we beheld the Healer and became the healed, we beheld the Baptizer and became the baptized. But now it is time to behold the SON OF GOD and become the sons of God in the earth. We must not bear a message about the Father, we must be the message.

Men and women are reading these lines at this very moment of whom the world is not worthy. They are part of a company under the dealings of God's great hand and the world has no clue of their true stature and destiny. The day is wonderfully nigh at hand when these shall arise in such power and glory that all nations will come up the mountain of the Lord's house to learn the Lord's ways. All nations will come and sit at the feet of the sons of God to learn the wisdom and knowledge of God. Upon these sons shall rest the spirit of Yahwey — the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. The world will sit at your feet because you have sat at the feet of Jesus. This people is partaking of the mind of Christ, the heavenly calling, and these are the ones who receive sonship authority and have influence over nations to rule them with a rod of iron — the irresistible power and all-consuming passion of the love of God. My greatest hope is to live to walk into this Day as it dawns brighter and brighter upon the world. And if not, I will be back in the power of His resurrection! The nations don't yet know that a kingdom of priests is being prepared for the great transition of the ages. These are now being abased under the mighty hand of God in order that they might be exalted in due time. In this new age of the Kingdom there will be no more superstars for God is raising up an obscure, motley crew in this Day to manifest sonship authority that will scare the devil out of the devil, raise the dead, release the prisoners, and do mighty signs and wonders that will stop every mouth and testify of the Father to all men.

The sons of God will not minister out of talent, natural ability, personality, charisma, nor out of theological training or organizational skills, but in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. I say to you by the word of the Lord — it's coming, and it is going to be powerful! There shall be a glorious showdown, this sonship ministry will show forth the glory of the living, exalted Christ in the face of every power on earth. The sons of God will actually accomplish more for the Kingdom of God in one year than the church systems have been able to do in all these hundreds of years of history. Hallelujah!

The religious crowd will never bring in the Kingdom of God with power. Look at Jesus' followers when He walked the pathways of earth. Thousands thronged about Him to see the miracles and eat of the loaves and

the fishes. His followers were at one time five thousand, then later five hundred, there was the seventy, and then twelve, and finally we find Him with just three — Peter, James and John — the innermost circle. Is that not how it was with David's army? There were 800,000 men that drew the sword, but only thirty mighty men (II Sam. 23-24). One out of every 26,666 was a mighty man of valor. Think about it! There was a small inner circle that was distinguished among them all. Gideon's army at the beginning was 32,000, then it was decreased to 10,000, and in the end there were only 300. Out of all the ministry there is in the body of Christ today the hand of God is upon a small remnant that is aiming for excellence. So whatever spiritual level you fit in you can just stay there, but if you have heard the trumpet, if you have received the call, if the urgency of the Spirit has been birthed within you then set your face as a flint, turn neither to the left nor to the right, and go for the one-hundred percent — THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

The best is yet to come! We haven't seen anything yet! The glory of Christ is about to appear, the banner will wave, and the whole world will say, "This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:9). The ears of the people of all nations will tingle, it will be glorious for multitudes, and frightening for others, but there is coming a shaking, there is coming a quaking, as all creation comes face to face with God. There is a people unknown by the church and unheralded by the world, who in the secret place of the Most High has discovered the rarest extract of God, these have drawn so close to the Father that they have sucked the very breath out of the mouth of God and live by every word that proceeds out of His mouth. To these the true and un-cut word of the Lord is revealed, the incorruptible word of God is being inworked, and by the metamorphosis from corruptible to incorruptible a new ministry will shed forth in these significant days.

In the time of glory that lies before us the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunk man under the impact of the power of God in His sons. The thing God will do will get the attention of whole cities, of whole states, of whole nations, and finally the entire world will see that God is in this people that has the ensign, that has the seal, that bears the banner of the presence, nature and power of the Lord of glory. The Day is upon us. The season of preparation is now drawing to a close, for soon we will speak and the lame will leap as the hart, little paralyzed children in children's hospitals will be overwhelmed by the power of the Kingdom, their little bodies will be made straight, whole wards of precious little ones will leap and dance under the supernatural power of God, the dumb will sing for joy, blind eyes will open, deaf ears will unstop, drug addicts will cast their needles and paraphernalia from them, men of pomp and power will be broken and melted in the presence of the Lord, worshippers of false religions will be quickened to the living reality of Jesus Christ the Savior, wicked men shall be cleansed and transformed by the consuming fire of God and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together!

There is a sound in the heavens and there is a rustle in the mulberry trees. This is the New Order! This is the New Day! I have lived my whole life for this Day. Thank God, we have not wasted our inheritance; thank God we have not squandered the substance of our Father in riotous living with the wanton harlots of Mystery Babylon. Thank God we are just now ready to cross over the threshold to see the glory of the Kingdom of God reserved for this Day. The spirit of wisdom and power in God's sons will bring a fatal blow against humanism and against religious, scientific, educational, medical and political professionalism. It will be marvelous beyond description! We will be able to accomplish more in a day than we have been able to do in a lifetime of preaching the gospel. The power of God will reach from one end of the earth to the other, from pole to pole, and from sea to sea. The glory of God will reach every cavern, every foxhole, every hidden valley, every isolated hamlet, every remote jungle, every mountain height, every tribe, every tongue, every people and every nation. God will reach them in spite of the vast populations and expanses of earth, despotic rulers, blinding religions, entrenched customs, and godless cultures. THERE SHALL BE A MIGHTY AND UNIVERSAL INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 46**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY-EIGHT**

AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT  
THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD  
THE SYMPHONY OF LIFE  
THE GREATER WORKS

The grandest event of all times is now at the doors! For almost two millenniums the Lord has been gathering out of all nations and peoples an elect body, refining its members in the furnace of affliction, transforming them in mind and heart by the deep dealings of His Spirit, preparing them by experience and in wisdom and knowledge to possess the reins of the government of the world. And while we rejoice and praise God for all the mighty visitations of the past, and those glorious movings of the Spirit we have experienced in our life-time, yet we know by the word of the Lord that the next great move of God will be greater than all — the manifestation of the sons of God. Nothing is more certain than that! You see, it's not enough to say that thousands of people have made a decision for Christ or were healed and blessed in this way or that. That's not what the manifestation of the sons of God is about! Creation is not groaning for more Christians, Church members, or people that have been blessed or received a miracle. Creation is groaning for the manifestation of the sons of God because creation itself is to be DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION (Rom. 8:19-23). That means deliverance from all sin, limitation, and death in spirit, soul, and body. It means *total transformation*. It bespeaks of a *complete metamorphosis*. The Spirit witnesses all across the land and around the world that the long-awaited *unveiling* of God's son-company is at hand. The unveiling of the in-Christed is upon us! The cry of the groaning creation and the prayer of the travailing saint are joined with the unutterable longings of the Holy Spirit, all crying in unison and harmony for the arising of God's deliverers. The desire of all nations is at hand. The **next stage** of the Kingdom of God is ready to unfold!

Things will be very different than I have thought, and I'm sure they will be a lot different than you have thought. The Lord has spoken deeply within my spirit, "You're going to have to see things my way. I am going to do a new thing and it will be different than anything you have seen or heard. Nothing will be carried over from the old, it will be an entirely new thing that I do in this Day." I do know this. **It will take far more to bring the Kingdom to its conclusion than it took to get it started!** If it required apostles and prophets, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost, and healings and tongues and signs and wonders to launch the Kingdom of God in the world, it will take a ministry greater than apostles and prophets, greater than gifts of the Spirit, greater than the level of miracles performed in the early Church, to bring this Kingdom to the glory of its consummation. It will require a pure, full, mature, powerful, glorious SONSHIP MINISTRY to finish the work!

The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord. The apostles of the former house literally turned the world up-side down! On the day of Pentecost the whole city of Jerusalem was stirred and shaken by the power of God and three thousand souls were saved in one day without a meeting, a building, an advertisement, a radio or television program, a choir or a crusade. But when the sons of God are manifested, one son will do more in one day than all the apostles and prophets did in a decade. God will do things through His sons that are unprecedented, different than anything He has done before. That is how it has been in every new move of God! What God did in Noah's day was altogether different than what He had done in Abraham's day. The thing God did in Moses' day was entirely different than His work in Noah's day. The events in the life of David in no way resembled those in the experience of Moses. The day of Pentecost was unlike anything God had done in any of His previous visitations. In like manner, the manifestation of the sons of God will eclipse all former moves of God and will bring a glory in the earth greater than you and I can ever dream of in our wildest imaginations! The fame of this will go throughout all the world and eventually every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

No saint has ever trod where we are treading. Millions trod in their appointed paths, did their work, triumphed gloriously, and entered heaven. But, although the same faith of the Son of God, His presence, love and power animates and sustains us, as it did them, our pathway into sonship is a very different one to their walk in the church order. They never had the work to do that we have. They never experienced the dealings of God in the way we do. They never saw the goal of the *fullness of Christ* as we see it before us in this hour. They never saw the vision we see, nor cherished the hope we have in the Father. They fulfilled their appointed roles in the on-going purposes of God, and received their reward. But the time of the unveiling of God's sons had not arrived, and the glory of such a high calling was seen but dimly and afar off.

My father in the flesh was a Pentecostal minister, and by God's design, he was stuck in Pentecost. The Lord moved us on into another move of His Spirit, into a further word than we had in the Pentecostal realm, and I remember I used to talk with my dad, and of course, I wanted him to see. I longed for him to have an ear to hear what the Spirit was saying, but he never could hear. So usually our discussions would end up in an argument. One day the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, saying, "Leave him alone! He is in the realm that I have appointed him to, and he will not be in another." And you know, that brought a great peace, because now I was able to fellowship with him on the level that he could fellowship with me, with no condemnation, realizing that he was in the place that God had ordained for him during his sojourn on earth, as I was in the place God ordained for me.

Thirty-five years ago my father died and he passed away in the Pentecostal realm, just as the Lord had said. But shortly after he passed away, the Lord gave me a dream. In this dream I was standing in the doorway in the living room of our home, and all of my family, my father and mother, my brothers, my wife and my children, everybody was there. They were sitting along the walls, on chairs and the sofa. My dad was sitting at the end of the line, on the sofa. He appeared exactly the way he looked just before he died. No one was saying anything, we were just there. Suddenly my dad looked up, gazed across the room straight into my eyes, and said, "**P-r-e-a-c-h t-h-e MANCHILD!**" Immediately I awoke out of that dream and I knew two things by the Spirit. I knew that now my dad knew something that he didn't know before, but I also knew that he represented a cry that comes from the very realm of death itself, the cry of the groaning creation, groaning for the manifestation of HIS LIFE that sets creation free from the *bondage of corruption*.

Well did Paul Mueller write, "Many years ago the Lord got my attention through visions and other experiences with Him. One vision, in particular, was an urgent call to ascend the high places in God. In that vision, I saw a large mountain. It was the mount of the Lord's presence. Many people were climbing that mountain, higher and upward toward the pinnacle of His presence. But few were reaching the heights. In that vision, the mount of His presence was like the literal mountains. The higher one goes, the fewer trees there are. And the higher we go in God, the fewer believers there are at that level. As I watched the people climb that mountain, they appeared on the spiritual level where they were when they died. Some of the people climbing that mountain of the Lord's presence were loved ones and friends. One among them was a man whom I considered a man of God, a man I had known quite well. By the Spirit, I was taken up that mountain but close to the people who were on various levels ascending that mountain. As I passed by some friends and loved ones, they all cried out to me, '*Go higher! Don't stop now, but keep going higher and higher.*' That vision made a profound impact on my life. I shall never forget it! By His grace and His Spirit, I intend to keep climbing higher and higher in God!

"Those who have lived and died in Christ are now in a realm where they can see and *understand* more clearly. The true reality is in the realm of Spirit, and they know it well now. They know what it means to walk with God toward perfection, and they appreciate it more now than when they were in this earthly realm. If the Lord would give us ears to hear the cries of those who have gone on before us, we would hear them crying unceasingly for us to ascend the very heights of the mount of the Lord. I heard them briefly. And the tone of their voices persuaded me to believe that our spiritual growth will also mean something significant and wonderful for them. Their call to keep going higher was almost a cry of desperation, but was one of hope as well. Without us they cannot be made perfect (Heb. 11:40). Therefore, the remnant of this hour must ascend in the Spirit to the heights of the mount of the Lord, where we shall be changed. And we shall also release many who died in Christ from their limited, static positions where they rest on the mount of the Lord.

"As we ascend the heights of the mount of the Lord, we will find that it is a lonely walk. To take a step higher in God may mean forsaking old friends and loved ones. When Moses made his seventh and last ascent up mount Sinai, the Lord said to him, *'And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNT. And no man shall come up with thee...'* (Ex. 34:2-3). Like Moses, some are invited of the Lord to ascend the mount of His presence and meet Him there. Half way up the mount will not do! Those who shall partake of His life and the fullness of His kingdom must go all the way up. God said to Moses, *'present thyself there to me IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNT.'* The top of the mount was Moses' goal, and it is ours as well. And it is impossible for us to take anyone else with us. We must go alone! Spiritual progress is not based on fellowship with people, but on fellowship with God! A few others will also go alone to meet the Lord in the top of the mount, so that a remnant — all the remnant — shall ascend the mount to present themselves to Him in the top of the mount. Not one member of that remnant company shall be missing, for the Lord will lead them all there by His Spirit" — end quote.

## AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

A miraculous event is soon to occur, the most startling and revolutionary in the history of the world. This is nothing more nor less than the manifestation of the sons of God. There will be a terrible and mighty manifestation of power and brilliant glory, as the sons of God arise and step upon the stage of world history. It will come upon both the church and the world as a thief in the night. Christians have been trained and taught that the world is getting worse and worse, and that finally the church will be evacuated off the planet, and the devil and the antichrist will take it over. What a shock it will be when the sons of God suddenly appear on the scene bringing salvation and transformation to all the ends of the earth!

Recently, as I was meditating upon these things, I thought about the element of surprise that God has manifested in His activities throughout history. Consider Adam in the garden without a companion, suddenly put to sleep, and then awakening to find this exquisite creature awaiting him. How could Adam ever anticipate a thing like that? Who could have anticipated the flood in Noah's day, or the separating of the Red Sea, or the manna from heaven, or the water out of flinty rock? Who could have anticipated the fall of the walls of Jericho, the overnight overthrow of ancient Babylon, or if you like, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, His ascension to heaven, and the manifest power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost? As I look back at the history of God's activity, I'm just excited and on tip-toe to see what He is going to do in this hour!

The thing God is doing, and shall do, is so stupendous, so altogether glorious and unprecedented, that I am reminded of the little story I read one time. There was a little boy who came home from Sunday School. His mom said, "What did you learn in Sunday School today?" The little boy answered, "Oh, we learned about Moses." "Oh? And what did you learn about Moses?" He answered, "Mom, if I told you, you wouldn't believe me." "Well, try me," she responded. So the little boy began. "Well, Moses was in a terrible situation. He had all of these soldiers coming at him on chariots and he was pinned at the Red Sea. So he prayed to God, and suddenly, all these tractors came rolling along and workmen and steel crews appeared, and within half an hour, they built a bridge that spanned the Red Sea. Then Moses and the Israelites walked across it safely, to the other side." His mother looked suspiciously at him and said, "Son, I don't believe you learned that in Sunday School today." To which the little boy muttered, "Mom, if I told you the TRUTH, you really wouldn't believe it!"

There is something very powerful and awesome going on in the world today! God is at work doing something hidden and quiet — and it is so supernatural, it's beyond human comprehension. Yet what He is doing right now is going to affect the whole world in these days. God is preparing a small but powerful company of kings and priests in the glory of His sonship. And the Lord shall come forth within them to do exploits and to shake all nations. He is going to bring in a new age with a small band of heavenly revolutionaries! A whole new realm of ministry is about to come forth! Oh yes, there is an act of God that transcends anything that has ever been known. For many millenniums all creation has groaned and sighed under the thralldom of sin, sorrow and death, but our heavenly Father had a purpose wonderful and glorious beyond words to express when IN HOPE He subjected the creation to the desolation of the curse. *"For the creation was subjected to frailty — to futility, condemned to frustration — not because of some intentional fault on its part, but by the will of HIM who so subjected it. Yet WITH THE HOPE that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption*

and gain an entrance into the glorious freedom of God's children" (Rom. 8:20-21) (Amplified). Ever since that day and because of that hope which springs perennial within the bosom of every man and all things, "the whole creation waits expectantly and longs earnestly for God's sons to be made known — waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship" (Rom. 8:19) (Amplified). The blood, the sword, the fire, the cross, and the deep dealings of God have not been working in us through these many years in order to make us ready for a harp in heaven. Oh no! God is preparing us to set creation free!

Carl Schwing has asked the question, "How much longer must the sons be silent? How much longer must they remain hidden? How much longer until they are *clothed upon* with the garments of immortality?" We don't know the precise answer to that, but he continues, "It will be in the twinkling of an eye...as the sons are taken beyond the barriers of time and distance, and the lightning of His great glory penetrates the stronghold of their flesh, and the fire of God consumes the remaining marks of Adam's curse...that the sons of God shall stand in the awesome majesty of their Father's presence as He proclaims to a waiting creation: 'These are my beloved sons, hear ye them.' We shall stand with our Elder Brother upon the highest regions of Zion, and all mankind shall hasten to the mountain that glows with the Light of God's fullness."

## THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD

The manchild company, the sons of God, will be born, literally and dramatically birthed upon the stage of this world, in a blaze of earth-shaking supernatural power and glory. They will be the total, corporate incarnation of God upon earth. That will be the greatest of all "spectaculars" the world has ever witnessed. The inhabitants of the world will at first be terrified, yes, even paralyzed! Instantly they will know this is no natural phenomenon, no traditional religious activity, while deep within the voice shall witness: TRULY, THIS IS THE SON OF GOD! The effulgence of His Person shall appear upon His chosen ones, the intensity of His brilliance, equating to that of seven suns, shining through the undulating "garment" composed of tens of thousands of glorified saints, a star-studded super-spectacular, seven times the power of Pentecost, the likes of which has never been witnessed by any man since the dawn of creation.

John on lonely Patmos beheld this greater glory and recorded, "And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat upon the throne...in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (Rev. 4:3; 5:6). "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (Rev. 4:5). John saw One sitting upon a throne, and He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone: and there was a *rainbow* round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald. A rainbow is *one* but it has *seven colors*, and the seven colors of that glorious rainbow represent the sevenfold intensified fullness of the Spirit of God, even as the seven lamps of fire, the seven horns, and the seven eyes are the Seven Spirits of God. Some imagine that the One sitting upon the throne is God the Father or our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is both, yet more, for just previous to this celestial scene Jesus spoke to the overcoming members of *His body*, saying, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21). There is only **one throne** and only **One upon the throne** — GOD IN HIS MANY-MEMBERED SON!

In the day when the fullness of these seven Spirits of God is realized in the body of Christ it shall also come to pass that "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun (the glory of Christ) SHALL BE SEVENFOLD, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound (removes the curse)" (Isa. 30:26). Malachi prophesied of this day too, saying, "But unto you that fear my name shall the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ARISE with healing in His wings...and ye shall tread down (overcome) the wicked...in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 4:2-3).

God's promise is the sending forth of the Sun of Righteousness, not in the single light of the man Christ Jesus, nor yet in the double portion of the Spirit, the former and latter rain in the first month, but AS THE LIGHT OF SEVEN DAYS CONCENTRATED IN ONE. Many are the figures of this coming sevenfold glory of Christ upon His people. When the Lord Jesus was on the mount of transfiguration His face shone as the sun. Saul of

Tarsus, on the road to Damascus, experienced something of that brightness, was blinded and fell from his horse, and was completely transformed. In the book of Revelation we read of a symbolic angel (a company of saints with a message) which comes down from heaven and his countenance is as the sun shining in its brightness. In chapter twelve of that book we read of a woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet. In chapter one John saw one like unto the Son of man, Christ glorified in that body of sons conformed to His image, and of Him he witnessed, "His eyes were as a flame of fire...and His countenance was AS THE SUN SHINING IN HIS STRENGTH" (Rev. 1:14-16). Isaiah looked forward to this Day with intense anticipation and described the glory of its dawning in this way, "Then shall THY LIGHT BREAK FORTH AS THE MORNING, and thy health (full salvation) shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward" (Isa. 58:8). Solomon wrote prophetically of this army of the Lord: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, CLEAR AS THE SUN, and terrible as an army with banners" (S. of S. 6:10).

The body of Christ is now maturing and moving out of the darkness of tradition, bondage, carnality, and limitation into the bright light of the fullness of the glory of God. The history of the church is a history of darkness and sorrow and bitterness. But, thank God, rays of promise are even now breaking forth from the heavens, and there is a company of apprehended ones that is rising up into the realms of the Spirit to drink in the intoxicating freshness of the morn! To these God is witnessing that in this Day He shall bring forth a light that is sevenfold in its intensification, so that there will be nothing hidden from it, and all things will be illuminated and quickened by it. This is the DAY OF THE LORD! Nothing short of this will lift this sin-cursed world out of the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

The early church with all its glory and power did not bring to consummation the Kingdom of God. Its glory was eclipsed, sinking into that which even secular history records as the Dark Ages. The Reformation in the sixteenth century was unable to bring the Kingdom to its consummation. All the mighty revivals of church history have failed to bring the nations under the sovereign rule of God and to deliver the groaning creation. The Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have been unable to subdue all things unto God. All the methods and programs of religion, all the missionary and evangelistic crusades, all the deliverance ministries and healing campaigns, have in turn failed to deliver this old world from the tyranny of sin, sorrow and death. The Bible Societies, the door-to-door witnessing campaigns, the train loads of gospel tracts, the prayer meetings, and all the other feverish activities and promotions by the world's churches have not gotten the job done.

All of us are thankful to God for what we have known of His power, we rejoice with joy unspeakable for every evidence of His manifest glory today, and we honor everyone who is demonstrating any measure of the life of God and accomplishing anything to His glory; but to break the dominion of sin and satan and ignorance and death over the nations in this hour of overshadowing gloom and darkness will require a SEVENFOLD REVELATION OF THE LOVE AND POWER OF GOD! Nothing God is doing in the lesser realms today can get the job done. God intends to send forth this sevenfold brightness of His life, light, love, grace, glory, righteousness, peace, joy and power. When this happens, and that glorious company of God's sons is manifested, then shall come to pass the word spoken by our Lord, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL YE DO" (Jn. 14:12). For this, my beloved, God is shaping the nations and preparing His elect in this great hour!

The prophet Daniel witnessed of this Day: "But the people that do know their God SHALL BE STRONG, and DO EXPLOITS" (Dan. 11:32). God is raising up a people that will be "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Yes, a people who, in the darkness of this hour at the end of the age, shall "arise and shine" until the nations come to their light and kings to the brightness of their rising. The DAY is at hand, my beloved, the greatest hour for the greatest body to march forth in the greatest glory to secure the greatest victory for the Kingdom of God in the history of God's great purposes! Be encouraged and strengthened in this wonderful hour!

When the sons of God are manifested more people will come to Christ and salvation than have from Pentecost until now. As the new age dawns every village in every nation will have been visited by the manifestation of the glory of God through His sons. Every living person will encounter the power of God! The knowledge of the Lord

will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and many whole cities and some entire nations will be converted to Him. As strange and impossible as it may seem today, the state of Israel and the country of Russia will be among the first to be transformed by the power of God's Christ! That is the clear word God has spoken in my spirit. The magnitude of this sonship ministry cannot be measured by anything that has been before. Even nature itself will be infused with life and transformation as creation begins to be released from the bondage of corruption. These results will be obtained without church meetings, revival crusades, healing campaigns, deliverance services, television programs, outreaches, missionary projects, literature distribution, or any of the methods, teachings, and programs of the church systems. This ministry will not stand in the wisdom of men's words, but in supernatural power and unparalleled demonstrations of the Holy Spirit.

The sons will move in the *fullness* of the "in part" anointings, gifts and powers of all who have gone before them. The **greater works** promised by Jesus will be done by the sons of God. The "works that He did" have in measure been done by believers during the church age, but the "greater works" have been reserved for the anointing of the Seven Spirits of God. The sons will walk in unlimited power and authority. Men will no longer look back wistfully at the early church and historic moves of God because of the exploits of those days, beseeching God to "do it again." All will recognize that He certainly has saved the best wine for last! The most glorious times in the world's history now lie just before us. The magnitude of this unveiling of the glory of God's Christ will astonish even the most optimistic believers. Miracles which exceed even the greatest Biblical marvels will cause whole nations to bow before the authority of God's sons. The visible glory of the Lord will appear upon multitudes of people, and power will flow out from them to convict, deliver, and transform all who come into their presence. The cloud and pillar of fire that hovered over Israel in the wilderness will not even compare to the intense presence of the Lord in these days. Never has the Lord Himself been as personal and intimate with His people as He will be at this time. The whole world will stand on tiptoe continually, wondering each day what great new wonders they will behold.

Wondrous things await the people of God, things that it is not possible for a man to utter. We do not know, we may not know all that awaits us. But enough is known, enough is revealed, to wean us from the things of earth, from the priorities of religion, from the concerns of time, and fill our souls with rapture on account of the extraordinary vision. For He hath "made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him...that we should be to the praise of His glory...and...that in the ages to come He might show (display) the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ" (**Eph. 1:9-12; 2:7**). We are now come to the dispensation of the fullness of times. This dispensation was yet future in Paul's day, he pointed to it and to the comprehensive work of restoration God would do in it, but it is now upon us with its power and glory. The world has never yet seen anything like that which shall take place when God's sons are manifest in this dispensation of the fullness of times! The transformation of the saints is the next event in the commencement of this Day.

## THE SYMPHONY OF LIFE

A brother related the following experience. "When I first went to Nashville, Tennessee, some friends, thinking they were doing me a favor, called me and said, 'We have tickets for the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra that's coming to town, and we want to take you as our guest.' Well, I love music, but I know nothing about it, and I can't sing it — I always help congregational singing by keeping quiet. Frankly, I can't think of anything more boring than a whole evening of symphony! But I had to go because they were so polite and I wanted to be polite, so I accepted graciously and went along.

"I had never been to a thing like that before, and I was impressed by what I saw. We went in, took our seats, and in a few moments there began to drift out from the sides the musicians. They were in shirt sleeves for the most part, and each man went up to his instrument and started tuning it. The fellows with the fiddles too big to put under their chins sawed back and forth — oh, it sounded terrible. The fellows with the little ones they put under their chins squeaked up and down with those. The ones with the horns — oh my, nothing was in harmony. It was a medley of discordant, confused noise. Then after they got through with that kind of a disturbance, they all disappeared again, went out through the wings.

"Another five minutes went by when all of a sudden the lights in the auditorium went off, the lights on the platform came on, and the musicians walked out. This time they had on their coats. My, they looked so nice. Each one came out and stood or sat at his instrument. Then there was a hush in the auditorium, a spotlight was focused on the wings, and the conductor stepped out. When he did there was thunderous applause for him. He bowed. Then he came up to the podium and picked up a thin little stick. He turned around again to the audience and bowed, then turned his back to the audience, lifted that little stick — total silence came over that auditorium, you could have heard a pin drop — then he brought that little stick down. And, my friend, there were goose pimples all over me. I never heard such music in all of my life. Oh, what harmony, what wonderful harmony there was!"

I tell you today God is preparing His sons for the greatest symphony the world has ever heard, a symphony of divine wisdom, omnipotent power, and unconditional, unbounded love. The sons themselves will be the symphony! All the chords of God's nature, wisdom, and power will be struck in them. At this present time, as God is fine-tuning our lives it seems as if every man is tooting his own horn, everyone is playing his own little fiddle; it sounds like everything is out of tune, a medley of discord. But as God deals in our lives, teaching us His ways, writing His laws in our hearts, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, establishing His will and transforming our beings, He is creating within each of us a chord of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Our minds and our souls are now being renewed, through repentance, by the Spirit of God. Through the crucible of daily experience by the dealings of God we are learning to perceive and fully understand by the wisdom of the mind of Christ instead of thinking with old Adam's carnal mind. As God by His refining fire purges out of us the trusting in our own strength, our confidence in the flesh, the inbred mentality of Babylonish religion, and the spirit of the world, what a raucous screeching is emitted from our lives!

We all seem so different, and Father's purposes in us appear disparate. What a motley crew the sons of God appear to be today! But you, precious friend of mine, are an instrument designed to be a channel of Life, Light, and Love. And Jesus Christ is the Master Conductor, and wants to play the strings of emotions and thoughts and desires and nature within you until you become a son indeed, the Song of the Lord in the midst of the earth. Your life, when it is hid with Christ in God, becomes a beautiful thing; your thoughts and actions all in unison with God are running along the lines that lead to God, for they diverge not. When the hour strikes for the unveiling of God's sons, Jesus Christ the Lord is going to lift His scepter — oh, the harmony that will sound forth from all His many brethren! Then the world shall see the fullness of Christ, which includes Christ, the Head, and Christ, the body, in all the life and glorious harmony of the Kingdom of God!

Every knee on this globe, and in the heavens above, and in the underworld, shall bow before the majesty of the presence of the Lord as they awaken to hear the pure melodies of the harmony of God in His sons. Never again will they be satisfied with the discordant notes of this world's pleasures and programs, nor the off-beat of the world's religious systems. As they hear the pure song that flows from the heart of God in His sons, all men shall hunger and thirst to be filled with the same, the harmonious chord of the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God. We have not yet witnessed the glory of God's manifestation in the way it is going to be expressed. We have not seen the hand of God move in the way it is going to move. The Lord spoke through prophecy years ago, at the time of a mighty move of His Spirit, and said that He was moving by His *little finger*, and I tell you when He moved that little finger there were tremendous things that happened, glorious things took place. But now — just think of the glory that shall come when He moves by His *hand* and makes bare His holy *arm*!

## **THE GREATER WORKS**

Amazed, the sons themselves will stand awed, as suddenly before them unfolds the true purpose of their lives on earth. Quickened within them in all its power and potential will be the great and high secret of God. They will become within themselves the magnificent expression of the greatest glory God has ever revealed. Reproduced in them will be the sonship ministry of Jesus intensified into the light of seven days in one. They will stand in the earth as the firstborn brothers of Jesus Christ, the sons of the Father in heaven.

When a man becomes a father, he is not diminished by his children, but enriched, increased, and expanded. If his children grow up with nobility and accomplishment, he is proud and delighted. His children make him

greater than he ever was before. Sonship is the Father's delight, the culmination and climax of His ages-long plan and purpose. God is electrified with anticipation to see His sons with skill and maturity visibly revealing the invisible things of His eternal power and Godhead to creation. This is the message of sonship revealed in the life of the firstborn Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Sonship is the singular objective of God, and the sole purpose of the formation of His body. The sons of God are the principle players in the awesome plan of God for all the wonderful ages to come.

The sons of God are reality. This company of divine-human beings is even now rapidly reaching completion. These will become what Jesus is and have what He has as their very own reality. God will be in them and through them in all His unutterable plenitude. What He is they will be also. They are the express image of their Father in Jesus Christ. This is the revelation of God and the staggering message of the Bible! The sons of God are destined to inherit all things on earth and throughout all the vastnesses of infinity, for they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus, who is the heir of *all things* (Heb. 1:1-2). They are destined to be the blessers, deliverers, quickeners and transformers of all the created realms. Thus creation groans with expectant birthpangs, longing for their arrival.

From the lowest darkness of demons and devils to the inhabitants of the farthest galaxy of light, the universe stretches in anticipation of the glorious unveiling of God's sons. They will be the full and complete expression of God in all the attributes of His deity. Like a super-nova the sons will burst into everlasting splendor, streaming glory and power for all creation to behold. These noble beings will conquer and restore all things to God on earth and throughout all worlds of the unbounded heavens. As priestly shepherd-kings they will lead the creation, dispensing judgment unto righteousness. As saviours they will loose the bands of Adam's curse from this world, and the darkness from all worlds in all realms. The sinful will be redeemed and changed, the ignorant will be taught of God, those in the church systems will be delivered from their delusions and guided into the pure truth of God. The angelic realms will behold the birth of God's manchild and arrive to honor God's sons. All creation will marvel at the splendor of a race of beings who are the offspring of God matured up into the fullness of all He is. The reins of creation will be surrendered to them, and all created beings everywhere will be committed to their loving and skillful care. These divine sons of the omnipotent and loving heavenly Father are the only answer to creation's lack and problems. They have been ordained of God as the power that shall deliver creation from the bondage of corruption.

These sons are the anointed sovereigns, the appointed rulers of all things. Today they stand in the wings, at this very moment they fine-tune the instruments which they are, but suddenly shall they enter upon the stage of history, strike their majestic chord, and all flesh shall hear the word of the Lord and see the salvation of God. Then a mighty power shall arise from the earth, as a stream of expanding light it will race through the galaxies, spreading out and penetrating all things with the life of God. Every creature on earth and in distant worlds will see the wonder of God. Every kingdom will be subdued, changed, instructed, and brought into harmony with the Father of lights. Throughout the endless eons to come, the sons of God will govern the creation in righteousness, infusing all things with the dynamic of His life.

When the sons of God arise, cruel oppression shall be banished. When the sons of God appear, savage war shall be driven from the face of the earth. When the sons of God come, the power of sin shall be broken, every sickness and pain shall be healed. When the sons of God march forth, the last enemy, even death, shall be destroyed. When the sons of God are unveiled, Satan shall be bound to deceive the nations no more; darkness shall flee away, the sorrowing shall be comforted, the meek shall be exalted, the weak shall be made strong, the broken-hearted shall be healed, and the glory of God shall cover the earth. These are God's kings and God's priests, a Kingdom of priests unto God and for creation. Every son is royalty — a king — born out of the loins of the King of the universe. As a king he rules in the sphere in which God places him, and as a priest he serves. He is kingly in his sphere and it is the priestly spirit that makes the nobility of character in the king. In Christ the sons stand above all authority and dominion and glory, holding the scepter of infinite love and power.

The ancients wrote on the pillars of Hercules, *Ne Plus Ultra*, meaning "No more beyond." For centuries those words chiseled on the mighty rock of Gibraltar reminded seafaring men that beyond those straits was nothing but a shoreless sea. One day, however, a man named Columbus sailed through those straits and set his

course westward. In spite of storms, discouragements, and threatened mutiny, he sailed on and on and discovered a new world. Later men climbed the rugged straits of Gibraltar and removed the word *Ne*, leaving the message *Plus Ultra* meaning "More beyond."

Captain James Cook was a famous English explorer who lived more than two hundred years ago. His adventurous life began when he joined the British navy at the age of 27. He surveyed the St. Lawrence Channel and the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador before he was given his own ship, the *Endeavor*, to command. He sailed this ship all the way around the world, exploring the coasts of eastern Australia and New Zealand on the way. After returning to England he set out again for the South Pacific with two ships, the *Resolution* and the *Adventure*, and explored the icy Antarctic Ocean. He explored the New Hebrides Islands and discovered the island of New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean off Australia. Early in his career Captain Cook made this amazing statement, which I am paraphrasing: "It is not my desire to merely go where other men have not gone; I WANT TO GO AS FAR AS IT IS POSSIBLE FOR MAN TO GO!" And his wish was granted, for when he was killed in 1779 by natives of the Hawaiian Islands, there were no more frontiers on this planet to explore, and no more coasts to be charted.

Ah, in the spiritual world just such a desire has arisen within a company, those destined to become the manifest sons of God, the desire to not merely press on in God into heights and depths not discovered by those great ones who have blessed this earth with God's grace, glory, wisdom and power, but indeed to GO AS FAR AS IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A MAN TO GO IN GOD! What a vision! We are well acquainted with the "in part" realm, where God anoints men with the Holy Ghost and with power, and their gifts increase and their ministries expand and many are blessed. But then they die, and while others might try to carry on their vision, it is never again the same as the movement crystallizes around the "part" the ministry possessed, and while men try to perpetuate it, it finally stagnates and dies. For one thing, every generation needs a new vision and not a carry-over of the old, but in this transition of the ages God is birthing a SON COMPANY that desires not merely to rebuild and restore the work of God of yesteryear, be it New Testament Church Order, five-fold ministry, gifts of the Spirit, expressions of worship, or whatever; but we are possessed of a heart to become identified with Jesus Christ beyond the veil, in the Holiest of all, after the power of an endless life, to know God not just in a measure, but in His fullness, and receiving that ministry after the order of Melchizedek which can proceed through the ages until a full victory is consummated and God is ALL IN ALL.

A dear brother, in opposition to this teaching of the ministry of manifested sonship, wrote, "We cannot have any selfish ambitions. It may sound very good to have the desire to change the world, to walk up and down the earth doing miracles, releasing people from their misery. This would make us look great in the eyes of people, yet that would be *receiving glory for self*. This desire for glory has to die!" My question would be just this: If doing miracles and releasing people from their misery is self-glory, then why did the firstborn Son of God **do just that!** And why did the apostles go out and walk up and down the earth doing the very same thing! Was Jesus grasping after glory for Himself? Were the apostles in this thing for the glory they would receive from men? **I DON'T THINK SO!** Creation is groaning for deliverance and God is birthing in His sons the intense desire and holy passion to set creation free.

When those who treasure the beautiful hope of sonship speak the words the Spirit is speaking to His elect in this hour, people demand, "Who do you think you are?" When we declare that we are called to be the sons of God, to grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, to partake of a ministry greater than that of the church age, to set creation free and reconcile all things, people ask, "Just who do you think you are?" It really makes no difference who we think we are, but it makes a great deal of difference that we know and understand **WHAT WE ARE APPREHENDED TO BE IN HIM**. Our ears have heard the sound of the trumpet and we cannot, dare not, settle for anything less, we must follow on to know Him in all of His glorious fullness.

Are you willing today, in the presence of God, to hear the word of God, "As the Father has sent me, *so send I you*." Someone says, "How can you declare such things?" Because they did not originate with us, it is the Father who is saying them in us. We are not commissioning ourselves. We are not a group of people who of our own selves have a burden for the lost creation, we bear the burden of the Lord in our hearts. And what His burden is, that is what matters. If we were a people with our own burden for the lost, to try and help people, we

would say, "We have tried everything else; we have had apostles, we have had prophets, we have had evangelists, pastors, and teachers; we have had gifts of healing, working of miracles, we have had money and missionary programs, we have had everything and it did not get the job done, so let us now try this sonship message."

We are not such a people. God has not put on us the problems of the world — God has called us unto HIMSELF — that we may live unto HIM, that we may be totally committed to HIM, that He may send us out to being salvation to humanity. If this thing began with OUR BURDEN, I would be suspicious of it. If we were wondering whether the communists were going to take over the world, and what about the masses of Moslems and Hindus, and the millions of lost souls in Africa, and we must hurry and reach the whole world before they slip away into damnation and hell; if we were speaking in that sentimental, religious vein, I would be suspicious. But our vision is not turned that way, we are not "need" conscious, nor "problem" oriented, nor "world" centered, nor "self" conscious — our eyes are turned toward the Father. "Ye shall be **unto me** a kingdom of priests," saith the Lord. Jesus never went around looking for that which He could do, or needs He could meet, or problems He could solve. Jesus went around looking to see *what His Father was doing*. That's all!

God wants sons today who are not caught up in world events and prophecies of gloom and doom, not worried about the desperate needs everywhere, but who are occupied with the Father's words and the Father's works. God is raising up sons in these days who do not have to explain anything, defend anything, build anything, promote anything, protect anything. God is merciful to us in saying to us, that the reason we can declare this, the reason this commission is coming, is because the burden is not of ourselves, but the Father is sending us. He is saying to us, "I am setting you to be lights. I am ordaining you to be saviors. I am forming you to be the habitation of God, I am anointing you to be kings to reign and priests to minister my salvation. I am sending you forth to be bread to be broken and fed to the hungry multitudes. I am pouring you out as a flowing, surging, bounteous river of life." Let us not sell creation short in these days. Let us not deny the Lord who has purchased us to be His people with a purpose for the ages. While we seek no glory of our own, there is, nevertheless, great wealth and heavenly glory for all who fulfill all the will of God. You never lose with God!

The compelling passion of my life is to be filled with all the fullness of God and be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. This is what sonship is. The deep cry of my heart is for the satisfaction of knowing that my life counts for God. As God knows my heart, it is not a selfish desire. The reason I want to be like Jesus is because I love Him so, but also because it is the *only way* I can ever be used in the restoration of fallen creation. I see the needs of the world around me, and realize that I am practically powerless to do anything about them. And should I initiate a program it would not even scratch the surface of the need. Men hold great crusades today and when you listen to their glowing reports you would think the whole world is turning to God. But should you walk the streets of the city they just left, you can barely find a trace of evidence that they were ever there. Oh yes, we can pray, believe God, and do our thing, and see some people saved, blessed, healed and delivered. But anyone who says that they have reached the place where their ministry is meeting the needs of the world is either blind to the needs of men, a proud hypocrite, or a liar. But God not is not blind to the need of this day, nor is He impotent to move. He has a plan, a wonderful plan! And He is going to move in mighty power just as soon as the time is ripe for it.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 49**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FORTY-NINE**

**THE GROANING CREATION**  
**THE MINISTRY OF THE SONS OF GOD**

The great characters of the past who have cut new channels, blazed new trails, opened new frontiers, opened up hidden secrets and led humanity onward to better days have been men of vision. Without a vision and the ability to soar on the wings of imagination there would be no progress of humanity. Back of every great development that thrusts man forward is the vision of someone who caught a glimpse of something higher and grander. What is it that discovered new worlds, opened new territories, built the great cities, tunneled the mountains, plowed the mighty deep, brought forth astounding inventions, developed technology, and conquered the air and space, but the power of vision? Society would be stagnant indeed without the vision of better and greater things to come!

The wise man said, "Where there is no vision the people perish." That is, where there are no new, fresh, vital thoughts there can be no progress into transcendental realms. The Old Testament prophets were called seers. They stood in the high places of the Spirit and looked down through the ages and caught visions of the coming purposes and glory of God's unfolding plan hundreds of years ahead of the reality. The scripture itself is a document of visions. It starts with Abraham. As someone has put it, "When God first called Abraham He inundated his soul with a sea of promises. He spoke to him from the starry heavens, from the soil of Canaan on which he walked, by the visit of angels, and by the Holy Ghost in his deep nature. Abraham saw great fields of light, great possibilities of things for himself and his posterity. His soul drank in these promises until his faith became wide and powerful, even before any of them were fulfilled. God deals with souls in a similar way. Yet when He calls anyone to a great degree of perfection or usefulness He begins by opening up to them the promises of His word and the possibilities which they may achieve even before there are any outward symptoms of their fulfillment. That heart anchors itself in the promises of God until those promises become as real as God Himself."

Joseph began as a mere wisp of a boy having visions of the distinguished life he was to lead. No man, except our Lord Himself, ever suffered such indignities against the hope of God he cherished in his soul as Joseph. Yet through it all he remained steady, calm, and resolute because of the word that burned within him. The secret of the great life of Moses, the deliverer of Israel, is that he lived "as seeing Him who is invisible." It was this that motivated him to forsake the throne of Egypt with its wealth, honor and glory and join an ignorant, despised, oppressed, destitute company of slaves. A vision of the supernal spoiled him for the fleeting things of earth. Later God called Moses up into the Holy Mount to commune with Him at the counsel-table of His divine government. While there God communicated to him a vision of the divine order of His redemptive purposes and gave him the plans for a model of it to be erected in the midst of His people on earth: its size and shape, where every curtain was to hang, its furnishings and order of ministry, its golden altar and the Holy of holies. Moses had a mental-spiritual picture of all this before it became a reality. He was commanded to build it according to the pattern that was shown him in the Holy Mount. He brought the pattern down from the Mount as a vision in his spirit of the glorious plan and purpose of God!

Ah, God has a wonderful plan and purpose for the life of every son of God. The Bible is full of this thought that for each of us there is a course, a race, a work, a divine plan to be unfolded and fulfilled. To this end we have been birthed on this planet and for this purpose there is ample provision of grace, revelation, and power. Never forget, dear one, you were born to be victorious and to achieve something transcendental. Just as the scientist and poet can look down on the lower animals and say, "Poor things, if only you understood the glory of this world of mind and intellect, of wisdom and knowledge, of harmony, beauty and purpose," so the son filled with the inner spirit, with the mind of Christ and the nature of the heavenly Father, can look upon the poor

worldlings, the rich and the famous, the great and the powerful, philosophers, scholars, politicians, and say, "Oh, poor things, if only you knew the purity, the peace, the joy, the interior brightness, the vastness, the sacred secret, the divine purpose, the sweetness and the divine personalities that I see and enjoy and respond to — ah, if only you *knew!*" And of course they shall, in God's due time!

This is the spiritual vision where our spiritual nature, with its inner senses, unfolds to the heavenly world. The Holy Spirit, quickening our spirit, opens our inner eyes and ears and reveals to us the vision of our high calling. This is the meaning of Paul's wonderful prayer where he prays that the saints might have "the spirit of wisdom and revelation," through "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye might *know* what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe..." (Eph. 1:17-19). Another translation says, "the eyes of your *heart* being enlightened," which is the very core of our being and the fountain of our thoughts and conception of divine realities. It is not through the intellect of the natural mind that God reveals Himself to us, but it is through our inner spirit, the seat of our spiritual consciousness.

Let us not rest contented with present attainments. There is a higher, larger, deeper, fuller experience that awaits each one of us, where we can have all the mind that was in Christ Jesus, all the nature of our heavenly Father, and all the fullness of the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the substance of the *heavenly vision!* Many years ago the sainted A. B. Simpson wrote, "If you could see all the fullness of His grace and love, all the rich provision of His great redemption, and all the possibilities of His indwelling life; if you could but get a glimpse of what it means to be a *son of God*, a temple of the Holy Ghost...if you could but fully realize what it means to have the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to have your sun no more go down in sorrow, but have the Lord for your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning forever ended; if you could for one moment taste the exquisite delight of the life of Jesus in your mortal flesh, as an antidote for disease and death, and the very mind of Christ to quicken your weak and erring brain; in a word, if you could see, as Moses saw, the good land which the Lord hath given thee, you would quickly arise and, casting all else behind, you would go over this Jordan and let nothing hinder your entering into your full inheritance." What a word!

The Spirit is saying today that He is preparing a people, He is preparing a body, He is preparing sons who shall be conformed to the image of His Son, who shall be partakers of the divine nature, who shall have the mind of Christ, who shall be brought to glory and who then shall become the very image of the Father. These shall become the very brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of the Father's person. Even as the first Son, who went into the ground and died as a grain of wheat to produce other sons in His likeness, bearing His image — He was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of the Father's person — and God sent Him to be the Saviour of the world. God is now preparing *sons*, God is now preparing a body for that first Son, we are the body of the first Son, the body of Christ. We are the body of the Christ and in and through these sons, when all have grown up into His fullness, His salvation shall be manifested unto the ends of the earth. The Lord is saying unto His people in this Day, "For this cause have I raised thee up and sent thee to be a light unto the nations, and thou shalt be my salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6; Acts 13:47).

God is not talking to babies today. God is not talking to spiritual children today. Spiritual children get all sentimental and starry-eyed over the provision of the Father in prosperity, healing, miracles and blessings. Little children cannot do much, but oh, how they love to *receive things!* *Gifts* mean everything to them! How excited a child gets over a shiny bike, a new doll, the latest toy, or a little spending money. Children know their parents will supply *all of their needs* and often ask, even beg, for things they *want*. There is nothing wrong with that, that is just how children *are!* And this, my friend, is a perfect picture of the spiritual level of most Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians today! Spiritual children have a little knowledge that puffs them up. Spiritual children fight among each other. "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas." Spiritual children pride themselves — who shall be the greatest. Spiritual children want to know which side of the throne they will be sitting on, "What am I going to get out of all this." Spiritual children like to play adult, imagining that they possess much more than they actually have, and that they have attained a stature far beyond their experience. Ah, now I've stopped "teaching" and started "meddling" in the attitudes of some in this Kingdom message! But God is not sending children today, He is sending sons, whose only desire is that the Father may be glorified, that the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand, that the will of the Father may be done. What happens to us has no bearing on the situation.

Christ says, "As my Father has sent me — in this total commitment to His will, so that I desire only to reveal the Father — so I am sending you, in a total commitment to the Father's plan and purpose, that the Father may be revealed in the multitude of sons." And let me assure you, precious friend of mine, if through one son in Eden's fair Garden who disobeyed, the whole creation came into bondage and death because of disobedience; and if through one Son in the Garden of Gethsemane who obeyed, God was able to provide a salvation for all humanity because of obedience — if God could bring such a revelation of Himself through one Son, a Son who was crucified and rejected, whom God raised again and set at His own right hand — what will happen in these days, when through a multitude of sons who have been identified with Him, buried with Him in His death, raised again in the likeness of His resurrection, ascended with Him, seated with Him in the heavenly places, anointed with His Spirit, glorified with His glory, invested with His wisdom, nature, and power — what is going to happen in all creation when *many sons* are revealed in the glory of God?

The future the Father has planned for His sons is away beyond our ability to comprehend or even imagine. I am overwhelmed with awe when I think of what is ahead for us! In Romans 8:18 the apostle says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Phillip's beautiful rendering of this reads, "In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us." Oh, the glory of it! Oh, the wonder of it! Who can express it! On another occasion Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9). I have heard preachers attempting to describe the future glory with the most eloquent language, but it didn't come anywhere near the truth. Even my feeble attempt in these pages will prove no more fruitful! The human mind is incapable of conjuring up a picture of what the omniscient Father has prepared for His sons. We can let our imagination run as wild as the wind and it will not come anywhere near comprehending the grandeur of what the Father has in mind! Yet we cherish, as did Joseph, the vision Father has given us.

## THE GROANING CREATION

The jubilation, gladness, and joy that will take place at the manifestation of the sons of God is beyond our wildest expectations. The Christ body, the sons of God, will experience great transport at their change from mortal to immortal. And the creation will also express the ecstasy that will be theirs' when they are released from six millenniums of bondage and servitude to sin, sorrow, and death. The songs of victory and glad tidings will be greater far than on that first glad occasion when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:7). "For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:20-22).

"The whole creation groaneth..." The word "groaneth" signifies to sigh, to pray, to be moved with inward feeling. Creation is depicted as a slave in bondage, groaning in its captivity, crying out to be free. Today the world is full of broken hearts, men suffer lack, pain, and indignities, the hospitals are crowded, the cemeteries are being filled, and all nature is groaning under its bondage to corruption and death. You go down to the seaside and you can hear the sob of the waves, you go to the mountains and you can hear the low sigh of the wind in the tree tops. Can we not hear the sigh and groan of nature in the hiss of the cat, in the yelp of the dog, in the lowing of the cattle, in the roar of the lion, in the tremor of the earthquake, in the howling of the storm, in the shriek of the captive, in the weeping at the graveside, and in the universal cries of disillusionment, sorrow, and pain?

"The bondage of corruption." The word "bondage" means more than being bound, it means servitude, slavery; and "corruption" signifies ruin, decay, death, to perish. The servitude to decay resulting in death conveys the meaning. Creation is said to be longing for deliverance from this "servitude of decay resulting in death" with "earnest expectation." Those longings which are implanted by God in all of nature will surely be met by Him! It is a fact in nature that God never puts an intuition within, without meeting it without. Therefore while creation is in bondage, it is not in despair, for an earnest expectation throbs through it and makes it to be like one who is looking out with intense longing for someone who is expected. The Greek word rendered "expectation" is made up from *apo-kara-dokia*. *Apo* signifies from, or from afar. *Kara* means the head, and *dokia* means to wait

for, or to look with intense expectation. This compound word at once suggests a striking figure, namely, one whose head is raised, and who is looking out on the distant horizon with intensity on the countenance, and longing in the eyes, as one expecting to receive something from another, or the arrival of a loved one from afar.

The whole creation is joining us in unutterable groans and birth pangs, earnestly looking forward to its release with ours, out into full and free eternal inheritance. EVERY CREATED THING is waiting, looking anxiously and with a kind of universal travail — waiting for what? A greater manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit? More missionaries? More Bibles and gospel tracts? Greater evangelistic crusades? Another televangelist? Or are they waiting for the combined efforts of all the churches to get together in an all-out assault against sin, sickness, and evil? Are they travailing for another preacher, another movement, another revival, or a restored New Testament Church? NO, NO, A THOUSAND TIMES **NO!** Creation is not standing on the seashore of history gazing expectantly across the ocean of time, looking with anticipation for any of these things. The whole creation, without exception, is waiting for the **manifestation of the sons of God** which is nothing less than our FULL SONSHIP, THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR BODIES. It is full and complete and eternal victory over sin, sorrow, limitation, sickness, and death. It is the life and glory of the Father fully revealed *upon earth in a people!* That, my beloved, is the *hope* of creation!

The story is told of a little boy who couldn't play outside because it was raining. His father, who was trying to take an afternoon nap on the sofa, became annoyed. "Go to the other room, son; Daddy wants to sleep. Find something in there to play with." "Like what?" "Anything," snapped the father. "There isn't anything," replied the lad. Grabbing the newspaper, the man tore out a page with a large map of the world printed on it. He knew the boy knew nothing about geography. With the scissors he cut it into hundreds of odd-shaped pieces like a puzzle. "There, see if you can put it together, and don't bother me till you're done." The father settled down on the sofa thinking his problem was solved, but ten minutes later there was a tug on his shirt. "You can't be done yet!" But there on the floor was the neatly constructed world. "How did you do it?" he asked. "Easy," said his son. "A man's picture was on the back, and when I got the man together right, the world was right." Ah, yes — when God gets HIS MAN put together in the fullness of Christ all the problems of the world will simply fall into place! Let us not expend our energies trying to get the world straightened out and ordered aright in this hour. Rather, let us give ourselves to apprehending that for which Jesus Christ has apprehended us — to grow up unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then the whole creation will fall into place!

If Alexander the Great could march his armies across the earth and conquer the whole civilized world before he was thirty-three years old; if Hitler could change the world for evil; if the communists could march forth to enslave one-third of the world's population, weaving a hundred million into the vortex of communism each year — it is not presumptuous to believe that the sons of God, armed with the immortal life and glory of Christ, can turn all nations to God, deliver the whole creation from the tyranny of sin and death, and bring the Kingdom of God to pass under the whole heaven, from pole to pole, and sea to sea, in power and great glory. As Ray Prinzing has written, "What glory, what wonder awaits the revelation of that true character and quality which HE is producing in His new creation species. Resurrection life shall burst forth, Babylon's shame and corruption shall be ended. Holiness is to be personified in a people. Religious racketeers will come to nought. Light will dissipate the darkness. No more will there be wells without water, and falling stars that fade into the darkness. HIS SONS will be a revelation of such character and quality as to satisfy all that men have waited for."

## **THE MINISTRY OF THE SONS OF GOD**

I have shared this before, but am deeply impressed to relate the following vision again, received by an old prophet of God (Bill Britton's cousin) many years ago, one of the Lord's pioneers of this gospel of the Kingdom of God. He wrote of his experience: "In that vision which lasted all night, the most wonderful vision I ever had, in which I saw the sons of God in action all over the world, ministering to the multitudes in every tongue and nation, to all people, I saw both men and women ministering. I saw them standing, suspended in mid-air, in the midst of a busy intersection of a large city, with all traffic stopped, and thousands of people seeing them with their eyes, and hearing them with their ears, regardless of distance, and without the aid of mechanical devices.

I saw them speaking to a people of one language, and in a moment's time I saw them transported to another people of another language, speaking to them in their own language, having power over all mechanical devices and natural laws, so that they could cause every activity to cease, and every eye to be fixed upon them, until their message had been delivered.

"I saw them walk upon the water; I saw the terror in the faces of the wicked, at the sound of their voices. I saw the professing Christians fall upon their faces in true repentance, crying out for mercy, and I saw them being genuinely converted. I saw the skeptics being convinced, and the blasphemy of the wicked, as they would rail and mock, only to be struck dumb or blind at just a word from the manifested sons and daughters of God.

"The vision lasted all night, as in my spirit I was living in that future time, when God will be manifested in fullness in His sons and daughters, while my body was back there in bed alongside my wife. Sometimes the scenes would make me weep and I would sob, my body shaking violently with pain and agony, whereas another scene would cause me to laugh with holy laughter, as I witnessed the genuine repentance of the shallow church members. I'll never forget the vision of the young girl (the daughters of God) who spoke with the voice of many waters. Human language could never describe the quality of her voice. All I can say is, it was so filled with love and compassion, it would break the hardest stone, and at her command, every infirmity, every sickness, every blindness, every lameness was healed; every one was made perfectly whole, even those who had been lunatic from birth.

"Sister Britain got no sleep that night, and finally when the dawn was ready to break, she asked me why I didn't get up and write the vision. I did try, but could not hold my hands on the keyboard of the typewriter. Some unseen force held them aloft over my head. I walked the floor and wept, and begged the Lord to permit me to write some of the visions I had seen, to preserve them in black and white. At last He did, and I wrote just a very few of the visions I had seen, for a large book could not contain them all."

And now, many years afterward, the old prophet has passed from the scene. But today, not only the small number who were touched by his word, but multiplied tens of thousands of saints in every nation under heaven have been quickened to these wonderful truths. It has not been the work of any man or group of men, nor of any movement or organization, nor of any organized effort or theological promotion. It has been the sovereign work of God by the Holy Spirit! A vast army of saints is now in preparation for the greatest day in earth's long history — the **manifestation of the sons of God!**

Some time ago brother Paul Mueller admonished the saints, "This age has been the time when the Lord's purpose was to bring people into His kingdom by 'the foolishness of preaching' (I Cor. 1:21). We rejoiced to see many gather together to hear the anointed messages of preaching and to be saved by that means. But God has a more perfect way! The old order of meetings, of the manifestation of the gifts, and of the foolishness of preaching is ending. We once preached, prophesied, and ministered in part. That which is in part is being removed, and that which is perfect is coming! The new, perfect order will function by perfect love. It is now time for us to put away the childish, foolish things of the past (I Cor. 13:8-13). The Lord is replacing the old order with a new order of greater Spirit Life and manifestation. And we are highly privileged to be the firstfruits of that new order in God.

"Imagine the wonders of the mighty moving of the Spirit as the new highway to God is revealed. Instead of church meetings, the Spirit of the Lord will move on an entire body of people wherever they may be gathered, and the whole group will be converted without a preacher, a choir, or an altar call. Instead of one man preaching to a group of people, the transformed saints will stand amidst many on the streets, on the highways or byways, or in a shopping mall. When they see the glory of Christ on us, they will gladly accept the Lord and their lives will be immediately transformed. Instead of one man preaching or ministering healing to a group of people, and seeing many turn to the Lord, the transformed body of Christ will point the way to the new highway to God, and many more multitudes will be brought into the kingdom. It may be difficult for us to envision entirely, but that new highway to God will be far more glorious than anything we have seen in the past! The Lord will do more in one minute by His Spirit than a man has been able to do in his entire lifetime. Yesterday the Lord worked and moved in the 30 and 60-fold degree, tomorrow He will move mightily in a 100-fold manifestation of His power and glory. And *all of this will be the result of our spiritual growth unto sonship.*

Multitudes shall then find the peace and joy of Christ, and will embrace the fullness of His kingdom and dominion."

Another brother has added his testimony of how the Spirit has opened to his understanding events that will herald the unveiling of God's sons. "Many believers today are ready in spirit, as they await this great wave with excitement and expectancy. Some have already been given a glimpse of this great Light that will move upon the waters. God's remnant will involve individuals who are humble, word-filled, trustworthy, meek: those who have died to self and have kept their eyes on things above. Many, like yourself, are they who are usually unnoticed or lost in a crowd. Let us look at a few examples of this coming anointing. We may hear of an elderly lady, one whom the world has never given so much as a second glance. She is walking to a nearby store, but the Holy Spirit speaks and directs her to enter a theater enroute. She enters, as if invisible, and standing at the rear of the great audience the Holy Spirit begins to sing through this lady and instantly everyone becomes quiet; even the picture on the screen and the sound in the theater stop. Every individual in that audience feels the notes rising in their soul and all that are in need are made free, and all those sick are made whole and well. Much weeping and praising and giving glory to God is heard from that theater, but during this time the song ends and the little lady simply leaves unnoticed. Indeed the audience is stunned, but 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the glory of God thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty' (Ps. 29:3-4).

"We shall now witness another move, or event. We see a large church in service and during the service the Holy Spirit directs a man to enter the church and he walks directly to the organ that rests at the side of the platform. Having never played an instrument in his life, the Holy Spirit causes his fingers to play heavenly chords of music that immediately paralyze the entire congregation. Tears flow and hearts beat unto that higher sound, and again all are made whole, set free from earthly bondages. The entire body is now giving glory to the Most High, and our little man simply turns and walks out of the service without notice, receiving no personal glory. Whatever the situation, whatever the conditions, THERE WILL BE NO STRONGHOLDS THAT GOD'S LIGHT WILL NOT PENETRATE. The land will shine here and there as God causes His *vessels of light* to move forth. 'They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble...and the Lord shall utter His voice before HIS ARMY: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great, and very terrible; and who can abide it?' (Joel 2:9-11).

"Truly we see that the Lord shall have an army of Light-bearers. Words cannot describe the acts and supernatural wonders that God will yet perform. It is your opportunity among that called remnant to stand among the number of this great army. Your life may have had many trials, testings, and hardships, you may be old and sickly, but if you believe that God has prepared you with all these exercises in order that you may stand in this hour, then nothing is impossible unto you. You have undergone a life training *for such a time as this*, so spend your time wisely now until that moment..."

A dear sister in the Lord, Rita Kahr, wrote a letter to a friend of ours a few years ago. I quote a portion of her letter. "About ten years ago I was in bed late at night reading a paper by Preston on the "Greater Works" ministry of the manifested sons of God that are to come forth. My spirit was leaping then, but I was also overwhelmed by my lack — lack of anything and of everything to help in any way in the ministry. I felt absolutely drained, and so I cried out to the Lord then and there, 'Father, I don't think I can attain to this ministry. It's too precious and wonderful and I have nothing to offer. I can't prophesy, I can't write like Preston Eby and others, I can't teach and I can't even sing to offer some praise. About the only thing I can do is speak in tongues, and that only a little. I feel I am failing in my very lack.'

"I then fell asleep and had a dream. I never dream, or at least very seldom do I remember them. Here I was in this dream in front of a large group of people. I opened my mouth to speak and out came words of great wisdom and profound teaching. The people cried out, 'It's the Lord! It's the Lord!' I then stretched forth my hand and people cried out, 'I'm healed — it's the Lord! It's the Lord!' I awoke and was confused because I was doing these 'Greater Works' and more, and then the Spirit spoke to me: 'Rita, do you believe the message you just read in Preston's paper?' I answered, 'Yes, but it seems so far beyond my reach.' The Lord answered, 'You couldn't even believe it if the *seed* wasn't in you with all the potential for its growth. I'll water and bring the

sunshine and it shall prosper in my time.' Oh, what joy and comfort that word brought me! I ceased all my fears and that word has kept me to this day — I still haven't any ministry, most of God's people don't even recognize me as a brother (sister), my body confesses to a 'Job experience,' and I can say the time has been long and dry. Nevertheless, the *seed* has grown greatly in these last years, but there is yet to be a demonstration of that which I believe — I can hardly wait, though, for it shall surely come to pass."

Earth has not yet witnessed the magnitude of ministry that shall be revealed through the manifest sons of God. In this hour at the transition of the ages, God is preparing His perfected and matured body, anointed with the seven-fold intensified fullness of the Spirit of God, and this enChristed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history with ten thousand times more power than any of the revival showers of the past centuries. God has moved deeply upon my heart to proclaim to God's elect that there is soon coming a great and glorious MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a full and complete revelation of Jesus Christ in His many brethren — and it shall usher in the *next stage* of the Kingdom of God on earth — the dominion of the Kingdom over all the living nations on earth. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a part of this manifestation that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself in our midst in a new, dramatic, and powerful way, and through us to creation.

The church order and ministry of the past two thousand years has been good and appropriate for saving a remnant and bringing the elect into the beginnings of their life in Christ. Let no man say that we are opposed to it! I still rejoice when I see hundreds of people walking down the isles in a Billy Graham Crusade to give their hearts to the Lord. And I still praise God when I see people testifying to the healing, miracle working power of God upon the stage of a Benny Hinn Crusade here or abroad. But it is not sonship ministry! Therefore, it can contribute but a little to the Kingdom of God in the earth. To deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption GOD HAS A MORE PERFECT WAY! He has given us a sneak preview of this way in the life and ministry of the firstborn Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pattern Son was never "meeting oriented." Meetings "happened" but they were not called, announced, planned or organized. Jesus never advertised that He would be speaking or ministering in the temple, or at any other place. No date was set for a meeting to commence on a certain day at a particular hour. There was no *place* and no *time*. All was entirely spontaneous! Jesus ministered at all times and in all places. He taught and healed in the streets. He ministered in the homes. He ministered in the places of business. He taught by the sea. He ministered in the fields. He spoke to the multitudes in the mountains. He proclaimed the word of the Kingdom in the courts of the temple. He ministered to one person alone. He ministered to ten people. He ministered to crowds of many thousands. It made no difference! Buildings, dates, praise services, campaign managers, music directors, choirs, announcements, and offering plates were all completely irrelevant to His sonship ministry. He ministered the same wherever He was, day or night. There was no need to sing hymns and choruses to "create an atmosphere" to "bring God's presence" or stir up His gift so it would work. **HE W-A-S GOD'S PRESENCE! JESUS WAS HIMSELF THE VERY ATMOSPHERE OF GOD'S GLORY!** There was absolutely no "meeting" or "church" mentality in the life of the firstborn Son of God. God was God in Jesus at all times, in all places, to all people, in a perfectly natural expression of omnipotence. And, my beloved, **JESUS IS THE PATTERN OF SONSHIP** — not Paul, or Peter, or the apostles, or the early Church, or the Church Fathers, or the revivals of past centuries.

When God roars out of His Zion Company in the fullness of His incorruptible life and divine glory and presence, the old drunk will rise up out of his drunken stupor and know that there is a God upon the throne. All will know, kings and presidents and prime ministers and members of congress and parliament, and rich men and mighty men everywhere will be made to know that there is ONE to whom they all owe their allegiance. Do not doubt for one moment, precious friend of mine, that when God wants any of His sons in any place, He will put them there. God need pay no attention to iron or bamboo curtains, vast oceans, boundaries between nations, immigration laws, passports or visas, airline schedules, or any form of transportation. I am talking about the miracle-working power of God to be manifested when the sons of God arise as King-Priests after the Order of Melchizedek, in the power of an endless life. Creation shall soon behold a pure, unadulterated move of the Holy Spirit through a people moving on the plane of incorruption, doing just what the Father wants them to do, without any limitations whatever. The Spirit will be poured out upon ALL FLESH. In the cities, on the plains, in

the jungle paths, in the deserts, on the mountain heights, upon people of means and education and culture in the industrialized nations and upon the few savages remaining in earth's remote corners, in all the dwelling places of men the Spirit shall flow. In the time of which I speak there shall be a complete overthrow of every government, institution, religion and power on earth. God will not leave one place on earth where the adversary can rally his forces. If God did not cover the seas with His Spirit, and move upon all flesh upon the seas, the adversary would have a place to rally his forces. If God did not pour His Spirit out and flood the deserts, the adversary would have a place for recruiting his followers. But, thank God! The glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. God will have this time, this day to do His mysterious work in all the earth and all the kindreds of the earth shall turn unto the Lord. All nations and peoples will come and bow down before Him. The Lord alone shall be King over all the earth in and through His body. The saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom (government) and possess the Kingdom and reign forever and ever.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 50**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY**

**THE GLOOM AND DOOM FOLLY**  
**THE LITTLE MORON**

Earth has not yet witnessed the magnitude of ministry that shall be revealed through the manifest sons of God. In this hour at the transition of the ages God is preparing His perfected and matured body, anointed with the seven-fold intensified fullness of the Spirit of God, and this in-Christed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history with ten thousand times more power than any of the revival showers of the past centuries. God has moved deeply upon my heart to proclaim to God's elect that there is soon coming a great and glorious manifestation of Christ before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a full and complete revelation of Jesus Christ in His many brethren, and it shall usher in the *next stage* of the Kingdom of God on earth -- the dominion of the Kingdom over all the living nations of earth. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a part of this manifestation that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself in our midst in a new, dramatic, and powerful way, and through us to creation.

In this message I want to deal with some issues that are vital to our understanding and appropriating the purposes of God for our lives in this important hour.

History is full of the vain-glorious attempts of well-meaning men to calculate, interpret, and figure out the **date** of the coming of Christ, the beginning of the great tribulation, the so-called rapture of the church, the manifestation of the sons of God, the beginning of the millennium, or some other great event, real or imagined, in relation to the coming of the Kingdom of God. But all the prophecies and booklets are misleading when they suggest that this Day comes according to some *calculation of time!* Many misconceptions regarding the "last times" are in circulation -- and only by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God do we know the things that pertain to our Day. The HOLY SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS that the manifestation of the sons of God is the next great event on God's prophetic schedule -- but I know of no system of chronology, no Biblical time-prophecy, no pattern of cycles, no numerical calculations, or prophecy that can accurately tell us the hour, day, year, or decade when this coming glory shall break forth!

The elect of the Lord has little interest in dates and years, or in the passing of time. **Our primary interest, yea, our all-consuming passion is to KNOW HIM in the fullness of Himself!** It is that we might experience Christ in the perfection of His nature, in the fullness of His spirit and power, in the accomplishment of His purposes, and in the revelation of His sonship glory, that the creation might behold HIM in the dawn of the New Day. Then everything and everyone will be blessed and quickened because of what He has wrought in us, not merely because a date on the calendar has arrived. Only by the power of Christ raised up in us, the Light that He is, can anything anywhere be transformed by our hand. By His Light all darkness shall be dispelled. The arising of His glory, the dawning of His Day is not a date to be calculated, but an attainment to be realized! It is the power of the *voice of God*, and the wonder of the *work of God* in His elect that alerts us to the reality of this Day -- not dates, times, cycles, prophecies, numbers, or calculations of any kind.

Look into any period of history and you will find prophets of all types who claimed they knew when the next end-time event would occur. Most have claimed to have discovered the *hidden secret* to the Bible's time-prophecies or found *hidden meanings* in Biblical numbers, cycles, or chronologies. Some time ago brother Ray Prinzing penned the following wise observation: "'Searching what manner of time...' seems to be the occupation of many. We find there are those of a more negative nature that keep close watch of all the doom events -- every earthquake, flood, war, etc., has them asking the question, 'Does this fulfill the prophecy, and indicate that the end of the age is here?' And there are those who look for the more positive elements, and with every surge and quickening of the Spirit, they are convinced that it means that the end is nigh.

"Some take their clue from Daniel, who said, 'I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem' (**Dan. 9:2**), and so they study 'the books,' every one they can find that is related to prophetic events, to see if they can understand the NUMBER OF THE YEARS. Let it be clear, we have no condemnation for those who make these 'searches,' and if the Spirit quickens any fragment of truth to them, we are delighted to share it, and hold it before the Lord for His quickening, and following confirmations. Some would try to search out the times with a solar calendar, others use the lunar calendar. Some would go back to Israel's times of old to see if they can glean understanding and relate it to these present times. And all the while, we find our own challenge being to hold a *balance* between looking to the future for its glorious fulfillment of that TOTAL SALVATION, and our living in the present times with a deep consciousness of just ABIDING IN HIM."

Efforts to set dates for the so-called "end time" began early in the Church's history, some as early as the first century after Christ. Saint Augustine (A.D. 354-430) talked about the end of human history. He tried to determine when human history would end. He divided human history into six ages of 1,000 years each. This was based on the six days of creation and **Psalm 90:4**, "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday," and **II Peter 3:8**, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years." Therefore the "end" would come in the year 6,000!

Many supposed that the second coming of Christ would take place in the year 1000, a thousand years after the first coming of Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom in the earth. As the year 1000 approached the message which was emphasized throughout Christendom was that the end of the world and the final judgment were eminent. Because of this approaching event, all were advised to repent and prepare themselves for the end of time. The end did not come! Its failure to materialize was a great disappointment to the faithful, for it had been the expectation of generations of Christians. When the second coming did not happen the church system had to change its message. The next date was set in the fourteenth century -- exactly one thousand years after the church became the official religion of the Roman empire. It was taught that the rule of the church over the nations of Europe and the world was the reign of the saints with Christ over the nations, therefore the millennium would end at that time, Christ would return, the final judgment would be set, and the world would come to an end. Of course, it didn't happen then, either!

Martin Luther found that the birth of Christ was approximately 4,000 years after creation. So the year 5525 had arrived (A.D. 1525), and Luther looked for the great "wind up" near the end of six one-thousand-year days, or the year A. D. 6000. Then Luther found that Jesus had said the time would be *shortened* for the elect's sake (Mat. 24:22). The year 5525 was 475 years short of 6,000, and Luther concluded, because of the earth-shaking spiritual events that were taking place in his day, that the end of human history could come in the year 1525 or very soon after. Then the great world Sabbath would begin and last forever! (Luther did not believe in a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ). In 1527 Luther and a friend published a book describing two events which they regarded as "signs" of the end. Somebody had discovered the carcass of a monster with a donkey's head and a human body on the bank of the Tiber River in Rome. Luther, who believed the Pope was the Antichrist, called it the "Pope-ass." The other sure sign of the end was a calf born with a monk's cowl over its head. That meant that the end of Roman Catholicism and all false religion was at hand. That was not all. There always were wars in Europe, but the war in A.D. 1525 was different. Emperor Charles V and Pope Clement VII were fighting the war to end all wars. Jesus had said, "Nation will go to war with nation, and kingdom with kingdom" (**Mat. 24:7**). Kingdom with kingdom surely meant Emperor with Pope! Even that was not all. In 1524, the planets Jupiter and Saturn met in the sign of the fishes: The fish was a significant Christian symbol. Jesus had said there would be signs in the heavens and "the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (**Mat. 24:29**). Jesus had said, "This good news of the kingdom must be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come" (**Mat. 24:14**). In Luther's mind the gospel proclaimed by the Protestant Reformation was that preaching of the gospel in all the world. Therefore, the end was at hand!

In more recent times similar prophetic schemes have been promoted among the Lord's people. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century William Miller, who became the founder of the Millerite sect, traveled through New England, New York, New Jersey, and Canada, with the announcement that Christ would return in 1843. He thought he saw, plainly, the time indicated, in the scriptures, when our Lord would return. In 1818 Miller, during his systematic study of the Bible, began to focus on Daniel 8:13-14 wherein we read, "Then I

heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Miller concluded that "the cleansing" in this passage referred to the purification of the earth (God's sanctuary) by fire. He understood that in Biblical time-prophecies a day stands for a year, therefore there would be 2,300 years until the earth would be purged by God's fire. Using also Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, Miller determined that the 2,300 day-years began with the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. to rebuild Jerusalem. This scheme is too detailed to go into here, but when one reads it, it is quite convincing to the intellectual mind. Proceeding from the beginning date of 457 B.C. Miller counted the 2,300 years forward, arriving at the year 1843 as the end. He restudied his conclusions for several years and in 1831, convinced of their certainty, began to teach and preach the second coming of Christ to take place in 1843. Being a signally gifted and scholarly man, he led thousands to adopt his views. The burden of his preaching was: Christ will soon be here; are you ready to meet Him? There were many conversions born of fear in view of the imminent appearance of Christ the **Judge**. The meetings of the people were often scenes of wild confusion; emotion was aroused, people fell down crying, men shouted and women fainted. Despite all the opposition of the churches to this unbounded sensationalism, Miller continued his crusade with great persistence and assurance. As the predicted day drew near many took their horses, with fodder for two or three days, and went out into the woods, expecting to be all the more likely to see all that was to be seen when once away from the crowded city. All over the States there were people who had made ascension-gowns in which to soar into the air in proper costume. They waited, and they waited. But when the year 1843 passed by without any unusual occurrence, Miller had to resort to the subterfuge that Christ had indeed come but remained in hiding temporarily because the people had not yet repented sufficiently; and when the year 1844 also passed by in the ordinary way, he finally had to admit that his calculations had been mistaken.

Pastor Russell, the spiritual father of Jehovah's Witnesses and several other groups of Bible Students, reasoned that God's plan of the ages would be worked out on earth through seven one-thousand year days. He, like many today, believed that the seventh thousand-year epoch would be the epoch of Christ's millennial reign, the great Sabbath Day of the restoration of the world and all mankind, an age of refreshment and rest from their own carnal works in which the whole creation labors and groans under the bondage of sin and death. Russell presented a detailed study of Bible chronology by which he demonstrated that 6,000 years from the creation of Adam were complete in A.D. 1874. The millennium, therefore, began in 1874 and at that time Christ returned in His spiritual presence to reign until all enemies are under His feet.

According to Russell's reckoning the forepart of the millennial age would be the "Day of the Lord," the "day of trouble," the "Great Tribulation," which would witness the breaking into pieces of the kingdoms of this world and the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. This great work would take one generation of forty years -- those living when Christ's invisible Presence began in 1874 would not pass away until the final end came. Therefore Russell prophesied that the **Times of the Gentiles** would end in 1914 and from thence forward the saints would reign over the nations. Russell further "proved" his calculations by another novel idea. In Leviticus 26 Moses prophesied that Israel's scattering among the nations would last *seven times*. To Russell those "seven times" were prophetic times of a day for a year, and using the day for a year theory he reasoned seven times would be 2,520 day/years. He said Israel ceased being a nation in 606 B.C. when the Babylonians destroyed their nation and carried them away into captivity. By counting seven times, or 2,520 years, from 606 B.C. he arrived at the date A.D. 1914, thus verifying his 1874 plus 40-year generation date. Russell died in 1916, admitting that things had not worked out as he anticipated -- and that was the end.

Russell's successor, the eloquent Judge Rutherford, kept alive the expectation of the speedy transformation of the living saints. He changed the time of Christ's coming in His spiritual Presence from 1874 to 1914 and said the final resurrection would take place in 1925. The burden of his message, which was spread nationally over billboards, shouted over the radio, and blazoned to the world in paid advertisements, was "Millions now living will never die!" It was a rather daring assertion, seeing that it could be so easily proved or disproved. A leading laundry, which had more humor than reverence, adopted the slogan as its own, making it read in this fashion: "We do the dyeing for the millions now living."

Then there was the Great Pyramid delusion. Back about the turn of the century a man by the name of Morton Edgar published a book titled PYRAMID PASSAGES. The thrust of this book was that the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in Egypt was built by divine wisdom and under God's direction, probably by Shem, the son of Noah, to be one of God's witnesses to men, the object of its construction being to *establish in stone* a record and a prophecy of God's great redemptive plan of the ages. The scriptural basis for this was **Isaiah 19:19-20**, "**In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt.**" This "altar" and "pillar" was assumed to be the Great Pyramid -- often referred to as THE BIBLE IN STONE.

It was conjectured that every passage and chamber therein silently but eloquently symbolized in size, length, structure, etc., the whole wonderful plan of God from the heaven blest garden in Eden down to the times of the restitution of all things when every enemy should be destroyed and God would be All-in-all. Those who studied the Pyramid from that standpoint were able to locate all the major events of history there -- Creation was there, Calvary was there, the Reformation was there, the return of Christ was there, and the Millennial Age. It was all laid out neatly and precisely in the measurements, passages, chambers, and symbolism of the Great Pyramid! And, since the measurements from certain well-established points to another, for instance, from Calvary to the Reformation, were all quite precise, it followed that the measurements from the Reformation to the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (and hence, the second coming of Christ) were *conclusive*. The testimony of the Great Pyramid showed irrefutably that Christ would return in 1914!

When Christ didn't make the anticipated appearance in 1914, the theory was later revised by Dr. Adam Rutherford of England. According to Rutherford's careful calculations, the entrance into the King's Chamber, typifying the beginning of the Millennial Age, would be reached on August 20, 1953. With 95% of the chronology of the passage system of the Great Pyramid supposedly already verified by history, the attention of thousands was focused upon August 20, 1953. Their expectancy was that the events of that day would demonstrate beyond question that their understanding of the purport of the Great Pyramid revelation was correct. In the summer of 1953 thousands of followers began to anticipate the development of spectacular events to climax, perhaps, with the visible appearance of Jesus, on the Great Pyramid dating of August 20. They hoped that what would occur would then firmly establish their belief in the reliability of the prophecy. But the day came and with it the failure of the hoped-for developments. Jesus didn't show up! The Millennium didn't begin! Armageddon didn't break out! NOTHING HAPPENED!

Again, the system was *revised!* According to Rutherford the "mistake" that had been made in his reckonings was "discovered" and duly "corrected." A new date was set: 1978. This date was bolstered by a study of the "seven times" of Israel's judgment, Daniel's 2,300 day/years, the 1,260 day/years of John's vision in the book of Revelation -- all of which, according to Rutherford's reckonings, ended in 1978-79. You see, beloved, everyone was using the *very same system* of deciphering the time prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation -- but each used a different **starting point!** Even if this application of these time prophecies is correct, the fact remains that unless one can be absolutely *certain* of the exact beginning point of any of them he will never wind up at the right ending point! And that does make a difference, doesn't it? The "88 Reasons why Jesus Will Come In 1988" delusion used the very same type of chronological scheme -- altered to fit their own agenda, of course. It caused hysteria and chaos all over the nation and around the world. But Jesus didn't return in 1988, either!

In July of 1978, I published an article in which I admonished the Lord's precious people, "Others are proclaiming that the Millennium will begin in 1978-79 according to the revelation of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. I must speak a word against that! I have no fear in offering to buy all your Pyramidology books for 1 cent each in 1980. I'll even pay the postage! Beloved brethren, I have no desire to be cynical about these things, but the Spirit of the Lord would have His chosen ones to get their eyes off of dates, pyramids, computers, newspaper headlines, world leaders, world events, conspiracies, supposed antichrists, beast governments, banking and economic systems, and all the rest of the ten-cent side shows which would capture the minds of those apprehended to be sons of the Most High. How much more profitably will our time and meditations be spent in LOOKING UNTO HIM. A correct understanding of all the above mentioned things (and most saints' understanding of them is **not correct!**) can never add one inch to our spiritual stature nor bring us to perfection in Christ. The finishing touches on God's great Building, His House of Sons, are not yet complete. **Let your**

loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves LIKE UNTO MEN THAT WAIT FOR THEIR LORD' (Lk. 12:35-36). Look unto HIM! That is the only act you can perform in this hour that will in any way hasten the Day of manifestation" -- end quote.

The error of these delusions is manifest in their repeated failure. I am sure that most of my readers remember the great 1982 Planetary Alignment hype. According to certain Fundamentalist and Charismatic preachers the "rapture" was going to take place on September 6, 1975. The "logic" for this was that in 1982 *all* of the nine planets of our solar system would be perfectly aligned on the same side of the sun. Two scientists, writing in Newsweek magazine, September 16, 1974, theorized about the catastrophic effect of this planetary alignment on the upper part of the atmosphere caused by the magnetic pull of this line-up of the planets on the sun, creating an increase in the magnetic activity on the sun with huge storms of sunspots and solar flares, some spreading over fifty million miles. These would greatly disrupt weather patterns around the world by sharply altering wind directions. This in turn would give our rotating planet a jolt large enough to trigger many major earthquakes in those areas of the world under severe geological strain. It was expected that the earthquakes around 1982 could destroy large populations of the earth. Some even theorized that the sun would "nova" in which case the earth would be completely burned to a cinder!

Therefore, reasoned certain preachers and teachers, since the earth would be purged by fire in 1982 (sounds like William Miller, doesn't it!), the Great Tribulation must precede that event by seven years, necessitating a beginning in 1975. Furthermore, since Jesus must come, according to their imaginings, *before* the Tribulation; and considering that He would come with the sound of a trumpet, and at the "last trump," it was concluded that He would split the eastern sky on the date of the FEAST OF TRUMPETS in the year 1975 -- precisely on September 6! I arrived in Big Spring, Texas on the afternoon of September 5, and found a large number of Charismatic brethren weeping, wailing, and repenting in preparation for the rapture the following day. It fell my lot to declare to the brethren assembled in the meeting where I was speaking that night that nothing, *absolutely nothing*, would happen the next day! Of course, Jesus didn't come on September 6, 1975 and seven years afterward the long-awaited planetary alignment turned out to be a non-event! The mischief done by these well-meaning men is all the greater when they coolly fix a fresh date when the march of time has utterly falsified their previous chronological predictions. **It is still a very adulterous generation that seeks after a sign.**

Let me briefly insert a partial list of date setters. These speculators set themselves up above the knowledge of God, futilely attempting to date events about which they know nothing by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, in fact, dates which the Holy Spirit Himself has chosen not to reveal! It is amazing how many Christians, including many in this word of sonship and the kingdom, fall for this spectacle of scholastic manipulation! Here are only *some* of those who throughout church history have set dates for the coming of Christ, the beginning of the Millennium, or the end of the world. First the name, followed by the date they predicted.

Tichonius 381 Irvingites of England 1864  
Hippolytus and Lactanius 500 Hans Wood 1880  
Joachim of Floris 1260 Mother Shipton 1881  
Michael Stiefel 1533 Joanna Southcott 1884  
Isaac Newton 1715 Charles T. Russell 1914  
William Whiston 1734 Edward D. Griffin 1921  
Joann Albrecht Bengel 1836 Judge Rutherford 1925  
William Miller 1834 William Branham 1977  
Joseph Wolff 1847 Adam Rutherford 1953, 1978  
Philo Britannicus 1849 Edgar Whisenat 1988

You may smile to yourself at the errors and mistakes of others, but I will incur the wrath of many well-meaning people when I declare that not a few of these chronological prognosticators are in the sonship and kingdom message, right in the midst of those sincere saints pressing on into the fullness of God. One of the fads recently occupying the attention of some has to do with JUBILEE CYCLES. One of the several theories is that there would be 40 Jubilees from A.D. 33 (Pentecost) that effectually bring us to the end of the church age. The Jubilee came every fiftieth year in Israel and forty Jubilees would be reckoned as 40 times 49 years (the 50th

being the Jubilee). This would add up to 1960 years from Pentecost to the end of the church age. By adding 33 to 1960 we are brought to the year 1993. This theory was concocted *before* 1993, and some were expecting the manifestation of the sons of God, or at least some great move in that direction, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in that year. Since there was no obvious outward change in the spiritual order on that date, it has now been determined that the church age, or Pentecostal age, is typified by king Saul of old. Saul represents flesh, and the Feast of Pentecost had *leaven*, which is construed to represent the fleshly ministry of the church systems -- the church under carnal man's control. Following the death of Saul, there was a seven year period before David was crowned king of Israel. David represents the ministry of the manifested sons of God. According to these calculations, at the end of the 40 Jubilees allotted to the church age, in a spiritual sense the carnal church systems die, or come to their end, in 1993. But the seven year lull between the death of Saul and the reign of David brings us to the year 2000. It is believed that David was crowned king in November. The *inference is* that in November of the year 2000 some great change is to take place -- possibly the manifestation of the sons of God! (This message is being written prior to November, 2000 in order to get it to the printer and ready to be mailed early in the year 2001).

The question follows -- by what **authority** does one determine that there are 40 Jubilees from the day of Pentecost to the close of the age? Where does the Bible reveal such a scheme? And how does one then reach the conclusion that the years between Saul's and David's reigns are to be applied to the years here at the end of the age: 1993-2000? The folly of such methods should be obvious! By playing with numbers, chronologies, types, dates, etc., one can take nearly any year from the time of Christ until now and make it "seem" significant. All kinds of seemingly unique and interesting things can be done with numbers, times, and types -- having nothing whatever to do with *inspiration or revelation*.

Look at the following predictions made by a brother. "We may see other events occur even before the end of 1999. December 29 seems to stand out as a potential date for something, since this is 2000 years from the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem. It is also 1260 days from July 16, 1996, when we began our Red Dragon wars. I had thought the 1260 days ended on January 1, 2000, but I made a mistake in calculation. It actually ends on December 29, 1999. This puts that date in a whole new perspective, since it is the 2000th anniversary of the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem. Others also say that they have had some revelation about this date that it is a time of judgment. By the time you receive this letter, we should know one way or another." Let the heart of every faithful son of God be assured of this -- that is *not* divine revelation, it is merely playing silly *numbers games* with the Word of God! We are living in a day when men without any true revelation from God are pawning off ridiculous carnal-minded calculations and intellectual tomfoolery as "end-time truth."

Those who promote these senseless "numbers games" usually use terminology like, "if our chronology is correct," "whether this proves out or not remains to be seen," "could this possibly indicate?" and numerous other carnal-minded, wishy-washy *admissions* that what they are writing is NOT A REVELATION FROM THE LORD but mere human speculations. This is not the foundation on which TRUTH is built! Notice the following expressions in the one short paragraph quoted above: "We *may see*...December 29 *seems* to stand out...I *had thought*...but I *made a mistake*...by the time you receive this...we *should know one way or the other*"!

One brother in the Kingdom message who has repeatedly, over many years, predicted dates for this and for that event, including the coming of the Lord, and has *missed every time*, wrote the following acknowledgment: "Now swiftly I shall set before you the proof that our Lord's return is immediately at hand; yet I cannot say that I *know* (with absolute and positive knowledge). It is but the **human mind** dealing with the Infinite; wherefore, unless the conceit be too great, we will recognize the possibility of error. Unless the Lord Himself were to appear and speak to a person, stating clearly the year, month, and the day and hour that He would return, we are not justified to use the word 'know'. But when we have sufficiently studied His Word, and weighed the massive evidence which concurs that 'these are the days', then we can certainly say that we know (are aware) that the time IS NOW. In fact, we can be far more specific by narrowing down the 'now' to the limited era of an odd few years; in fact the year and day might even be pinpointed!" If you analyze what this brother is saying, he is contending that it is possible for the *human mind* to *figure out* and *pinpoint with precision* the timing of events that the Lord Himself has chosen *not to reveal*! Obviously this man "knows" **nothing** because all his

projections are based on calculations made by natural understanding -- the carnal mind! The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither *can* he know them, for they are *spiritually discerned*.

Another sign of the carnality of such schemes is that they are constantly being "revised." When the prophesied dates come and go uneventfully, they then "discover" the error in their calculations and "correct" them. Hogwash! The Holy Spirit does not make mistakes. The carnal mind makes mistakes. I have made mistakes. I even expressed once that I felt the sons might be manifested within a certain decade, but I am not revising that, for it was a mistake and I have learned my own lesson from it. But some brethren never learn! They continually spew out date after date, none of which amounts to a hill of beans, and mysteriously God's precious little gullible people never seem to learn that they are being conned, for they get all excited over every new prediction. When God speaks, His word does not have to be corrected! And when we speak by the Holy Ghost our words do not need to be corrected, either. It's just as simple as that!

All predictions based on types, times, cycles, and chronologies will fail. You can put that down in your little black book. It would seem that all the mistakes of the past would provide a warning, but the inquisitiveness of carnal minds never gives up. **INQUIRING CARNAL MINDS WANT TO KNOW!** And let me assure you -- God will not dignify any of the foolish dates and predictions of men by doing His strange and wonderful work at that particular time! Here me now, and believe me later -- if you are assembled some year at the Feast of Tabernacles expecting the sons to be manifested at that time because *man* has determined from some *study* of types, cycles, times, or chronologies that this is the year it will happen, you can rest assured that **nothing** supernatural or divine will transpire and you will leave your gathering disappointed. Oh, how gullible we still are! Don't get carried away, beloved, with teachers who tickle your ears with some strange "key," some obscure "clue," some magic "formula," some alleged "cycle," or some special "understanding" of times, etc. The difference between spiritual truth and fiction is just this -- if it can be "figured out" with the **natural mind** it is fiction, not truth. The deep things of God are **revealed by the Spirit** and **discerned by the Spirit**, not intellectually by pouring over charts, time prophecies, historical data, world events, cycles or chronologies.

Now -- another flaw of the scheme of "figuring out" prophetic dates through the study of those things just mentioned is that our present calendar is not dependable for such usage. In fact, the calendars are so messed up that there is absolutely no way to accurately ascertain the correct date for *anything* -- not even the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ! The proof of this is that the men who have done scholarly studies on the birth of Jesus all arrive at different conclusions! In the spring of 1999 a brother sent me his article exposing the fallacy of date-setting based on man-made calendars. I concurred then with what this brother wrote, and I still agree today.

Let me quote a portion of what this brother shared. "Our God in His marvelous creation of the heavens and the earth provided mankind with the means to determine times and seasons and days and years. 'Then God said, **Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years'** (**Gen. 1:14**). This marvelous system of days and years has been beneficial to man down through the ages by the making of solar and lunar calendars. The lunar calendar, based on the phases of the moon, goes back to the beginning of history. Consisting of twelve lunar months, with periodic adjustments, it continues in use throughout many parts of the world. The children of Israel were using the lunar calendar in Egypt, like their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but when the time for their exodus out of Egypt came and the night of the Passover took place, God gave Israel new meaning and new reckoning dates for their calendar. The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, '**This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of the year'** (**Ex. 12:1-2**, NIV). More instruction followed; on the tenth day of that month each household was to set aside a (Passover) lamb; it was to be kept until the fourteenth day of the month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel was to kill the lamb, take the blood and strike it on the two side posts and also the upper door posts of the house. Thus the house was prepared and spared from death. According to the lunar calendar, that night would be a full moon. One can only marvel at the planning of God, giving them moonlight for travel during the next several nights, enabling the exodus of probably two million people on foot, with all their cattle.

"Many centuries later, during the time of Roman domination in the known world, history tells us that Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. issued a solar calendar that was based on a 365 day year. The names of the months in the

Julian calendar are still used in our present calendar. As many centuries went by, the Julian calendar continued in use and it was not till 1582 that Pope Gregory XIII replaced it with a revised calendar of 365 days with a 366 day year (leap year) every four years, each year beginning January 1, and ending the following December 31. The changes included the designating of many of the Roman Church's religious observances and holidays which still affect our lives. It is called the Gregorian calendar and is probably the most commonly used today for international datelines, international trade and record keeping. It is the same calendar that hangs in your kitchen, marked with your schedules and appointments.

"When this present year (1999) runs out these calendars will read year 2000 which is really a non-event, just another New Year's day, but the news media is carrying stories of how millennium fever is showing up in many places. One article stated that even in Christian circles individuals and house holds take this change very seriously. Two men said they have been stockpiling goods for the past year: a gas-powered generator, a solar-powered lamp, six-gallon pails of grain, 55 gallon drums of water, canned goods and extra clothes. Others told of digging their own back-yard wells. In addition to the interviews a poll showed that among those who take the Bible literally, 40% believed that the new millennium is tied to Christ's return. Among those who are not Biblical literalists, only 18% said so.

"This leaflet is written in April of 1999 with the intent of showing that the new millennium and the transition from one century to the next is a man-made situation and our God with His plans and purposes is not involved. He will continue to flow out to this world with His grace just as He has done for almost two millenniums. Our man-made calendars, useful as they are, have no connection to any Biblical prophecy or coming event. On December 31 of 1999 the earth will continue to rotate and at midnight the Gregorian calendar will change to January 1, 2000.

"One other matter of concern to many people is the man-made Y2K computer problem that could possibly cause some isolated disruptions in older computers. Those problems, made by men, will be worked out by men. The days and years of time will continue to roll by until the day comes, known only to God, when He will intervene in the affairs of men and assume His authority in this world. God has His own calendar...when God intervenes, the times and seasons of HIS CALENDAR will bring great blessing to this world, changing every individual and all life upon this earth...we are encouraged by the Lord to pray for His Kingdom to come" -- David R. Hetteema. And let me hastily add -- GOD'S CALENDAR is simply that which HE REVEALS TO HIS PEOPLE **BY THE SPIRIT!** That is how we know the times and seasons, that is how we gain enlightenment about what God is going to do -- God reveals His plans and purposes by revelation of the Holy Ghost! If you don't have a word from God, my friend, then stay out of the date-setting business. The hour is too late, and God's purposes too serious, to be playing games. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the **Spirit saith** to the churches!"

## THE GLOOM AND DOOM FOLLY

A "gloom and doom" interpretation of history and world events sees culture and history descending into a diabolical abyss in which all of society degenerates until the Antichrist takes over and the Lord has to come back to save what is left of the church. The "gloom and doomers" keep track of every famine and earthquake, view the enemies of our nation, and even our own politicians, as involved in dark and sinister conspiracies for our destruction and the overthrow of God, watch every planetary lineup and extra-terrestrial activity, observe every new world leader to see if he might be the Antichrist, and expect communism, the new age movement, or a one-world government to take over any day. Gloom and doom sees the coming of the Lord and the manifestation of His Kingdom in relation to a series of "end-time" cataclysmic events and over-whelming evil, rather than a progressive new stage of God's intensified dealings with humanity. The gloom and doomers think that when things get **bad enough** -- God will be forced to step in and **do something!**

No matter what you have been hearing about the dark and dreadful things to come upon the earth, let me tell you something about the doomsday prophecies that keep coming year after year and decade after decade. Sherlock Holmes once solved a famous murder case by noticing what *did not* happen. He observed that the victim's dog did not bark on the night of the crime. Therefore the dog -- and hence the victim -- must have known the assailant. The rest was easy. So it is in the events of the end time. What *hasn't* happened -- for

instance, a great Doomsday Crash mindlessly foretold by the parrots of pessimism year after year -- has tremendous significance by its very absence! Despite all the prophets of gloom and doom the communists have not taken over, America has not been invaded, California has not fallen into the ocean, the economy has not crashed, the government has not declared marshal law, the churches have not been closed, our money has not been confiscated, our old money was not called in when the new money was printed, Clinton was not our last president, the Antichrist (as people think of him) is nowhere to be seen, we have not been laser-tattooed with 666 on the forehead, Y2K went the way of all flesh and the folks who fled to remote areas with their generators, out-houses, guns, and stockpiles of food had plenty to eat for a while before creeping back into civilization -- and the sons of God continue to be processed and matured for the Day of Unveiling! **Only the word of the Lord has stood!** All the false prophets have been proven liars, and God alone is true! In my files over the past twenty years or so, I have purposely saved booklets and papers in which people have set dates for devastating tidal waves, killer earthquakes, the collapse of the money system, the fall of America, and a host of other ominous events, which I refer to from time to time. With the passing of time, their falseness is evident -- not one single prophecy of gloom and doom has come to pass! Ah, Sherlock Holmes, what is *missing is significant!*

All these doomsday apocalyptic pictures of the end of the age, the antichrist, the great tribulation, etc., are based upon carnal-minded interpretations of certain prophecies in the Bible, have nothing whatever to do with the unfolding of the Kingdom of God on earth, are completely irrelevant to God's purposes for this hour, and simply do not enter into the equation at all. They are founded upon a confusion of thought -- a failure to understand the scriptures *by the Spirit*. The expositors take totally unrelated and disconnected passages from different parts of the Bible, and weave them together into an elaborate tapestry which is pure fiction. The scriptures that are put together to *prove* the end-time events of the rapture, the antichrist, the great tribulation, the seven year covenant with the Jews, the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, the revived Roman empire, one world government, and all the other imagined happenings at the end of the age -- when understood by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, these concepts make no more spiritual sense than the moronic letter I read one time that goes like this:

Dear So and So, I set down pencil in hand to typewrite you a letter (excuse the pen). I don't live where I lived before. I moved to where I live now. When you come to see me, ask anyone where I live, because no one knows. I'm so sorry we're so far together, I wish we were never apart. We are having more weather this year than last year. I started to Fulton to see you last week and I saw a sign that said, "This takes you to Fulton." So I got on the sign and set there for three hours and the crazy thing never moved. I mailed you an overcoat, but took off the buttons to make it lighter (those in the pockets). If you don't get this letter let me know and I'll mail it to you. I would have sent you the \$600.00 I owe you, but I didn't think of it until after I had sealed this letter. Enclosed you will find a picture, but for fear it would get lost, I took it out.  
Yours very truly,

## THE LITTLE MORON

That letter, my friend, makes absolutely as much *common sense* as most preachers' prophetic teaching makes *spiritual sense!* If you escape this confusion and refuse to be moved by the fleshly sensationalism of uninspired literalistic prophetic interpretations of men, then you have taken the first step into the revelation of the Kingdom of God!

Let me quote a passage, which I am sure you have heard as descriptive of our times and the signs of the end of the age. "Our earth is degenerate in these latter days; there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents; every man wants to write a book, and the end of the world is evidently approaching." What a sad commentary of the times! But *what times?* These words are inscribed on a tablet in a museum in Constantinople, Turkey. They were written 2,800 years *before Christ* -- and yet it sounds so modern! Here's another: "Our youths love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority -- they show disrespect for their elders, and love to chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when their elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up food, and tyrannize teachers." This was written by the philosopher Socrates in 400 B.C.!

Today we pick up a newspaper and read of all these things happening, so we are assured that the prophecies of the Bible are being fulfilled, and we conclude that it must be about THE END -- based on *external* evidence. "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." "In the last days perilous times shall come..." The doom-casters quote every verse that speaks of negative conditions in the *outer world*, yet they have not the foggiest notion of the awesome *inward work* of God in His sons to bring forth a NEW ORDER IN CHRIST. They know what the world is doing, but have no idea of what GOD IS DOING! They must look to the world around for the signs of the end of the age. They must see and hear in the fleshly realm around them with their natural eyes and ears, and with the understanding of the carnal mind. They can understand outer, natural, earthly, dark things, but cannot hear and see in the Spirit and by the Spirit. They lack spiritual vision and understanding. But God's elect are not spiritually blind! They are not dependent upon what the eye sees and the ear hears and the carnal mind comprehends. The Lord would not have chosen us if we were stuck in that realm! He has given us His faith, vision, and understanding. Now we live by His faith, we hear truth by the voice of His Spirit, we see with spiritual eyes enlightened by Him, and we understand with the mind of Christ.

There are many who feel that every earth-shaking event that shocks the public must be a sign of the "end-time," and we must make certain that we are prepared for the "doom day" which is upon us. Millions of Christians suffer from a malady called the "Doomsday Syndrome." They constantly fear what the future holds. Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear some doomsday disciple pronouncing imminent judgment and damnation. Babylon's preachers and teachers continually have a hey-day with sensational world events, trying to make them fit the fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies, speculating about their meaning, projecting, predicting, and even prophesying about their outcome, and never apologizing for all their past mistakes and erroneous conclusions. Every year a new super-disaster hoax is promoted among gullible Christians.

To the above brother Paul Mueller adds this timely testimony: "*Our Lord has said, 'The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness'* (Mat. 6:22-23). We are entering a new age of increased Light. A new day has begun in the world! It is a new day of the Light and glory of Christ in a greater measure. This new kingdom Day is a Day when the darkness is being dispelled by the Light of Christ. And all who are awake and aware are keeping their single, spiritual eye focused on Christ and the wonderful things He is now doing in all the world as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. No longer do we see only the negative things taking place in the world. Now we see that Christ is reigning, and things are changing because of His increased dominion in our lives and in the world around us. Messages of doom, gloom and darkness cannot possibly bring anyone to sonship fulfilled.

"In this new Day the Lord is changing our spiritual diets! He is giving us the type of messages that are necessary to our spiritual growth, messages that will bring about our change. The Lord's chosen elect must have God's pure word that gives them hope! Yesterday's messages of doom, gloom and darkness will only discourage and defeat us. To read and assimilate the negative stories coming from the news media, or even from the writings of some current 'come-outers,' will keep us in defeat and cannot help but adversely affect both our minds and our bodies.

"To read and speak of war, lawlessness, immorality, violence, tribulation, distress of nations, and all the other ills of the world, only fills us with darkness. And darkness only begets more darkness within us! We need a single eye in this great Day that sees only the Lord and His great glory. **We must feast on the royal food of the kingdom!** We must feed on food that begets Light within us. We must feast on Christ to the full! Let nothing turn your single eye away from Him. There are those who would saturate your mind and wrap it in the darkness of man and his shadowy world. But this will only impede your spiritual growth! The wise will keep their minds centered on Christ and the positive, kingdom work He is now doing in this great Day. This indeed is the way to sonship! This is the path to the throne of God! And this is the route that leads to the fullness of the Life of Christ and the glory of the kingdom of God!" I was once among those who believed the negative predictions of man. But I must confess, something wonderful has happened to me! I spent a lot of my early life and ministry with an "apocalyptic mentality." By apocalyptic I mean that mentality that is always looking for the end of the age with great cataclysmic upheavals and tremendous earth-shaking events -- kingdoms falling, nuclear bombs exploding, economies crashing, and all those violent, catastrophic happenings that are supposed to take place in the world. I was looking for that. In 1964 I believed the issue was God and

Goldwater, and I just felt that if Goldwater didn't win the election, brother, this country was down the tube, the antichrist would rise up in the earth, and we would be in great tribulation. We watched the stock market, because we knew if it crashed, the jig was really up! We were concerned about the Russians, the Chinese, the Illuminati, and a thousand other things.

God delivered me from that apocalyptic mentality! It takes the same power of God to deliver one from that spirit as it takes to deliver one from any other demon. You see, every nation of earth has experienced economic collapse, including ours. Every nation has had war and destruction. All the saints of God from time immemorial have suffered persecution. "*All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*" (II Tim. 3:12). Two thousand years ago the apostle John wrote, "Even now there are *many antichrists*." All these things have been happening out there in that external world for ages, but let me tell you, it has nothing whatever to do with the Kingdom of God. NOTHING! None of those things will herald the Kingdom or bring the Kingdom. Only the nature of the Father formed in His elect, only the full measure of the stature of Christ found in God's New Creation Man, only the power of God upon His people, only the glory of God in His sons, will signal the hour of transition into the greater glory of His incorruptible and all-conquering Kingdom of God!

The mind of Christ is now being imparted to God's elect in greater fullness. By the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the glorious mind of Christ we are beginning to see all things as they really are. We are now seeing new things, a new heaven and a new earth. This knowledge and vision come not by any outward observation, but by the mighty working of God in our lives. This is a marvelous transition for me and for the body of Christ, as I trust it is the reality of all who read these lines, who are moving on in God. The hope and promise and power and glory of the Kingdom of God burn more brightly in my spirit today than at any time in the past. I rejoice that this is the DAY of manifestation when Christ and His body shall see the Kingdom triumph and reign over the nations; bringing Life, Light, Love and Peace to all mankind. This is the Present Truth. This is what the Spirit IS SAYING to the overcomers in this great hour! Hallelujah! Great and glorious things are at hand!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 51**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-ONE**

**THE GREAT IMAGE**  
**FIRST KINGDOM OF GOLD**  
**SECOND KINGDOM OF SILVER**  
**THIRD KINGDOM OF BRASS**  
**FOURTH KINGDOM OF IRON**  
**TEN KINGDOMS EMERGE**  
**REVIVAL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE?**  
**THEY SHALL CLEAVE TO ONE ANOTHER**  
**CHARLEMAGNE TRIES IT**  
**LOUIS IXV TRIES IT**  
**NAPOLEON TRIES IT**  
**KAISER WILHELM TRIES IT**  
**HITLER TRIES IT**

For those longing for the coming of the Kingdom of God upon the nations of earth, today's march of history-making events has special interest. Millenniums ago ancient prophets saw our times, prophesied the rise and fall of world empires, revealed the frantic efforts for global peace and a new world order in the last days, and finally outlined clearly and unmistakably the last great world empire of all. The Spirit of God has revealed the course of human history today. He shows the finale of the efforts made by mortal men to resolve their differences and live peaceably, every man beneath his own fig tree and by his own vineyard.

In the days of Daniel the prophet, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a dream in the night. He awoke disturbed, perplexed. "Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dream. So they came and stood before the king" (**Dan. 2:2**). The king shared with them his problem. He was certain the dream he had had was a significant one. But now he could not remember any of it! So he called upon the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell him the dream and to give him the interpretation of it. It was common practice for these men to give the king fanciful, highly colored interpretations of his dreams. They were usually twisted to please the king and build his ego. But now there could be no guessing! They were called upon to not only *interpret* the dream but to *provide* the dream! They were left speechless. They pled with the king to at least tell them the dream; then they would give the interpretation. But try as he might, the king was unable to remember his dream. In wrath the king ordered their execution.

Numbered among the wise men in Babylon was Daniel. He, along with others, had been taken into captivity when Nebuchadnezzar invaded and destroyed Jerusalem. The first he knew of the king's disturbance -- and drastic action -- was when Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, came to take him to the place of execution with the rest of the wise men. The record states: "And Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon: he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known unto Daniel. Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven" (**Dan. 2:14-19**).

You see, God has promised "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (**Amos 3:7**). God will not leave His people in darkness about the future. God is in control! In the annals of human history the rise and fall of empires *appear* to be dependent on the will and power of man. But by the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through

all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the workings of the great God, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.

King Nebuchadnezzar's question to Daniel was to the point: "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and the interpretation of it?" Daniel answered the king, "The secret that the king has demanded neither the wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor astrologers can show the king; but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to king Nebuchadnezzar what it is that shall be in the latter days -- at the end of the days. Your dream and the visions of your bed are these..." (Dan. 2:26-28, Amplified). And then came the dream, one of the most dramatic revelations of all history, in which God outlined the rise and fall of global empires, moved beyond to our day with its struggles for peace and safety among the great powers, on to the setting up of earth's last great world empire. The dream accurately portrayed the events now transpiring before our very eyes. "God...has made known to king Nebuchadnezzar **what it is that shall be in the latter days...**"

## THE GREAT IMAGE

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king" (Dan. 2:31-36).

Now it all came back to Nebuchadnezzar. This, indeed, was the dream he had dreamed in the night! And Daniel informed the king concerning the significance of the dream: "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that revealeth secrets **MAKETH KNOWN TO THEE WHAT SHALL COME TO PASS**" (Dan. 2:29). This was a dream whose interpretation was to reveal the FUTURE. Painted dramatically, unforgettably, unmistakably, was a precise outline of world history -- the rise and fall of world empires and the exact events which would lead to the establishment of the last great empire of all.

## FIRST KINGDOM OF GOLD

With what interest and astonishment must the king have listened as Daniel began his interpretation of the dream and informed the king that his own kingdom was the golden head of that magnificent image. Gold, the king of metals, represented the Babylonian empire. Daniel informed the king that the God of heaven had given him his kingdom, and made him ruler over all. The character of the Babylonian empire is indicated by the head of gold. It was indeed the golden kingdom of a golden age! A natural center of trade and commerce, Babylon was immensely wealthy. Site of the ill-fated effort of Nimrod to erect the tower of Babel centuries before, it boasted one of the seven wonders of the world, the hanging gardens, which tradition says Nebuchadnezzar built to console his Median wife who missed the mountains of her homeland. The city of Babylon itself was another and still mightier wonder which there is neither time nor space in this message to recount. There, with the whole world prostrate at her feet, a queen in peerless grandeur, drawing from the pen of inspiration itself this glowing title, "The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of Chaldees' excellency," stood this magnificent city, fit capital of that great world kingdom which was represented by the golden head of this great historic image.

## SECOND KINGDOM OF SILVER

The Babylonian empire was not to stand forever. It was to give way to another. Interpreting the dream, Daniel added: "And after thee shall arise another kingdom *inferior* to thee" (Dan. 2:39). The breast and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian empire (538-331 B.C.). Fulfilling a word of the Lord (see Isaiah 45:1), Cyrus damned up the river Euphrates flowing through Babylon, marched his armies beneath the two-leafed gates, and through this stratagem overthrew the kingdom of Babylon. Across the banqueting hall of Belshazzar, the

king of Babylon at that time, appeared the dreadful words: "Mene, mene, tekal, upharsin," ("thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting"). Before the night was over, blood flowed in the streets as Belshazzar and his thousand lords perished at the hands of the Medo-Persian armies. Medo-Persia, inferior to Babylon in some ways, was nonetheless a great empire. The king had two capitals, one at Persepolis and the other at Susa. The one he occupied in summer, the other in winter. Medo-Persia had the first organized mail system. While it did not launch the Pony Express, it did have the Dromedary Express -- camels carrying messages throughout the empire. Its great armies are said to have numbered in the millions.

### THIRD KINGDOM OF BRASS

Great as was the Medo-Persian empire, it too, was to topple. Daniel declared: "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and *another third kingdom* of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:39). Alexander the Great assumed the leadership of the Grecian armies at the age of 20, and marched with lightning rapidity to conquer the then-known world by the time he was 33. From the beginning of his military career he was a marked man -- a man of destiny. Ambassadors came to Alexander almost from all parts of the world: some to congratulate his victories, others to tender his crowns, others to make leagues and alliances with him. However, Alexander could conquer cities but not his own spirit. With contemptible arrogance, he claimed for himself divine honors. He gave up conquered cities, freely and unprovoked, to the mercy of his bloodthirsty and licentious soldiers. He often murdered his friends and favorites in his drunken frenzies. He encouraged such excessive drinking among his followers that on one occasion twenty of them died as the result of their carousal. Finally, having sat through one long drinking spree, he was immediately invited to another, when, after drinking to each of the twenty guests present, he drank twice, history records, incredible as it may seem, the full Herculean cup containing six of our quarts. He was seized with a violent fever and died eleven days later while he yet stood only at the threshold of his life and career -- for he was only 33 years old! His kingdom was divided among his four generals.

### FOURTH KINGDOM OF IRON

What kingdom succeeded Greece as the empire of the world? Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar: "**And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: foreasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise" (Dan. 2:40).** One kingdom did this and only one. Rome. Rome conquered Greece; it subdued all things; like iron, it broke in pieces and bruised. Rome -- everywhere victorious! Rome with its universal language, Latin; its universal highway system, of which the Appian Way is a surviving example; Rome with its invincible armies moving undefeated to the outposts of the globe. In A.D. 312 Rome experienced a radical change. In that year, Rome became so badly divided that Diocletian abdicated as emperor. The two most likely successors were the general Constantine who was in the West, and the general Maxentius who was in Rome. Constantine rounded up his loyal followers and marched into the capital to battle Maxentius for the throne. When Constantine approached Rome he found that he was greatly outnumbered by Maxentius. That night at a bridge Constantine had a dream. He was shown a sign which was the combination of the Greek letters Chi and Rho. These are the first two letters of the name "Christ" in Greek. These letters had been used as a symbol or logo by the Christians in Greece. In Constantine's dream, the Latin words, "*Hoc signo victor eris*" appeared beneath the Greek logo. These words mean, "By this sign conquer." At dawn, Constantine ordered the logo to be painted on every soldier's shield, and the soldiers were encouraged, "By this sign, you will be victorious!" Against overwhelming odds and against a very strong defense by Maxentius, the army of Constantine was victorious at one of the world's greatest battles, the Battle of Melvian Bridge. In gratitude, he caused Christianity to emerge as the state religion. Constantine moved his imperial capital to Constantinople, thus dividing the kingdom into two parts, East and West. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image with the two legs of iron points to this period when ancient Rome was divided into two segments, with government at both. Rome's years of power were from 168 B.C. to A.D. 476.

A logical deduction would be that after Rome *another* world empire would emerge. Not so!

### TEN KINGDOMS EMERGE

It should be noted that at first the fourth kingdom is described with two legs which are unqualifiedly as strong as iron. This was the symbol of its strength, by which it has been likened in history to a mighty colossus bestriding the nations, conquering everything, and giving laws to the world. But this was not to continue. Daniel went on to say: "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom SHALL BE DIVIDED; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, inasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom SHALL BE PARTLY STRONG AND PARTLY BROKEN" (Dan. 2:41-42). The decline and fall of the Roman empire was a gradual thing. Luxury, vice, an almost total moral breakdown, disintegration of the family -- it culminated in A.D. 476 when the barbarian hordes overthrew the Roman Empire.

Ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes of the image, emerged. The ten peoples which were the instruments in fragmenting the empire were the Alamanni, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. The kingdom was indeed divided! These barbarian peoples not only overran the Roman world, but planted themselves within the territory of the empire and thus *became* the empire! The connection between these and the modern nations of Europe is clearly discernible in such names as England, Burgundy, Lombardy, France, etc. These are the roots of the leading nations of Europe today! The geography of Europe is determined by the ethnic identities of these ten peoples! A study of the history of the last days of Rome shows that the empire did not really "fall." It has been suggested that its political and judicial system, religion, culture, and militarism continue to exist in Europe and many countries of the new world having European roots. In reality, the ancient empire only *fragmented*.

## REVIVAL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE?

The earth was *never again* to see the cohesive strength of the Roman empire welded into the superstructure of one great World Empire. For Daniel, in one of the most significant prophecies of all time, declared: "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they (the ten toes) shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with miry clay" (Dan. 2:43). It is important that we take more than a mere casual perusal of these words of the prophet, for in them is contained the KEY to, and UNDERSTANDING of, the world's history from the time of ancient Rome all the way down to, and including, events that shall unfold in this our day.

Many are proclaiming a "revival" of the Roman Empire here at the end of the age under the Antichrist. Some speak of a "One World Beast Government" which they believe to be even now arising in the earth. Preachers declare to us that the European Common Market will give birth to a political alliance in the United States of Europe that is to be the coming last great "revived" Roman Empire through which the Antichrist, or the beast, shall rule the world and universally enforce the "mark of the beast." Nearly everyone is looking for a world government under the beast to arise out of a UNITED EUROPE. And right here, before going any further, I want to speak a word against that. I will say plainly that IT SHALL NOT COME TO PASS. Now, I do not say there will not be a United States of Europe or some kind of political alliance in Europe. There has been before. If there is, it will not last, and should it come, **it will not be a World Empire nor a World Government.** It will not be the beast government nor the government of Antichrist. That is what I am saying.

One brother said in a meeting with us in 1971 that the "Beast Government" would arise in the earth and take over the United States within three or four years. And for many years until his death he continued preaching and proclaiming that the beast government would rise up and take over the world within three or four years. One wonders just when "three or four years" will end!

One of the problems today is that men read too much trash. People read all kinds of politically oriented literature telling about the Illuminati, the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, conspiracy theories about the Rothschilds, Rockefellers and others who control great financial empires and international money systems, much of which is either spurious or misinterpreted or misapplied. Many take this kind of information and try to harmonize it with what they imagine to be the prophecies of Daniel or the Revelation and come up with all kinds of speculations that they embrace as revelations about so-called "end time events." Many years ago the Spirit spoke to me that all those kinds of "revelations" are false because, in reality, they are NO REVELATION AT ALL! At best, they are merely carnal unions of flesh and spirit, mixture of men's ideas, theories,

speculations, and lies with the word of God. Most the sources for this information about the great banking conspiracy, the Illuminati, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, etc., are not Christian at all. Granted, there are many Christians promoting these ideas, but they are not the *originators* of them. When one accepts the political theories and speculations of unregenerated men and mixes them with the prophecies of the scriptures, calling it a REVELATION, promoting it as the word of God, he has created an abomination before the Lord. None of the true, proven prophetic voices that I know across the land are prophesying those kinds of things. And those who are will live to see their prophecies come to naught!

Even apart from the teaching of the Holy Spirit, I have no faith at all in the conspiracy-mongers who harp on the above issues and the coming One World Government. I have followed their writings for at least forty years, both political and economic forecasts, and have found them liars. Their predictions have been proven false time and time again -- in fact, they have rarely been *right!* This one-world conspiracy of the Illuminati has supposedly been around for more than *two hundred* years. In the meantime we have passed through a civil war, two world wars, the great depression, the rise and fall of communism, and they still have not taken over our government, formed a one-world government, or imposed the mark of the beast. Either the conspirators are *extremely stupid and inept* -- or the whole supposed conspiracy is a lie. The fact is -- the world is fractionalizing, not uniting. The prophecies of the Bible are opposed to the concept of a coming world government. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the course of history in the form of a great image there were only FIVE world governments -- Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the Kingdom of God. That's all! There was NO other world empire between Rome and the Kingdom of God. And the kingdoms of Rome that exist just prior to the triumph of the Kingdom of God are *fractionalized* -- ten toes of iron and clay mixed, that will not cleave together. Many have historically tried to unite those ten toes into a powerful one-world government -- Charlemagne, Napoleon, Kaiser Bill Wilhelm, Hitler, the Communists. And all have gone down in ignominious defeat before the infallible word of the omnipotent God! So I put no confidence in the prognostications of the fundamentalist conspiracy-mongers.

The church today is full of energetic and sincere preachers and teachers who are just full of and bubbling over concerning things that are going to happen. Eighty-five years ago men were telling how the Kaiser was the Antichrist and was going to upset the world. Then when that failed to materialize, they frittered away much time and wasted much good paper and printer's ink telling what the next war was going to be like, and how it was going to be fought. There were to be death rays, and a hundred and one other horrible devices. There were to be rays that would melt a gun in a soldier's hand even as he held it. But the next war came. There were no death rays. It was fought in much the same manner as the last one had been, except that there was very little or no poison gas used, and the equipment and methods were much more effective, particularly on the Allied side. And yet, even after this next war had actually begun, certain religious periodicals published these blood-curdling articles telling of the awful inventions which were ready to be used against mankind. The actual battles that were being fought at the time the articles were published made a lie of the articles. And the unbelievable reality is that many of God's people today are so gullible and so susceptible to this kind of sensational trash, that they have no better sense than to glory in it, even though the statements are proven false by actual events then transpiring before their very eyes.

Then Mussolini arose, and he was to be the future superman who would revive the Roman Empire and do this, that, and the other. Then Hitler formed a deceitful alliance with Russia, and the false prophets loudly predicted that they would soon fight side by side. But we now know the answers to all these predictions. They were nothing more than the presumptuous guesses of idle shepherds who were destitute of truth. Other men, now that the Kaiser, Mussolini, Hitler, and other hoped-for candidates for the office of Antichrist have passed out of the picture, pinned their hopes on Henry Kissinger, Jimmy Carter, Mikhail Gorbachev, Saddam Hussein, and others. And all the books written about these are today worthless except as kindling to start a fire!

My prayer is that God will deliver His people, especially those who have heard the call to sonship and God's great Kingdom purposes, from all this carnal and soulish sensationalism. I fear that even many of the Lord's precious saints who have a vision for higher and deeper things haven't progressed far beyond Dr. Scofield's footnotes when it comes to their understanding of events at this transition of the ages. Many people today fear the term "New World Order" as it has been used by George Bush, Mikhail Gorbachev and others. But those who are afraid of it have a misguided "One World Government" mentality. Learn this, my friend, and you will

know a great truth. THERE WILL NEVER BE A MAN-MADE ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT! When it comes to the so-called New World Order I must ask: Which one? History records one in 1815, 1848, 1861, 1918, 1945, and 1990. And they each collapsed into chaos and war!

The question follows: Will this latest effort at forming a New World Order be any more successful than those that preceded it? According to the prophet Daniel -- not a chance! And our recent experience in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo and other places confirm the word of the Lord! I'm glad David said, "In all their evil imaginations they are vain." That means their evil imaginations *will not come to pass*! Whatever those who roar against God and His purposes devise, their imaginations are vain, vanity, emptiness, and they fall on the ground before His face and in His presence. Their imaginations cannot triumph over our God, His word, or His Christ.

Those who are looking for the Antichrist are always calling on us to imagine a world with no national boundaries...one global government...one international economy...one monetary system with one universal currency. Imagine a world where conflicting religions are unified into one supreme ecumenical force, presided over by one self-exalted "god." Imagine a world leader so powerful that he personally directs the world's economy and military might...a man so crafty that he enforces universal peace even in the troubled Middle East! My friends, it **won't happen**. Do the world's leaders want this? Some do. Is there a movement in that direction by the world's governments? I do not doubt it. But just because men wish for it, hope for it, plan for it, and work toward it, **doesn't mean it will happen!** The word of almighty God is against it. And even if God had not spoken against it, it is unlikely that it would happen due to the deceitfulness of the human heart and the treachery of human nature.

Let us look for a moment at the practical political ramifications of the idealistic concept of one world government. President Clinton attempted to follow the idea which George Bush proclaimed, namely that a New World Order can be inaugurated under the UN which should use the NATO organization as its main police force. China laughs at that. The British government feels obligated to make polite noises, but doubts such a system is practical. Germany does not believe that America will be able to construct a single New World Order. Germans know that a One World Government cannot be set up without China gaining numerical superiority, and Germans would not accept that. Like Russians, they are still nationalistic, as are the French. China and Russia and the Middle East all have their own aims which do not fit in with a One World Government, especially if Europe or America is in the driver's seat. The whole Moslem world, about a billion people and many nations, have no intention of being ruled by a One World Government. Neither a unified Europe nor the current NATO system can now stop or change the course of events that those four influences will cause. Every nation and block of nations has its own agenda! We are no more on the verge of a One World Government today than we were in 1815, 1848, 1861, 1918, or 1945!

Ah, beloved, every son of God must be able to distinguish between FACTS and TRUTH. Truth is Reality, Life, Christ. Truth is a Living Person! In Truth there is a flow of Life. If there is no quickening flow of Life, then you are not receiving Truth. Jesus said, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life**" (Jn. 14:6). Now Truth always brings Life because Christ is the Truth and Christ is also the Life. Truth always brings Life, but there are things that are true that can sometimes bring death. For example, were I to rob a bank this morning, and someone stood up in your fellowship next Sunday to tell how Preston Eby robbed a bank, would it bring you Life? Would you say, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord for that word, we are blessed!" Do you see what I am saying? The word would be true but it would not minister Life. Therefore, though it would be true it would not be the Truth, for the Truth and the Life are one, the Spirit and the Word are joined together as one Living Stream. **There are many things that are true, but they are not the Truth** and if you live in them you will die. Truth brings Life and because we are the children of Truth we desire Life.

And now may I exhort you further to flee from those things that are true but are not Truth, as surely and swiftly as you would flee from your home if you discovered it to be a den of rattlesnakes. We have a whole crop of doom-casters in the land today who spend their time in nothing else but informing the Lord's people of all the negative situations which are going to overtake our nation and the world. Many believers are continually being fed a diet of messages, articles, books, and tapes about world conditions, politics, intrigue, crisis, economic collapse, conspiracies, antichrist one-world government, mark of the beast, tribulation, so-called safe areas,

planetary conjunctions, earthquakes, tidal waves, wickedness, and a whole catalog of other fearful and frightening events, some of which may happen, but most of which I tell you now are nothing more than carnal-minded sensationalism proclaimed by men masquerading as end-time teachers and prophets, bewitching the saints.

Let every child of God in whose bosom has been birthed the bright hope of sonship answer this one question: Do any of the before mentioned things minister LIFE? Does the study of them or the knowing of them cause you to be more filled with the Spirit? Do they aid you in putting on the mind of Christ? Do they work deliverance in your life? Do they transform you into the image of God? Do they imbue you with divine wisdom, spiritual understanding, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Do they add an inch or a cubit to your spiritual stature? Are they Truth, Life-giving Truth, or are they merely things that are true, or *may* be true, or may *not* even be true!

My deepest prayer is that the reality and force of this may grip your believing heart! I cannot over-emphasize the importance for every son of God that our thoughts be *His thoughts* and that our words be *the Father's words* of Spirit and Life. One of the unmistakable marks of a son is that he speaks as His Father speaks. The mind that dwelt in that glorious firstborn Son of God was His Father's mind. Is that not why He could say, "**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. And I know that His commandment is LIFE everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so speak I**" (Jn. 12:49-50). How could He do otherwise when the Father's mind possessed Him! As we walk in blessed unity of mind and spirit with the Father, the words of our mouths automatically become a river of Life unto all who hear them.

We do not have our heads in the sand, pretending that the horizons are not dark, or that the world has no problems, or that sin and death do not stalk the lands. But those who walk in the Father's purpose for this Day are able to distinguish between the **voice of man** and the **voice of God**. You will hear a multitude of voices from both the secular and the religious world in this hour, but the sons of God do not parrot the words of scientists, politicians, economists, ecologists, psychologists, military leaders, or theologians. Sons speak only the words of their heavenly Father! We do not get our revelation of "end-time" events from Newsweek magazine, USA Today, or the Wall Street Journal. The words spoken by the learned ones of *this world* hold nothing for me, for I know only and always as I am taught of my Father, and I must speak *only the words I hear my Father speaking*.

For years preachers warned us that the communists had a plan and time-table for world domination, and we were told that they were *ahead of schedule*. What fear this struck into men's hearts! But it was not the word of the Lord, it was the *word of the communists*! The preachers didn't take time to hear from God, they just accepted the word of the communists. So they jumped on the anti-Communist bandwagon and stomped around the country warning God's people about what the communists were going to do. But the word of the communists was merely a lying vanity within their own deceitful and wicked hearts. Finally they came face to face with the power and purpose of the Most High God, and the Lamb overcame them! And even if they could have been successful in dominating the world for a season, their plans would have been true, but not THE TRUTH.

Preachers today are just full and running over with information about what Russia is going to do, or China, or the Illuminati, or the Antichrist, or the Common Market, or Saddam Hussein, or somebody else. The question follows -- Has GOD revealed those things unto them by the Spirit, or has the knowledge of them been gained from the reports, books, and tapes of men? You see, if I accept the word of the Illuminati as being true; if I then teach God's people that this fulfills certain prophecies about an end-time One World Government; if I proceed to show how gun control, oil crisis, economic collapse, martial law, etc. are instruments in the implementation of this One World takeover, then I have accepted the DEVIL'S WORD as Truth and have transformed myself into a messenger of Satan, convincing men that the devil's word can be counted on, he will surely do all that he says he will do! I care not one whit about any conspiracy on earth or the aims, plans and goals of any group of men or nations. Satan is a braggart and a liar. He is defeated! This is the LORD'S DAY, the day of victory and triumph, the Day of the unveiling of the Christ, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of

our Lord and of His Christ! The next thing on God's prophetic schedule, my beloved, is the *manifestation of the sons of God!*

In Noah's day, in Abraham's day, in Moses' day, in Elijah's day, in the days of all the prophets, and in the day when Christ Jesus trod the pathways of earth, it was the man of God who notified the world, by the spirit of revelation from God, of the impending events that would determine the future course of men, kingdoms, and the world. The prophets didn't get their information from the counsels of men, rather, the counsels of men received a word through the prophets from almighty God who rules in the heavens and in the earth. In our day it is the world that is feeding the information to the preachers about what is supposed to happen! If your revelation of events that are going to transpire in this hour at the transition of the ages is dependent upon what comes over the wire services, or what you read in someone's book, then you need a NEW REVELATION! And if God has not spoken about the events unfolding before our eyes from day to day, then we need not worry about our ignorance of those things. Our only concern is to hear the voice of our Father, and when He sends us light, that we receive it and walk in it. The words of God are always Spirit and Life and by them we are quickened to those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. About many things happening in the world I confess that I know very little, but my heart sings a thousand hallelujahs, for I do know that this earth in God's good grace is yet to see a whole race of sons of God begotten by the Holy Spirit in the extremity of the age, and the wonderful life of Jesus Christ shall flow out from the throne of God within their innermost beings as mighty surging torrents of Life-giving water in those blest days that lie just before us. This word I have received of my Father!

## THEY SHALL NOT CLEAVE TO ONE ANOTHER

Let us now examine more closely the prophecy of **Daniel 2:43**. There are two important statements in this prophecy concerning the final stage of the Roman Empire, the ten toes. Of them Daniel says, "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay,

1. They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men:
2. But they shall NOT CLEAVE one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

Hear it! "They shall NOT cleave one to another!" This reference is to the ten divisions of the old Roman Empire which remain with us unto this day in the nations of modern Europe. But if these ten toes must yet be formed into the superstructure of a World Empire of Antichrist, where is the signification of that COMING WORLD GOVERNMENT? Daniel revealed that there would be *four* great World Empires of man. The fourth would be divided into ten parts, brought into a condition of fragmentation. Then, in the days of those kings, in their weakness and fragmentation, the God of heaven would set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed. If there is to be a World Government here at the end of the age, then God left something out! The Holy Spirit was wrong! The word of God was missing something! There was an oversight on His part! Perhaps there really was to be a FIFTH WORLD GOVERNMENT *in between the fourth World Empire and the Kingdom of God* -- but in His haste to reveal to king Nebuchadnezzar the plan of the ages God momentarily *overlooked* that fifth kingdom!

Perhaps one of the most astonishing features of this prophecy is the declaration that the Roman kingdom would be the last -- not the last of four -- but the last of all, the end of man's political domination of earth through World Empire. How could Daniel have known that no other kingdom would ever rise to world dominion? It would have been but the natural supposition that since the Babylonians would give way to the Medes and Persians, and they in turn would fall before the Greeks, who, in course of time would surrender their scepter to the Romans -- that, at length, when the Romans ceased to dominate the world, that surely another great warrior-conqueror would rise on the horizon who would gather in his hands the reins of power, and forge a new World Empire, perhaps stronger than any in previous history. How has the continent of Europe, for nearly two millenniums, escaped unification? Everything in Europe seems to call for it; great men and mighty armies have tried to accomplish it; yet history testifies to the futility of every effort. Had Daniel written out of his own imagination, why should he have stopped at *four* in predicting coming empires in Europe and Asia? Why not fourteen? or forty? Because *only God* rules over the nations and controls human destiny! Ah, God almighty has a controversy with the statesmen and leaders of this world who dream of a United

Europe and a New World Order. They should know that the future is not Europe nor a world based on it. All attempts to reconstitute the Kingdom of Iron will not succeed. Europe is no longer the Kingdom of Iron, it is now a mixture of iron and clay in divided form, a conglomeration of peoples culturally, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously different, and because of its inherent weaknesses can never again be the Kingdom of Iron.

Furthermore, if these ten toes were to be united into a fifth World Empire, they would have to be symbolically joined together in a sort of webfoot. Men do not have webfeet, and this image of Daniel being the image of a man, therefore signifies no joining of the toes. If God had wished to give such a signification, He would necessarily have given Nebuchadnezzar a dream of an aquatic animal, such as a muskrat. He did no such thing. Furthermore, if there were to be this union of the Empire of the Toes, then Daniel, in his explanation of the vision, surely would have said something about it. Instead, he stated the exact opposite: in speaking of those toes he said, "but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." If these toes still have to be joined to form a kingdom for the Antichrist to rule, then they must cleave one to another, and that would make Daniel a false prophet. I leave my readers to judge who are false: Daniel, or those who contradict him and thus contradict the Word of God.

With Rome fell the last of the world's universal empires. Heretofore it was possible for one nation, rising superior to its neighbors in prowess, bravery, and the science of war, to consolidate them into one vast empire. But when the Kingdom of Iron passed away, such possibilities forever passed away! The iron was fragmented and then mixed with clay, and lost the power of cohesion. No man or combination of men can again consolidate the fragments as a power over the earth. No other human empire was to succeed it, as had the three, which went before it. It was to continue, in this ten-fold division, until the Kingdom of the Stone smote it upon its feet, broke them in pieces, ground them to powder, and scattered them as the wind does the chaff of the summer threshing floor!

In the afterglow of a thousand battlefields, in the shattered dreams of would-be world conquerors, in the light of two world wars, the words stand invincibly true... "they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

### **CHARLEMAGNE TRIES IT**

In A.D. 800 Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor. Voltaire, an able French writer and intellectual, observed wittily and sarcastically that while the coronation had plenty of pomp associated with it, as for the empire, it was "neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire." Charlemagne grasped for world empire, came close, then found himself defeated by the words of the great God: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

### **LOUIS XIV TRIES IT**

Louis the Fourteenth was a vain and pompous Frenchman. He sent his armies into Holland and the Low Countries, to no avail. At death, he too, had failed. Before him, Charles the Fifth had marched his armies across much of Europe, then found himself unable to achieve world empire. The words still stood: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

### **NAPOLEON TRIES IT**

From the ashes of the French Revolution arose Napoleon Bonaparte. "I will tear the heart out of glory," he promised a friend. The supreme object of Napoleon's life was to get the Roman Empire together again, and he very nearly did it. Christian people told Napoleon that he was the "beast" and he was flattered. In Marengo, Ulm, and Austerlitz -- everywhere Napoleon's armies were victorious. Then came the invasion of Russia. Due to a set of circumstances Napoleon made a fateful decision. He would return to France. The retreat that followed was the most disastrous of all history. Literally hundreds of thousands of soldiers fell in the ice and snow as the coldest winter of Russian history struck. Napoleon was captured, and escaped, and returning to France rallied his troops for one last great effort to unite the nations of earth under his control. June 15, 1815,

as the sun sank on the third day of the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon's career sank with it. In captivity Napoleon wrote his memoirs. And he gave what he felt was the reason for his failure: "God almighty has been too much for me!"

"They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

### **KAISER WILHELM TRIES IT**

For decades prior to the outbreak of World War I, the world had been at peace. Men anticipated the Golden Age. On the fateful night when the ultimatum delivered by the British empire to the Kaiser had been rejected, Sir Edward Grey stood with his military aide looking out over the London skyline. It was late. Lights in the buildings of the city were winking and going out. Pondering the implications of the outbreak of the first World War, Grey turned to his aide and said, "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

Kaiser Wilhelm's armies met Allied forces in No Man's Land in France. For a time it appeared victory would be his. The horror of trench fighting had demoralized the Allied armies. Then came the battle of the Marne. *From every standpoint, German armies should have been victorious.* But up and down Allied battle lines the slogan went, "They shall not pass." Victory went to the Allied armies! Before the war was over 60,000,000 casualties had been sustained on the land, in the sea, and in the air. Armistice day came. Kaiser Wilhelm had failed as had all the others before him. He too, had come face to face with the words of our God: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

### **HITLER TRIES IT**

In the 1930's, fed by the injustice of the Versailles Treaty, the storm clouds of war began to gather. September 5, 1939, Hitler's panzer divisions swept through flimsy barriers that separated Poland and Germany. World War II had begun. Unstable and mercurial, Hitler deceived and misled the Germans, a people with a proud and ancient heritage. He sought absolute power for himself. He held out the promise of a thousand-year Reich. Five weeks, and Poland was defeated. The Low Countries were quickly conquered too, with Blitzkrieg, a new lightning war technique that utilized the mightiest mechanized army the world had ever seen. Bypassing France's "invincible" Maginot Line, Hitler plunged through France to Dunkirk. Military experts gave England a few weeks -- at the most a few months -- before she too would be crushed beneath Hitler's mighty military machine. Nazi armies at that point seemed to be unstoppable. But Dunkirk was a turning point. For when the picture appeared hopeless and the logical course for Britain to follow was surrender, Winston Churchill, British prime minister, announced the course England would take: "We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight in the seas and oceans, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

Had Hitler at this point launched a massive invasion of England with paratroops and air cover supporting, there is little question the British Isles would have fallen. Possibly, eventually, the whole world. But curiously he did not. He was sure England would sue for peace. So he waited -- for an event that never came. Then, too late, after England along with refugee troops from Europe had had opportunity to rally, Hitler launched the Battle of Britain. Hitler invaded Russia, making the same mistake of Napoleon before him. Later came D-Day, June 6, 1944, and the invasion of continental Europe by the Allies. Hitler is believed to have died a suicide in a Berlin Bunker. Like military leaders before him who had dreamed of world conquest, Hitler was defeated. But he was not defeated by military might -- this he had in super-abundance. Rather, it was the fateful words of our never-failing God that doomed him to failure: "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Next month we will consider the Kingdom of Stone.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 52**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-TWO**

**COMING WORLD EMPIRE**

Millenniums ago ancient prophets beheld in spirit the scroll of history, prophesied the rise and fall of world empires, revealed the frantic efforts for world domination, and finally outlined clearly and unmistakably the last great world empire of all. The Spirit of God has revealed the course of human history today. He shows the ultimate outcome of the efforts by mortal men to resolve their differences and live peacefully, every man beneath his own fig tree and by his own vineyard.

The unfailing promise of God is, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (**Amos 3:7**). God has not left His people in darkness about the future. God is in control! In the annals of human history the rise and fall of empires *appear* to be dependent upon the will and power of man. But by the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the workings of the great God, silently, patiently working out His own purpose and will.

In the days of Daniel the prophet, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a dream in the night. He awoke disturbed and perplexed because he knew the dream was significant, but he could not remember any of it! The king called the magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers, all the wise men of Babylon, but none was able to tell him his dream or give the interpretation. When Daniel received news of this, he requested an audience with the king. King Nebuchadnezzar's question to Daniel was to the point: "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and the interpretation of it?" Daniel answered the king, "The secret which the king has demanded neither the wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor astrologers can show the king; but there is a God in heaven who revealeth secrets, and He has made known to king Nebuchadnezzar what it is that shall be in the latter days -- at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your bed are these..." (**Dan. 2:26-28**, Amplified).

And then came the dream, one of the most dramatic revelations of all history, in which God outlined the rise and fall of global empires, moved beyond to our day and its efforts toward a New World Order, on to the setting up of earth's last great world empire. "God...has made known to king Nebuchadnezzar *what it is that shall be in the latter days...* thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof to the king" (**Dan. 2:28, 31-36**).

With what interest and astonishment must the king have listened as Daniel began his interpretation of the dream and informed the king that his own kingdom was the golden head of that magnificent image. Gold, the king of metals, represented the Babylonian empire. Daniel informed the king that the God of heaven had given him his kingdom, and made him ruler over all. But the empire of Babylon was not to last forever. It was to give way to another. The breasts and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian empire which overthrew the kingdom of Babylon. Great as was the Medo-Persian empire, it too, was to topple. It was succeeded by the Grecian empire. The fourth and final empire to arise and dominate the whole of the civilized world was Rome. Of this fourth kingdom Daniel said, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters clay, and part of iron, the kingdom **SHALL BE DIVIDED**; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, inasmuch as thou

sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom SHALL BE PARTLY STRONG AND PARTLY BROKEN" (Dan. 2:41-42).

The brokenness spoke of division. Ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes, were to emerge. The earth was *never again* to see the cohesive strength of the Roman empire welded into the superstructure of one great World Empire. For Daniel, in one of the most significant prophecies of all time, declared, "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they (the ten toes) shall *mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay*" (Dan. 2:43). It is important that we drink very deeply of these words of the prophet, for in them is contained the KEY to, and the UNDERSTANDING of events that shall unfold in this our day!

Hear it! "They shall NOT cleave one to another!" This reference is to the toes of the image, the ten divisions of the old Roman empire which remain with us unto this day in the nations of modern Europe. But if, as some say, these ten toes must yet be formed into the super-structure of a World Empire of Antichrist, where is the signification of that COMING WORLD GOVERNMENT? Daniel revealed that there would be but FOUR great World Empires of man. The fourth would exist first in two parts (the two legs), as East and West, and finally would be divided into ten parts, brought into a condition of fragmentation and weakness. Then, in the days of those kings, at the time of the ten toes of iron mixed with clay, in their fragmentation and weakness, the God of heaven would set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed! If there is to be a World Government of the ten toes here at the end of the age then God left something out! God was wrong! There was an oversight on His part! Perhaps there really was to be a FIFTH WORLD GOVERNMENT *in between the fourth world empire and the Kingdom of God* -- but in His haste to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar the plan of the ages God momentarily overlooked that fifth kingdom!

Time and again men have dreamed of rearing on these ten fragments of the fourth kingdom ONE mighty empire. A single verse of scripture was stronger than all their hosts... "*Partly strong, and partly broken,*" was the prophetic description. And this is exactly the history of these ten kingdoms! "**They shall NOT cleave together!**" God announced. And yet men have tried to mold them together. And men of God, who ought to know better, predict that they shall unite and form a Fifth World Empire -- a World Government *in our time!* "This shall not be," says the word of God. "This has not been," replies the book of history.

But in the light of history's dramatic chapters and the current move toward a united Europe -- a UNITED STATES OF EUROPE -- what of the future? Will the elusive mirage of world peace based on the foundation of European solidarity, the result of wishful thinking, *again cause men to forget the counsel of the word of God?* "They shall not cleave one to another!" Ah, alliances may come, as they have for brief periods in the past, even some strong-man may arise, and it may appear that the iron and the miry clay of the feet and toes have finally fused to again dominate the world, but the word of God standeth sure: "They shall not cleave one to another!" It may seem that old animosities have disappeared and that the "ten kings" have truly become one, but I must assure you that "*the scripture cannot be broken*" (Jn. 10:35).

What further proof of divine inspiration need anyone than these words of the Lord: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another." Everyone who knows the history of Europe knows that for generations and centuries the royal seed of these nations intermarried and mingled to foster unity, but the result was always the same -- they never could cleave together! And neither can they now. In the year 1957 the European Economic Community (Common Market) was created under the Treaty of Rome. This is the latest, perhaps final, effort to unite the ten toes that *cannot* cleave together, and thus revive in some form, by a United States of Europe, the old Roman empire. This, too, is ultimately doomed to failure no matter how promising it appears at the present time. Even now all is not peace and harmony within the European Union. A struggle for unity and direction has become increasingly tense. Germany and France insist on a strong central government. Luxembourg, Belgium, and The Netherlands, wedged between the two giants, are forced to join the two stronger powers. Denmark has been a reluctant participant, fearing the Catholic Church. England has been reticent from the beginning to surrender sovereignty to a strong central union. Spain and Italy have at times sided with England. Greece, Iceland, and Portugal are going along for the ride. I do not say there will not be some kind of European unity. There have been in the past for *short periods of time,*

only to be violently broken apart by age-old resentments, mis-trust, and hostilities. But I can prophesy this: Should such a union materialize for a season it will NOT be a world empire, neither will it last!

When the Soviet Union collapsed, some observers thought they heard its crumbling superstructure sputtering out promises of a new world order -- a grand new era of peace, cooperation and easing of international tensions. The tearing down of the Berlin Wall, a precursor of the Soviet breakup, became a symbol of fresh winds of freedom and hope blowing over the European continent. Winds, it was proposed, that would blow goodwill and understanding around the world! As we look honestly at today's rapidly changing political world, I doubt that most people are being deceived into believing that some wonderful new era of man-made peace is developing. It is other winds, renewed dark winds of long-standing hatred and religious and economic confrontation that have all but devastated the idea of a new world order. The end of the Cold War between the former Soviet Union and the West is leading to far-reaching consequences. The shape of the world is changing. New power blocs are emerging. Frightening scenarios of economic upheaval, intensified regional armed conflict dividing the interests of the super-powers, more starving populations and ecological disaster loom on the horizon. Once again the almighty Lord is setting the stage to show the immutability of His word -- "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall **not cleave** one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

## THE COMING WORLD EMPIRE

The awe-inspiring vision of Nebuchadnezzar did not end with the vision of the feet and toes of iron and clay. The *greatest event of all* was yet to come, for he saw a stone cut out of a mountain without hands, which smote the image on its unsteady feet. The blow fell upon the feet because they represent the ruling power at the time of the end when these events take place and the vision is fulfilled. The moment that blow was struck by the stone from the mountain, the whole Babylonish system fell and crumbled to dust beneath its own weight. It became like the dust of a summer threshing-floor and the wind blew it away. Then the *little stone* cut from a mountain itself became a *great mountain* and *filled the whole earth* (Dan. 2:35, 44-45). This, of course, is the beginning of the Kingdom of God over the nations, which will eventually fill the whole earth!

That Daniel should have thus so accurately and precisely foretold the past two thousand five hundred years of world history is convincing proof that we have in his writings a divine revelation, and it demands that we expect the due fulfillment of the rest of his forecast. We are bound to expect the sudden and dramatic overthrow of all the nations that have emerged out of the old Roman empire by a heaven-sent power, the "stone cut out without hands," which smites the image, grinds it to powder, blots it out of existence, takes its place and then rapidly increases and fills the whole earth, not merely with the gospel of salvation, but with the **GOVERNMENTAL RULE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD OVER THE NATIONS**.

Some have imagined that this was fulfilled in the days of Christ and the early church as the apostles and disciples went forth proclaiming the name of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, triumphing at last over the pagan religions and gods of the Roman world. But it is clear that this stone cut out without hands has nothing to do with that. In the first place, the stone falls on *the feet* of the image. Now you will observe that the stone did not fall on the head, nor on the breast, nor on the belly, nor on the legs, but on the feet of iron and clay -- it was upon the feet that the stone fell! This helps wonderfully to identify the stage of world history when the stone is cut out of the mountain without hands and smites the image. The ten toes, representing the ultimate fragmentation of the Roman Empire, did not even exist in the days of Christ or the early church! Christ came and the church grew from one hundred twenty souls into millions in the time of the *undivided imperial strength* (the iron kingdom), not after its decay and division (iron and clay mixed). Christianity had already been established for centuries, as the religion of the Roman Empire, before the state of things symbolized by the ten toes of iron and clay arose. The "days of these kings" were not yet come. The hordes of barbarians from the north and the east had not poured into the empire and broken it up. You see, the church came before the legs were fully formed. The church came and triumphed over the pagan religions and gods of the Roman Empire. The church began and triumphed, not in the days of the toes, but in the days of the loins of the image. The church did not destroy human government, and then take its place. The church has been growing alongside of human government for two thousand years. No, the stone is not the advent of Jesus two thousand years ago, nor is it the church!

In addition to this, the destruction of the image is attributed to the sudden *fall* of the stone, not to its gradual expansion into a great mountain that fills the whole earth. Nothing whatever answering to the crushing, destructive fall of the stone came upon the Roman Empire at that time. The Roman Empire barely knew that a man called Jesus had walked upon earth. The growth and development of the stone into a mountain does not even *begin* till the image has been struck by the stone, broken to pieces, ground to powder, and blown away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor! The stone will fall on the feet of the image. Earthly politics will then crumble forever into dust. Empires, monarchies, republics, and democracies alike, the iron and the clay, will disappear from man's experience upon this earth and the Lord shall be King over all the earth, and alone be exalted in that Day. The gospel of salvation preached among all nations for the past two millenniums has never destroyed the civil powers of human government; to the contrary, the church systems have ridden upon the back of the civil powers as a gaudy harlot riding the beast (Rev. 17:3). But what we have in Nebuchadnezzar's wonderful dream of the stone smiting the image is that there comes a power that sets aside every human empire and government, and *then* is introduced the rule of the Kingdom of God over every dimension and institution of national life. In fact, even the residual influence of human government in culture, politics, government, judicial systems, social orders, philosophy, education, science, art, religion and all other realms shall be smashed to smithereens, *ground to powder* that the wind (spirit) drives away -- the whole thing disappears to be remembered no more!

God's own nation on earth must take up the scepter. This Kingdom SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED! "Never" covers a long time. This Kingdom of God "shall not be left to other people." The four preceding kingdoms were left to others. Babylon became a prey to Medo-Persia, which in turn was seized and held by Greece, which in turn was left to Rome to subject and dominate. Rome has fallen into its fragments, which in due course shall be subjected to the rule of the saints of the Most High. It is God's Kingdom, which must "**break in pieces, and CONSUME A-L-L these kingdoms and it shall stand forever!**" (Dan. 2:44). Furthermore, this is no fiction or fairy tale: this is history in the making. "**The dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure**" (Dan. 2:45).

As the fourth kingdom, the Roman empire, was represented in a two-fold state, first strong and flourishing, "with legs of iron," and then weakened and divided, "with feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay," so this fifth kingdom, or Christ's Kingdom on earth, is likewise described in two states. But while Rome passes from strength to weakness, from iron to iron mixed with miry clay, the fifth kingdom begins small, merely a stone, and advances to become a great mountain. First it is cut out of a mountain to become the kingdom of a stone. The final phase is when itself becomes a mountain, larger and greater than the mountain it was cut from, "and filled the whole earth." There is ANOTHER KINGDOM coming! It is the Kingdom of the Stone, and yet it is not another kingdom, but *another stage* of the same Kingdom of God. It is the Kingdom of the LIVING STONE! It is the Kingdom of God in His sons! It is not made with hands -- it is not of man's doing. It is cut from the mountain of the house of the Lord (Micah 4:1). It shall roll irresistibly forth from the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord's house (the true church), smiting the feeble feet of the great image, leaving it in ruins, and as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor the wind (spirit) shall carry it away that it shall be no more. Thus will the kingdoms of this world *become* the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and we shall reign unto the ages of the ages. Hallelujah!

The great majority of commentators have missed the truth here, assuming this stone to be Jesus Christ, when God says it is A KINGDOM. The text does not state that God sets up the Christ, who shall never be destroyed, as beautiful as that fact is. Furthermore, in verse 45 we find this stone "cut out of a mountain." Jesus was not cut out of a mountain. But this fifth kingdom was cut out of a mountain. And the next verse definitely states that this kingdom is set up by God "in the days of these kings," that is, in the days of the kingdoms of the toes. The ten toes did not even exist when Jesus came! Rome was not even in its "feet" stage at that time. And the stone smites the *feet!*

I do not deny that there is a Kingdom of God in the world today. The Kingdom of God has been here among the Lord's people ever since Jesus came and brought it. If a man has been born again, he has been delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated or transferred into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, submitting to the will of God in the Spirit as supreme. And yet -- this Kingdom is as a mountain in the earth co-existing with the image of Nebuchadnezzar. The Kingdom of God in the earth is one kingdom among all the kingdoms of men, one mountain among all the majestic peaks of human government. But this present "mountain" form of

the Kingdom is not the one that shall smite the image and break it to pieces and utterly destroy and replace it. A **stone** must be cut out of this **mountain** without hands, by the sovereign move and work of God, and it is the **stone** that smites the image! The stone destroys all human government! Only then does the stone begin to grow and become a mountain so great and mighty and immense and boundless and all-consuming -- not a little mountain co-existing with the image, but a **great mountain that fills the whole earth!** Ah, can you not see it, my beloved? There are TWO MOUNTAINS AND A STONE. The stone is *cut out of* the first mountain, and the stone *becomes* the second mountain. The first mountain is a small mountain, the second mountain fills (dominates) the whole earth! The first mountain exists "in the days of these kings." The second mountain only materializes *after* the image of human government has completely passed away! The stone and the two mountains are different forms or stages of the Kingdom of God in the earth!

The apostle Peter, when writing to the *church*, says, "**But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, AN HOLY NATION, a peculiar people...**" (I Pet. 2:9). He calls the church a **nation**. He also calls the members of the church a **race**, for the word "generation" is from the Greek GENE, which means "race." The Amplified Bible renders this, "But ye are a chosen race." Nations are generally built up after ethnic lines. The church is both a race and a nation because it is composed of people who have been **born of God!** God is thus the head of an entirely new *ethnic entity*, which is *heavenly* in its origin! Born *again*, born of the *Spirit!* The off-spring of *God!* And God has formed this new race of men under His government, making them a **nation**. It is God's nation. He is the King over this people. And in the scriptures mountains are used to denote kingdoms or nations. So when we read in Daniel 2:45 of a stone CUT OUT OF A MOUNTAIN, it is a stone, a force, a power cut out of a kingdom -- out of a nation! And that nation, or mountain, is GOD'S CHURCH! The stone is, therefore, the many-membered Christ of God, the overcomers out of the church age who form His divine government for the nations -- the sons of God! The Hebrew word for "stone" is EBEN, taken from the root word BANAH, which means "to build". The Hebrew word for "son" is BEN, also derived from the root word BANAH. Thus, in the Hebrew language the association between "stone" and "son" is clearly established. The **stone** is the **sons!**

The stone is the corporate Christ, the body of sons. It is the body of Christ, which we are, united with Christ the Head. Our spiritual maturity and union with Christ make us the stone of Daniel's prophecy. And this anointed body of Christ is now ready to smite the image, man's systems and governments, the remnants and residue of the fourth kingdom of Rome lingering in the modern institutions and nations of the industrialized West, breaking it into pieces. This will begin to happen when the body of Christ steps forth into the full expression of Christ's immortality and omnipotence at the manifestation of the sons of God. This manifestation is not afar off, beloved, it is even at the door! That mighty stone, which is this glorious Christ company, including the Head and the body, shall smite the image, representing man's governments and systems, by the power of the fullness of the Spirit of Sonship. It will be the mighty *spiritual manifestation* of the glory of God! It will be the power of God of which Pentecost was but a foretaste, a sampling, the appetizer! This will be the balance of the meal -- the fullness of the Feast of Tabernacles! In due time, all those bits and pieces of man's corrupt and fallen systems shall become like chaff to be carried away by the wind of the Spirit, leaving no place on earth for any of them. And that stone shall become a great mountain or kingdom that shall fill the whole earth, not with laws, rules, force, or coercion, but with the eternal glory and transforming life of Christ. Even now that stone is being fashioned and formed, chiseled and cut out of the mountain without hands, by the sovereign dealings and work of God in the elect members of His body. We are truly members of our Father's glorious Christ! According to the prophecy of Daniel we are gods, sons, lords and kings in union with Jesus the Christ. I find myself too limited to set forth this truth as I should do, but king Nebuchadnezzar's heart was pierced by these sacred words when Daniel interpreted the king's dream by the spirit of revelation from God. Hear the words of the king in response to the mysteries opened up to him in that awesome hour: "**Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret**" (Dan. 2:47). What a word! Our God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings. Now it naturally follows that we are those "gods" of whom Yahwey is the chief God, and we are those "kings" of whom Yahweh is the Lord!

The elect of God are beyond doubt a very special people, members in particular of the body of Christ, called and chosen unto a divine and supernatural calling. They are a people hand picked for sonship from the teeming multitudes of redeemed men and women. They are few in number, for they are but a small *stone* cut out of a great *mountain*. They are chosen by the sovereign purpose of God and refined in the furnace of

affliction. They have welcomed Father's call and have stripped for the race. They have girded up their loins with truth. They have laid aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset the human frame. They have *pressed* toward the mark for the prize of the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus. They are fashioned in the heights of the mountain of the Lord. They are destined for full sonship in Him. They have counted every dear and precious thing of earth *but loss* for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. Christ has become *all in all* to them. They have brought into captivity *every thought* to the obedience of Christ, and He is high and lifted up within them. They love Him first and foremost, and all other men they love *in Him*.

We have thus become the mighty Stone of Christ that is ready to smite the image. The hour is at hand when this mighty Stone of Christ will bring down all the carnal, worldly systems of man, replacing them with the righteous and just and beneficent Kingdom of God in all the earth. Whenever we turn away from the religious doctrines, traditions, ceremonies and orders of the church systems of man to embrace completely the truth, life, maturity, mind, will, power, and authority of the Spirit of the Son in our hearts, we thus enforce the mighty, kingdom Stone of Christ. Whenever we reject the will of man, the ways of the flesh, the systems of the world, and the religious principles derived from eating the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and seek to do only and always the will of the Father in the earth, we thus enforce the mighty Stone of Christ. When we cease eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil after the rules, laws, and doctrines of the religious systems of man, and begin to eat of the tree of Life by the Spirit, we receive the greater wisdom of the mind of Christ and transformation into His image by the spirit of His Life working within. We then become partakers of Him who shall feed the peoples of the nations, and impart to them the Life that He is.

This mighty and glorious Stone of Christ is taking form as it is chiseled out of the mountain without the aid of any of man's works or religion's methods. It is cut out of the mountain *without hands!* Oh, the wonder of it! Thousands who now read these lines can testify to the fact that it is the Lord Himself who has revealed Himself and these truths to their hearts, and who has directed their steps, ordained their path, and brought forth His dealings in their lives to conform them to the image of God's Son. Only the work of the eternal Spirit within their hearts has purged, purified, refined, delivered, changed, enlightened, transformed and empowered them to do nothing but the absolute and perfect will of their Father. Because we have come before Him declaring our solemn purpose and intention of submitting to every one of His dealings in our lives to make us His sons, we see that the Lord is taking away the former order of things and preparing our minds, hearts, and bodies for the fullness of His resurrection life, glory, wisdom and power. We are being readied for the great fall down the side of the mountain, which shall bring the more glorious order of the Kingdom of God upon the nations of the earth. How marvelous is this day and Father's sovereign, omnipotent purpose for it!

The same analogy of the stone cut out of the mountain is drawn in John's vision of a woman bringing forth a manchild in chapter twelve of the Revelation. The woman is the church. The manchild, born *out of* the woman, is that company of God's overcoming sons who are to "*rule all nations with a rod of iron*" (**Rev. 12:5**). Thus, the **woman** of Revelation twelve, and the **mountain** from which the stone is cut, ARE ONE AND THE SAME -- **God's church!** The **manchild** *out of* the woman and the **stone** *out of* the mountain refer to the same company that is also the 144,000 overcoming sons of God who come with the Lamb upon mount Zion to reign! Immediately following the marvelous description of the 144,000 sons of God in chapter fourteen of Revelation, John sees an angel flying through the mid-heaven crying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" The remainder of the chapter symbolically portrays the process of the destruction of this Babylonish system by the stone, which was cut out of the mountain without hands!

Can we not see by this that the manchild *out of* the woman, the overcomers *out of* the seven churches, the 144,000 symbolically *out of* the tribes of Israel, and the stone cut *out of* the mountain all bespeak of the same company. Of the manchild it is written, "*And she brought forth a manchild, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron*" (**Rev. 12:5**). Of the overcomers the record states, "*And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers*" (**Rev. 2:26-27**). In Revelation, chapter 14, the 144,000 come up on mount Zion, the symbol of *kingship* and *dominion*, where typically king David ruled gloriously over the kingdom of Israel. Daniel says of the stone, "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain*

without hands, and that it *brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (**Dan. 2:44-45**).

So the **stone** *rules* and breaks in pieces all these kingdoms. The **overcomers** *rule* and break the nations into shivers. The **144,000** *rule* from the dominion of mount Zion. The **manchild** *rules* all nations with a rod of iron. And each of these "comes out" of something else -- out of a larger group of God's people! They all fulfill the same function -- smashing the kingdoms of this world and bringing the Kingdom of God to pass over the nations of earth! This, precious friend of mine, is GOD'S GOVERNMENT. And this is the NEXT WORLD GOVERNMENT! After Rome, the NEXT WORLD EMPIRE IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD! Hallelu-yah!

Is there not joy in your heart to think that the One who came, and had nothing but a borrowed cradle, a cross built for a criminal, and another man's tomb -- I say, is there not joy unspeakable and full of glory in your heart today that God is going to establish His Kingdom over ALL? I freely confess it is a great joy to me, and I am blessed with the sacred knowledge that *we are sharers of His glory*, we are called to sit with Him on His throne and reign with Him in His Kingdom, and we are glad to the full because it is the Day of the exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ as King over the nations and Lord over all. At the present moment, when I think of God's dealings with men, I learn this, that "*grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life*" (**Rom. 8:21**) -- it is divine *grace* upon a righteous basis that saves men today. But in that glorious age now at hand "*Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment*" (**Isa. 32:1**) -- there *righteousness reigns* and there comes forth a new heaven and a new earth wherein *dwelleth* righteousness. Righteousness is perfectly at home, so to speak, there. It is the Day when righteousness reigns upon the earth through the transforming authority and rule of the sons of God. The unrighteousness of men, institutions, and nations shall be broken to shivers, ground to powder, and carried away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

Press on, saints of God, for we are on the winning side! We are on the way up, and the kingdoms of this world are on the way down! All of the distress and perplexity among the nations today does not indicate the imminent rise of a world dictatorship under Antichrist. Oh, no! Rather, it heralds the hour for the final collapse and destruction of this present evil system of things and the victory of God's glorious Kingdom. The kingdoms of puny, unregenerated men are growing old and wearing out like a garment. Democracy is not the greatest form of government ever devised, it is the *weakest*, the *clay* mingled with the iron. It is the rule of the *people* with unregenerated hearts and uncircumcised minds. Democracy cannot stand. Communism cannot stand. Dictatorships cannot stand. Kingdoms of men cannot stand. They are all time-worn and threadbare, faded and dilapidated -- ready to be discarded like a worn-out garment and replaced by a new order.

The carnal-minded rulers of *this world* plan for a One World Government, a New World Order of their own making. But it matters not what the Fabian Socialists or any other group plans -- don't you believe for one moment in any scheme that the carnal mind devises! Just because men plan doesn't mean they will succeed. Man that is born of woman is born in sin and shapen in iniquity and because men have sinful natures and dwell in a world where sin with all its sordid evil and wicked deceptions and vain illusions, they craftily devise many inventions, plans and plots, and the vast majority of Christians *believe* these things. Man boasts of what he is going to do and all the Christians say, "Amen!" fully expecting it to come to pass. The confession of many of God's people corresponds with what the devil is promoting. Remember, beloved, millenniums ago men were promoting the same ideas. "*And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth*" (**Gen. 11:4**). But GOD had other plans! "*And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad...and they left off to build the city*" (**Gen. 11:5-8**).

The effort to World Government today is just as contrary to the will and word of God as was Babel of old. And the whole world, including the people of God, must yet again, one more time, come face to face with the word of the Lord: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"The present nations of the earth, and most of the Christians of the world today, will be surprised...*shocked*...when God steps in again and by His sovereign power derails the well-laid and proud and boastful schemes of the great men of the earth, bringing forth a company of unknown, unrecognized, and unheralded sons of God, the instrument in His hand to establish in the earth HIS OWN WORLD GOVERNMENT! God's word is always true, but it is our meddling with it that makes it awkward and difficult to explain. The simple truth is just this: "But the *saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even forever and ever...the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the SAINTS of the most High: and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom...and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM*" (Dan. 7:18, 22, 27).

These *saints* who take and possess the Kingdom, to whom is given judgment and dominion, are THE STONE OF CHRIST -- THE **COMING WORLD GOVERNMENT!** You have *God's word* for it!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 53**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FIFTY-THREE**

**THE DAY OF THE LORD**

You won't find the English word "millennium" in your Bible. Our English word "millennium" is derived from the Latin word *mille*, meaning "thousand." The Greek equivalent for millennium comes from *chilias*, meaning "a thousand," and *annus*, meaning "year."

The only place in the entire Bible where the millennium is mentioned *per se* is in chapter twenty of the book of Revelation. Still, this lone passage has built a doctrine and expectation as firm in most minds as that of eternal torment or the rapture! We are inclined to lightly pass over the fact that the book of Revelation is written in symbolic language, using elaborate figures of speech to convey spiritual truths. I think this should be obvious to every spiritual mind, but some of our brothers and sisters in Christ try to use the "literal method" of interpretation (the *letter* rather than the *spirit*) — even within this book of symbols. A statement like: "The Bible means just what it says and says just what it means!" *sounds* good, perhaps even spiritual, and often brings some hearty "amens," but this cannot apply when the Holy Spirit speaks and conveys truth through symbols. The very nature of a symbol is that it means *something else*. Otherwise it would not *be* a symbol!

In the opening verse of the book of Revelation the beloved John is told that the message of the book would be *signified* to him. This word means just what the syllables say: **sign-i-fied**, that is, communicated to him by means of signs and symbols, in parables, in the typology of numerology, figures of speech, and so forth. These signs and symbols were not to be taken *literally*! For instance, the "lamb" in the midst of the throne is not a four-legged lamb with wool. The "beast out of the sea" is not some weird pre-historic reptile from Jurassic Park. The "1260 days" are not twenty-four hour periods. The "woman" clothed with the sun and in pain to be delivered is not an ordinary female having a baby. Why should the Holy Spirit suddenly change His style once He nears the end of the book? Why should it seem strange that the "thousand years" should have a *spiritual meaning* beyond a literal age lasting for exactly a thousand earth years? Why should not the angel still be **sign-i-fying** when He shows John this millennial reign of Christ with His saints?

One brother has well written, "Principles of interpretation are very important. This is the only passage in the entire Bible which speaks of a 'thousand years' period of Christ and His saints reigning. A single passage such as this, sitting as it is in the midst of all the symbolism of the book of Revelation, should not be used to explain *other* passages of scripture in the Bible by taking it as having a natural fulfillment instead of being symbolical. Rather, this passage of scripture should be interpreted in the light and understanding of all the other teachings of the Bible. Many take this one passage of scripture and try to fit a hundred or more other passages into a supposed meaning of it, thereby distorting the meaning of the many other passages...in this, they do not properly handle nor rightly divide the word of God."

The chief difficulty is in a *literal* or *carnal* or *letter of the word* understanding of the nature, place, and time of the thousand years. Most teachers make it an earthly scene, with a physical Jesus reigning on a material throne in the old city of Jerusalem, for a thousand earth years. I do not expect men to love me for pointing out that the understanding of many who call themselves sons of God has not progressed one whit beyond that of the Baptists, Pentecostals, and other Fundamentalists in these things! The fact is, the Lord Jesus Christ did not preach even one sermon about the millennium publicly to the multitudes that followed Him, nor did He teach it privately to His disciples, either before or after His death and resurrection. Think about it — He was completely silent on this now popular doctrine! The apostles, in their epistles, are likewise silent on the subject of a thousand year reign of Christ. The Holy Spirit did show them "things to come," but a thousand year kingdom was never proclaimed as one of those things.

Now, don't misunderstand me! I do not say that the next age of the Kingdom of God will not last for one thousand years. It may. Or, it may not. I will not debate the point with any man. What I am saying is just this: Of all the wealth of scripture truth nothing is more certain or clear than the great truth that the book of Revelation is a *symbolic* and *spiritual book*. Can we not see by this that the *spiritual meaning* of "a thousand years" is something higher and grander by far than a mere time period or number of years? There is no value whatever in the *letter of the Word*. It is when a man begins to see the *spirit of the Word* that truth and reality are quickened as life within. My spirit rejoices today in thankfulness to my Father in heaven for that divine, eternal, life-giving wisdom which is the secret of His own heart.

In Bible usage, one thousand is a round, indefinite number. **Psalm 50:10** states, "**Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.**" Does that mean only a thousand? Or are all the cattle and all the hills His? In like manner, does the Kingdom of Christ last a thousand years, or does it stand forever? Do the sons of God reign with Christ for a thousand years, or do they reign throughout all ages until God is all in all? Is the Kingdom really an age of a thousand years? "God keeps covenant and mercy unto a thousand generations," says the prophet (Deut. 7:9). Does His mercy stop there? "**He commanded His word to a thousand generations**" (**Ps. 105:8**). The thousand is not literal in any of these. They speak figuratively of an abiding principle and the unchanging character of God throughout all generations and ages.

## THE DAY OF THE LORD

In chapter twenty of the Revelation God has clearly revealed the scenario of the millennium by *symbols* — an angel, a key, a bottomless pit, a great chain and a dragon. Are any of these *literal*? NO! Not one. Therefore, when we understand by the Spirit the great truth of the symbolic meaning of the thousand years, we find that it signifies something infinitely more meaningful and glorious than a mere period of time! The thousand years signifies a complete and total reign with Christ IN THE FULLNESS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD. The essence of the millennium is within us now because in measure the light, the illumination, and the glory of the Lord has risen within His elect and to that degree we are even now reigning with Christ.

We live in a day when almost everyone, saint and sinner, recognizes that this is a crazy, mixed-up world we live in. But most preachers and multitudes of Christians are constantly talking about how **bad** it is and how **dark** it is getting. Hogwash! It might be getting dark in the world you live in, but in the Kingdom I've been translated into "**...the path of the JUST is as a SHINING LIGHT, that shineth MORE and MORE unto the perfect Day**" (**Prov. 4:18**). Rotherham translates, "But the path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, going on and brightening, unto meridian day." The Revised Standard Version reads, "...which shines brighter and brighter unto full day." The Moffatt translation says, "... like a ray of dawn, shines on and on unto the full light of Day." Young's Literal Translation renders, "...going on and brightening till the Day is established." The Amplified Bible is so clear and expressive, "But the path of the uncompromisingly just and righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines more and more — brighter and clearer — until it reaches its full strength and glory in the perfect (to-be-prepared) Day."

Many think Christ will reign for a thousand years — and He will, for one thousand years is as a day, and a day is as a thousand years, and that day is the Day of the Lord in your life. I know no words, be they many or few, that could more adequately establish that the term "thousand years" is the New Testament code-word for THE DAY OF THE LORD. The thousand years is the symbol of a time in the life of a son of God where he experiences the power and glory of ruling and reigning with Christ. It is not a literal thousand years, it is the symbol of an attainment of reality and ministry whereby the authority and power of God's Christ is revealed and expressed through us as the elect of God. It is not a *date on the calendar* — it is *reality in the spirit*.

We know that the Kingdom of God does not last for a thousand years. The Kingdom came with Jesus and it shall stand and increase throughout all the ages of time and Christ is the King eternal. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be *no end*. So there is a deep mystery here. The mystery is in God's word, and if we search out the scriptures with the spirit of wisdom and revelation we will be able to see the mystery. The mystery is just this: "**A day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day**" (**II Pet. 3:8**). This lofty thought should assure us beyond doubt that the "thousand years" ARE THE DAY OF THE LORD! Understanding the Word spiritually I believe that this interpretation is the correct one. The "one thousand year day" is the Day of the Lord in your life. The Day of the Lord in your life is when, by the

illumination and work of the Holy Spirit, Christ is fully revealed *to you, in you, through you, and as you*. When Christ rules in you one hundred per cent, the brightness of the Day of the Lord has reached its zenith within your life.

The Biblical imagery for the Day of the Lord begins in the very first verses of the Bible, in the opening chapter of Genesis. Right at the beginning of the creation account we are told that God created light and named it *Day* (Gen. 1:2-5). May God give us eyes to see just what happened at that moment! The Spirit of God was hovering, brooding, vibrating over the face of the deep, and God *said*, God spoke creatively by His *Word*, "Let there be *light!*" This means that when God created light, it sprang from His Logos-Word, which is Christ the light of the world. "God has spoken to us in the person of His Son...who being the brightness of His glory, the out-*raying, effulgence, and emanation of the divine...*" (Heb. 1:3). What the sun's *rays* are to the sun, *Christ* is to God. From the start, therefore, we are taught to associate *Day* and *Light* with Christ and God. And now we have been made the (light) body of Christ!

The firstborn sons of God *are* the Day of the Lord, for upon them is risen the *glory of the Lord* and they are the *light of the world*. I know what the church system has taught, but they taught a lie. They teach that the Day of the Lord is the seven-year tribulation at the end of the age. They have no scriptural foundation. I am making known a DAY unto you, beloved, and the day I am proclaiming is the Day of the Lord, and it is upon us now. We must not be established upon the traditions of the elders nor the doctrines of men. We must allow the Holy Spirit to unfold Christ that we may know Him when He appears, in whatever form or manner He appears, that we miss not the Day of visitation as did the Jews of old. A great light shined in the darkness, the greatest light that has ever been upon this earth and yet, to this day, they are living and walking in darkness. The very glory of the Father was revealed to them as the scripture said it would be. All God ever could be or ever shall be was manifested in Jesus Christ, the firstborn son of God. No greater light could have shone unto them than that light, because the Light of lights was there to see. Most of them did not recognize Him, neither did they suspect that the Lord of glory was right there in the midst of them. If they had entered into Him, He would not have declared that another day yet remained for the children of God. Let us not fall short of what He is now speaking into our hearts! God is in this Day raising up a people that is hearing His words of instruction and is beginning to walk in the light of the glory of God's Christ.

I admonish all who read these lines — be established in YOUR DAY. It is a new day, the Day of the Lord! It is not the great tribulation, nor is it the literal millennium. It is the Day of the unveiling of the glory of Christ and this Day comes in like a thief. Christ's presence is beginning to fill the whole earth and the glory of the Lord is risen upon a people. This is not a fallacy, this is the sovereign work of God in the lives of those who have been called to this Day. This is the very truth, the very understanding as the Spirit has made it known unto His chosen people, that we might know the counsel of God for this very Day. Though multitudes continue to walk in darkness, the darkness of the world of the carnal mind and of the carnal religious systems of men, **you** shall walk in the Light! Many stubbornly cling to those things which are passing, to the former orders and moves of God that have ended, the relics of a former day of glory, but those whose hearts have responded to the call to sonship are taking hold of those things that are new. The former heavens are being rolled up like a scroll and set aside. There is a new order, a new heaven and a new earth for you today, saints of God!

The Day of the Lord is the Light that *Christ is*. Jesus said, "**I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life**" (Jn. 8:12). John, in the first chapter of his Gospel, gives additional revelation on this great truth, when he speaks of the Word being with the Father in the beginning, and how all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Then he goes on to make this significant statement, "**In Him was life; and the LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN**" (Jn. 1:4). From this verse we see that *life* and *light* are essentially the same thing. "The *life* was the *light!*" So when the Christ came as a light into the cosmos, He was also the life that was injected into the creation, to give life to all mankind. John goes on to say, "**That was the TRUE LIGHT, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world**" (Jn. 1:9). All other lights are artificial, imitation, be they sun, moon, stars, sages, teachers, or holy men. Only the Word of God, the Logos, the Christ is the TRUE LIGHT, and He came a light into the cosmos.

When God separated the light from the darkness in that long ago beginning, He called the light DAY, and the darkness He called NIGHT. We are also told that He made two great lights, one to rule the Day and the other to rule the Night. Man with his limited carnal understanding and dead letter-of-the-word interpretations has

restricted this to our solar day and lunar night, and the sun and moon in the sky. But our almighty Father has something infinitely higher than this in mind! These are mere shadows and types of reality. There is a great spiritual meaning to all this. There is a REALM OF LIGHT and a REALM OF DARKNESS in creation, which have nothing to do with our solar day and lunar night. They are realms in the spirit, and we can be inhabitants of either. The realm of light is ruled over by the Son of God, the Sun of Righteousness, who is THE LIGHT in our spirit; and the realm of darkness is ruled over by satan, the prince of darkness enthroned in the ignorance of the carnal mind. Paul, when writing to the saints at Thessalonica, stated, "Ye are all the children of the Light, and the children of the Day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:5). There are many other passages where we read of the children of Light, the children of the Day; and the children of the night or of darkness. So we can be either children of the Day, or children of the night. We can either walk in Light, or walk in darkness; it all depends on whom we are following — Adam or Christ. Jesus spoke this beautiful truth: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the LIGHT OF LIFE" (Jn. 8:12).

As we consider this world in which we live, we see that all the physical light we have springs from the sun in our sky. Take away that orb and darkness would soon cover the earth. All vegetation would droop and die as it turned yellow, then brown and black and crumbled into the earth. Soon after that all animal and human life would have the same fate. The verdant creatures, which grace the surface of the earth, have been created to live in light and by light. No one who has ever seen the sickly color of some plant that has struggled for life in semi-darkness can fail to miss the contrast between the green thing, which grew in the sunshine, and the pale travesty which grew in the shade. In total darkness every man would become blind within three days, and death would follow shortly after. The life that we know comes from the sun, for the light is the life. In the same way, Christ Jesus our Lord is the Sun of Righteousness! He is the illumination of *our Day*, and the light of *our Life*! The sun's rays are the vital life in the environment of earth; the light of God in the face of Jesus Christ raised up within us is the vital life of the heavenly realm of the Kingdom of God where the sons of God live and move and have their being.

The sweet singer of Israel penned these meaningful words: "The entrance of Thy words GIVETH LIGHT; it giveth UNDERSTANDING to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). The prophet Hosea, speaking of the Lord, said, "Thy judgments are as LIGHT that goeth forth" (Hos. 6:5). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a LIGHT unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). Also in II Corinthians 4:6, Paul declares, "For God, who commanded the LIGHT to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT of the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Can we not clearly see by this that TRUTH is LIGHT, UNDERSTANDING is LIGHT, KNOWLEDGE is LIGHT, and LIFE is LIGHT. We often hear someone say, "I got some light on that." They are declaring the reception of understanding. In like manner, DARKNESS is ignorance and error. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MINDS of them which believe not, lest the LIGHT of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:3-4). The Day of the Lord speaks of the *illumination* and *enlightenment* that come *by the Spirit*. The inner revelation and transformation which bring the Day of the Lord into our lives begin the very moment that we turn from the dead letter of the word and seek for its spirit. We have turned from religion and the old static order of the church systems unto the living reality of the Christ within. The elect of God who are being spiritually enlightened and quickened in the full reality of Christ in this hour are now experientially entering into the DAY OF THE LORD!

If we have considered the matter as we ought, we have surely discerned that there are **two kingdoms** in the world: the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of man, the Kingdom of Light and the kingdom of darkness, the Kingdom of Life and the kingdom of death, the Kingdom of Truth and the kingdom of error. Praise God, He "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13). In this world darkness and light, day and night co-exist. Here in El Paso, Texas it is a bright, sunlit day. On the other side of the world people slumber upon their beds in the darkness of night. Therefore I learn in the natural a principle that teaches me a spiritual truth: It is day and night at the same time! These lines are being read by many thousands of people around the world. Some of you walk in light and some of you walk in darkness. Some of you walk in spiritual light in different dimensions, while some of you walk in spiritual darkness in different dimensions. Some of you walk in the unveiling of the unbounded wisdom, understanding, power and glory of Christ within you, while some of you still walk in the bondage and limitation of the dead doctrines, traditions, and orders of the carnal church systems. It's a matter of your UNDERSTANDING! It's not a matter of whether you speak in tongues, how you were baptized, how many meetings you attend, or rules,

regulations, methods, programs, or externals of any kind. It is a thing of the *spirit*, a condition, a state of being, a spiritual mentality, a KNOWING OF THE LORD IN TRUTH AND UNDERSTANDING that brings transformation unto maturity.

Darkness is but the absence of light, or the lack of understanding. Christ Himself IS THE LIGHT OF LIFE. Life comes from light, therefore, if we want to know the condition of life in a man, we must see the state of enlightenment within him. I don't mean his knowledge about doctrinal facts, but the inward revelation of spiritual truth, purpose and reality. We often think that if a man becomes a little more zealous, his life has grown; or if he is a little more pious, his life has increased. Such concepts are totally erroneous. Life is not in the zeal of man; neither is it in the piety of man. There is only one realm and one source of life, and that is LIGHT. Life rests with light; life comes from light. Show me a man who has only a carnal understanding of the things of God and I will show you a man who has a very low level of spiritual life. The churches are full of them! And the pulpits, too! To determine whether a person has grown in life, we must discern the condition of his INNER ENLIGHTENMENT. Furthermore, if we want to help others grow in life, we must help them to be enlightened, to experience the truth of God as reality. If they can receive enlightenment from us, they can obtain life and develop that life. In this the sons of God are made manifest.

It is in this spiritual enlightenment that we step into GOD'S DAY. It is in this Day that Christ is and that Christ brings, in which those who shall rule and reign with Christ now walk. The "Day" of the Lord is not a date on the calendar, not a period of twenty-four hours or a number of years. THE LIGHT OF CHRIST IS THE DAY! This is *our Day!* We are children of *this Day!* The Day of the Lord is not a thousand years — but the *symbol* of one thousand years *stands for* the Day of the Lord. The sons of God reign with Christ for a thousand years — that is, they reign with Christ IN THE DAY OF THE LORD! That is the only place one *can* reign with Christ! No man who walks in the darkness of sin, or in the darkness of carnal religion, will ever share the throne of the Lord. No man devoid of spiritual understanding, illumination, and enlightenment can experience the power of God to rule. And no man who abides in death is able to *reign in life* by Christ Jesus.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). One great cause of error among the Lord's people is their failure to understand this single precious passage of scripture. If we can lay aside the traditions of the theologians and sects and listen instead to the voice of the Spirit, we will clearly see that it is those who *live* that also *reign*, and those who live and reign do so *in the Day of the Lord*. "And they *lived* and *reigned* with Christ for a *thousand years*." We speak the truth in saying that only by life can we reign! Paul speaks of our *reigning in life* by one, Jesus Christ.

Those who reign in life with Christ are also those who have been *beheaded* for the witness of Jesus and have gotten the victory over the *beast* of the Adam nature. Unfortunately the Greek word rendered "beheaded" in our King James Bibles is not fully understood. It appears nowhere else in the scriptures except here. But one fact stands out plainly: It cannot allude to only those who *died* as martyrs. This, too, is a *symbol!* The beloved John who penned these words of inspiration did not die a martyr's death. However John intimately knew Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings and the fact is, he suffered more by living than if he had actually been beheaded. Legend tells us that he was once boiled in oil in an effort to kill him. He was exiled to the isle of Patmos there to starve, where he was given the Revelation. When you read church history you find that a martyr's grave was very often but a release from persecution, an easy way out. So martyrdom does not necessarily mean an untimely death. Those who take up their cross daily and follow Jesus, who lay down all claims to their *own lives*, to know Him in the power of His resurrection and in the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, always bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, are those who are "beheaded" for the witness of Jesus. These blessed ones **lose their own heads** that they might **put on the mind of Christ**, thus **making the Lord Jesus Christ their head**. If we have not **died to self**, my friend, we cannot reign in life by Christ Jesus! And when you begin to live and reign with Him, you live and reign with Christ IN THE SURPASSING GLORY OF THE DAY OF THE LORD. This is not the "letter" of the Word that I now share with you, but this is the **spiritual meaning** of the **MILLENNIUM!**

A day is the result of sunlight, and night is the absence of sunlight. Just as the natural sun rises to bring an earthly day, so the rising of Christ in the hearts and lives of His elect also denotes the beginning of a new spiritual "day" in God's purposes. When Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," He was not referring to natural light. He is the enlightenment that comes spiritually, enabling us to see things in the spiritual world. Christ is now rising in fresh, new, and higher dimensions in the hearts of His elect! And this spiritual action within us heralds the arrival of the Day of the Lord in a new intensity of God's unfolding plan of the ages. It is not a day as man reckons *time*; it is a spiritual reality determined only by the moving of the Spirit. The "millennium" is not a span of time from one point to another — spiritual reality is incalculable! It is not a *quantity of time*, rather it is a *quality of experience*. We must be careful to both read and interpret the scriptures *in the Spirit* or we will think that everything will be fulfilled some day IN TIME, instead of seeing that the fulfillment is IN CHRIST. All the sacrifices, offerings, Sabbaths, feast days, temples, vestments, rituals and laws find their fulfillment **in Christ**. HE is the reality of every type, the substance of every shadow, and the fulfillment of every prophecy!

Carl Schwing spoke of this beautiful truth when he wrote, "Our God is Spirit; and we, as His sons, are led by His Spirit. He is the dawning Spirit, or the Spirit of New Beginnings, that has been sent forth to give us Kingdom Light, Kingdom Life, and Kingdom Knowledge. He is the Spirit that is dividing the time. As we leave time and times past, we move into the time that is to come. This, my brethren, is the 'dividing of time' of which our brother Daniel was told. In the time that is behind us men look for *signs*; while in the realm of Kingdom Time, we are laying hold of the *reality*. As men struggle at the foot of the mountain with their end-time events, methods, and means, we are the 'handful' on the top of the mountain beholding only Jesus, our Elder Brother and Crowned King; into whose image and likeness we are being born.

"The glory that is transpiring will change the course of time. It is bringing to pass the merging of the two realms. Shall deep call unto deep and there be no answer? Shall spirit cry unto spirit and there be no reunion? Shall the old pass away and the new not appear? Ah, it is appearing, my brothers...we are seeing it, we are touching it, tasting it, handling it and becoming it. We are the NEW CREATION of which Paul spoke. We do not belong to *time* as the world knows it...our kingdom is not of this world...nor do we belong to the *times* for they are lifeless and belong to vultures. Time that is to come belongs to us. Hallelujah! Eventually, every eye shall see this glory and all shall know that He is God.

"The 'time' of which I write, goes beyond the prophet's voice, beyond the hope of the patriarchs, beyond the wind of doctrine, and far beyond the teachings of a pseudo Christianity. I write of God's time and of the sons' time. It is the *time* when the *still small voice* is like the *sound of many waters*. It is the *time* when the *storehouse of the Lord* is being opened to the sons of God. It is the *time* for the meeting of the Bride. Can you not see, are you not aware, that we are in the Spirit on the dawning of the Lord's Day? He who was *behind* John is now *before* us...all that remains is to become Him. He is sending forth the seven Spirits, which are before His throne. Within the dimension of Kingdom Time dwells the fullness of all that the prophets foretold, all that Jesus taught, and all the early church died for; and it is in that dimension we have our true citizenship. It is the City of our former birth, the City our fathers sought for, the City of His abode, and it is the City John saw coming down.

"The sons are hearing the call of the Spirit. They know it is daybreak; the transforming rays of the Morning Son, shine upon their yearning souls. This is the beginning of the Rule of the ages, and it is given to the sons to have dominion. Be not deceived, the day of this glory is not far off; already it appears in the eastern sky of the Son's Realm. The light of day pierces the darkness of man's rule, it crumbles into dust the stronghold of Babylon's vain religions, it is the substance of all creation hoped for. The Spirit of the many-membered Lamb goes before us to lead us into the knowledge of the Holy One that we might know, even as we are known. He is leading us unto the Day where the sun never sets; yea, even the darkness shall be light around us...the day when they that *toil not* shall blossom as the lilies of the harvest, the Day when the *wolf* nature of our flesh shall lie down with the *Lamb of God*...the Day when the vipers and hypocrites shall not be able to hurt the children of God in all His Holy Mount...the Day when a thousand shall fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand; but it shall not come nigh us, for we have made the most High our habitation...the Day when the Feet shall stand on Zion...the Day of speaking with a pure tongue, yea, even the language of our Everlasting Father.

"If you should hear the voice of orthodoxy saying, 'But there are many things that first must be,' let it not dishearten you, rather let it strengthen your vision and press you onward toward the *Perfect Day*. There are,

indeed, many things that shall occur upon the earth within earth's range of time. We do not belong to time as such; we belong to the *Father's Time*, to that invisible dimension, to that City whose builder and maker is God. Our vision goes beyond today and tomorrow, it reaches out to the Day of the Lord. Though battles rage and beasts appear, though death and darkness fill the air, and kingdoms fall and nations fail, and kings of earth are no more; yet, there is a plane where sons do dwell...at the right hand of the Glory Lamb. Where He goes, they too must go, and when He shall appear, they too shall appear, and when He reigns, they too shall reign...for they were faithful and passed, with boldness, into the Father's Time; they heard what mortal ears could not, or perhaps would not hear; they answered and were taken there..." — end quote.

Those who are spiritual, having eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, know that God is now beginning to do a new thing in the earth. God is now moving by His Spirit to restore all things beyond any work He has ever done in the past. The new order of the Kingdom of God over the nations is now replacing the old church order of the past, bringing to pass in the earth a new Day in the purposes of God for this world. This new order has begun within God's elect by the establishment of the Present Truth in their minds, hearts, and natures. This Day begins in those who are called to establish the new order in the earth.

The Day of the Lord is one continuous Day known only to the Lord, but it dawns upon different territories as it moves along in God's purposes. The natural earth-day is one continuous day, for it is always day *somewhere in the world*. The day is not only arriving each morning, it has always been in existence since God spoke the command, "Let there be light!" The day never really begins or ends, it simply moves across the earth bringing its light and warmth to different areas throughout a twenty-four hour period. Likewise, the Day of the Lord is an eternal, never-ending Day, nor did it ever have a beginning. The Day of the Lord has no darkness in it. It shines and illuminates continuously. The Day of the Lord is the light that *He is*, for God *is light*, and in Him there is no darkness at all. The beginning of a day means the ending of night, but in a realm where there is not, nor ever has been, darkness, day has no beginning and no ending — it is Eternal Day. This Day of the Lord had its beginning **for us** when it arrived in our experience, to shine upon the territory of our lives. No man knows when this Day begins apart from a revelation from the Lord, for it is the brilliance which He is. He reveals this Day to those who are given eyes to see. It is now time for the NATIONS to come to our light, and KINGS to the brightness of our rising (Isa. 60:1-3). That is the next step in the Day of the Lord.

Some time ago I read a book titled "*Einstein's God*." It is a book that delves deeply into Albert Einstein's concept of the Theory of Relativity. One thing that stood out to me was that Einstein believed that there is no future and there is no past. He claimed that the distinction between past, present, and future is only an illusion, however persistent. Time, said Einstein, is not at all what it seems. It does not flow in only one direction, and the future enters simultaneously with the past. He concluded that within time, there is only NOW. Everything that ever will be *exists only in the now*.

Let me explain how this works. Let's imagine that they are having a great parade through your city. So you go downtown early and put up your little chair on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. You have the perfect vantage point from which to view the parade as it passes by. The hour arrives and you begin to hear the beating of the drums, the tramping of the feet, and the noise of the wheels and you know that the parade is approaching. Soon the floats begin to pass before your vision. But you see, there are people all around, thousands of people standing and sitting on the sidewalk and curb. There you are in your little seat and the only thing you can see is the one float, or perhaps two, that are right there in front of you. So one by one, by one, you watch the floats pass by. Soon there are a number of floats that are in the past — they have already rounded the corner and passed out of sight. There are some floats that are in the future because they are still far down the street, and you can't see them yet. You are like a horse with blinders. All you see is that little portion right there in front of you. That is your *present*, your *now*. Those out of sight are in your *past*, and those still on their way are in your *future*.

Now let's suppose that you make your way up to the top of a three-story building. You perch yourself there on the edge of the roof and you have another view of the parade. In that instant past and future pass away, because now you see the whole thing at once! You see the float that is down in front of the chair you were sitting in. But you also see all the floats that already passed by and all of those still coming up the street. You see the whole parade at the same time, and there is no past or present — the entire parade is in YOUR NOW! If you get high enough you see it all at once and the whole parade, from beginning to end, and *before* the

beginning, and *after* the end — *is all NOW!* This is where we touch God. This is where we meet eternity. This is where we discover the mystery of immortality. This is the great *mystery of life and reality*. This is where we converge with the Eternal Day of God. The past and the future are the present for the Lord. In the high realm of the Spirit there is only now. When you get *high enough* there is no past or future, everything that ever happened or ever shall happen is in God's Eternal Now. If you are sitting on your little chair in front of the hardware store, that will blow your mind. But the LORD SAYS, "I AM that I AM." God IS, and He changes not. God dwells in that light that no (carnal) man can approach unto. He lives in His Eternal Day, the Day of the Lord.

The Light shines in the darkness of this world at this very moment, and it shall yet shine to dispel all darkness from all realms, bringing Eternal Day. There shall be no more night! Speaking of the light of Christ John wrote, "*The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not*" (**Jn. 1:5**). That word "comprehend" is an unfortunate translation. And a wiseacre did not help it by rendering it, "and the darkness was not able to put it out." That is no translation at all. The word in the Greek is *katelaben*, meaning actually "to take down." It is the picture of a secretary to whom the boss is giving dictation, and she stops and says, "I can't take that down, I am not able to take it down." The light shines in darkness and the darkness is not able to take it in. That is it exactly! Someone said to me, "Man, was I in darkness before I met Christ! And I don't know why I didn't see." And after we met Christ, held captive in the blindness of the carnal church systems, there was still so much we didn't see! Well, that is it, we were in darkness and we did not see. Just as walls keep out the sunlight, so the denseness of the carnal mind evades the penetrating light of the Spirit. The darkness just cannot take it in!

Thank God, there is a time for the darkness to be chased away. You go into a room and the minute you switch on the light, the darkness leaves, it disappears. Darkness and light cannot exist together, although they do exist side by side. Darkness and light, night and day, co-exist side by side on planet earth. While it is day time here in the United States of America it is night time in China. We are working in the day while the Chinese are sleeping in the night. The astronauts see both day and night at the same time as they circle in their orbit high above the earth. There you have light and darkness side by side and the darkness just cannot take it in. But the sunlight moves across the earth and the darkness is swallowed up. In like manner, when God's time comes for a man, a woman, a people, or a nation to be brought into the light, He has only to bring the light to shine upon them, and the darkness flees away. The hour is wonderfully nigh at hand when the sons of God shall shine their light upon the nations of earth! The darkness of all people shall be dispelled and billions shall come to the full light of God's Christ. Only the sovereign revelation of the Lord by His Spirit can accomplish this, and it *shall be done*.

It was when the prophet Joel beheld this Day in Spirit that he exclaimed, "*The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible (awesome) Day of the Lord come*" (**Joel 2:31**). This doesn't mean that the literal, physical sun up in the heavens, ninety-three million miles from earth, is going to *nova* and go dark. If it does, we're all dead! There won't be even a cinder of earth left floating through space. And if the sun could somehow go dark without exploding, we would be plunged into an instant ice age the likes of which planet earth has never seen. Nor does it mean that the moon which graces the night sky with its beauty is going to turn into literal, physical blood. This is symbolic language! What does it mean when it says the sun shall be turned into darkness? The sun is our natural light. It is the natural source of all life. Without the sun we would be in total darkness and instant death. Should the sun of our solar system go out an icy coldness would grip us and we would all be dead before we could get to the door — that's how terrible and catastrophic the event would be.

The figure speaks of light turning to darkness. Natural light, figuratively and metaphorically, bespeaks of human understanding, intellect, reasoning. The moon speaks of reflected light, that which has no light of its own, turning to blood. Blood is a symbol of life — "*the life is in the blood*" (**Lev. 17:11**). Spiritually we have a lot of *reflected light* in signs, symbols, rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, rules, commandments, creeds, doctrines and programs. None of these have any light of themselves, they merely reflect the light of God and truth and reality. Water baptism, for example, is merely an outward symbol or reflected light of that true baptism into the death of Christ whereby our sins are carried away into the sea of forgetfulness. The Lord's supper or communion is but an outward symbol or reflected light of the deep *spiritual experience* whereby we eat the flesh (word) of Christ and drink His blood (spirit) in truth and reality. We read of the woman in chapter twelve of the Revelation who has the *moon under her feet*. SHE IS LIVING IN THE REALM ABOVE ALL TYPES AND

SHADOWS AND SYMBOLS, ABOVE ALL REFLECTED LIGHT, CLOTHED WITH THE SPLENDOR OF THE NOONDAY SUN, THE MAJESTY AND GLORY OF THE LIVING CHRIST. She has risen above the outward shadows! Few Christians or churches in this world have touched that realm! This woman, the virgin bride of Christ, dwells in a heavenly place in the dazzling glory of spiritual understanding, reality and power. Only the woman thus clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, is able to birth the manchild, the manifested sons of God. The sons of God are not birthed out of the carnal, earth-bound religious systems of men who are ruled by the reflected light of the moon. Coming out of Babylon was not our birth into sonship. Oh, no! It is only in the high place of pure spiritual experience that the life of sonship is conceived and brought to birth.

The Spirit of God is speaking to us today that in order to enter into this new Day of the Lord the natural light, the natural source of life, all of our carnal, letter-of-the-word, religious understanding which we have put upon the word of God and the things of God, must be turned into darkness. There is no hope for it! It has no spiritual illumination in it, nor can it quicken us or produce within us any spiritual seed of life. That natural light must be *turned off!* We must be *clothed upon* with the glory of the Living Christ! And the moon — all those reflective ordinances, rituals, creeds, religious works, programs, and activities — must be *turned to blood*, brought to life within us, so that we are made partakers of the *reality*, having no need any more for the *shadow*. Instead of the cold, reflective light that only rules over us in the night time darkness of our walk as carnal Christians, the Lord is now bringing His elect into the hot, throbbing, pulsating, radiating, penetrating LIGHT OF LIFE. Ah, *our sun* shall be fully turned into darkness, and *our moon* into blood, before that great and notable Day of the Lord comes in our lives! The natural light of the carnal understanding must *pass away*, while the typical and symbolic must be *spiritually fulfilled* within each of us. This is how the Day of the Lord is now dawning in our hearts! This is the process by which the Day of God arises upon us in our experience!

The Day of the Lord is the Light of Christ illuminating the earth realm. Christ is both the light and the life. Sweet mystery of life, at last we have found Thee! And we have found that Thou, O Christ, art the *light of life*, not life like the life of men, but everlasting life, the life of the ages. "*For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 5:17). *Much more* shall we *reign!* When? Where? How? How long? A day? A thousand years? During the millennium? In heaven? In Jerusalem? In the sweet by and by? No — IN LIFE! "...shall reign *in life* by one, Jesus Christ." To reign in life is to reign in light; to reign in light is to reign in the Day of the Lord; to reign in the Day of the Lord is to reign for a thousand years in the symbology of scripture. God has given us authority by the life of Christ raised up within us, and in and by that life we are destined to reign in the Kingdom.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the NATIONS shall come to *thy light*, and KINGS to the brightness of *thy rising*. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:1-3,14).

God is raising up Christ in a people as the Light of Life. The elect of the Lord is the illumination of the Day of the Lord. Just as Jesus stood on the mount of Transfiguration and went through that *chrysalis metamorphosis* and His astonished disciples saw His face shine as the sun, and His raiment as white as the light, and His whole being radiating the glory of God, so God is bringing many sons to that same glory, and this time the whole world will see the light, and all nations will come to **your light**. That's how the Kingdom of God is coming upon the nations in this hour of transition into the next age. God is coming in a light that cannot be hid, and kings shall see that brightness and that rising upon all the holy sons of God. They will want that light, hunger for that truth, yearn for that reality, and thirst for that life, and they will come to it and the NATIONS of them that shall be saved will walk in the light radiating from the City of God.

You, my beloved, will be called upon by presidents, kings, prime ministers, lawyers, educators, doctors, business leaders, and great men of the nations for the Lord shall bring heaven to earth and stand it up in a people. The word that flows out of this people will be channeled out of the throne room of heaven, it will be the mind of God, it will be the mind of Christ, it will be a more sure word of prophecy, it will be a creative word that changes and transforms all things. There shall be a wonderful, glorious, equitable outpouring of the Spirit of

God on men and women, boys and girls, and little children — the fire, the glory, and the power — and the whole world is going to see this thing. It will no longer be necessary to go out there in the energy of the flesh, knock on every door, mobilize, organize, and by carnal methods and religious techniques try to get the world saved. A brother of perception once said to a large church crusade, "There are hundreds of people here tonight who have pulled your loved ones by the ears into the Kingdom of God. And all you have accomplished is *lop-eared loved ones!*" Ah, when God arises, when God does His strange act, your loved ones, your friends, your neighbors, your associates, your enemies will fall all over you getting to God. All they need is the divine revelation of the love and glory and majesty of God and they will come to your rising and run to your glory!

The natural light of the world is the sun, and the sun brings the day. **THOSE WHO ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD ARE THE DAY OF THE LORD!** Nothing could be plainer than that. We who are of the Day, and are not lovers or sleepers of the night, have a high heritage. "For ye were one time darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as sons of light" (Eph. 5:8). "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the sons of light" (Jn. 12:36). "Ye are all the sons of the light, and the sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others..." (I Thes. 5:5-6). We who have received the love of the truth and have been made the light of the world have a higher calling. We have privileges, and duties to perform. We must be about our Father's business! There must be a parting of the ways with all who walk in the night of sin, negativism, religious bondage and spiritual drunkenness. It is time to forsake the shame and error of former carnal and religious realms, and time to look up, time to arise and shine.

The Day is at hand! The night is far spent. We must go forth and lead the way for all who will follow. The Day of the Lord begins with those who are enlightened, cleansed of all error, bondage, and carnality, and clothed upon with the glory of Christ's presence, mind, and nature. The Day of the Lord begins with those who have eyes to see the true purposes of God for this hour, and commit themselves to walk therein. There is glory and power and rejoicing and praise ahead for those who walk in the light of this new Day. This is the Day of deliverance, not bondage. The bands are broken. Christ is conqueror. He reigns! We are not expecting the Antichrist nor the Great Tribulation, for we have met the Christ, we have heard His heart, we have beheld His glory, and have been made one with His purposes. His hosts are invincible, and we are those hosts. Our coronation draws nigh. We are the City foursquare, the heavenly Jerusalem, and mount Zion where the King reigns gloriously. The Kingdom of God is within us! Its glory overshadows us! Its light emanates from us! Those who are born of this Word of the Kingdom are now standing on new Kingdom ground.

What is *light*? No one has ever seen pure light, or even sunlight, for light is invisible. Those things which we see are really only the objects that are revealed by light. You and I do not see light, we only see that which reflects the light. Remove the objects and we would see nothing. Even what we perceive in our atmosphere as sunlight, or in our houses as light, is not really light, but those things within our atmosphere and in the room where you now sit, which reflect the light. Light is invisible. Light cannot be seen! That is why 'outer space' consists of vast reaches of complete darkness, unless interrupted by some planetary body revealed by some source of light. Truly did the apostle write, "God *is light*, and in Him is no darkness at all." And just as truly it is written, "No man has *seen God* at any time." You don't see light, therefore you cannot see God, for God is light! That is why God has channeled Himself through Jesus Christ, for in Jesus is revealed all the essence of God in visible form. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen *in the face of Jesus Christ*. Jesus is to God what a light bulb is to electricity. Electricity is invisible, but channeled through the bulb the energy becomes revealed and expressed in a visible way, a way that we perceive as light. As members of the Christ body, the light that God is, is also channeled through us. God is invisible, but expressed through His people on earth He is perceived by the world in all the glory of His attributes and power.

The Father is now appearing within His chosen sons, imparting the light that He is within them. By His light within, we shall dispel the darkness of this dark world. He is awakening us to the new Day in which we now live. We are like light bulbs that have just been screwed into the light socket. God is now ready to appear in His saints in the greatest manifestation of His glory ever! He shall shine throughout the earth in a brilliance that will outshine a thousand noonday suns. By His glorious appearing in us, the Day of the Lord shall come in the full brilliance of the glory of Christ, to turn this long, dark night into endless Day. When the Day of the Lord has fully risen, **all** shall be awakened, illuminated, and quickened by His Light of Glory. In the Day of the Lord there is *no night!* There is *no darkness!* That means the light illuminates all things and all men, for only by the reflection of the light is the darkness dispelled. The realm of darkness no longer exists for those who walk in the light as

He is in the light. The church and the world shall be transformed, and this old earth of ours shall become the Paradise of God. I tell you the truth, I lie not. The Day is at hand! Rejoice and arise, oh ye sons of the most High! The glorious dawn is now painting the eastern sky, and the river of God is full of water!

Some people have asked me, "Brother Eby, don't you believe in the devil?" No! I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Don't you believe in the power of the devil?" they persist. Some people do, and they are under that power. They believe in the power of the devil, they believe he exists everywhere, behind every bush, in every circumstance, at every church meeting, in every sickness and trouble, everywhere all the time the devil is fighting them, tempting them, opposing them, hindering them, trying to trip, ensnare, discourage, and defeat them. And no matter how many times they rebuke him, bind him, and cast him out, he always pops right back just like the roadrunner in the cartoons. For them the devil is a power to constantly be reckoned with.

"Do you believe in witchcraft?" people inquire. No! I'm not afraid of voodoo or any other kind of darkness. No one can cast a spell on me. That has nothing to do with me. "Oh, but Brother Eby, don't you stand in awe of the power of darkness?" No, I don't. I stand in awe of the greatness of THE LIGHT! Darkness is but the absence of the light. How can light fear darkness, or attribute to it any power? "Don't you believe that as the people of God we ought to stand against the darkness, fight the darkness, pray and plead the blood against the darkness?" NO!!! **Turn on the Light.** That is the *only* cure for darkness! For darkness to cast a spell on me, or do anything to me, would be like trying to get a duck wet with a water hose. Darkness has no power over light, but light has total power over darkness.

Darkness has no power except that which we give to it. When I was a child we had a pitcher pump from which we got all our water. The pump was down the hill just a little way from the house. At night my mother would often send me to get a bucket of water from the pump. I was always afraid of the dark. To my childish mind the darkness was full of unseen dangers, wicked men, monsters, ghosts, and dreadful creatures of all kinds. They were right there ready to snatch me. They were behind the trees and hanging from the branches. They were in front of me and behind me. I would turn around and around and around all the way to the pump and back to the house, trying to face all the spooks at the same time. None of them ever touched or harmed me and, of course, as soon as the sun rose in the morning they were all gone. The fact is — they were never there! They existed only in my mind and possessed only the power my imagination gave them. And the light is the only power on earth that could chase them away!

My beloved brethren, know ye not that *ye are the light of the world?* Brother Bennie Skinner once gave the following illustration. What if I came into your house at night and it was totally dark, and I found you standing in the corner saying, "I curse this darkness, I rebuke this darkness, I command this darkness to go!" I come in and you say, "Brother Bennie, please join me in prayer. We're going to curse this darkness together. We're going to break the power of this darkness." I reply, "We're going to *do what?*" "We're going to curse this darkness that is in this room. This darkness has caused me to bump into things, I tripped and fell, I bruised and cut my face and nearly broke my arm. This darkness is so dreadful, depressing, and threatening!" Without a word I reach over, feel along the wall, find the light switch, and flip it on. Instantly the room is flooded with light. Every thing in it becomes visible. The danger, depression, and fear are all gone. What happened to the darkness? WE JUST TURNED ON THE LIGHT! That's all that is necessary to defeat the darkness. *You are the light of the world!* **Turn on the light!** Ah, as soon as we *know* this, when we truly *understand* that we are sons of The Light, then **the darkness is past, and the true light NOW SHINES** (1 Jn.. 2:8). All creation is waiting for the manifestation of the SONS OF LIGHT! Know the reality and power of the Light within your own experience, my beloved brother, sister, and you will be ready to enlighten this darkened world.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 54**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART FIFTY-FOUR**

**MAN - THE IMAGE OF GOD**  
**THE SON OF MAN**

What is man? The question is asked five times in the scriptures by men who probed the deep purposes of God. We first find this question in the book of Job, which is the most ancient of the inspired writings we have come to know as the Bible. It predates the first five books of the Bible, the books of Moses, and its exact origin is a mystery. It came out of antiquity, emerged from the mists of obscurity, and has always been a classic of human history. Job was a man of whom God witnessed that he was a perfect man, none like him in all the earth, an upright man who feared God and hated evil (Job 1:8). And yet God subjected him to testings so severe, that it is hard to believe that any man has been more severely tried. Why did God do this? Job wondered about this himself. He wondered about the plight of all humanity, the good and the evil that befalls every man, the joys and the sorrows, the triumphs and the tragedies. Job saw that all men were being tested in various ways. Why was this? In some cases man's lot didn't seem reasonable. So Job asked the probing question, "*What is man that Thou shouldst magnify him? or that Thou shouldst set Thine heart upon him? and that Thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?*" (Job 7:17-18). It appeared to Job that there must be some great and divine purpose in man, that of all the creatures God had made in the universe, man was singled out for special treatment. God was dealing with man every moment of every day, in a way that was hard to understand. Man seemed to be in some great school of experience where the lessons were uncommonly difficult and the discipline exceedingly severe. There must be some purpose behind it all, some great goal, some grand scheme that God had in mind, and Job was moved to search out what it was. And so his question, "What is man?" What is the purpose of man's experience on earth? What is the plan behind creation? Why was man created and formed, and why do You visit him every morning, and try him every minute? There has to be some divine reason for all this, some mysterious purpose behind it all. But what?

Further along in Job's testing understanding began to break like the light of morning with a view of God's purpose in man and he cried out, "*He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*" (Job. 23:10). Ah, when God had tried Job he came out on the other side a far different and better man, a greater man, with an *experiential knowledge* of God and His ways, and at the end of his training was able to confess, "*I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now my eye seeth Thee*" (Job 42:5). He had heard of God before, he had been taught religion and doctrines and creeds and ceremonies, and all he knew was men's opinions, ideas, concepts and theories; but now he *saw God*, he *knew God* for himself, and *understood* the mystery of His great purpose in man as he had not understood before. God answered his question: "What is man?"

This question is asked again in Job 15:14. The next time we meet it is in **Psalm 8:4**. "*What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visiteth him?*" This was David, the shepherd king asking it this time. He prefaced his question with this astute observation: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man?"

Come with me now to the hills of Judea surrounding the village of Bethlehem, walk with me in the stillness of a star-studded night long centuries before the Christ came to earth. A young lad, a shepherd boy, at the close of the day has gathered his sheep into the fold, and sitting upon a jutting rock, gazes with contemplation into the arching vastnesses of space, at all those billions of galaxies with their trillions of stars and suns and planets and moons, scintillating in all their glory. Observing the harvest moon coming up over the dark horizon, he is awed and fascinated with the majesty of the heavens, and in the wonder of the moment begins to commune in his heart with Yahweh, the Creator of it all. What a beautiful situation that must have been! There alone in the

sacred stillness of the night, no city noises, no clapping tires of eighteen-wheelers on the freeway, no noisy throngs of people rushing here and there, no gaudy flashing neon lights, no smog to blur the beauty of those exquisite stars. Just himself, and his flock of sheep, now resting in the fold — and God.

As David stared into the twinkling glory above him, he said to God, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" "Lord, what is all this? What are they doing out there? Why did you make them? What am I here for? What is man that Thou art mindful of him? Why do you visit and deal with the sons of men? Where does man fit into the great scheme of creation? What role is man destined to play in your universal purpose? Surely this was not all made for nothing! Perish the thought that it is all merely your plaything, designed for your entertainment. There must be some grand scheme behind it all, some great mystery yet to be unfolded. Lord, tell me about it, give me understanding and wisdom, instruct my heart, enlighten my mind. Teach me where I fit, where man fits, into the equation. Am I here only to tend sheep, to live out a miserable existence, full of trials and sorrows, with only old age and the grave at the end? Is that all there is to this? Or is there something that I am missing?" Ah, I know the feeling in David's heart that blessed night, for I have felt the same way, and have asked the same questions in my heart.

It has always pleased the Lord to shroud the deep things of God in mystery and to cover them as with a cloud of glory. Centuries ago David sought in prayer that he might understand God's ways in man. The word of the Lord came to him as it did to Job, and God granted him to be among that elect people to whom understanding is given of the great and glorious plan of God behind all His works. David knew that God was dealing with man in a very special way, and he wanted to know why. To David's heart came the most sublime of all truths. His spirit rejoiced as the heavens opened and the mind of God was revealed in him. When God revealed to David the purpose of His working with mankind, David began to speak eternal truths in the spirit of prophecy, declaring, "For Thou hast made man but a little lower than Elohim, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to *have dominion over the works of Thy hands*; Thou hast put *all things* under his feet" (Ps. 8:5-6).

As we meditate upon this blessed truth, surely we must realize that when God placed Adam, formed of the ground, in the lovely Garden of Eden, he was just in the first stage of being the man that God wanted. He was like the lump of clay placed on the potter's wheel, he had not yet been scraped, glazed, and fired, and was in no way ready to assume his role as ruler of the universe. Surely his "fall" is the *proof* of that! He was the most glorious of all God's magnificent creation, yet he was like a little baby in a state of innocence. How could he exercise dominion over the earth and over starry worlds beyond (*all* the works of God's hands), how could he stand as a judge and ruler over nature, how could he command celestial orbs, and living entities of all kinds, from demons of darkness to angels of might and glory, when he himself had no sense of right and wrong, no knowledge of good and evil, and no *experience* with the laws of the universe or the ways of divine government?

The scriptures tell us that we shall judge the world and angels that we shall inherit all things and rule from the Father's throne, but how many of us are in a position to do that yet? Have any of us got the knowledge, the wisdom, the understanding, or the experience to fill such a position? There is only one man thus far who has qualified for this great task — the man Christ Jesus. Jesus is God's finished product! Jesus is God's perfected man! And how was he made perfect? *Through the things that He suffered* (Heb. 2:9-10). This is the revelation God gave to Job when he posed the question, "What is man?" Even though Jesus was born the Son of God, as the Son of man He had to be processed, He had to be subjected to the trials and the fire, He had to pass through God's great school of dominion, He had to learn the lessons and be trained in the ways and wisdom of His Father, as every human-divine son has to be before he can ascend the throne and fulfill God's purpose in rulership over all things. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience through the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:8-9). It was absolutely necessary that the firstborn Son of God first be perfected to bear the image and likeness of God before ascending the throne at God's right hand. But, praise God, He is not to be the only one! There is going to be a vast multitude

of sons who will be just like Him, and they are in the process now, even as I pen these words, of becoming like Him.

Can we not see by this that our present travail is distinctly necessary for the bringing about of God's glorious purpose for His sons. Our singular experience of trial, suffering, and overcoming is to render itself in a unique position of glory! The eighth Psalm is a poem on the excellence of the divine government in all the world, yea, through the entire universe. It begins by stating that God has set His glory above the heavens. Then follows a not unnatural contrast between man's littleness and the greatness of the unbounded heavens. The universe in all its immensity is contrasted with man, who seems but a speck in the ocean of infinity. What thoughtful mind does not echo the sentiment, "What **is** man, that Thou art mindful of him! and the son of man, that Thou *visiteth* him!" Yet there is something altogether unique even in the local habitation of planet earth, which has been assigned to this mysterious being. But it is not to this that the Psalmist refers. He speaks of the extraordinary position of man in what may be called the *spiritual universe*, and describes him as being made but a little lower than Elohim, and being crowned with *glory* and *honor*, and enthroned as the *ruler of all*. Man was *meant* to rule ALL THE WORKS OF GOD'S HANDS! Man was destined to exercise a *divine* and *spiritual dominion*, the authority of God Himself invested in man. The image of God would clothe him with divine power. All things would be subject to his word. His life fluid would be heavenly. His will would be in God, and the fullness of God would dwell in him. He would live in paradise, clothed with heavenly glory. The light of the majesty of God would emanate from him, and he would live on the paradisaical fruit of the Word of God. He would know no limitation, no sickness nor sorrow, and no death. All things everywhere would be subject to him in the fire of his love.

## MAN — THE IMAGE OF GOD

It all goes back to the creation of man. Jesus said, "The Father hath given Him (the Son) **AUTHORITY... because He is the SON OF MAN**" (Jn. 5:26-27). One might think it should have read, "because He is the SON OF GOD," but it doesn't say that. The awesome and universal authority of the Son is rooted in the fact that He is the **SON OF MAN**. Why was it necessary for Jesus to be the "Son of man" to have authority on earth? That man should bear the image of God and have dominion over all things is the first announcement of God's intention regarding man and the first announcement of His purpose, and locked up in that wonderful declaration is a universe of meaning that does not reach the eye and that the mind has never understood. We must re-establish and re-define the purpose of our existence. Why are we here? The purpose of God in man has been blurred, distorted, and hideously mangled by the carnal teachings of the church systems.

Oh that men would awaken to the truth that God has provided the *answer* to humanity's dilemma! "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). I hope that we all have become aware that that MAN by whom God shall *judge the world in righteousness* is a CORPORATE MAN. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ...for the perfecting of the saints...till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto A PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:1,12-13). "Do ye not know that *the saints shall judge the world?* and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that ye shall *judge angels?* how much more things that pertain to this life" (I Cor. 6:2-3).

God in His great purpose of redemption and restoration is raising up A MAN, the MANY-MEMBERED CHRIST OF GOD. He is preparing an instrument, a channel through which to rule, deliver and bless. God has a MAN to fix creation's problems! You see, beloved, when God injected Himself into the history of this world to save, lift, redeem and restore it, He could not do it as *God*. He had to do it as *man*. That is why *God was manifest in the flesh*, because anything that is done in a governmental way on this earth **must be done through man**. "Let *them* have dominion..." is God's own sovereign edict and delegation of governmental authority. Man's rulership of the earth and the heavens is built into the *constitution*, which He framed for creation. For God, as God, to do the job would be *unconstitutional*! Man is God's constitutional agent. To man has been given the stewardship of the earth and of the heavens! That is why there is now a perfected MAN *reigning in the heavens*! God remains the owner, but man is the manager and overseer — the judge, ruler, priest and king! Jesus Christ had

to take upon Himself the form of man, the likeness of flesh, being made in all things like unto His brethren, because *nothing happens on this earth except through man* The Captain of our salvation, the High Priest of our profession, the Head of the Christ-body, the firstborn Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords IS THE **MAN** CHRIST JESUS, *not the God Christ Jesus*; He is the SON OF **MAN**, not *God the Son*.

Man in the image of God is God's government in the Kingdom of God. Creation was originally established with a degree of splendor suitable to the dignity of Adam as its appointed ruler. Man was the final and crowning work of God's hands! I would draw your attention, beloved saint of God, to the fact that man was not created on the first day, nor on the second or third, but in the end of the sixth day when all the rest of God's creation had been completed. It was only after the vastness of the heavens and the earth and all the hosts of them had been made that the Creator proclaimed the awesome fiat, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have **DOMINION**" (**Gen. 1:26**). You see, the dominion of the whole Kingdom was given unto man! David explains this *universal dominion* in the eighth Psalm. "When I consider Thy *heavens*, the work of Thy fingers, the *moon* and the *stars*, which Thou hast ordained; **what IS man**, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visiteth him?" And then he answers the question! "Thou hast made him a little lower than Elohim, and hast *crowned him with glory and honor*. Thou madest him to *have dominion over the works of Thy hands*; Thou hast put *all things under his feet*."

Now that phrase, "under his feet," is a Hebrew term which means that man was to have authority over all the works of God's hands, over all creation, over the earth, the moon, and the stars, over absolutely *everything*! He was to rule it all, govern it all, be head of it all. God made man for that intent and purpose. That is the answer to the question, "What is man?" That is **what man is!** The writer to the Hebrews makes this truth so plain that only a fool could question it. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, *What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visiteth him? Thou madest him a little lower than God; Thou crownest him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left NOTHING that is NOT put under him*" (**Heb. 2:6-8**). There is holy wonder to these words that is almost beyond our understanding. Nothing has been left outside the dominion of man! Weymouth puts it this way: "Thou hast put everything in subjection under his feet. For this subjecting of *the universe* to man implies leaving nothing that is not subject to him. But we do not yet see the universe subject to him." The whole cosmos really belongs to mankind, it is his dominion, his sphere of authority, and everything is to be put under his control.

Now for Jesus to have anything to do with this dominion He had to become a man, for the dominion was given to man, and in order for Him to receive the kingdom, He had to be a man. As the eternal Word of God He could have nothing to do with this dominion, though it was through Him that all these things were made. But become a man He did, and through His life of obedience to the Father, by His holiness, His purity, His grappling with sin, sorrow, pain, limitation, and death, and triumphing over it, He *qualified* to receive the Kingdom and be the ruling head of it, the King of glory. The man in God's image has a divine and royal destiny to exercise dominion and authority in this world and throughout the unbounded heavens. He is to be the head of all. All that happens in the cosmos must take place under the direction of man. God created all things and then man in His image and likeness, as the connecting link between God and His creation, that through man in His image and likeness the *invisible God* might be *seen and known and touched* by the *visible creation*. The face of God would be revealed for all creation to behold, in the face of man. The likeness of God would be made known to the entire universe in and by man. The love, grace, wisdom, knowledge, power and glory of God would be exercised toward every creature and world and order throughout the vastnesses of infinity through the man in the image and likeness of God!

When God gave the world and all things into the power of man, who should rule it as a viceroy under Him, it was His plan that Adam should do nothing but with God and through God, and God Himself would do all His work in the universe through Adam. Can we not see by this that Adam was appointed God's KING-PRIEST on behalf of all creation? It had nothing to do with the fall of man or of other worlds, but everything to do with the revelation of God to creation and rule over it. When sin entered the world, Adam's power was proved to be a terrible reality, for through him the earth, with the whole race of man, and all things, was brought under the curse of sin and death. When he fell his kingdom fell with him. When he came under the dominion of sin and death he took all that he ruled with him. But when creation's new rulers, the second man, the last Adam, the

corporate Christ, Head and body, are manifested as the sons of God, their kingdom will be elevated again with them. Christ has raised *us* up, and we shall raise *them* up! As the sons of God are forever freed from sin, sickness, sorrow, fear, limitation and death — then will their realm be.

From the earliest dawn of creation's light it has been God's intention, and His eonian purpose, to make man in His image and after His likeness. This was His initial, original and only statement about His will for mankind: "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the works of our hands." We read in Genesis how God affirms that "it was good" after each act of creation — except after the sixth day, when man was created. There follows a concluding assessment that God saw that all of His creation was *good* — but not necessarily the creation of man. Man was not declared to be *good*, He was declared to be THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD! This was God's purpose from the beginning, and He has never deviated from that purpose or changed or revamped it in any way. When our Father's great plan of the ages has been consummated, He will have accomplished exactly what He set out to do in that long ago beginning. He initiated this purpose when father Adam stepped forth out of His creative hand, He has been working on it ever since, and will continue until the whole race of mankind shines forth in the brightness, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, power and glory of the omnipotent Creator.

The making of man in His image and after His likeness is the pivotal point of all God's actions. This cherished plan which God kept hidden in His mind from eternity motivates all that He is working toward in the whole scheme of creation. Everything that has happened in the history of mankind, or is happening, is working to bring about this glorious end. It is with this unwavering resolution that God arranges all His works. When once we see this by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God, we are for the first time able to truly *understand* all the various aspects of His plan, and all His doings, and all that shall take place in the ages to come. As the light of revelation streams from realms above, and our minds become enlightened to the higher and divine purpose behind all things, we see how great and glorious is the intention of God in man! The idea held by most Christians, that God finished this work with Adam in the garden is far, far, from the truth. God's original plan was not to make just one man in the garden in His image, or one Son two thousand years ago in His image, or a few saints through the ages into His image, but to make a *whole race of beings* in His image and likeness and give them dominion over *everything* He has made! When God began this vast, beautiful and wonderful creation, that is what He had in mind to do. Oh, the wonder of it!

The grandest of all truths is that CHRIST IS THE IMAGE OF GOD! If you want to know what God had in mind when He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness," you have only to look at Jesus Christ. **That is what God meant!** "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of CHRIST, WHO IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:3-4). "In whom we have redemption through His blood...who is THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, the firstborn (prototype) of every creature" (Col. 1:14-15). His dignity is still further elaborated in these words of the writer to the Hebrews: "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels..." (Heb. 1:3-4). The Amplified Bible reads, "He is the...expression of the glory of God — the Light-being, the out-raying of the divine — and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature, upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power...taking a place and rank by which He Himself became...superior to angels..."

How totally inadequate do our words become in the light of words of such wonder as these! Jesus is the *prototype* of what God intends man to be. He is God's finished product, God's perfect man; what every man should be and ultimately will be. We will only understand the majesty of man in God's image when we see Jesus as THE BEAM OF THE DIVINE GLORY, or THE OUT-RAYING OF GOD'S PERSON. We have never seen the sun — we have only seen the light-rays which emanate from it. The light that floods our earth is not the sun itself, for were the sun to truly come into our world there would be nothing left but a cinder. The sunbeams radiate from the sun, travel ninety-three million miles through space, arriving at planet earth some eight minutes later. The ray is of the same constitution as the orb from which it comes; if you analyze its character you will learn something of the very nature of the sun; they live in perpetual and glorious unity. The sunbeam originates in and as the sun itself, and is the *emanation, out-raying, effulgence, expression*

*manifestation and revelation* of the sun. We are reminded of those inspired words which tell us that "no man has ever seen God at any time; the uniquely begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him — He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him and He has made Him known" (Jn. 1:18, KJV & Amplified). God's Christ is the out-raying, projection, expression and revelation of the very Father Himself!

The Christ is also the express or exact image of the Father's person, the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature. The allusion here is to the impression made in ancient times by a seal on molten wax; and as the image made on the wax is the exact representation (though on another substance) of the die, so is Christ the exact representation of the Father in human flesh. And thus He was able to say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The life of Jesus is the life of God transmuted into the form of our human life, so that we may see, touch, hear, know, understand, and experience the very being and nature of God in human terms. The natural mind cannot understand such a truth as this, but this is what God meant when He said, "Let us make *man* in our image and after our likeness." CHRIST is the image of God and God meant for every man to look and speak and act and be just like Jesus Christ. *This is the value of man's life in redemption*, for God sent One who was all that man was meant to be to purchase us — not to harps and golden streets and fluttering wings in some far-off heaven somewhere — but back to relationship with God as sons in His very own image.

As we consider the wonderful advent of man created "in the image of God" we can only conclude that this is a SPIRITUAL MAN brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power and attributes. The image of God is the nature of God reproduced in man. Thus, man is the true image of God! The divine nature was best and fully expressed in the man Christ Jesus who shined upon mortals the truest revelation of God and lifted man's sights higher than their poor thoughts would allow. Jesus revealed to men their true origin, heritage and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption and so great a salvation shall be — THE IMAGE OF GOD. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning, and as he ever shall be world without end — THE IMAGE OF GOD WITH DOMINION OVER ALL THINGS.

We have come to the most sublime of all truths. The beauty of these celestial realities is found in the fact that all Jesus did He did "for us" — not in our place, but **on our behalf**. A musician demonstrates the beauty of the music he teaches in order to show the learner the way by practice as well as precept. This was the precious import of our Lord's sinless life and of His demonstration of power over the whole flesh realm, including death. Our heavenly Father demands that all men should follow the example of our Lord and Master. In order to enter the Kingdom of the Heavens, the anchor of hope must be cast beyond the veil of this carnal, dying realm into the Shekinah into which Jesus has passed before us; and this advance beyond the law of sin and death must come through the joys and triumphs of a people "led by the Spirit" who are "the sons of God" as well as through their sorrows and afflictions. It is by facing the enemy in the crucible of experience and by the authority of the Spirit that victory is snatched from the jaws of defeat. Each and every test in our lives is an opportunity to prove for ourselves and demonstrate to those about the triumph of the Spirit over the flesh. Step by step, battle by battle, victory upon victory we ascend into the heights of the Kingdom of Heaven. the image of God and the dominion restored in man.

One can never comprehend the length and breadth and height and depth of God's great plan of creation and redemption until he first understands that Jesus Christ is the revelation of the **value of every man**. In the mysterious mists of Eden God breathed into man the breath of His own divine life and prophesied of this man that he would be the image and likeness of Himself, and in due time would take his place in the Father's great Kingdom with dominion over all the works of His hands. There is a story about a little piece of wood that once bitterly complained because its owner kept whittling away at it, gouging it and making holes in it. But the one who was cutting it paid no attention to the stick's protests. He was making a flute out of that piece of ebony, and he was too wise to stop when the wood complained so bitterly. The man said, "Little piece of wood, without these rifts and holes, and all this cutting, you'd be just a stick forever — a useless piece of ebony. What I am doing now may seem as if I am destroying you, but instead it will change you into a flute. Your sweet music will charm the souls of many and comfort sorrowing hearts. My cutting you is the making of you, for only thus can you be a blessing in the world." The meaning of this little parable is clear: That flute, whose music

blended so sweetly in the orchestra, was made a flute only by the knife and file that filled it with rifts and holes which seemed to be its very destruction. But the purpose of the master was that it might become a melodious instrument to the praise of God. The Lord is shaping us. He is processing us into His image, that His glory might be revealed in creation. Hallelujah!

This divine potential lies in the spirit of *every man* and shows the *value of man's life*. Some do not believe that the seed of God abides in every man, but I do not hesitate to tell you that the *spirit of every man* originated with God and came out of God. If every man is *spirit*, soul, and body, then where else did man's spirit come from? When the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us we learned the true dignity of man. The wonder is not that God could stoop so low but that *man was created so high*, that He took our nature. The sinless Son of Man reveals indeed what a fall man has suffered, but shows what a destiny is his, when once the image of his Creator has been restored. Why lift a sot from his gutter to care for him and rehabilitate him and bring him to God? The reason is that man has in him some touch of the eternal and *must* be saved; and some ultimate tide of compassion moves us to save him! His salvation is not merely *from* his drink, *from* his lust, *from* his sin and bondage and hell; it is salvation *unto* all his awesome potential as a child of the Father in heaven! Is that not what Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son teaches us? Man was meant to **be the head of creation**.

Can man who has sunk so low be raised so high? Consider with me the destiny of one *muddy road*. The clay, left long enough, hardens into a sapphire. The sand becomes by refraction of light an opal. The soot is a diamond in the rough. And the water when it freezes, is a snow-white star. Ah, there is a finer destiny for muddy humanity, but you do not see it in our raw state! Only the mighty pressures and processes of God's redemptive dealings can transform the murky elements into the essence of divine beauty, glory and power! And this, my beloved, is the answer to Job's piercing question, "What *is* man, that Thou shouldest magnify him? and that Thou shouldest set Thine heart upon him? and that Thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?"

Sin-cursed and sin-broken, sick and weak, murderer and prostitute, proud and arrogant, mean and vindictive — all that is humanity! But is that the *value* of mankind? What is the value of human life? JESUS is the value! For just such humanity there was the Man from Galilee, the Son of God, the express image of the Father, the pure, sinless, harmless One, love personified, the heir of all things, the Lord of the universe — there was *that One* nailed to a cross, to redeem every man that ever lived or shall live. THAT IS THE VALUE OF MAN'S LIFE! **JESUS IS THE VALUE OF MAN!** The price that is paid for an object reflects its value. The price God paid for humanity was His own Son in the image and glory of the Father. God saw beneath man's tattered garment and marred image His own omnipotent potential buried there. Love pierced through the gloom and roughness and saw a diamond in the rough, but a diamond sure enough. It was in that divine spark within man's spirit capable of being renewed that we find the reason for the cross. The cross was God's great act by which He released His life-flow, *the precious blood of Jesus*, to heal, quicken, and restore man to his place in God.

It would do us all a world of good to take inventory of our attitudes — how we see men. I fear that we would be both surprised and disturbed to see how often we view men *out of our carnal minds* rather than with the eyes of our heavenly Father — the prodigal's Father! Oh mystery of mysteries! Jesus went to the cross not only to take away our sins, He went there for the *good* in man, to redeem it and restore it into the image and likeness of God. The deepest mystery of all is that God is *multiplying Himself in man*, and is bringing Himself into a new dimension. There is a MAN seated upon the highest throne of heaven. Not an angel, not a cherub, but a MAN! That man still is clothed in the body that walked along the shores of Galilee, for the cave of Joseph of Arimathea is empty, although that body has been spiritualized by the power of incorruptible life.

The dwelling place of *a son of God is in the Father* and the dwelling place of the Father is *in the sons*. The sons are the out-ricing of the Father's substance and the perfect imprint of His nature in human form. I never enjoy trying to see pictures where no picture exists, but it is plain to an understanding born from above that ultimately *all men* will be *manifested sons of God*, for Jesus Christ, the *Son of the living God*, died and rose again to save and redeem and restore *all men* to God as His very own children. That will be the glorious consummation of God's ages-long purpose to *make man* into His image and after His likeness. Nothing short of that can suffice. Only *then* will God be ALL-IN-ALL!

This wonderful truth cannot be stated more eloquently than it has been by F. B. Meyer in his book *THE WAY INTO THE HOLIEST*. He writes, "'We behold Jesus...*crowned with glory and honor*' (Heb. 2:9). This is the crown wherewith His Father crowned Him in the day of the gladness of His heart, when, as *man*, He came forth victorious from the wrestle with the prince of hell. All through His earthly life He fulfilled the ancient ideal of man. He was *God's image*; and those who saw Him saw the Father. He was *Sovereign in His commands*. Winds and waves did His bidding. Trees withered at His touch. Fish in shoals obeyed His will. Drove of cattle fled before His scourge of small cords. Disease and death and devils owned His sway. But all was more fully realized when He was about to return to His Father, and said, in a noble outburst of conscious supremacy, '*All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.*'

"*As He is, we too shall be.* He is there as the type and specimen and representative of redeemed men. We are linked with Him in an indissoluble union. Through Him we shall get back our lost empire. We too shall be crowned with glory and honor! The day is not far distant when we shall sit at His side — joint heirs in His empire; comrades in His glory, as we have been comrades in His sorrows; beneath our feet all things visible and invisible, thrones and principalities and powers; whilst above us shall be the unclouded empyrean of our Father's love, for ever and for ever. Oh, destiny of surpassing bliss! Oh, rapture of saintly hearts! Oh, miracle of Divine Omnipotence!" — end quote.

Bill Britton penned these instructive words: "Paul tells us in I Corinthians 15:49 that 'as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' We were once in the image of the Adamic man. We once bore the image of the man of sin, of the earthly man, but we shall bear the image of the Christ. We *have* borne the image of Adam, we *shall* bear the image of Christ, Paul says. 'Have borne' is past tense — that means I am not bearing it now. I am not under his control. I am free from sin — I don't have to walk in sin. I don't have to obey it any more. I am not a slave to sin any longer. But I'm not yet bearing the fullness of the heavenly image because we 'shall bear' is a future tense. I'm not yet bearing the fullness of what He has prepared for me. Then where am I? I am in a process — a progressive development. There is a present, progressive work going on in me. That's that redemption of the soul that is happening. The quicker we get our souls redeemed, the quicker we yield to the spirit, the quicker we are going to get in there for our bodies to be redeemed. As we have borne the image of Adam, we shall bear the image of Christ.

"John 1:14 says that the Word of God was made flesh and dwelt among us. Does that mean the Word of God actually put on the wicked, sinful nature of old Adam? When Jesus was here, was He a man of sinful nature? The word 'flesh' here is not the word for sinful nature. Nor does it mean that He was just made fingers, toes, and so forth. If that was true, we would all have to try to work on our natural appearance so we could look like Jesus as much as possible. I don't know, and thank God the Bible doesn't say, what Jesus looked like physically. It doesn't tell us whether He was tall or short, fat or skinny, whether He was black, white, or brown. Some folks say He had a Jewish father, so He must have been brown. But He didn't have a Jewish father! He wasn't a Jew by race. He had a Father in heaven, and He was born of a virgin. He had a heavenly nationality. So I don't know what He looked like physically. And thank God I don't, because I would want to be just like that to bear His image, and I would be dissatisfied with the way I look, and I couldn't change it! But I'll tell you what I can change — I can change this *nature* by the help of the Spirit, into the likeness of the nature that He was made of. That Word became human nature, or flesh, inside of a physical body. And that human nature was a holy nature — the image of God!" — end quote.

One of our long-time readers, Paul Stumpo, wrote in one of his letters this beautiful illustration of the image of God in His sons. "There is a technology today for making pictures that can be viewed in three dimensions. That is, the image has height, depth, and breadth. This technology is called *holography*. As with all photographic processes, light is needed to radiate a photographic plate with the desired object. However, with a *holography*, a special source of light is needed, light that is produced by a LASER. LASER light, simply stated, is completely harmonious with itself, light that is in time, in phase, and traveling in the same direction. Using a LASER, the object and the photographic plate are radiated and the image becomes 'inscribed' onto the photographic plate. The amazing thing with a *holograph* is that *the complete image resides everywhere on the plate*. This means that if a small piece is broken from the whole plate, that small piece will have the complete image on it and the complete image can be seen. Now, because this piece is not the whole piece, the image on it is blurry — not clear for lack of details. The remaining large piece is diminished somewhat

because of the few details lost by the removal of the small piece, but most of the clarity of the image is still there. Is it not the same with us, since we are very small pieces of that whole which is the body of Christ. As He radiates our life with HIS Image, we begin to take on that same Image. Now, if we view this Body as He views it, it is one complete whole, and that whole is now being radiated with the Light that He is — that perfect, complete, in time, in phase, same direction LIGHT. Each of us being small parts carry within ourselves the whole Image with a certain aspect of the whole more pronounced within each of us, so that when fitly joined together, one clear, crisp, distinct Image can be seen."

## THE SON OF MAN

Jesus constantly referred to Himself as "the Son of man." Most Christians read right over that, thinking it means Son of God, though it says He is a man. This does not mean that He was born of Adam, the fleshly man, nor even that Mary in some mysterious way contributed to His genetic makeup. In solemn truth we may search the Bible through and we will not find that the "second man" was in any way derived from the "first man." Jesus was not conceived by the union of divine sperm with Mary's human egg. Mary's life was Adam's life, and if Mary contributed anything at all to Jesus' life He would then have been from the fallen Adam and would have Himself been of the first man Adam. He would, therefore, have *needed a Saviour* instead of *being* the Saviour! Nothing is more certain than this — Adam cannot redeem Adam! The fallen cannot *perfect himself to redeem and restore himself*. The very thought is an absurdity. I have heard men say that when Jesus says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," He means that He Himself was both the first man Adam who sinned and the last man Adam who redeemed. I do not hesitate to tell you that this is not only an *improbability* — it is an *impossibility!*

The first man is of the earth, earthy, the record states; the second man is the Lord from heaven! The first man fell by sin, marred his image, lost his dominion, forfeited his inheritance, becoming a poor, miserable, degraded creature, ignorant and godless, the impotent plaything of circumstances, and weak and helpless to the last degree. The second man *knew no sin*, was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and walked even upon this earth in a realm higher than the heavens. Have you ever wondered how the second man became the Saviour of the first man if He Himself *was* the first man? How could the fallen man *become* the Saviour *without* a Saviour? If Jesus was like us in that He needed a Saviour, but was able to *save Himself without a Saviour*, and then save others, then mankind really needed no Saviour at all, for they could have, like Jesus, simply saved themselves. Such reasoning is spiritual tomfoolery and theological drivel.

What, then, does Jesus mean when He calls Himself the "Son of man"? He means that He was born from the *realm* of true manhood, formed in that *state of being* in which the first man dwelt *before he sinned*. Jesus stepped right out of that *prophetic, spiritual, creative dimension* where the word of God proclaims, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." He was the *second man* to be fashioned in that *realm of true manhood* by the creative word of God. Being the second man of GOD'S MANHOOD CREATION, He is called "the Son of man" or the offspring of GOD'S MANHOOD IDEA. The first man Adam stepped forth out of the Creative Mind of God's Idea of Manhood and Jesus was the second man to proceed out of that Creative Manhood Idea of the Father. As the second man He is the SON OF MAN, the second of an Order, the second revelation of the image and likeness of God in man, birthed from the Manhood Mind of the Father. *This man*, being tempted in all points like as we are, yet *without sin*, is THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD!

What is an image? An image is something which is formed, a representation of something, a likeness. A true image would be that which correctly depicts the appearance, form, substance, nature, character, and being of whatever it stands for. A true image of God would have to be a true expression of who and what God is! Today we have many false images of God! These, whether idols, concepts, ideas, or theological creeds are manufactured out of the carnal minds of men according to their own darkened understanding. So we have a distorted image of God. Many preachers portray God as vengeful, vindictive, unforgiving, unmerciful, demanding, laying heavy yokes upon His followers, taking away our salvation the moment we slip or fall into sin, consigning all who die outside of Christ to unending torture in hell-fire, and many other hideous, monstrous images. But, blessed be God! Jesus Christ brought a true and correct image of God, by faithfully walking out the true and divine *manhood*. It was in MAN, the highest of God's creations, that God placed the "invisible things of Himself" for display. Now we are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ — the image of God

that Christ gave. All the holy sons of God are becoming the image of God in the earth to reveal the heart, nature, wisdom, power, glory and love of God to every order of the universe, worlds without end. Through these manifested sons all realms shall be blessed to see and touch and experience the image of God. ALL shall come to know Him! This is the purpose of God in man. And THIS IS THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 55**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-FIVE**

**KINGDOM DOMINION**  
**REIGNING FROM THE HEAVENLIES**

Man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God, is God's government in the Kingdom of God. This magnificent purpose burned in the heart of the heavenly Father when on the sixth creative day He proclaimed the wonderful decree: "Let us make man in our image...and LET THEM HAVE DOMINION over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (**Gen. 1:26**). Far away in the depths of my spirit I am convinced that within this shadowy type we behold a vivid portrait of God's purpose for man, that when man comes fully into GOD'S IMAGE he shall be, first, the ruler of things beneath, the lowest realms of the bottomless, typified by the fish swarming in the depths of the seas, and the creeping things; next, the things upon the earth, typified by the cattle, and all the earth; and finally, the things of the heavens also, typified by the fowl of the air. One may find it difficult to embrace so great a truth from so small and insignificant a type, but did not our Lord Jesus employ many of these same analogies when He said things like, "Ye shall tread on serpents, and on scorpions...I give you power over all the power of the enemy." Spake He of creeping creatures slithering through the grass? Certainly not! He spoke of spiritual realities represented by the orders of things in the natural. The natural world is but the type, symbol and shadow of the heavenly.

Was it not upon this very Edenic type that the writer to the Hebrews enlarged when by the Spirit he wrote, "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What IS man, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him a little lower than Elohim (**Ps. 8:5**, Hebrew); Thou CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, and didst set him OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS: Thou hast put A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left N-O-T-H-I-N-G that is NOT put under him!" (**Heb. 2:5-8**).

You won't quite grasp that at first. It's too overwhelming! To be CROWNED means to be given KINGLY RULE. To be crowned with GLORY and HONOR is to be given such rule as Jesus Christ has now, and of that rule we read, "Wherefore God also hath HIGHLY EXALTED Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue (in all those three realms) should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). We have already stated that man in God's image, man in Christ at the right hand of God is God's government in the Kingdom of God. Paul said it this way, "Who (Jesus) IS THE IMAGE of the invisible God...by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers...and ye are complete IN HIM WHICH IS THE HEAD OF A-L-L PRINCIPALITY AND POWER" (**Col. 1:15-17; 2:9-10**).

Have you noticed that the rule the firstborn Son of God now has is the very same rule over the identical THREE REALMS of heaven, the earth, and the abyss, which God delegated to Adam, the man in God's image, in Genesis 1:26! This is the dominion reserved for all of God's sons! What a hope! What a calling! How much better, how much higher and more meaningful is this than harps and fluttering wings and white night gowns! A kingdom denotes rulership and advancement of all kinds. It means work and responsibility and a place of ministry and authority to bless. All who in Christ come to God's image are destined to share that awesome dominion, seated together with Him, far above all principality and power. The reason so many people fail to attain to the great heights of the Spirit is because they are unable to see God's purposes, and therefore they have no particular incentive to seek the great heights that are IN HIM. So many Christians are far too taken up with carnal ideas and childish notions about mansions in the skies and harps and wings and sitting on clouds eating pork chops with nothing to do and all eternity to do it in, to be able to see the true purposes of God at

HIS RIGHT HAND. Simply speaking, the purpose of God is that we might reign with Him, and to reign is to exercise authority for God -- to rule all things. Paul tells us that we are to seek those things which are above -- where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This means that we are to SEEK THE THINGS OF THE RIGHT HAND! Reigning with Christ must become one of the great goals in the life of every man and woman who has received the call to sonship. When our Lord Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," He spoke of that true church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. It should be abundantly clear that He spoke of His "many brethren" who would be conformed to His image, matured in His life, and perfected in His wisdom, power, and dominion. The sad truth is that for nearly two thousand years the gates of hell have prevailed against those systems which call themselves the church, and every foul and unclean spirit has overrun them and sits enthroned in their creeds, liturgies, ceremonies, rituals, and ecclesiastical orders.

The Greek word for church is ECCLESIA. We all think we know the meaning of this word, for we hear it so often. Ecclesia means "called out," it's a chosen, separated people. That is true. But ECCLESIA means much more than that! The word ECCLESIA is a special word, with a particular usage in the Greek in which our New Testament is written. It is a word that denotes a legislative body. In New Testament times when they wanted to gather people together for various purposes they had different words for different gatherings. For instance, the word SUNAGOGE (synagogue) means a gathering of people for the purpose of worship. In every Jewish community there was the synagogue, the gathering of people to worship the God of Israel. But whenever they wanted to gather together the ruling class, the legislative body -- the mayor, the senate, the pro-consul, etc. -- they would announce the gathering of the ecclesia. It was a ruling class of people with power to legislate, to make laws, to initiate governmental actions, to control events within the nation.

That is what the church is intended to be! What today is called the church is not the church at all! The gatherings are not gatherings of rulers, but gatherings of babes seeking blessings and spiritual thrills. The church has become a spiritual kindergarten where people go to be entertained and taught and taught and taught again, those things, which are but the elementary principles of the doctrine of Christ. These so-called church systems are decaying before our eyes and nothing can save them. They are not at all what Jesus had in mind when He said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The imperfect things that have been used of God in an imperfect age are vanishing away with the age itself, for "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part (imperfect) shall be done away."

## **KINGDOM DOMINION**

Dominion means to live in authority, to reign in life by one, Christ Jesus. God is teaching His sons in this hour to live victoriously! With the pen of inspiration Daniel wrote of this Kingdom-Dominion: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: and his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14). Daniel said that he saw something in the night visions. He saw one like unto the Son of man. There was given unto Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom. These were given Him for the purpose that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. It describes His dominion as an enduring dominion, an invincible dominion that shall not pass away and a kingdom that cannot be overcome or overthrown.

KINGDOM DOMINION! The terminology that Daniel used is that the dominion and the kingdom are given to God's Christ, Head and body, and it is an enduring dominion and an indestructible kingdom. That is powerful! The kingdoms of men crumble very quickly, all the vaunted empires of history lie in ruin in the dust of the ages. The rise of any earthly empire is but the early proclamation of its fall. The Roman empire, apparently invincible, exists today only in the crumbling ruins of buildings, roads, and aqueducts. All of man's systems are doomed -- the short span of the twentieth century saw the decline of the British empire, the meteoric rise and fall of the Third Reich, and the emergence and collapse of Russian communism. If this is the "American Age," then nothing is more certain than the fact that our greatness, too, shall pass away. The kings of the earth have dominion one day, and lose it the next. But when you connect with God's Kingdom, you connect with an enduring dominion and an indestructible kingdom. The dominion that you receive from God and His Kingdom

will not only last forever in your life, but it can never be defeated. The victory of Christ is being raised up within every son of God that will triumph and remain -- it cannot be affected by anything within or without or diminished in any degree. You, my beloved, have omnipotent potential in Christ! What we are walking in as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven is an everlasting, continual, full and indestructible Kingdom!

One cannot talk about Kingdom dominion without recognizing the King of the Kingdom. Jesus Christ is the King of the ages. It is Jesus who now reigns and shall rule for all the ages. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who has been given power, authority, influence, and control over the spiritual heavens, over the universe, over the earth, over humanity, and within your heart. Matters not what demons, devils, men, or any other creature says, those called to sonship to God have received the spirit of kingship -- the Lord of glory sits in royal majesty upon the throne of our lives and all power in heaven and in earth is given unto us. **"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Dan. 7:27). "Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk. 12:32).**

The power of the Kingdom of God begins to have dominion first within our individual lives. The beginning of the Kingdom dominion of God is right there in your heart today. In 1932 a young actor, trying to make his mark in Hollywood, took a screen test. A talent judge who watched the performance was less than enthusiastic. His note about this particular actor read, "Can't act, can't sing, can dance a little." The actor was a man named Fred Astaire -- the same one who went on to stardom. When the world looks at us -- or when we look at ourselves -- there doesn't seem to be much potential in us for sonship. We have little natural ability that God can anoint and use for His Kingdom. Fortunately, the reality of our sonship doesn't depend upon any potential we have in our natural constitution -- all the potential comes from God! It is the potential of the Christ who has come within! Our potential is not limited by our own resources but, instead, is limitless because of Christ's infinite resources! Jesus Christ did not come to earth to win the world by political action or military rule. He didn't come to set up a police state. "My kingdom is not of this world (system)," Jesus said. Some of the Jews came to forcefully make Him a king and what did He do? The scripture says that He escaped away from them, He walked right out of their midst and vanished. He came representing and manifesting the spiritual rule of God, the invincible heavenly dominion, which is destined to consume all the visible kingdoms of this world and raise them up into the realm of the Kingdom of God. That's exactly what Jesus came here to do -- to consume the visible kingdoms, the existing ones, until the words of the prophet are truly fulfilled: **"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages" (Rev. 11:15).**

The rule of God on earth begins to become a reality when the dominion of the Spirit is established in the minds, hearts, and lives of God's elect. When the Kingdom of God is fully established in God's elect, then God begins to take hold of the kingdoms of the world. It is just as simple and effective and powerful as that! God doesn't take the kingdoms from the top down, He takes them from the bottom up. He starts at the grass-roots level. Every time a man or woman is born again into the Kingdom of God there is the increase of His government and peace. There is the increase of Kingdom dominion in the earth as He forms His Kingdom in His sons and daughters.

**"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing: and when they were ended, He afterward hungered. And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Lk. 4:1-2,5-8).** "All you've got to do is worship me, and all will be yours." Well, it is true that all the kingdoms of the world, their glory, their power, their beauty and their splendor were delivered into the hands of the devil through the transgression of Adam.

Have we considered that the apostle John knew what he was talking about when he wrote, **"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one" (I Jn. 5:19).** That's the very reason Jesus came -- to take the dominion back and give it to the sons of the Most High. It is delivered into the hands of God's elect!

Notice the testimony of God: "The Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom...the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" (Dan. 7:22,26). Can you imagine what was going through the mind of the firstborn Son of God when Satan offered Him all the kingdoms and dominion of the world if He would fall down and worship him? By revelation of the Spirit Jesus could say, "You don't give me anything -- I've come to take it! Just stick around, devil, you're going to lose it, but not because you gave it to me. I've come here to take the dominion from you, and all power in heaven and in earth shall be given unto me and to the sons of the Most High God. You're not offering me anything. I'm about to subdue you!"

Jesus came into the world to transfer the power and the dominion to the sons of God. He came as a Son of God, He came by divine force, by might, by strength, by ability, by God's potential in man. Within Himself He entered into the adversary's dominion, to his throne room, to the seat and stronghold of his kingdom and wrested from him the power and the dominion. He came upon him abruptly, suddenly, powerfully, seized him and took his dominion from him, left him humiliated, stripped of all his power and dumbfounded at the swiftness and magnitude of his defeat. Jesus accomplished all of this within Himself, and now His victory is given to us to accomplish within ourselves. Sons of God! The spirit of sonship is within us! That's what Jesus came to do: to destroy, render impotent, make of none effect the devil and bring to nought all his works. This power and authority is within the Christ, and ye are the body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and it is He who lives within us. The Life He lives is nothing less than the Life He is. Within His Life is all His love, grace, wisdom, ability, power and authority. Don't let anybody tell you the devil is after you, the devil is fighting you, hindering you, tripping you up, defeating you or thwarting God's purpose in your life. Oh, no! "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," says Christ the Head. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," must be the testimony of every member of Christ the body.

All power is all power. For those who stand in God's Christ no power belongs to the devil anymore! For these blessed ones the devil's kingdom has come to an end! His rule is terminated! His dominion is over! His power has been stripped, his authority revoked! And now the sons of God are "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:12-13). Therefore may I boldly say, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom -- its righteousness, its joy, its peace, its incorruptible life, its power, its authority, its dominion, its wisdom, its knowledge, its anointing, its blessing, its potential, its fullness, its riches and its treasures!" It is the Father's good pleasure; it pleases Him to make you the sons of God with power. It pleases Him to give you life more abundantly. It pleases Him to raise you up into the fullness of His Christ and send you forth as deliverers of creation. Jesus took it all -- all power -- and raises it up within the sons of God. The hour has now come for this to be realized, personified, and consummated in the many brethren of our Lord.

Men of God throughout the church age have tasted the earnest and firstfruits of this Kingdom dominion, but just as the seed planted eventually produces a harvest of many seeds in which the life settles, reproducing in form, quality, and power the original seed, so now the life of the all-triumphant Jesus is settling in fullness of form, quality, and power within the sons of God. We who have received the call to sonship are learning, growing, developing and maturing into His dominion within ourselves, the rule of His Kingdom raised up within us. We can never understand the deep mystery of Kingdom dominion until we clearly see that Jesus does not now enforce His victory over satan and His acquisition of All Power on behalf of all creation. If He did, there would be no sin, no darkness, no sickness, no sorrow, and no death anywhere! Though Jesus has all power in heaven and in earth, and has fully and forever overcome sin, satan and death, men continue to be ravaged by fear, carnality, sin and death. It is like a boxer who fights the world champion boxer and defeats him. HE has defeated him for himself, but no one else has defeated him. Now suppose that the new champion trains every other man to box as he does, and one by one they are developed into world-class boxers and enter into a match with the former world champion and each in turn defeats him. The new world champion's ability has thus been transferred, conveyed, and imparted to all men, making them champions. This is the law of Kingdom dominion! We do not merely glorify the victory, power and authority of the man Jesus two thousand years ago, but through His Spirit we are brought into the same relationship with God that He knew. Then by the gracious ministry of the sons of God all men shall be ushered experientially into the same victory! How awesome is this Day!

Paul Mueller has ably written, "David expressed the magnificent wonder of man having the glory of the Lord. 'When I see Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast formed; what is man that Thou shouldst think of him, and the son of man that Thou shouldst care for him? Yet Thou has made him but little lower than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor! Thou madest him ruler over the works of Thy hands, Thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field; the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, that traverse the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is Thy name in all the earth!' (Ps. 8:3-9) (Smith-Goodspeed).

"This is a Psalm showing the authority God has given man over His creation. It presents a picture of man as he is now, and as we shall be when redemption is complete. During this and previous ages, man was given dominion over all God's vast creation (Gen. 1:26-28). The earth and all things of it have been given to man to manage and to govern according to his ability. But man has not done a very good job of managing the Lord's creation. We have polluted the earth and its environment. Man has not judged the world in justice and righteousness, nor has man handled the economic affairs of this world with equity. And man has certainly not represented the Lord and His kingdom very well. Man has had the God-given authority and dominion of the earth, according to the Lord's plan and purpose, yet he has done a miserable job managing the Lord's wonderful creation.

"Why is this true? What is lacking in man that makes him such a poor administrator of God's creation? Those who managed the creation did poorly because they were not yet in God's image and likeness, nor were they crowned with glory and honor. The glory and honor of the Lord was lacking! The likeness of Christ also was lacking! And unless man is transformed into the image of God, and crowned with glory and honor, he cannot possibly take the dominion of the creation and govern it in righteousness. The whole fallen, corrupt order of man is in the debased condition it is because man has ruled in his fallen state. And the Lord has ordained that it should be this way for an appointed time. But in the age to come, a corporate man shall come forth in God's image and shall be crowned with glory and honor. They shall then administer His kingdom with justice, equity, peace and righteousness just as the Lord intended it to be.

"The glory of the Lord now rests upon the sons of God who make up the true church, the body of Christ. God's glory is not now, nor has it ever been, on a denomination or a building of man's design. His glory is the glory of Christ, which is His splendor in the realm of the Spirit. The glory of the Lord is that holy and awesome presence of the Lord that is miraculous, marvelous and beyond the feeble words of man to tell. That glory belongs to the Christ body. And the hour is upon us when we shall be anointed, empowered and crowned with the fullness of the wondrous, majestic, and awesome glory and honor of the Lord. Then we shall be qualified by the authority He has given us to have dominion over His creation. Then it shall truly be said by many, 'O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is Thy name in all the earth!' When the Christ body is complete and united in one, we shall all be changed into His likeness and crowned with glory and honor. We shall then have dominion over the whole creation in that wonderful, resurrected, new creation state.

"The writer to the Hebrews also proclaimed the truth of the creation of a new heavens and earth. 'And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail' (Heb. 1:10-12). One aspect of the vision the elect shall have in this hour is the vision of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pe. 3:13). We shall not forever rule and reign over an earth that has been worn out and destroyed by the effects of man's sin, perversion and darkness, and by Satan's dominion. We shall eventually reign over a restored universe.

"The earth, as we see it now, is slowly wearing out and its resources are diminishing. It is all waxing old as doth a garment, just like the word of God says it will. To those without a vision, it appears that we will not have enough water, oil, gas, trees, rain forests, vegetation, spotted owls, birds, beasts, creeping things, insects, fish, and sea mammals. Environmentalists are trying to stifle agriculture and industry, for they think that we are at the end of earth's resources. There are many unbelievers and skeptics who are far from God and have no vision. They are worshipping the creation rather than the Creator (Ro. 1:25), putting the creation before man. But man was given this dominion (Gen. 1:26-30). God and man must always come before the creation. That is

the divine order! Many millions of those in darkness have no vision of God's power of restoration! Though mankind has done a terrible job of managing our resources, there will be enough of everything to the end of this age. Then the whole creation shall be made new again. And the reason we are running out of the earth's resources is because we are at the end of the ages of man's dominion.

"By the inspiration of the Spirit, the writer to the Hebrews prophesied that both the heavens and the earth would 'perish,' and would 'wax old as doth a garment.' Thank God he didn't end his dire prediction there, but went on to declare, 'And as a vesture (garment or mantle) shalt Thou fold them up, and they (the heavens and the earth) shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.' The entire universe is in God's sight as a vesture, as a mere piece of cloth or garment that the Lord shall pick up and turn over in His hands, thus making it all new again. With the ease and simplicity of someone changing garments the Lord will restore the whole creation. The restoration of the earth is to the Lord as if He would remove an old coat from the mantle of the earth and put on a new one. That is the truth of God's word which is presented in Hebrews chapter two, in Peter's epistle, and in Old Testament prophecies (Ps. 102:25-28, Is. 66:22).

"The heavens and the earth will be changed and restored by the same power that is changing us. The whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19-22). When the Lord has completed His work of restoring the earth, there will not be one needy, starving, famine-ravaged person anywhere on earth. Then every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree; and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it (Mic. 4:4, Zec. 3:10). Only our omnipotent God could make such a promise as this, and back it up with His glory and honor. And He alone is worthy to be adored, revered and worshipped by all. The restored heavens and earth will not be under the dominion of angels, but will be given to the saints of the most High. Let this be our vision, and the daily struggles and conflicts of this life will be seen as nothing when compared to the greater plan and purpose of our omnipotent Father that is now coming into view" -- end quote.

## REIGNING FROM THE HEAVENLIES

Many a sermon has been preached on the rule of the Kingdom of God on earth, and I think most of them have missed the mark because they see only God reigning over His Kingdom. The greatest mystery of the ages is that seated at the right hand of God today is a MAN. God came down from heaven and invaded humanity, He took upon Himself the nature and the body of a man, so that when He went back to the throne (His omnipotent power in the Spirit), He would take humanity back to the throne. There is no mystery to it that God sits on the throne, He belongs there; but to think now that MAN is sitting on the throne! "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs...THIS JESUS hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED..." (Acts 2:22,32-33).

There is confirmation of this in Acts 7:55-56 where we read concerning Stephen, "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and JESUS STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. And said, Behold I see the heavens opened and the SON OF MAN standing on the right hand of God." The "right hand of God" is simply a metaphor denoting the spiritual realm of all authority, power, and dominion. It is the divine realm of God's omnipotence. It was rankest blasphemy in the minds of the persecutors of Stephen for him to say that he saw JESUS, the SON OF MAN, standing at the RIGHT HAND of God. Such words were for him to seal his doom at the hands of the high priest and all the council. If Stephen had said he saw the SON OF GOD there, it would not have been so grievous, perhaps, but when we realize that it is the SON OF MAN seated in such a place, then it assumes proportions that we never before have thought about.

The right hand of God is not a physical location somewhere in the universe. The throne of the God who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent spirit is not a material one, but bespeaks of the REALM OF HIS SUPREME AND UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY AND RULERSHIP; and our Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the glory of that rulership. The right hand of God is a realm of power and authority, a position of eminence, a condition and a state of divine being. It is the assumption of the almighty power and universal dominion of the Father! It is the dispensing of His positive energy force into His creation. Exalted to that high realm Jesus no

longer walks in a limited physical body, for He now indwells the spirits of His many brethren, who are the FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL (Eph. 1:22-23).

And blessed be God! We now have a share in the REALM OF THE RIGHT HAND. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). (Ephesians 2:5-6) tells us that "when we were dead through our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with Him, and made us SIT TOGETHER WITH HIM in the heavenly places (the heights of His own exaltation)." This shows that as we come to know the resurrection life of Christ, we are also made to experience the ascension of Christ. We are chosen of God not only to be made alive from the dead and have God's life, but also to sit in the heavenly places as ASCENDED MEN. He causes us to ascend with Him and sit with Him in the heavens -- NOW!

Therefore, ascension truly is the position of those who know Christ in His fullness. The position of ascension rests not only on the fact of Christ's ascension, but on the LIFE OF ASCENSION WE HAVE OBTAINED WITHIN US. The Christ who indwells our hearts and is being formed in our lives is THE ASCENDED CHRIST, and His life is ascended and heavenly, and is given from heaven. Although in the conditions of the outer man we still live on earth, yet according to the inner man we are already in heaven. The situation is just like our Lord's during His time on earth. He said then that though He "descended from heaven" He was still "in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). This was due to the fact that His life and consciousness were heavenly and one with heaven.

It is true therefore that as we ascend into the high places of God in the spirit, we are reigning with Christ from His heavenly, spiritual throne. As we truly become overcomers by the ascended life of Christ, we are also given power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessels of a potter they shall be broken to shivers (Rev. 2:26-27). This rule is given to the overcomers in Christ! As the life of ascension within us raises up Kingdom dominion in our lives we reign with Christ in the Spirit, and the worldly powers of man can be broken by the authority within God's sons. The will and ways of man are displaced by the power of the Spirit and replaced by the spiritual power of the Kingdom of God. We are a spiritual people. And the Kingdom of God is the spiritual realm of our Father's dominion. Therefore our reign in Christ is a spiritual reign, which is accomplished as we move in and by His Spirit in relation to things in the earth realm. Through that spiritual dominion God's will is brought to pass on earth as it is in heaven.

All the vaunted thrones, powers, and dominions of earth are as sand castles on the beach before the power of the Kingdom within us. The greatest power in the universe is that which flows forth from the throne of God in the heavenlies! Although the Lord has ordained the "powers that be" for a purpose and for a season, the true throne of God remains in the heavenlies in the realm of the Spirit. During the days of king David, who was one of the most powerful and honored kings of Israel, and who reigned gloriously from his physical throne on the earthly mount of Zion, the throne of the Lord was really in heaven, for David ruled by the Spirit of God and it was the Spirit of God upon Him out of the heavenly realm that constituted the throne of the Lord in the midst of His people. The prophet Isaiah, who prophesied during the reign of four kings of Judah, also beheld in spirit and saw the throne of Yahweh in the heights of the heavenly realms of the Spirit (Is. 6:1, 66:1). Jesus also proclaimed the truth that the throne of His Father was in heaven (Mat. 5:34, 23:22).

Armed with this sacred knowledge that the throne of God is a spiritual throne in the spiritual heavens of His divine life, wisdom and power, it is clear that there is no throne anywhere that can withstand the moving of God by the Spirit in Kingdom dominion. As His sons we must take our place in the heavenlies, acknowledge that we are seated with Christ at the right hand of God, and begin to move more and more out of the unity of His mind and will within us. As we sit in the high place of spiritual ascension in union with our Lord we are establishing a vital link between heaven and earth by which the Kingdom of God more fully comes to earth, thus usurping and overcoming the powers of man. As one has written, "Each time we rise in the Spirit to worship our Father at His spiritual altar, the fire from His altar is cast to the earth to change the world (Rev. 8:3-6). This is the direct result of the reign of Christ, which shall continue to increase until all is changed!"

The sons of God are called in this hour to minister to the Lord and for the Lord from the realm of His presence. The throne of God is in the presence of the Lord in the heavenly realm of His Spirit. Our spiritual ministry in the

presence of God releases a mighty stream of God's life and power from the heavenlies that flows from the presence of the Lord to all the earth. As heaven casts its shadow upon the earth, all things are changed just as the sick were healed when the apostle Peter's shadow fell upon them. It is by the word of the Lord that flows through us from the throne in the presence of God within ourselves that causes God's will to be done on earth even it is being done in the heavens. This is taking place even now as God calls His sons higher into His presence and glory. There is nothing that cannot be affected on earth through the spiritual ministry of the sons of God in the Most Holy Place in the heavens of His Spirit!

Multitudes of Christian ministers today are ministering from the lowlands of carnal church programs and promotions. We have a higher calling in God. Only as we rise into the heavens of God's Spirit and minister to the Lord and for the Lord from the realm of His greater, spiritual presence in the Most Holy Place of His throneship, shall the blessings and benefits of His heavenly Kingdom continue to change us and the world. Father has raised us up into a unique place in this spiritual temple of the body of His sons. Our hearts cannot settle for anything less, for we yearn and long and pray and travail and seek for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Nothing else will satisfy! As we abide in this heavenly realm of His presence, taking our position -- seated in Christ Jesus at the right hand of God in the higher than all heavens -- His mighty spirit-power shall continue to flow to the earth, changing the world and shaping the nations for the full and powerful reign of the Kingdom of God. Those who are called to sonship are experientially ascending in the Spirit to the high places in God. They are recognizing and taking their rightful place on the throne of the Lord, by the Spirit, where they reign with Christ.

Today we are living in momentous times. We are living in a period between the ages, and God is initiating a new order and ministry in the earth. My prayer is that all who read these lines will see in the spirit this new ministry of the Kingdom of God on earth! As we fulfill this Kingdom ministry, this Kingdom dominion in the Spirit and by the Spirit, all evil and darkness shall eventually be removed, to trouble the world no more. The spiritual ministry in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly realms of the presence of the Lord is the secret to conquering all evil and all darkness! Preaching and ministering according to the old carnal methods and techniques of the church systems will avail but little in this battle against the corrupt kingdoms of this world. But when we ascend in the Spirit to the heavenlies where God's will is revealed to our hearts, and God's word is put in our mouths, and we worship and intercede and speak from the throne of the Lord, we then begin to defeat all darkness and evil and put every enemy under Christ's feet by releasing the presence and power of the Kingdom of God in the world. This is a new ministry we are entering at this time, and it is real and very powerful. It will bring the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom and God's power and glory to all mankind. Make no mistake about it -- sons of God have a tremendous responsibility. We are not called to merely learn deeper truths; we are called to **RULE AND REIGN WITH CHRIST!** We are called to possess the Kingdom, to take the Kingdom, to take dominion over all darkness, sin, and death. We are called to break the kingdoms of man to shivers, and to rule mankind as if we were shepherds tending a flock of sheep.

God is bringing us in the power of the Spirit to a new place. There are certain principles of the Kingdom of God that must be a part of the frame of mind and the experience of all who fulfill the high calling of sonship. We must learn to think like God. We must begin to **RULE WITH CHRIST IN THIS LIFE.** Kingdom dominion begins in that inauspicious place where we now dwell. Too many saints are weak, frustrated, troubled, and defeated. Many run to and fro seeking someone to deliver them out of their distresses and problems. May the dynamite of God's Spirit blow us all out of the low places of lethargy, discouragement, oppression and defeat into a vibrant walk with Christ in the high places of joy, peace, faith and triumph of His Kingdom within. **"Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which His supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armor of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil. For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world -- the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare. Therefore put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and having fought to the end, TO REMAIN VICTORS ON THE FIELD" (Eph. 6:10-14) (Weymouth).**

Once the believer embraces the truth that he is now seated with Christ at the right hand of God in the higher than all heavens, his heart will find rest and joy and confidence in the face of all situations and circumstances. The right hand of God is the place of omnipotent universal power and dominion -- **FAR ABOVE ALL THINGS!**

Such all-embracing majesty is far too vast for my feeble understanding, yet I know by the Spirit that the body of Christ is being formed and prepared for the explicit purpose of UNIVERSAL DOMINION! Yet, how can a man rule over principalities and powers and universes if he cannot rule his own spirit? If my mother-in-law, my boss, or my neighbors get me down, how can I handle nations? It is my deep conviction that what happens in your life and mine is a result of the use or abuse of the principles of the Kingdom of God. Learn this, beloved, and you will know one of the fundamental principles of reigning with Christ in the heavenlies: OUR AUTHORITY IS OVER SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS FIRSTLY IN OURSELVES!

I never think of the glory of reigning with Christ without remembering an incident that happened many years ago. In 1966 three brethren and I made a mission trip from Florida to Central America by automobile. We arrived late one night in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. From there we were scheduled to fly to the island of Roatan for a series of meetings. Three things needed to be done the following day before our departure. The brakes on the car must be fixed, we must find a place to leave the car while away from the capital, and we must locate the Embassy of El Salvador and secure visas for our return trip through that country.

After breakfast at our hotel the next morning we inquired at the desk for the address of the El Salvadoran Embassy. The desk clerk courteously gave us directions and we set out to accomplish our business. But there was no Embassy at the address we were given. Driving around the block we found nothing in that area that resembled an Embassy. Finally, inquiring of a man on the street, we were informed that the Embassy had moved to another location. But when we arrived at the new address, there was no Embassy there, either! I entered a small shop nearby and introduced myself to the owner, a well-dressed, distinguished looking business man. He said, "Oh, yes, I know exactly where the Embassy is; in fact, I have business in that part of the city and will be most happy to accompany you." He climbed into our vehicle and happily we sped away. An hour later we were driving around in circles and our distinguished guide still could not find the building he was quite certain he had seen a hundred times before! Disheartened, we dropped that project, concentrating instead upon getting the brakes repaired. In a matter of minutes we discovered a large garage and were motioned in. We stated the problem, whereupon a mechanic proceeded to jack up the car, take off the four wheels, and disassemble the brakes. Once the parts were laying out on the floor an attendant informed us that it would be three days before they could fix the brakes! Astonished, we instructed them to reassemble the brakes, and made our departure. I was aware of an American church in the city and thought perhaps we should seek help from the pastor. We did find the church rather quickly. Leaving the brethren in the car I made my way to the door of the residence attached to the sanctuary, and rang the doorbell. A young American girl answered the door. I asked if she could direct me to the pastor of the church. Her response was that she didn't know the pastor, neither did she know his name, where he lived, or how he might be contacted. By this time I was completely confounded! We had spent the entire morning accomplishing absolutely nothing! Our efforts to locate the Embassy were fruitless. The attempt at getting the brakes repaired ended ridiculously. And now here we sat atop a hill in front of an American church in a Spanish-speaking capital in the heart of Central America, and an American girl in that American church denies any knowledge of the pastor of that church!

I related this news to the brethren, whereupon one brother, especially sensitive to the Spirit, exclaimed: "The Lord shows me that this city is RULED BY SPIRITS OF CONFUSION. We must agree together and bind these governing spirits in Jesus' name!" We joined hands there on that hilltop and spoke to the spirits of confusion reigning over the city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, commanding them to loose their hold. After several minutes of praise and rejoicing we drove down that hill, saw a Texaco station, and were impressed by the Spirit to pull in. We met the proprietor, an English-speaking gentleman. In the conversation that ensued we found that he knew where the Embassy was, and he graciously offered to park our car by his station while we were in Roatan; furthermore, he would fix the brakes while we were gone -- and then the icing on the cake -- he picked up his phone and arranged a free night's lodging for us at a Bible School on top a mountain just outside the city. Within forty-five minutes after we took our position in the higher-than-heavenlies and bound the spirits of confusion that had us (and the entire city) running in circles, every problem was solved, every need met, and all our business accomplished! Furthermore, we were convinced in spirit that not only had we personally triumphed in Christ, but something tremendously glorious had transpired in the heavenlies that would redound in blessing to that city and country for years to come. And the subsequent history of Honduras in relation to events in Central America over the past thirty-five years proves that we were right!

Simply speaking, the purpose of God is that we might reign for Him, and to reign is to exercise authority for God -- to rule all things. All who in Christ appropriate the fullness of His life and glory and exaltation are destined to exercise that awesome dominion by the Spirit, seated together with Him, far above all principality and power. This is the blueprint and strategy for the triumph of His Kingdom in all realms, from the lowest hell to the highest heaven. Ah, beloved, we shall reign throughout the age and the ages to come until all enemies are conquered and Christ is All in All.

Let me give you another example of how we are called to rule and reign over the nations at this present time. In 1983 the Lord spoke to me in a dream. In the dream I was standing on a wide boulevard at a busy intersection in the city of Moscow. At this intersection was a large vacant lot, and erected on this lot was a tall pole on the top of which was affixed crucifixes and religious emblems of the type used by the Russian Orthodox Church. I stood in transfixed wonder, astonished that in a nation ruled by an atheistic government, which harshly suppressed all outward expressions of religious faith, this religious symbol should be planted in such a prominent place with no connection to any nearby church edifice. As I marveled, I turned and saw to my left a vast throng of people coming, marching down the boulevard. The street was completely flooded with this crowd of demonstrators, and those at the head of the parade (who we presumed were priests) held out in front of them a great number of crucifixes and religious emblems identical with those on the pole. Again I was amazed that in an atheistic nation where public religious demonstrations were forbidden, this multitude of people should be uninhibitedly parading their religious symbols through the thoroughfares. At that moment I started across the side street, but the demonstrators turned toward me and I found it necessary to run in order to keep from being trampled.

Immediately the scene changed. I was in the same city, but found myself in a storefront building. There was nothing in the large room where I stood except a number of folding chairs. I was aware that this building was used by certain believers who met for prayer, counsel, preparation and planning; for from this place teams of ministry were sent forth throughout the length and breadth of Russia. Suddenly I was transferred to a small room at the back of the building. The room was furnished only with a single cot with a small table at its head, upon which lay a book with a dark purple cover, and embossed across the front in gold letters was this title: THE UNITED STATES IN PROPHECY. The next scene was back in the larger room where several people were congregated. I knew that a meeting was soon to begin, with prayer and a strategy session for sending out the ministry teams. In connection with this activity I was shown a massive intervention of God's power accompanied by a dramatic move of the Holy Spirit across Russia, by which the nation would be stirred with the manifestation of the glory of God. With this electrifying knowledge planted within my consciousness, I awoke. Immediately the interpretation of the dream flooded my spirit. It was clear that a new condition of RELIGIOUS LIBERTY was to come to the people of the Soviet Union. Remember -- this was 1983. At that time Yuri Andropov was in power and Mikhail Gorbachev was unknown to the Western world. We had not yet heard the words GLASNOST and PERESTROIKA. And the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union was the farthest thing from anybody's mind! In 1984, first at a Convention in Daytona Beach, Florida, I commenced to proclaim the word the Lord had given me; following that in meetings in El Paso, Texas and in other parts of the country. The Spirit revealed to me that the advent of religious liberty (typified by the pole) would be followed by a revival of religion (represented by the parade). This we have seen come to pass! Late in 1989 as I watched the NBC Evening News, suddenly -- THERE IT WAS! The reporter was giving a report from Moscow. Down the broad avenue I saw them coming...a vast throng, literally hundreds of Christian believers marching on foot...at the forefront of the crowd marched the Russian Orthodox Priests holding out the crucifixes and icons -- the exact scene I had witnessed in my dream six years prior! I shouted through the house to Lorain, "Honey, come, look! That's it! There is the procession I saw in my dream!"

Exactly as the Lord said, much of what is happening in Russia today is taking place within the precincts of religious Babylon. The Russian Orthodox Church has had a dramatic increase of people, priests, seminaries, and restoration of power and prestige. Thousands of new churches have opened representing many denominations and groups. The Lord has opened doors -- tremendous avenues for the gospel of salvation. Teaching services in Russian churches are now diverted to evangelistic messages in deference to the masses of unbelievers (most first-time attendees) flooding the meetings. Invited by friends or attracted by a printed invitation, many Russian people come to churches seeking an answer to their great spiritual hunger. Evangelical churches are filled with new inquirers, and many newcomers are converted to Christ. Most have

dramatic and emotional experiences -- all are life-changing. Excitement permeates Russian churches as believers have the joy of leading unbelievers -- people who have never prayed before in their lives -- to the Lord. And there is a very significant revival in the cities, especially among the youth. But for the most part this is all an elementary move of the Spirit within the context of the church systems of man.

The sovereign move of God in miracle working power that the Lord showed me in 1983 HAS NOT YET BEGUN -- but it looms upon the horizon. There was to be a revival of religion first, then the mighty move of the Spirit of God. Since 1984 I have had a ministry to Russia in and by the Spirit and through that saw the collapse of Soviet Communism there just as the Lord had moved me to proclaim. Everything that has happened there has been according to that word of the Lord and the proclaiming of it! That is what it means to be given power over the nations and to reign over them from the heavenlies! By prayer, by faith, and by the revelation and proclamation of the word of the Lord we have heavenly governmental power and authority to change things! The sons of God are beginning to reign in the heavenlies, and earth is being impacted by their authority and dominion! When the present distress in Russia has run its course, there will be an unprecedented, sovereign move of God in that country that will bring the glory and honor and power of the Kingdom of God in a new and higher dimension, and bringing multitudes into living relationship with God beyond the religious systems of man through the power of the Holy Spirit! I was made to understand that the book I saw -- THE UNITED STATES IN PROPHECY -- indicated that American ministries were destined to play a pivotal role in this move of the Spirit in Russia. But beyond that, America represents to the whole world the concept of LIBERTY, and God is about to PROCLAIM LIBERTY to the captives of communist ideology, sin, darkness, bondage, hopelessness, poverty, sorrow and death throughout Russia!

The groundwork is being laid. The preparation is in progress. The stage is being set. And regardless of what events, positive or negative, may yet transpire, the mighty God, in due time, will utter His voice from the heavens and great shall be the sound of abundance of rain. Can you comprehend, dear reader, what effect you can have upon creation by REIGNING FROM THE HEAVENLIES? There is no need to board a great airliner and fly to far-away nations with strange sounding names and quaint customs in order to bless the world. I have never set foot on the soil of Russia, yet I do not doubt for one instant that the faith and prayer in my heart and the declarations of God's word through my mouth aided in some mysterious and divine way the amazing events that have unfolded and are unfolding in that land. The sons of God are now arising on the world scene. It will be MORE than revival this time, my beloved, IT WILL BE THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITH POWER! There is a fresh move of the Spirit, a new ministry from the Holiest of all, and a new work of God in the earth that transcends by far anything that has ever been seen or known. We are nearing the hour of the full manifestation of the sons of God. The long awaited liberation of planet earth is near at hand. The greater works that Jesus told us of are ready to begin. The hour is at hand when THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER and the enduring Kingdom of God, which shall never be destroyed, shall consume and destroy forever all other kingdoms. The sons shall reign in the power and authority of the Spirit over all dominions from pole to pole, from sea to sea, and from galaxy to galaxy, and all nations and peoples and entities shall know and serve the Lord. There shall be peace on earth and goodwill to men, with justice and judgment and equity and LIFE ABUNDANT FOR ALL.

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 56**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-SIX**

**UNIVERSAL DOMINION  
THE LAUNCHING PAD**

It's a fascinating thought . . . could there be somewhere out there in the vastness of space . . . beyond the solar system . . . beyond our Milky Way galaxy . . . other worlds of intelligent beings? This is a subject that intrigues scientists and theologians alike. What is the likelihood of other intelligent life in the universe? It is not a new question. In the 4th century B.C., Metrodoros of Chios observed: "It seems impossible, in a large field only one shaft of wheat to grow, and in an infinite universe, to have only one living world." We do not know what other races of intelligent creatures there may be, but I think it is no stretch of the imagination to believe that, as this world is only one speck in the vast creation of God, there may be millions, yea, billions of other races in the countless worlds around us, and all of these are invited to behold the glory of the invisible God manifested in the many sons who are His image and likeness. In 1966 two astronomers, Carl Sagan and Josef Shklovskii, desired to estimate the number of planets in the universe with favorable environments for the support of biological life. They determined that it takes a certain kind of star with a planet located at just the right distance from that star to provide the minimal conditions for life. Working with just these two parameters, they estimated that 0.001% of all known stars could have a planet capable of supporting advanced life. By that estimate there could be more than one million life-supporting planets in our galaxy alone!

We must not think that when our ministry is finished here on earth, and all men have bowed the knee and happily owned Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, when all the earth has been set free from the curse and sin, sickness and sorrow have flown away; when the dirge music has sung its last song, and the minor chords are all gone, that the Master will then say, "Go and sit on a heavenly mount, and sing yourselves away forever and ever." No way! What Bethlehem was among the thousands of Judah, this little earth is to the great Universe of God -- for it is here that the glory of God has broken forth! All those stars, those worlds of light, who knows how many of them are inhabited? It is my conviction that there are regions beyond our imagination to which every son of God shall become an everlasting illumination, a living expression of the love, wisdom and power of their Creator and God. The people in those far-distant lands could not see Calvary as this world has seen it; but they shall see it in the redeemed that are conformed to His image. Some entertain the foolish notion that each of those worlds have their own way to God, but such cannot be the truth, for it is the testimony of scripture that it is in Christ that all things are gathered together into one, of things both in the heavens and in the earth (Eph. 1:10).

Truly in that day the Lord shall say to His sons who have brought the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." He is to keep on doing something, you see. God's Kingdom does not stop here on this globe, and God's revelation is not limited to mankind. Compared to the orbs of space the earth is insignificant. The celestial realm is unutterably greater and its glories grander. Men will risk all of their fortunes and their lives to seize the reins of even the smallest of earth's governments. Yet the glory of universal dominion promised to the sons of God is greater than all! The man who has been a faithful and wise steward of God here, will be promoted by our heavenly Father to more eminent service in the ages to come. This shall be our heaven, not to go there and walk on golden streets waving palm branches and playing harps, but to enter upon some larger, nobler ministry for which we are preparing by the lower and more arduous service of this present time!

There are worlds beyond this one, scattered throughout the vastnesses of infinity, all created by our Lord Jesus Christ and all included within the scope of His ever-increasing Kingdom. Long millennia ago God "created the heavens and the earth." A universe of raging infernos called stars came into existence.

Astronomers estimate that their number is equal to 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 or one sextillion -- yet, their utter extremity has never been seen! There seems to be no end to the twinkling points of light.

Only of the earth was it said that it was "without form and void -- empty." The scriptures refer repeatedly to "the hosts of the heavens." Scattered among these myriads of stars and nebulae are millions of solar systems composed of suns, planets and moons. Those worlds, too, are to be explored and God's great purpose fulfilled in them through the sons of God, for God's Christ is heir of A-L-L T-H-I-N-G-S. Ages to come...it will take them all, precious friend of mine, though there should be billions or trillions of them, to complete the great and grand purpose of our Creator. What a calling! What a plan! What a destiny! How magnificently awesome and meaningful the words of the inspired prophet: "And of the INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND PEACE there shall be no end!"

## UNIVERSAL DOMINION

More than thirty years ago, standing in the darkness of a jungle in South America, many miles from the nearest road or town, and further yet from anything that could be called a city, it seemed that every star and galaxy of the heavens adorned the night with the scintillating brilliance of diamonds. Looking up I could see the immensity of God. On some dark night look up and behold the infinity of God, look up and consider the majesty of God, look up and see the glory of God, look up and wonder, look up and be awed, look up and be overwhelmed. Take a look at the heavens, consider this infinite universe, contemplate the immensity of it, examine the balance of it, reflect upon the order of it, give attention to the symmetry of it, observe the way everything works by divine law and purpose -- in the light of all this, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visiteth him?" (Ps. 8:4). What is man, that God cares for him and visits him -- do you want to see it? Continuing this divine assessment of man the inspired Psalmist says, "Thou crownest him with glory and honor." He's showing how mindful God is of man, the greatness of His purpose for man. "Thou didst set him over the works of Thy hands." Do you want to see how great man is in the scheme of things? Consider what are the works of God's hands over which man, crowned with glory and honor, is set: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has ordained..." (Ps. 8:3).

"Thou has put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:6). Now "his feet" is not Jesus, his feet is MAN. It's not talking about Jesus, it's talking about MAN. Quoting this passage and speaking again of man, not Jesus, the writer to the Hebrews says, "Thou has put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him!" (Heb. 2:8). Man was created to be king of the universe. Man was designed by God to rule and reign over all things everywhere. Man was destined to have dominion on earth and in the heavens. Man was to have authority in all realms. Man was appointed to be sovereign -- not merely over the earth, but over all the unbounded heavens. Did you know that? It was the divine intent that man should be lord of all with all created things under submission to him, that man would explore, conquer, control, harness, utilize, bless, rule, and direct all the earth, the elements, the heavens, and all worlds and realms, visible and invisible, and all creatures, visible and invisible -- the whole creation of God!

But there is a problem. Although man is destined for universal rule and dominion, the apostle continues: "We see not yet all things put under him." Does any wish to debate that? Take a look at the world in which we live. Man was made to reign over the earth, but man broke his covenant with God. When man sinned he brought ruin to the earth, the ruin of sin, the curse, and death. Before sin man's hair was not turning gray, his teeth were not decaying, his heart was not giving out, his skin was not becoming wrinkled and flabby, his bones were not getting brittle or his body weak and stooped. There was no cancer, there was no stroke, there was no disease. There was no famine. There was no weed. There was no rust. There was no flood. There was no plague. There was no storm -- no frightening hurricane, no devastating tornado. There was no hatred, no greed, no lust, no cheating, no lying, no deceit, no murders, no crime, no war. God created man in His own image, He placed him in a perfect environment, and he told man that he was to rule and reign and that all things were in subjection under his feet. But man violated his union with God. Every broken body, every disturbed mind, every lack and weakness and sorrow of the human race for at least 6,000 years can be traced to man's violation of his union with God. Therefore, we see not yet all things put under man! Look at the terrors

of our world and it is plain to see that not yet has even the earth been subjected to man, much less the celestial realms above!

But -- "**WE SEE JESUS!**" (**Heb. 2:9**). It is interesting to note, there are two prominent words used in Greek for "see" -- HORAIO and BLEPO -- and the writer uses both in one sentence. He says, "We see not yet all things put under man," that is, take an in-depth, studied, wide-angled look, examine carefully -- we see not yet all things put under man. That is HORAIO. "But we see Jesus" -- it's a fleeting glance, one look is enough to settle the issue -- that is BLEPO. Ah, we see not yet all things put under man, but we see Jesus "**made a little lower than the deity for the suffering of death, CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR...**" (**Heb. 2:9**). Jesus was lowered for a season that He by the grace of God might "taste death for every man," that through His redemption He might restore all men to the righteousness, joy, peace, wisdom, authority, power and dominion that was theirs in the beginning.

The world is filled with hopelessness today only because men do not see Jesus! All is despair and futility and lack if we don't see Jesus! He is the great Captain of our salvation and the Firstborn of many brethren. He is the Firstborn from the dead, and the Firstborn of every creature. He is the proto-type of God's ordained destiny for all men. Oh yes, we who have been quickened by His Spirit, infused with His life and imbued with His mind -- we SEE JESUS! We see Him overcoming sin, self, the curse, and death. We see Him risen, ascended, crowned with glory and honor, exalted to the throne of the Majesty on high, heir of all things, with all power in heaven and in earth, having obtained a name above every name, Lord of all, King of the universe, higher than angels and principalities and powers, the image and likeness and dominion of God over all things restored in man. That is what we see! We see Jesus and in Him we see our very own calling and destiny!

Therefore, let us consider the honor and glory with which Jesus has been crowned. Present estimates -- no doubt underestimates -- put the size of the universe at over twenty thousand million light years in diameter. That's about 120,000 million million miles. Present estimates -- also no doubt underestimates -- put the number of galaxies in the known universe at over 100,000,000,000. Since each galaxy has roughly 100,000,000,000 stars, that means the universe has over 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (ten thousand million million million) individual stars or "suns". Why did God design such an immense universe? And why did God create such an innumerable number of stars? For no reason? For some reason? For an incredible reason! God, away back before the mountains were formed, or ever the sun and moon appeared, had perfected His plans for the future rulers of the works of His hands. Those plans called for a planet named earth, and for His future rulers, his sons, to be placed there for their training in God's school of dominion. And those plans called for a tempter to ensnare the original pair, who were made to be deceived and subjected to a realm where they could learn to overcome and rule, first within themselves, then over the earth, and finally over all things of God's vast creation. "**For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope**" (**Rom. 8:20**). God had a better plan for men than a garden -- a very beautiful garden, of course, yet a garden in which nothing ever happened and no one ever learned anything or got anywhere. If there had never been a fall, then there could be no salvation, and man could never have learned through grace to rule over his enemies within and without. The fall with its plan of redemption provided the perfect school where man could experience in a practical way the principles of dominion.

Man was created a human being, formed of the earth, infused with the spirit of life from God, with not one thing wrong with him. He never had a headache, nor a heartache, nor a trouble, nor a care. He was just a perfect specimen of humanity, a son of God, a prisoner of earth, placed in a garden "to dress and to keep it." This man was completely untested, untried, undeveloped, and inexperienced. And if there had been no tempter and no fall, then man would never have attained to anything higher. I don't like farming. I am neither a farmer nor the son of a farmer. I'm rather glad Adam got out of that place! I have higher aspirations than messing around eternally in a park, tending to the birds and beasts in it, and bossing them around. Oh yes, I know that park must have been a very delightful place and filled with allegorical realities. But I soon get tired of frittering away my time in beautiful parks. Man was not made for that! If man would have been made for that, God would have kept him there. It's just as simple as that. I am getting tired of being a prisoner of earth. Instead of being shut up in a park with Adam and the rest of his race, having dominion over the beasts and the fowls and creeping things in it, my feet are beginning to itch to go exploring beyond this old world. And what's more, that is exactly what I am in preparation for! And I am going to do more than that; for my Father tells me that now, since

breaking out of Eden, I am not only going to explore, but I am going to own, as a joint-heir with Christ, all the countless worlds of His endless heavens and every creature in them. Who wants to go back to Eden?

Thanks be to God's wise and wonderful plan, we now, who are recipients of God's grace, His dealings, processings, and His glory, have advanced to the place where we shall judge angels and reveal God to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places (I Cor. 6:3; Eph. 3:10). Go on with your Eden, you folks who want to go back to it. I have something better. The Bible begins with man in a garden, but it ends with the Holy City coming down from God out of the heavens with life and light and love and glory for all creation: "**Behold, I make all things new!**" (Rev. 21:5). I never did like cleaning out horse stalls and cow stables anyway. I have aspired to a better job; for my Saviour now promises me a seat with Him on His throne, helping to rule over His endless and eternal universe (Heb. 2:5-8; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 21:7). This heavenly calling is not as a park attendant, playing valet to a lot of beasts and birds, but a king-priest after the order of Melchisedek (Heb. 3:1). Eden never offered anything comparable to this!

The Bible clearly teaches that God's sons shall inherit all things (Rev. 21:7; Heb. 2:8). The whole universe shall be theirs! Every world that floats in space shall be subject to their word and at their disposal, as they range the broad fields of the boundless heavens. Here and now we are a people in whom there is royal blood; sons of God, heirs to the throne; we are born to rule over all things, and God is preparing us for that dominion. The rule of one little world is not enough for a man born of the omnipresent God of the universe. It may be for a chipmunk. It is not for a son of God, because one born from above is too big in his spirit, which is his real divine self. To be a spiritual man, a heavenly man, he must reach out to the future, to infinity, to eternity, and grapple with the powers of the ages to come, and compel them to gird him with strength to fulfill the ultimate intention of our heavenly Father. It reminds me of the review I read of Thornton Wilder's famous play, "Our Town." A little girl is leaning out a window on a beautiful moonlight night, telling a little boy friend about a strange letter that has just arrived in their crossroads town of Groves Corner. The letter was addressed in a most unusual way.

Instead of just having the name of the crossroads post office, and state, it was addressed:

Groves Corners,  
Sutton County,  
New Hampshire,  
United States of America,  
Continent of North America,  
The Western Hemisphere,  
The Earth,  
The Milky Way Solar System,  
The Universe,  
The Mind of God.

When the little girl finishes telling about it, the little boy who listens has enough insight to pause and say, "Well, what do you know! What do you know!" All the while he thought he had been living in Groves Corner, New Hampshire, and that was all. Instead, all the while he had been living in the Universal Mind of God! Ah, my beloved, you have a more complete address to which your mail must be addressed when once you perceive yourself as spirit seated together in union with Christ in the higher-than-all-heavens at the right hand of God. And if you have the insight, even of that little boy, you will pause long enough to say as you contemplate the fact that in union with God you live not just in Connecticut or California, in the United States of America, or Europe, or Asia, or Africa -- but in the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent Spirit of God, "Well, what do you know! What do you know!" We are children of the universe. As sons of our heavenly Father we are universal children not to be confined to any spot or place in the cosmos. Even as now our minds roam over the vast expanses of God's universe, even so shall we ourselves follow our minds and fill all things. This is our heritage. We are not bound to this earth. God yet has an obligation to all of the creation and it will be by and through us that He will fulfill that obligation. The sons have not yet come to manifestation to bring deliverance to the earth, but that is about to be accomplished, and it is only after that that the work of revealing God to the whole universe will begin.

With humbleness of mind and holiness of heart let us prepare ourselves for the change that is coming. If you wish to be-dwarf men, stunt them, cut them down, reducing them to a race of spiritual Lilliputians, then proclaim that earth is the extent of the dominion of those who rule in the Kingdom of God. But God made us on no such diminutive, low-down scale as that! He made us so big that unless we can penetrate beyond the outer shell of flesh and lift our spirits, breathe the air of eternity, and soar into the All-ness of God, our understanding fails, and we will grovel like worms of the earth. The King of glory comes and irradiates us with the glory of transcendent hopes. He begets within us a living hope, an eternal hope, an unbounded hope which, like leaping and dancing flames, lights up all that is within us, and then throws its golden glory out to the farthest shores of infinity. Sons of God! Oh, the mystery of it!

The sweet singer of Israel was a seer and this truly is the understanding he had when by inspiration he penned the Eighth Psalm. When we read the words of this Psalm we get the impression that the writer is a great astronomer. He speaks as though he had just come from one of our observatories where he had been peering into the depths of the universe through a great telescope. But David did not have access to a modern observatory. We can only understand the wisdom of his marvelous words when we recognize that he spoke by the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God. When he considers the heavens and the stars, he asks -- as we all might ask who know that the earth is but a grain in the towering mountain of creation -- "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visiteth him? For Thou hast made him for a little while lower than Elohim, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet."

A report that came across my desk recently states: Today a small group of physicists are seeking to understand the infinite. Their cherished goal is beautifully expressed in a statement by Murray Gell-Mann. He put it this way. "It is the most persistent and greatest adventure in human history, this search to understand the universe, how it works and where it came from." In strictly geographical terms it seems astoundingly presumptuous of men and women to even seek such understanding. Physicist Gell-Mann explains the paradox of human desire to understand where and why everything began: "It is difficult to imagine that a handful of residents of a small planet circling an insignificant star in a small galaxy have as their aim a complete understanding of the entire universe, a small speck of creation truly believing it is capable of understanding the whole." But in fact, such ambitious projects are typical of the story of man. As the proverb says, "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter" (**Prov. 25:2**). Never satisfied with what he knows today, man always wants to know something more tomorrow. He never rests content.

Today, unregenerated, carnal man is shooting rockets to the moon and Mars, boasting that he is going to use the planets as a launching pad to soar to the universe beyond. But man is simply getting in too big a hurry! He is striving to "take over" and rule what he has not fitted himself to manage. There is that deep, innate knowledge in the subconscious of man that he is destined to explore and subjugate the universe. But man has not yet proven his ability to rule this planet, much less the worlds beyond! Man with his history of greed, lust, strife, treachery, wars, bloodshed, deceit, and perversion has now stockpiled enough atomic bombs to not only blow this earth to smithereens, but twenty more just like it! Shall God indeed commit into the hands of corrupt, depraved human nature the rulership of the universe? No way! Man is reaching out to rule that which he has not qualified himself to rule -- and before it has been made lawfully his! Man is still a rebel. But what mankind does not know is, that when, through Christ, he first qualifies for the trust, it has been God's intention all along to place not only the moon and Mars, but the WHOLE VAST, LIMITLESS UNIVERSE under his jurisdiction!

We see not yet all things put under man, but we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor. We see the first son of God to qualify for universal dominion! To be "crowned" means to be given kingly rule. To be crowned with glory and honor speaks of the excellence and greatness of the rule Jesus has now as the administrating, Ruling Executive over the ENTIRE UNIVERSE! He has ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things. All authority and power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Oh yes! A man in God's image and likeness is now the Head of all principality and power, angels, authorities and powers being made subject to Him. Christ is now ruling over all things, for He overcame all things. As qualifying sons of God we are now in preparation to be raised up with Him into the power of an incorruptible life in spirit, soul, and body, to inherit with Him ALL that

HE has now inherited! When we have been changed by the redemption of our bodies, we will need no space craft to ascend through the heavens, but will soar to worlds unknown just as Jesus did in His resurrection and ascension.

So that is the supreme heritage of man -- if he is willing! Man, and man only, of all the life-forms God has created, has been given the incomprehensible privilege of being born into the GOD FAMILY, the ELOHIM, the universal ruling family of GOD. This family relationship is a GOD-PLANE relationship, not an animal-plane, human-plane, angel-plane, or alien-plane relationship. Angels are ministering servants of God in the administration of His universe-ruling government. Are there aliens flying around the galaxies in flying saucers? I do not doubt it for one minute. But the fact is -- it is really irrelevant to anything! Some are caught up in the different orders of aliens -- the Grays, the Nordics, the Reptilians, etc. -- but to none of them is the dominion given. God may have many kinds of servants throughout the universe, but it is a higher calling to be the very SONS OF GOD. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7). Even the angels of might and glory are mere servants, "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them (not to them!) who shall be the heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). During the days of His flesh, in times of severe testing and weakness, angels came and ministered to Jesus. But not any more! For when He ascended He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high "being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb. 1:4). And seated with Him in the heavenlies we are seated far above the dominion of angels! "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come...Thou hast put all things in subjection under his (man's) feet" (Heb. 2:5-8). Some speak of angels as "sons of God," but such a notion contradicts the word of God. "For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? Or, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son?" (Heb. 1:5). We speak the truth in saying that angels are servants, but we are the sons and the heirs of God.

A young son of a wealthy man, while still a child, may be under the care of an adult servant. The servant is older, farther advanced in knowledge, on a higher plane physically and mentally -- but far lower potentially. For when the son is mature, he will inherit ALL HIS FATHER'S WEALTH AND POWER! Therefore, the servant who is temporarily older and more mature is a servant to the young heir. But when the heir comes into his manhood he will then command the servant. Such are the angels! Rulership over the universe does not mean merely the physical universe, the moon, sun, stars and galaxies. It is a dominion over ALL THINGS, ALL REALMS, and ALL DIMENSIONS within that universe; every being, entity, order, all worlds, aliens, angels, devils, principalities, powers and dominions. Therefore, the apostle wrote, "He seated Him (Christ) at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above ALL RULE and AUTHORITY and POWER and DOMINION, and EVERY NAME that is named -- above every title that can be conferred -- not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and in the world that is to come...and He raised US UP TOGETHER WITH HIM and made us sit down together -- GIVING US JOINT SEATING WITH HIM -- in the heavenly sphere" (Eph. 1:20-21, Amplified).

Oh, the wonder of it! Or Lord Jesus Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God. He has been given the dominion and the kingdom. The whole universe has been delivered into His mighty hands, and now He tells us that it belongs to us; that we have been raised to sit together with Him at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto us (1 Pet. 3:22). We are to sit with Him on His throne, which is the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). We are not only raised up to sit with Him on His throne, but He has been given a name that is above every name, and we are also to share that wonderful Name. Listen to this: "To him that overcometh...I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city (government) of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God...and I will write upon him MY NEW NAME" (Rev. 2:12).

This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over the endless vastnesses of infinity. They have proven faithful over few things. Now they shall soon be made rulers over many...over ALL HIS POSSESSIONS (Mat. 24:45-47). He has given us His glory because we are His brethren, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, life of His life, mind of His mind. We are of common parentage, brothers by the new birth, becoming like Him in name, nature and being. We are all "out of one" for which reason He is not ashamed to call us brethren. He has raised us up to sit with Him in the higher

than heavenlies, hence we belong on His throne. And the place which He has been preparing for each one is not only a world to come, and a Kingdom of Life and Light, but a position, a place of eminence at His side, ruling with Him over all the eternal endlessness of His unbounded heavens!

As I have pointed out before, I now remind you that the Kingdom of God, having filled the earth in the dispensation to come, will from thence extend eternally outward to reconstitute, reconcile, bless, quicken, illuminate and transform the entire universe, enfolding within its mighty branches the vast limitless expanse of nebulae, luminaries, and galaxies until the multiplied myriads of the ransomed and reconciled shall in chorus fill the vastness of the universe with this glad song: "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise Him in the heights. Praise ye Him, all ye angels: praise ye Him, all ye hosts. Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise ye Him, all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: He made a decree that shall not pass...let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; HIS GLORY IS ABOVE THE EARTH AND HEAVEN" (Ps. 148).

"For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled" (Col. 1:16-17, 20-21).

I must emphasize that God is the Creator of ALL THINGS. Notice the things that the inspired apostle includes in creation. ALL things in the heavens, all stars, galaxies and worlds with all the life forms, entities, and powers they contain. ALL the things on earth, from the highest to the lowest. ALL things that are visible, or that are discernible to the physical senses -- ALL that the eyes can see, ALL that the ears can hear, ALL that we can touch, feel, taste or smell -- has been created by God. ALL things that are invisible were created by our God -- ALL the wisdom, ALL the knowledge, yea, even all that which has not been discovered, tapped, or conceived by the mind of man -- God created. ALL of the myriad machines and devices that shall yet come out of the mind of man, were created by God. ALL of the vast forces and powers and universal laws that science has discovered and has not yet discovered, were created by God. ALL the thrones, and the glory and the power of them that occupy them, in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, were created by God. ALL the dominions and lordships, the mastery and the supremacy, were created by God. ALL the principalities and powers, angels, intelligences, chief ones, demons, devils, and spirits of every order in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, were created by God. It is not just the fact that all these were created by God that startles us the most, but it goes on to say that BY THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS ALL THESE THINGS ARE RECONCILED TO GOD IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. This implies that every alien entity on every planet in all the galaxies of the universe are reconciled by the blood of God's Son. Furthermore, it means that the principalities and powers in the heavenly realms needed reconciling and are reconciled by the blood of God's Son. Is this not why the blessed Redeemer was both a heavenly being and an earthly being? He was the Word from heaven made flesh upon the earth, heaven and earth, spirit and flesh, divinity and humanity, blended into one so that the Son could say, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). Praise God, even the principalities and powers in the heavens are included in the glorious reconciliation, peace, blessing and life secured by the blood of His cross! The man who was from heaven, born on earth, is reconciling both realms and gathering all things INTO HIMSELF -- what a wonder that is!

Hear it! "By Him to reconcile PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN HEAVEN and on earth" (Col. 1:16-20). These are the words that stopped me in my tracks one fair day. "What is there in heaven that needs to be reconciled," I queried. The thought had never crossed my mind! I had always assumed that all was at peace and that never a cloud had darkened any brow in that bright eternal realm of Spirit.

Discord in heaven? Perish the thought! Sin in heaven? Impossible! Negative forces in heaven? It couldn't be! Wickedness in heaven? No way! "But," I thought, "not only does it plainly state that Christ will reconcile things in heaven, but it furthermore states that among the things to be reconciled are PRINCIPALITIES AND

POWERS. Principalities in the heavens that are discordant with the will of God! Powers in the heavens that are hostile to God! Principalities and powers in the heavens that must be reconciled, and that by the blood of God's heavenly Son! I had always assumed that Jesus died only for men. But comparing the following three scripture passages it becomes very plain. "He hath quickened us together with Christ...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ Jesus" (**Eph. 2:5-6**). "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers...against WICKED SPIRITS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES" (**Eph. 6:12**). "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers...and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (**Col. 1:16-20**).

It is not just the scope of "things on earth" being reconciled that startles us the most, for it goes on to say, "and things in heaven." One day the words struck me with such incredible force! There I faced anew one of the old, well-known verses of the Bible, and when the profound truth of it broke in wonder and glory within my consciousness, I had a completely new Bible, and an increasingly wonderful God. For the first time in my life I saw what God had created in the beginning. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And the scope of things created is the full scope of the things reconciled! God must reveal the fullness of Himself to all realms and worlds and bring every spirit, creature, and entity in the whole vast universe into relationship and union in Himself. I discovered at least sixteen different items or groups of items CREATED AND RECONCILED in that one short passage in chapter one of Colossians:

1. All things in heaven
2. All things on earth
3. Visible things
4. Invisible things
5. Visible things in the heavens
6. Visible things on the earth
7. Invisible things in the heavens
8. Invisible things on the earth
9. Thrones in the heavens
10. Thrones on the earth
11. Dominions in the heavens
12. Dominions on the earth
13. Principalities in the heavens
14. Principalities on the earth
15. Powers in the heavens
16. Powers on the earth

All this is to be reconciled BY THE BLOOD OF GOD'S SON! God is raising up a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, the body of the High Priest in the heavens, the king-priest sons of God. Their parish will be not only the earth, but the heavens also. God is going to make Himself known through us to the myriad hosts of the heavens. Our bliss will be to bestow the boon of God's favor and redemptive power throughout the bounds of stellar space. Out of the magnificence of God's grace and glory we will gladden the hearts of all His creatures in worlds we have never seen. Can we not see by this that the Royal Priesthood, which shall be the instrument of God to effect this universal reconciliation, is itself both earthly and heavenly, composed of men of earth who have been born from above, raised up and made to sit AMONG THE CELESTIALS IN JESUS CHRIST? "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus..." (**Heb. 3:1**).

There is to be a restoration! Today we see a terrible lack of things being right, or in divine order. There is a divine order for creation, an order of life and harmony. There is a proper order for animal life, vegetable life, and human life. There is a proper order for every planet, every world, every life form, every order of beings throughout all the infinite stretches of space. Reports I have heard from those who have been abducted by aliens in space ships indicate that many of those aliens do not know the life, ways, or power of the living God. They do hideous things to people, leaving them psychologically traumatized, physically mutilated, and filled

with fear and torment. All things everywhere are out of order, in frightful chaos. The curse must be lifted, every enemy put under our feet. Divine order for the universe must be restored. All creation is groaning and crying for release from the curse of sin, decay and death. And everything hinges on that body of sons that are to be manifested in that perfect state of divine order. And those who receive of this victory and glory, the wonderful mind of Christ, conformed to the image of the Son, with a full and complete triumph over sin, carnality and death, in spirit, soul and body -- these make up that blessed company TO WHOM IS GIVEN DOMINION OVER ALL THINGS!

How we praise God that we are living in the times of this restoration! It is the greatest day in the long history of man. It is at hand! I know it's at hand because I see a people being pressed and processed into the very life of God. Over fifty years ago the revelation of manifested sonship broke forth in the earth in a blaze of glory, and since that time God has been dealing in deep and powerful ways with those who have embraced the hope. The knowledge of God's purpose has spread over the whole earth, to every kindred and people and nation. It has been the sovereign work of God apart from any organization or the united efforts of any group or ministry. Not only you and me, but all creation as well will thrill to what God brings to pass in this grand and glorious restoration! "The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21). The word of God, as well as the witness of the Spirit, makes us know that this is not for some other age. It is now! It is here! Be ready! Prepare yourself! Cast aside all doubt and fear! The kingdom and the dominion is being given to the saints of the Most High! Victory over every enemy is arising within a people -- the SONS OF THE LIVING GOD!

While we thus stand, as it were on Pisgah's heights, and view the grand prospect just before us, our hearts rejoice in the Lord's great plan, with unspeakable joy; and though we realize that God's true church is still in the wilderness of humiliation and testing, and that the hour of divine breakthrough has not yet fully come, yet, seeing the indications of its rapid approach, and in spirit already discerning the dawn of the New Day, we lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh. Oh what fullness of blessing and cause for joy and thanksgiving the truth contains! Truly, the Lord has put a new song into our mouths. It is the grand anthem, the first note of which was sung by the angelic choir at the birth of the infant Jesus -- "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people, for unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Thank God, the harmonious strains of this song shall ere long fill heaven and earth with eternal melody as a whole family of sons in His exact image and likeness and form are born -- saviours on mount Zion -- and the work of universal salvation, the restitution of all things, which they come to accomplish progresses toward its GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION!

What glories lie beyond this, we cannot know. Of this we may be sure: we who are redeemed have entered a progressive institution, a Kingdom in which stagnation will never enter. We will ever go on "from glory to glory," for "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." We will never come to the place where we may sit down with folded hands and say, "This is the end." We, who have been born into the heavenly realm, have entered a stage of action, we have become active agents in the greatest development program ever conceived. A whole universe awaits our touch and guiding hand. Away out there in the blue is a Kingdom of life and light and love for every son of God to explore and develop and perfect. And if ever, in all the countless ages to come, that Kingdom should become too small or overcrowded for its citizens, let us remember that we, being as He is, are therefore, one and all, the very same kind of Beings as He who simply spoke the word, and lo! the present worlds appeared. Being like Him, the offspring of His own nature, wisdom and power, we will also be creators, one and all, and not destroyers, as in our human state. "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM."

## THE LAUNCHING PAD

We are inclined to lightly pass over many profound statements of holy scripture. Consider with me for a moment the opening words of the divine record. "In the beginning God created the heavens..." (Gen. 1:1). That phrase, "the heavens," is an inclusive one, and it is "the heavens" not "heaven." The Hebrew word used in that way is always in the plural, and used in that way it refers to what we would speak of as the whole universe.

You may have heard of Heptarchus who attempted to catalog all the stars in the sky, and in his final report he said, "There are thousands of them." Now scientists today tell us that, if we took the time, even with the naked

eye we can count up to 2,000! They say that is the extent of the possibility of vision of the human eye. But with the aid of telescopes and reflectors, it was Ptolemy long ago who peered into the vastness of space and said, "There are millions of them!" And when Herschel turned his great reflector on to the heavens he made this announcement, "They cannot be numbered." That is the last word of the scientific investigators of the heavens. The most recent estimates reveal that there are at least trillions of them!

The divine record continues, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Now why is the earth referred to in a sweeping cosmic statement? Is it not enough to say "the heavens?" Is not the earth included in that great statement? This earth of ours is just one tiny speck in this cosmic sentence -- why specify it? Simply because the moment you say "earth" you set the scene of the great drama of the Bible. In the scriptures the scene of all its activity is this earth on which we are now living. That is because God's purpose in the whole universe begins with earth! Earth is the cradle of God's revelation of His glory to all realms!

The earth is but a speck and the sun a spark in the vast creation that is known to the modern astronomer. So insignificant is this earth in comparison with the universe of celestial bodies, that its removal from space would cause less commotion than the loss of a penny from the trillions of dollars in the national treasury in Washington. But with all our modern knowledge of astronomy, which reduces to insignificance our infinitesimal planet and the people that populate it, we have no scientific or scriptural ground, strange as it may seem, for believing that this world in which we live is anything less than the ancients imagined it to be -- the center of the universe! It is the revelation of God's infallible word that has mightily magnified the importance of this grain of sand in the mountain of creation.

In this hour when our whole universe is becoming our backyard, there are some who have settled for a very small and inconsequential purpose for the earth. Such as these have great difficulty understanding why our little earth, by comparison so small a place in the universe, should be the divine stage whereon God is enacting His great plan of the ages. The inference seems to be that God's purpose in man and in redemption cannot be so great when the place chosen for its chief events is so small and insignificant. But this miscalculation arises from the failure to discern the difference between a seed plot, where the seeds are planted, and cultivated, and grown, and the immeasurable acreage in which those same seeds are afterward sown to produce a vast harvest. The great mistake that many have in their minds is the notion that this world is the whole sum and substance of God's redemptive plan and purpose. **OUR PLANET IS ONLY THE PLACE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEED.** Christ (Head and body) is the seed, yes! He is the wondrous seed corn that fell into the ground and died and rose again. And in the end, this seed shall grow and multiply and bring forth and fill and satisfy all the acreage of God's vast field of the cosmos! Thus, we are justified in calling earth the launching pad of the universe! Just as the space shuttles and rockets blast off for other worlds from the launching pad at Cape Kennedy, so is the earth itself the launching pad from whence the sons of God, when their hour comes, shall blast off by the power of resurrection life to fulfill God's great purpose in all realms of the unbounded heavens. Not only is the earth the present center of interest, but the attention of all creation was centered in this orb in those prehistoric days when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Methinks that they sang and shouted the wondrous message penned millennia later by the inspired apostle, that **"in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens, and which are upon the earth: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:10).** The earth was, is, and shall continue to be the seed plot of the universe! Do you think those sublime sons of God shouted over the beauty and grandeur of a sterile and purposeless universe? No, it was a wise plan and a glorious purpose for every galaxy and world and creature that called forth this oratorio of the sons of God. And there was a special reason why these sons of God should rejoice in this new creation called earth. It was to be the first sphere of their development and dominion -- the launching pad of God's cosmic purposes!

The whole creation, suns upon suns, systems upon systems, worlds upon worlds, immensity beyond comprehension is centering its attention upon what is transpiring upon this little earth, and the reason for all of this is because God has graciously seen fit to make this world the theatrical stage of the universe. It is here that the drama of God's universal program is presented. It is here that Jesus Christ, the proto-type of man in God's image and likeness with divine life, power and dominion is first introduced. It is here that His many brethren, the manifested sons of God, enter into their inheritance and commence their ministry and rule. **"And**

to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages hath been hid in God, who created the all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly spheres might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to a plan of the ages which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (**Eph. 3:9-11**). "Wherefore seeing that we also are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (**Heb. 12:1-2**).

The church systems today offer no hope for this earth and no plan or purpose of God for the universe. In their view the world is going to the devil, getting worse and worse, and will end with the antichrist, the great tribulation, and fiery vengeance, with only a few saints evacuated off to a heaven somewhere beyond the blue. Their attitude pictures humanity's condition somewhat like poor George. George fell off a scaffold from three stories up, broke half the bones in his body, scalded himself with hot tar and lay in the hospital covered with bandages from head to foot, strapped in traction, fed intravenously -- only his left eyeball was visible! The doctor came in, checked the chart at the bottom of the bed of pain, hmmmmed knowingly, but not too encouragingly, came around the side of the bed, looked closely at George and said, "I don't like the looks of that eye!" Hopeless! That is how the church world views humanity today. The wonderful truth is that "the whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited -- yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God! It is plain to anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail. And it is plain, too, that we who have a foretaste of the Spirit are in a state of painful tension, while we wait for that redemption of our bodies which will mean that we have realized our full sonship in Him" (**Rom. 8:19-23**) (Phillips).

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 57**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-SEVEN**

Scientists finding fossil footprints of extinct dinosaurs assure us that these great creatures must have roamed the earth in the long ago. As they walked upon the semi-solid earth, later hardening into rock, they left these indisputable evidences of their existence. In like manner God has trod this earth; He has traveled the infinite depths of space leaving His mark on everything touched. The starry heavens are studded with countless universes flung from His omnipotent hand. He has set them in their destined locations and marked out for them their appointed speeds and orbits.

The notion that God for many ages through incomprehensible measures of time -- countless billions of trillions of earth years -- remained inactive and then at a comparatively recent date created the universe and our world is both illogical and fallacious. This view assumes that eternity preceded time, that time began from several thousand to several billion years ago, and God was within eternity uncreative and unproductive. Here, in the picture people have of God first contemplating the idea of a creation and then resolving to bring it into existence, we have God suddenly becoming something in recent history that He had never been before!

Just as a king is not called a king until he has a people subject to him, so in like manner the name "Creator" cannot be applied to one unless there is something that has been created. God is not called "God" until He has a people, as it is written, **"And I will be your God, and ye shall be my people"** (Lev. 26:12). Furthermore, the smiter can smite, but he is not called "the smiter" until he has smitten something. Even if there is no smitten object, and there is nothing lacking in the ability of one to smite, yet it is only when there is a smitten object that it is proper to call the smiter by that name. Thus with the Creator -- possessing the ability, wisdom, and power to create does not make Him a Creator. Only when He has created something is He the Creator!

I declare to you today that our God is spontaneously creative. He is not systematically creative. What I mean by that is that God does not employ a program in His purpose and activity. God is a God of spontaneity. God moves, not by system or method, but by the creative power of His life. God is speaking in this hour a word of life. He is energizing us with His life, transforming by His life. The life of God is the creative power of His nature. When I say that God is spontaneously creative, it is my conviction that God has always been everything that He is. He says, "I am Yahweh, I change not." You can't add anything to God. There is no increase of what He is. There is an increase in manifestation, a progression in His purposes, but God Himself does not change. If God changed one iota today, He would cease to be God. He is God by virtue of the fact that He IS. "I am that I am; I change not; I am the eternal." By this God is saying, "I am what I am. I always am all that I am. I have never been anything that I am not now. I never will be anything that I am not already. What I am I have always been. All that I am I ever will be. I change not." That is what makes God eternal. Anything that changes in any way is not eternal, for in the change some characteristic is left behind or a new one acquired. In every change something ends or something begins. That which dwells in an eternal state knows no change. Change is possible only in that which is not stable, is limited, is imperfect, or not fully developed. The Lord declares of Himself, **"I am Yahweh, I CHANGE NOT"** (Mal. 3:6), and the inspired apostle says of Him, **"with whom there is no VARIABleness, neither shadow of turning"** (James 1:17). God is never surprised. God has not learned anything this week, nor this year, nor in the past billion trillion years. If God learned one thing today, it would destroy Him. He would no longer be the omniscient One, the all-knowing One, for known unto God are all His works from the creation of the world. God does not experiment. God does not become stronger, wiser, mightier, or increase Himself in any way. God is the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent One. He CHANGES NOT. He eternally is all that He is without any decrease or increase or fluctuation whatsoever. Therefore He is the ETERNAL GOD! Eternal means more than unending, it means unchangeable, and therefore unending! Therefore, God has always been Creator!

I don't know about you, but I used to have the idea that God sat around in His heaven for all of "eternity past" and never did anything. There was just God, there was nothing else. God had never done anything except be God. God had never spoken a word. God had never created anything. God had never related to anybody, for there was nobody else, just Himself. He was just God and that was all there was! And then one day, unexpectedly, suddenly, mysteriously an idea came into His mind. A thought presented itself. God thought, "Why don't I do something? Why don't I speak a word? Why don't I make a creation?" And in that sublime moment God first purposed to bring forth a creation!

We are wrong when we teach such a concept. God is life and the wellspring of life. In the outflowing of that life I know Him; and when I discover that He is love, I see that if He were not love He would not, could not create. Now let us consider together the nature of this God who has eternally been Creator. We must clearly see that God is all-inclusive, and that He lacks nothing whatsoever. And God is love -- all goodness. Having said that God is complete within Himself and therefore good, we can now go on to describe the attribute through which we are aware of His existence -- His desire to share. This is the consequence, the effect of His goodness.

Some have said, and I have said it too, that God created man because He was alone and yearned for fellowship -- for creatures of like kind with whom He could commune. But this falls short of the nature of God which is Love. Love does not give because of the desire to receive; rather, love gives purely out of the desire to bless. The desire for fellowship is the desire to receive -- not give! Now God possesses that attribute also, as we shall presently see, but is first and foremost love -- the pure, unmixed desire to impart. Here we have the first principle of creation -- God's infinite desire to impart led to the creation of a vessel to receive His blessings. The creation of the vessel (the one we know and are a part of, the present cosmos) is the revelation of God by creation. He created the universe with all the hosts thereof, and this world with its inhabitants. Thus the Creator could now bestow upon the creation His infinite love and inexhaustible abundance. God is the Lover, creation the beloved, as it is written, "For God so loved the world..."

We have shown that the Creator's nature is that of sharing, giving, imparting, and blessing. However, there can be no sharing unless there is some agent that can receive. So God's infinite and eternal desire to impart implies a desire to fulfill every possible dimension and quality of desires to receive. Can we not see by this that God's infinite and eternal desire to give demands AN AGENT WITH THE DESIRE TO RECEIVE! The very nature of God requires -- CREATION! To impart or share with others, on any level, can only be considered noble or kind when the recipient desires and enjoys that which is offered him. When the recipient rejects the gift, yet the donor continues to insist on its acceptance and finally forces him to accept, one can hardly consider this an act of giving -- much less of love. In fact, it is brutality and tyranny!

All who read these lines know by experience that the mere mechanical act of giving is, in itself, unsatisfactory and unfulfilling. Clearly there must be a desire to receive on the part of the recipient, a knowledge of what the gift entails and signifies, before we can say we are truly giving. If I should give a box of books to a thousand people who cannot read and have no interest in books, I have not really given anything. It follows that God could never give anything to anyone without an active desire to receive on their part. So the first step in creation was to bring forth the manifestation of the DESIRE TO RECEIVE! This desire is inherent in creation, just as the would-be mother desires the implantation of the seed from the father. Although some are so blinded by sin and benumbed by death that they seek the answer to their cravings in all the wrong places, even rebelling against the glorious Giver, yet God has a plan for all these, to bring them to repentance (a change of mind and desire) so that they can desire properly and discover the true source of life, blessing and reality. And thus, as it is written, it is "the goodness of God that leadeth men to repentance."

It readily follows that because of His giving nature God must create an instrument with both the capacity and desire to receive. The only way to accomplish this was for God to withdraw Himself, to remove Himself, that there would be a place or condition where HE WAS NOT. God is light, the scripture declares, and in Him there is no darkness at all. Therefore, let it be clearly known that darkness is nought but the ABSENCE OF GOD! "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (**Gen. 1:2**). You will understand a great mystery when you see how it is that creation was brought forth in the domain of darkness, the realm from which, though created by God, God had withdrawn Himself! "For the creation was made subject

to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:20-21).

God omnipresent -- how could there be some place where He is not?" We say that God is omnipresent, yet there certainly are realms from which He withholds some measure of Himself, otherwise He could not say, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). We say that God is omnipotent; yet He has placed a limitation upon the exercise of His own power, just as it is written of Jesus that "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Mat. 13:58). We say that He is absolutely free, that He can do anything He wishes; yet He has put Himself under obligation by His promises and is bound by His covenants.

Not only was darkness (the absence of God) the first state of creation, it remains the condition of the Adamic creation unto this day. The command, "Let there be light!" is not merely an historical event, but a prophecy of the glorious reality that would be birthed out of the darkness of the first creation. The work begins with darkness. God said, "Let there be light," and at once light shone where all before was dark. It is only when the word of God pierces the dense darkness of our alienated, carnal mind with the divine fiat, "Let there be light!" that our darkness displeases us and we are turned to the light. In that blessed moment the shroud of ignorance and death is removed from our heart and the light of life shines in to illuminate, quicken, and transform that world which we are. "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Mat. 4:16). "I am the light of the world: He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John. 8:12). "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:12-13).

God's method in His going-forth cannot be better understood than by the use of a somewhat uncommon word - - parsimony. We may say that God's method of realizing Himself in creation is by parsimony. To use an illustration -- if we desire to understand the composition of the great white rays of light, we break them up into their constituents and see them as the colors of the rainbow. All the colors are in the white light, for that is what white light is. When we pass white light through a prism, through stained glass, or even through the cover on the taillight of your automobile, what takes place is that part of the light is held back and we see the remainder. This is parsimony. To change the figure, those who love little children often act upon the same principle. We have to shed a portion of our experience, dispense with a part of our resources, yield up a measure of what we are, and become children ourselves if we are to understand and relate to children. We isolate some of our persona, as it were. Your little boy or girl knows you as father, but perhaps your fellow citizens know you as professor, banker, lawyer, carpenter, electrician, mechanic, or proprietor. You have a larger life than the little child knows anything about, and yet to live your fatherhood properly you have to shed the other persona in the presence of your child and live and act as a child. Part of your nature is dismissed, or withdrawn, or held back. Many know me as a man of God, a preacher and teacher of the Kingdom of God, and there is a certain esteem of the ministry the Lord has favored us with; but for a few years my little grandson knew me as someone to play cars with! A lot of who I am was held back in my relationship with him. Now he is discovering other parts of me that he did not know at that time. There is, furthermore, a part of me that only my wife knows, it is withheld from all others. What is this but parsimony? The principle of parsimony helps us to live our life truly. When we get home from work we shut the world out; when we are at business we live in that as though there were nothing else to live for. In different relationships we insulate or restrict portions of our being.

It is not difficult to see how this applies to God's great principle of creation. God withdrew Himself, creating darkness and void -- this is the self-limitation of Deity; or to state it in other words, God retained, or held back, His full resources in order that there could be formed outside of Himself and beyond Himself and yet within Himself the desire to receive. The desire to receive is the basic mechanism by which the world operates, the dynamic process at the base of all manifestation. The desire to receive affects all creation because it is the basis of all creation. As we view the animate creation we find a remarkable physical dependence upon the external world for survival culminating in man, who has the greatest desire to receive of all creation -- not only for physical things like food, clothing, houses, and possessions, but also for psychological things like peace, happiness, satisfaction, love, and above all, the deep inner craving for spiritual life, the insatiable hunger after reality.

When God created man male and female in His image, He revealed the great truth that He is Himself male and female in His nature and attributes. God would never have known the action of giving and receiving had He not known them as characteristics inherent within Himself. The masculine nature is the nature of the Giver. Aggressiveness, boldness, strength, valor, authority, power, and dominion are among the traits of the masculine nature. And it is the man who provides the sperm out of himself for the creation of a new life. Thus, man is the Giver. Modesty, gentleness, tenderness, sensitivity, and dependence are attributes of the feminine nature. It is the woman who receives the sperm in the act of procreation. And this is why men hold doors open for women, and offer a woman their seat on the bus, instead of the other way around. Woman is therefore the Receiver. When a woman conceives, the realm of her conception is in darkness -- the new life, the new creation, the product of her union is formed in the seclusion and darkness of the womb. In its beginning the new life is without human form and darkness is upon the face of the deep. What marvelous things are wrought in darkness! Said the Psalmist: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from Thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:14-16). And yet, the receiver in turn becomes a giver! The mother who receives the sperm at last gives a child and pours out upon that child love, affection, care, instruction, and discipline as a Giver!

We have been receivers up to this day, but with Peter we can say, "Such as I have, give I unto you!" The great principle of sonship is that we receive in order to be able to give! The sons are receiving in fullness that they may give out of fullness. The sons are receiving ultimately that they may give ultimately. The sons are receiving infinitely that they may pour into creation infinitely. All men give out of the measure they have, but God is bringing forth a people in this hour in such a dimension of His nature, life and power that He shall be expressed through them in the fullness of Himself. For these creation groans, for only as this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruptible puts on incorruption, shall we be able to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption.

I know nothing deeper in God than love, nor believe there is anything deeper than love, nay, there can be nothing deeper than love! The being of God is love, and love demands an object -- the beloved. If God never created until six thousand years ago or twenty billion years ago, then He could have not been love before that event, for there was no object of love, therefore no expression of love. God would have been throughout eternity -- before time -- loveless. Our existence is not accidental: it had to be. God must love, therefore God must create. The reality of love is a property inherent in the essence of the lover. The Divine Lover, God, cannot love in a limited way because in His nature and being He is limitless, so He loves to the furthest limits of possibility. Creation is therefore intrinsic to God's very life, it is the outer landscape of His own being, God making Himself visible to Himself and simultaneously making Himself visible to us. It is in some sense His very self, as Eve was Adam's self. And in this relationship with His creation God's love is revealed in the interchange of giving and receiving!

Far away in the depths of my spirit I see that from all eternity God has been creating! "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1-3). "Through faith we understand that the ages were framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3). That creative word was already there with God in the beginning of our present cosmos. "In the beginning...God said, Let there be...and there was..." That never-begun existence of the Word has eternally been the out-raying of the Father's nature. The Word did not come into existence at the beginning of the present creation -- He already was. He is the CREATIVE WORD! To say that God never created anything before Genesis 1:1 is to deny God His own being, nature, and expression from eternity.

If God never until recent times created anything, then God eternally never spoke and never loved! If at any time He either spoke or loved, then He created! These truths are self-evident. There has never been a time when there was nothingness and only God in existence. The scripture says that He is "before all things," but that doesn't mean that He eternally existed alone, only that He is the origin, the source, the cause of all things, as it is also written, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things -- for all things originate with Him

and come from Him..." (Rom. 11:36). There was never a time when His omnipotent power was not outspread everywhere. We are so narrow when we naively suppose that this universe is the first or only thing God has ever done! God has never been contented to be alone, for He is love. He has ever willed and labored to give existence to other creatures and worlds who should be blessed with His blessedness -- creatures whom He has eternally purposed to conform to His own image and likeness, a likeness developed over eons of time, forever growing: perhaps never one of them yet, though unspeakably blessed, has had even an approximate idea of the blessedness in store for him. It is the ministry of God's firstfruits company of sons to bring this blessedness to all realms of all the creations of God in all dimensions forevermore!

It would make no difference if there were a googolplex (the largest number that has a name) of universes and a googolplex to the googolplex power of sons of God. Eventually God's plan of the ages would be finished, and then comes eternity -- what would seem to be an eternity of stagnation, of the status quo, of no more change or growth or creation -- forever after. There would then be nothing more anywhere with the need to receive, and God's nature of love would forever cease to be expressed, His creative power eternally inactive. If we can lay aside the traditions of men we will see that the creation of God and the family of God will increase forever. And that is what the prophet Isaiah indicates: "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end..." (Isa. 9:7). The key word is increase -- the government of God forever increasing in number, area, power, scope, responsibility, creativity, fulfillment, fullness of life and purpose.

What happens when the universe is fully occupied, and the glory of God's sons has brought the fullness of God to all worlds everywhere? Ah, some astronomers postulate that the physical universe is potentially infinite in size, with space expanding and matter continually coming into existence. Even if this were not the case, God is CREATOR and other universes and dimensions may exist or be created. There is nothing impossible with God! It is absurd to straitjacket God's great plan and power by the confines and limitations of the cosmos as we know it today. God is unlimited, almighty, omniscient in wisdom, infinite in potential, omnipotent in power and ability. The human mind cannot even conceive of, much less verbalize, what the scope and glory of God's activity and purpose throughout the unending eternity shall be! No end to the increase! What incomprehensible potential! Involvement in God's government unto infinity is what God is offering us as His very own sons. Infinity for eternity! What a prospect!

If God has always been Creator, it follows that He is still creating today. One astronomer describes how throughout the interstellar space freshly created particles of matter cluster first into gaseous thin clouds and then swirl into even denser forms, finally bursting into flaming suns whose energy is nourished by the transmutation of matter itself. These swirling celestial fires are not merely single stars, but systems of stars within systems of stars. Hundreds of millions of them move in the rhythm, which produces the galaxies. Who can deny that God is still creating!

You see, my beloved, creation is co-extensive with the Creator. I don't believe there was ever a time when God was not Creator, and therefore creating, because if God one fine day became a Creator, then He changed. Something was added to Him. He became something that He had never been before. As long as there has been God, there has been creation. I don't know how many creations there have been, or how many parallel universes exist even now in other, unknown, dimensions. I know the one that I see with my eyes that I perceive with my senses. I know the one that my natural man has been birthed into. I gaze at the majesty and immensity of the heavens at night. I behold the symmetry, the harmony, and the wonder of this earth with its towering mountains, vast oceans, and teeming life forms. But I cannot conceive today that what I see is the only thing God has ever done! There may have been ten billion zillion googolplexes of creations, on scillions of levels, before the one that we are beholding today. And I do not hesitate to tell you that this is not the last creation! God continues to create today and without His ceaseless activity all would sink into chaos and nothingness. Jesus said it this way: "My Father is working still, and I am working."

Ray Prinzing contributed a beautiful depth of insight into God's Creatorhood when he wrote, "The security of all the good things to come is in Jesus Christ -- since it is IN HIM that all things are to find their perfection and fulfillment. We see Him as the Son of man, we see Him as the Son of God, we see Him as the great High Priest, but we need to also see Him as the GREAT CREATOR -- 'for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible...all things were created by Him, and for Him' (Col. 1:16). It

is this GREAT CREATOR who has become our Redeemer, and you cannot separate redemption from His creativity. As Peter writes, 'Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls in well doing, as unto a FAITHFUL CREATOR' (I Pet. 4:19).

"What about this 'CREATOR' part in today's sufferings? For the majority of Christians, CREATING was an historical happening that was wrought a long time ago. 'In the beginning God created...' A creation was brought forth -- hazy, nebulous, but in some way a revelation of His power. Then the erroneous teaching follows that an enemy came by guile, treachery, and marred that creation, so now God has to try and patch things up, rescue a few, and then close the book on the whole sorry chapter. What nonsense! Rather, we firmly declare unto you that CREATING IS A PROCESS STILL BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE WILL AND GRACE OF GOD. Our Redeemer, as our Creator, is still creating us, and we are being perfected in His hand as He conforms us into His own image and likeness. This is why Peter, by inspiration, holds before us the fact that the Creator is faithful -- still operating as such, and using suffering as a part of the creative process. 'As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.'

"God's creative acts are not just limited to history -- they are still in progress, and some are very much yet in the future. 'I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are CREATED NOW, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them' (Isa. 48:6-7). Even though He has given us promises of things that shall happen, good things to come, yet there is such a unique creativity involved that no man shall out-guess the way He shall accomplish His plan. That is why Peter admonishes us to 'be established in the present truth' (II Pet. 1:12). Our God is marching on, but are we marching with Him?

"The usual first thought for 'Creator' is **Genesis 1:1**, 'In the beginning GOD CREATED the heavens and the earth.' I realize that one could go off in several directions with this, perhaps placing the emphasis on the fact that it was God who did the creating; or, that it was the beginning of His plan of the ages; or, we could spend hours meditating on what it was He created. But the thought that strongly comes to me is that far too often we limit HIS CREATIVITY to the book of Genesis, chapter one, and we are not aware that HE IS OUR CREATOR RIGHT NOW. There is a NOW-NESS in His creating, which is presently taking place in a people. To say, 'remember now THY Creator,' the THY makes it a personal experience now. Yet it is the proclivity of the carnal man to turn away from the Creator, and involve himself with what was created instead.

"How beautifully the scriptures turn our eyes to behold a higher creation. For 'Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building' (Heb. 9:11). The Greek word used here for 'building' is 'ktisis' which literally means: thing made, a creation, and could rightly be read, 'not of this creation,' meaning, not of this present Adamic man. THERE IS A NEW MAKING TAKING FORM, in His image, with His divine nature. This NEW MAKING is a part of the on-going creativity of our God. And each member of this new creation is an original handiwork of the Creator. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (thing made, creation)' (II Cor. 5:17). There is a totally new creation being formed, and it is 'not of this building,' not after the realm of the earthy, but OF THE HEAVENLY. It is in the new that the scripture shall be fulfilled which saith, 'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them' (Eph. 2:10).

"With a broad sweep the prophet declares that God is 'the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth' (Isa. 40:28). The vast galaxies, its farthest outreach, beyond the beyonds -- HE prepared, formed, created it all. But lest one would become overwhelmed by the immensity of it all, the prophet also reminded them that 'I am the Lord, your Holy One, THE CREATOR OF ISRAEL, your King. Thus saith the Lord, WHICH MAKETH a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters' (Isa. 43:15-16). Yes, He created the entire universe, but He also CREATED YOU, and He reveals that creativity by making a way for you now, a path through the waters, a way where there is no way. Who ever heard of a path through the Red Sea? God created one when needed! But God's creative acts are not just limited to history, they are still in progress, and some are very much yet in the future. Christ consistently pointed the people towards the new, things that were to happen in their day, and the future, because the working of the Father was progressive in its unfolding. 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work' (Jn. 5:17). He is 'the Lord our MAKER,' and He is still MAKING/CREATING that which furthers His plan

and purpose. And then, in tremendous love and grace He includes us in that creative working. How utterly awesome!

"These are truths being revealed today which have been reserved for this very time, and no one can say 'I already knew them.' God has a creative work for this day, which has never been seen before! God has a truth for our today and it is sufficient for our times -- as we walk on in His creative unfolding. People are so prone to look back to yesterday's revival and want to repeat it over and over again, so they can say, 'it is just like the good old days.' Little do they know that those days are gone, that God has a most unique, original work of creation for this day which is peculiarly fitted to our times. Why do we think He has ceased to be OUR CREATOR, and has now become a 'Do It Again Worker.' I find no witness of His Spirit within me to return to the 'early church' patterns. I have no inner Divine Urging to dredge up the pattern of Israel's historical dealings for a repeat. Indeed, we are challenged to 'Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.' Rather, we are to 'REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR,' He is the Originator of that which is ever new, and He says, 'Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert...this people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise' (Isa. 43:18-19, 21).

"We have borne the image of the earth. We do not need to go round and round on the wheel to see how many times we can bear this earthy image, or have a repeat of His earthy works, or works in the earthy. There is also an image of the heavenly to be borne. Let the natural give way to the spiritual, let the earthy be replaced by the heavenly! He continues to mold and shapen and form, because HE IS CREATING A NEW SPECIES, that is, CREATING AN HEAVENLY HOST. Resurrect and build replicas of all the old orders that you desire -- then pray them through repeated cycles of revival after revival, but they will always go into a decline, for God has not meant for them to endure. In our heart He has spoken of A NEW, and for us the former has now waxen old, and we pray it will swiftly vanish away. We do not belittle the days that have passed. We praise God for every move of His Spirit, every work that He has wrought, but we see them as stepping stones of preparation for that which is to come. For, we repeat, HE IS THE HIGH PRIEST OF GOOD THINGS TO COME!"

"Even Paul, in turning the attention away from himself, and unto God, told the people, 'Ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein' (Acts 14:15). When you worship let it be THE LIVING GOD, He has the power to create, He is OUR MAKER, the living Lord of all. Briefly and simply stated, when we need help, let it go beyond Christ being our Healer, see Him as our CREATOR, He can create whatever is necessary for us. We can see Him as our Provider, but when we see Him as our Creator He can create provision when there is nothing in hand. HE is our MAKER, and He can continue to make, to produce, to create. 'My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth' (Ps. 121:2). Ah, to see Him as our faithful Creator means that we are connected to One of total sufficiency, total power, total victory.

**"Remember thy Creator, the Spirit speaks today,  
And let His love and mercy attend thy pilgrim way.  
To turn the shades of darkness into the dawning light,  
O'erthrow the force of evil, and turn the wrong to right.  
Why need we fear the future, or fret at things behind?  
For He is all-sufficient e'en when our faith is blind.  
And He remaineth faithful, to succor those who call,  
Remember thy Creator, He is our All in all."  
-- Ray Prinzing**

We are even now a new creation. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." There is an old creation and there is a new creation. But I have news for you! The new creation shall also be a creator, for the new creation is that which is in union with Him who is the ETERNAL CREATOR. And I tell you that I have higher objectives than this, but I did joke with my wife on occasion that when I become a creator and create my worlds, I think one of the first things I am going to create is a six-legged chicken! (I guess you can tell which part of the chicken is my favorite!). That, of course, is merely a humorous thought, for I am quite sure that any kind of chicken will be the farthest thing from our minds when we come to that awesome and glorious task of being

participators with God in His ever-expanding, universal Kingdom. What I am saying is this: God IS. God has always been everything that He is, and always will be all that He is. God has always been Creator! He will always be Creator! And now He is making us His sons that we may in all things be like Him! God is creating today, and He is a God that is infinite in all of His ways. The sons of God are SONS OF THE CREATOR and are therefore creators as is their Father.

The creative spirit already dwells within man. If you have ever noticed -- even a child loves to create. Have your children not brought something to you, a picture they drew, something they made, something they did? They were so proud of it, so excited about it! But that is really the image of GOD in them shining through! You see, the nature of creativity is within every man. That's why we have artists, poets, musicians, architects and inventors. Where does a picture, a poem, a song, a building, or an invention come from? Someone says, "Well, the picture is canvas and paint, and it's the artist who does it." But give me canvas and paint -- and you don't want to see it! I bought a guitar once, too, and you wouldn't have wanted to hear it! These things all proceed out of mind, out of spirit. They emerge from the invisible realm and are made visible by those who receive them. They come right out of that creative nature breathed into man's nostrils, the very breath and life of OUR CREATOR. They are not made, they are created! They are products of the inspiration of the Almighty! Paul Mueller once quoted a letter he received from a brother who obviously has a deep understanding of the creative processes of God. A portion of the letter said, "This has been a very exciting morning for me, as the Lord gave me a new picture and understanding of what He is doing and how He is doing it. These are days of continuing creation. Our Father, being a Creator, has never stopped creating. He is still creating out of nothing! A Creator can't stop creating. Now He is creating through His sons. But how is He creating? Where is He creating? That is the glorious mystery that is unfolding to me as I journey on His highway! We sons are learning the higher way of God, our Father, who created everything out of no-thing. It all came out of Himself. We are creators made in His image, learning to create the kingdom as we live, move, and have our being moment by moment, day by day. We are creating the kingdom where there was and is no kingdom, only darkness. We are bringing it right into the midst of that darkness!

"How do we go about turning spiritual darkness into Light? Just by knowing and being who we are, children of light! It is all done out of rest! It is done by the Person of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. It is actually the Holy Spirit who is doing the creating through us, precept by precept, speaking the word of faith that becomes fact. It is taking many of us, who together are His body, to create the world-wide kingdom. We are interconnected in Spirit. In Christ, we are one omnipresent Spirit. Now instead of 120 in an upper room, we are a world-wide body of spiritual creators, bringing the kingdom into being where before there was no kingdom in manifestation. "The kingdom of God appears in the midst of the darkness as the sons speak the word of their Father from His center of higher spiritual knowing, wisdom, and understanding within, 'Let there be light!' As the sons of God walk in earth's spiritual darkness and nothingness, wherever they are, they all say the same word, 'Let there be light!' And that light shines away the darkness. Because we are children of light, made in the image and born into the family of our Father in Light, we may knowingly and purposefully speak His Word. This is spiritual Light, spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit. He is omnipresently networking the children of Light, those who speak the same Word with the one mind of Christ in them, and who are brought into one accord and agreement together. If one hears this Word in the Spirit, 'Let there be light!' although he may be surrounded by spiritual darkness, he will speak to that darkness, and it must go. In that higher way, each child of Light enters into the creation of the kingdom on earth and becomes a living part of the present kingdom. We're busy creating the kingdom that was not there beforehand in visible form. By faith it comes into manifestation, and those who have been held captive to the world's systems are loosed from the darkness. They come into the kingdom with rejoicing, singing, and an abundance of feasting on kingdom infinite supply" -- end quote.

Everything that God creates is unique. He is a God of unlimited diversity, of infinite variety, of inexhaustible capacity. We see this throughout the whole creation of God. To me it is amazing, it's a wonderful thing that astronomers tell us the heavens are composed of more than two hundred billion galaxies -- yet I don't accept that! I believe that not only is the creation co-extensive with the Creator in the sense that God has always been creating, but I also believe that the creation is co-extensive with the Creator in the infinity of His person. In other words, the only reason the scientists believe that there are two hundred billion galaxies is simply because that is as far as they can see. The fact is that everywhere God is -- He is creating! Not only is God always all that He is, He also is all that He is everywhere that He is! His power, his glory, His wisdom, His knowledge, His

love, His goodness, all is as omnipresent as God Himself. God does not have two eyes somewhere out in space with marvelous X-ray vision that can pierce through all things. No! The eyes of the Lord are spirit eyes, and everywhere God's Spirit is, the eyes of the Lord are. God does not see you today, my friend, from heaven above. God in the room where you are, God within by His Spirit, sees you right where you are, for the eyes of the Lord are all about you and within you. All the attributes, powers, functions, and abilities of God are spirit and are as omnipresent as His Spirit. God is all that He is everywhere, and He can do all that He does everywhere. The mouth of the Lord is an omnipresent spirit mouth, His ability as Spirit to speak in every place at the same time. Out of His Spirit He can speak within your own heart or ears, while at the same instant He is speaking to millions of other people around the world and to holy angels and creatures of all kinds in far distant worlds. He speaks to each out of His Spirit present with them, not from some distant place where His "mouth" is. In like manner the creative power of God is an omnipresent power and God creates, not in one locale, but out of the infinity of Himself.

The astronomers can discern and calculate two hundred billion galaxies, but no man can see further than his vision can go, naturally or spiritually. God is quickening His sons in this hour to see further, to see deeper, that we might perceive the truth of all things. It is only as we see by the Spirit that we can see as God sees, know as God knows, understand as God understands, and act as God acts. God is infinite. I don't know how many galaxies there are, because there is no end to them. You could never find the outer extremities of the universe because God is everywhere, all things are out of Him, God upholds all things, He fills all things, and if you were to discover the limit of the creation, you would discover the limit of God Himself! Not only does God always do everything that He does, He always does everything that He does everywhere that He is. So there is no limit!

God is always doing. Jesus said, "My Father works, and I work." Again He said, "I do only those things I see my Father doing." That is the mark of every son of God. We must see farther, we must see deeper, because we can only do what we see our Father doing. Most Christians see so little of God! But within His sons that are coming to maturity God is expanding and enhancing our vision. Our Father is bringing us to the place of His perspective, to see as He sees, to see according to His own heart and purpose. God IS Spirit; therefore the Spirit is God, searching and comprehending all the inner depths of God's being. Because He has been sent into all who are in Christ, He brings the insight of divinity into us as sons of God. Not only does He impart to us the thoughts of God, but for the first time we become awake to His nature, out of which all His actions spring. We are now beginning to SEE WHAT THE FATHER IS DOING, and are becoming participators with Him in His Kingdom purposes.

Our minds cannot comprehend infinity, but if you were to discover the end of God you would discover the end of creation. Yet Paul assures us that in all the universes of the universes there are no two stars that are equal in glory. And stars are still being created! Universes are still coming into existence throughout the immensity of what we call space. With my natural mind I can't conceive of creating two hundred billion stars, and making every one of them different, giving each of them a glory that is unique from any other glory, and then realize that over the millions and billions of time-years, with literally millions and billions of new stars coming into existence, there will be no duplication in the glory of any one of them! And God knows every one of them and calleth them by name! Our hearts are awed with reverence by the sacred knowledge that spiritually each star of the heavens represents a son of God.

The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens. And to help us in correctly interpreting the spiritual meaning of the sun, **Genesis 1:16** informs us that God made "the greater light to RULE the day, and the lesser light to RULE the night." Here we first have the idea expressed of both the sun and the moon being RULERS. Then we find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the Word a "Sun." "For the Lord thy God is a SUN and a shield" (**Ps. 84:11**). Also, our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, is in Malachi 4:2 called "the SUN of righteousness." He rules! Furthermore we read that "He that RULETH over men...shall be as the light of the morning, when the SUN ariseth" (**II Sam. 22:3-4**). And in II Samuel 21:17 we find David the king called "the LIGHT of Israel." In Matthew 13:43 we find, concerning saints who are kings and priests and rule with Christ (Rev. 3:21; 5:9-10), that they are compared to the sun: "Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father." Of these same ruling saints, who are the manifested sons of God, Jesus says, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations and he shall RULE them with a rod of iron..." Then He hastily adds, "And I will give him the MORNING STAR" (**Rev.**

**2:26-28).** That is, I will give him power over the nations -- rulership -- and I will give him the POSITION AS THE MORNING STAR to herald the dawn of the Day of the Lord for all mankind. Now consider how meaningful these words of Daniel the prophet wherein He foretells the manifestation of the sons of God: "And they that be wise shall SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; and they that turn many to righteousness as the STARS for ever" (Dan. 12:3).

Then we find in Daniel 4:26, "the HEAVENS DO RULE." God's heaven is His throne. "Heaven I-S M-Y T-H-R-O-N-E" (Isa. 66:1). Heaven in the spiritual terminology of the scriptures is the seat where the SUN, the MOON, and the STARS RULE. As God's heaven is His throne, so God's heaven is not a place in some far-off space, but includes all the governmental realm through which God rules, and He is Lord of all. You, my beloved, are a star in God's governmental heavens! "Ye are the light of the world," said Jesus, the firstborn son of God. Don't try to be like anybody else. Each star has its own glory. How many snowflakes do you suppose have ever fallen upon the earth? And yet they tell us that no two snowflakes have the same design! More than six billion people walk the face of this planet today, and no two fingerprints duplicate, and there are no two people who are identical. Everybody and everything is UNIQUE. You can't be like Preston Eby, and I can't be like you, but we can all be sons of God, stars in the firmament of His ruling Kingdom. And you are very special, beloved, for when God speaks the superlative comes into existence! The shining constellations spreading across the enormous expanse of the heavens represent the Lord's dwelling place in the Kingdom of His new creation people. God is setting His star-sons in the heavens of His throne to rule and reign over all things. Just BE what God has called you to be where you are, and let Christ shine through you in the glory He has given you -- there cannot be another YOU!

Praise God, the heavens are ablaze with the glory of God -- a people who embody and personify the hopes of creation, a people who are experiencing deep within the transformation so necessary to bring deliverance to the earth, and to make all things new. The reason there is darkness today is because of the false doctrines and dark traditions of the church systems and all religion. No wonder God's precious people are full of unbelief, filled with doubts, held captive by circumstances, and overwhelmed with fears. No wonder they magnify the works of the devil and declare him more than they declare God. They know not the DAY in which we are living, because of the darkness of their minds. They receive death and feed on darkness all about them. But God has arisen within you, my brother, my sister, as a light this very day, first dispelling the darkness within you, that you might dispel the darkness and remove these heavens that men have been living under and establish something altogether new in the earth. Bring forth in your life a new likeness, the image of God that you may declare HIM that is supreme throughout all the earth and to every world that God has made, that He may reign in every heart. Just BE what He rising up to be in you. Thus you have a share in the glorious INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM!

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 58**  
**THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM** [continued]

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

**PART FIFTY-EIGHT**

**ALL THINGS NEW**  
**GOD ALL IN ALL**

The sons of God do not have to be afraid of the passage of time, because time is on our side. History is working toward our objectives, which are according to God's plan of the ages. Nearly four millennia ago God appeared to Abraham with the promise that through him and his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. Abraham was only one man in the midst of a pagan world of false gods and superstitious religion. How could such a promise be realized? Must he form an organization, design a strategy, and begin to enlist workers to help bring the objective to pass? Not at all! He stood by faith in the God who promised and staggered not in unbelief. He did nothing more than that. He understood that this was God's strange work, not man's.

Centuries passed monotonously and uneventfully by until the day God appeared to Moses in the burning bush at the backside of the desert. Swiftly momentous events were set in motion, which brought Abraham's multiplied family out of Egypt and formed them into a nation at the foot of blazing Sinai. Forty years later God gave them their homeland in Canaan, according to His promise to their father, Abraham, and eventually they became a power to be reckoned with among the nations. Then fifteen hundred more years of unclimatic history passed until the angel Gabriel was dispatched to the young virgin in Nazareth and announced, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:31-33).

Jesus came into the world at the time of the Roman Empire. He was crucified on a Roman cross, pierced with a Roman spear, and sealed in His sepulcher under a Roman seal. But, praise God! He burst the bands of death, shattered the seal of mighty Rome, and arose the Conquering Christ. And not only that -- He ascended victor over sin and all the powers of darkness, having brought to nought the prince of this world, having brought in eternal redemption and everlasting hope for a lost world and reconciled all things back unto Himself. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high and poured out upon the first few citizens of His Kingdom the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom of God was birthed, and gathered from Jew and Gentile alike a vast multitude into its bosom. What a flood of light and glory and power fell upon the world through the ministry of the humble followers of the Lamb!

What glorious days those were! How God blessed His people! Mighty signs and wonders were performed as God confirmed His word with signs following. The word of God, anointed by the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early Christians that they turned the world upside down -- so powerful was their message and spirit! The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Paganism fell. The mighty Roman empire shut up its pagan temples, sheathed its persecuting sword, and sat down as a disciple at the feet of Christ and His apostles. Jesus had said, "I will build my church," and build it He did!

Now two thousand years more have gone by and nothing new has happened! But -- can you not see the progression? God appeared at the first to one man -- Abraham. It is plain to see that out of Abraham came a nation. Out of that nation came the Christ. Out of Christ has come the church. And now, out of the church is being birthed the manchild, the manifested sons of God, destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. No man understands history who has not the knowledge of this progression of events! The truth is that not one history teacher out of ten thousand has any idea of what history is all about. The proof of the Bible is found in the fact that its prophecies have been, and are being, meticulously and precisely fulfilled. The mighty works of God

throughout the ages are the very core, the momentum, the purpose, and the meaning of history. History reveals the outplaying of God's purposes in the earth. Just as surely as Abraham fathered a nation, just as surely as that nation produced the Christ, just as surely as Christ raised up the church -- just that certain is it that the church shall birth a manchild! It is history in the making. It is the mighty God controlling destiny. It is God's plan of the ages unfolding through the divine events that shape the course of the world.

The ministry and rule of sonship is ready to be released upon the nations of earth. At this junction of history we now stand. We are on the threshold of momentous events! The Lord God of the universe is about to sovereignly interject Himself once more into the world of mankind. The sons of God are now standing in the wings. Every day brings us closer to the realization of the glory of the Lord covering the entire world, changing and transforming the nations, all people, all cultures, and all things. The nations will love and serve the one true God and Father, and will cease to make war; the earth itself will be changed, restored to Edenic conditions; all nations will be released from the bondage of corruption: sin, sickness, sorrow and death. It is a wonderful thing that we have been called and chosen at this junction of history to enter into the Kingdom. The prophets prophesied of this Day and I do not doubt that some of us will see the power and the glory of it with our own eyes.

The coming age will be one that will see the fullness of God in operation through His sons, the demonstration of the mighty power of the Kingdom of God. It is not a mansion over the hilltop, or a cabin in the corner of glory-land, or white night gowns, or harps, or palm branches, or dangling feet in some celestial stream. There is a job to be done! A battle to be fought! A victory to be won! An enemy to be conquered! A glory to be secured! "And there shall be no more death." This is God's will for humanity upon this earth, not in some far-off heaven somewhere. And this is what our call to sonship is all about! It would be a most beautiful thing if all the saints of God could have an open vision that would enable them to understand the glory of God's purpose on earth, and His election in man. The writer to the Hebrews spoke of those who have "tasted the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and THE POWERS OF THE AGE TO COME" (Heb. 6:4-5). The Rotherham translation renders this last statement, "Mighty works also of a coming age." The Interlinear Greek New Testament says, "The works of power of the age to come."

Jesus said concerning the mighty miracles which He did, "Greater works than these shall YE DO!" But have the followers of Jesus really done any greater works than He did? The book of Acts doesn't record them. Neither do the Epistles. Nor does church history. And, my friend, after a hundred years of the restoration to the church of the baptism in the Holy Spirit; after more than fifty years since the restoration of the five-fold ministry, the gifts of the Spirit, and the prophetic flow, have you seen any greater works than raising the dead, cleansing lepers, walking on water, calming storms, and turning water into wine? You know you haven't! But according to Hebrews 6:5 all the signs, wonders, gifts, miracles, and glory we have experienced are simply a taste, a small sampling of THE MIGHTY WORKS OF THE COMING AGE, GREATER WORKS THAN JESUS DID 2,000 YEARS AGO! Why friends, we have seen only the firstfruits of what God will do through His enChristed body upon this earth. The hospitals emptied, the dead raised incorruptible, natures changed, nations turned to God, the crucial problems of poverty, crime, violence, war, corruption and the environment solved, the whole world system transformed -- and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL YOU SEE as the glorious mind of Christ rules and reigns over the earth through the manifested sons of God bringing THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD! The fullness of what we have had just a taste will be the normal works on behalf of humanity in that new age of the Kingdom. The next dispensation is to be as different and as much more glorious as every succeeding dispensation has been to the one preceding it.

## **ALL THINGS NEW**

Those who are now being transformed by the Spirit and gathered into God's Christ are the new creation (II Cor. 5:17). How little we knew when we started this wonderful journey into God what glories He had prepared for those who love Him! And even less did we realize that in that blessed day when we began to follow Christ we had joined the triumphant march that leads at last to the reconciliation and transformation of the universe. We did not know that one day every thing and every one throughout all the unbounded heavens would echo and re-echo the praise of Him who created all things for His pleasure and redeemed them with His own

precious blood. "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev. 21:5).

God's purpose is not merely to make the members of the body of Christ a new creation, but to make ALL THINGS NEW. Like the sons of God who are now being raised up into the heavenlies and made one in Christ, from the moment of creation's first dawning it has been the divine intention "that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him" (Eph. 1:10). I believe Paul gives the clearest insight into this supernal mystery when he writes: "In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has in store for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own. The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, not because it chooses to be blind, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited -- yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end the whole of created life will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay, and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!" (Rom. 8:18-21) (Phillips).

What a glorious liberty! What a wonderful purpose! What a transcendent hope! Ultimately the whole creation will be raised up into this same spiritual, heavenly, divine and incorruptible realm that God is now bringing His sons into. God's plans are as big as the universe! This shouldn't seem strange. God created all the stars and planets and all who inhabit them. So should not the vast universe fit into God's Kingdom purpose? "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:18). This passage confirms that the physical creation exists as the arena for God's majestic purpose. But consider the imperfection throughout the known universe. It needs further development, a transformation, a mighty change! The spectacular novas and multicolored clouds are undeveloped galaxies. Our own moon offers evidence that outer space needs much reworking. The other eight planets, like our moon, are also disordered, bleak, uninhabited, seemingly purposeless places.

God has raised His firstborn Son, Jesus, to an exalted position above all things. He has made Him Head over all things to the church; but we miss the whole truth of His glory until we see that God has made Him Head also of all principality and power (Col. 2:10). He has given Him all power in the heavens and on the earth. He has given Him a name that is above every name anywhere. So far as position and honor and glory and authority is concerned, Jesus is higher than all else in the universe, and all things are being made subject to Him and gathered into Him. He and His government of sons will reign until everything in the universe is brought into subjection to Him and resonates with His life; and when this is accomplished, Jesus will deliver the Kingdom up to the Father that God may be all and in all (I Cor. 15:24-28). Everything in all realms, from the depths of the bottomless to the heights above all heavens, will find their one Head in Christ. "And this is in harmony with God's merciful purpose for the government of the world when the times are ripe for it -- the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yea, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head in Him" (Eph. 1:9-10, Weymouth).

It should be clear to every enlightened mind that God is in the process of making an entirely new creation, or making all things new -- not this time a mere natural creation, nor yet a purely spiritual one, but a spiritual-physical one. This present natural creation is really only a step in the process of making the creation God had in mind from the beginning. "First that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual," is the divinely revealed order. Does that mean the natural is completely done away with, supplanted by the spiritual? Not at all! It means that the natural is swallowed up by the spiritual. The natural is a necessary step in the process of making the kind of creation God purposed from the beginning. Jesus Christ is the proto-type of that new creation -- the PHYSICAL SPIRITUALIZED, RAISED UP INTO THE DIVINE AND HEAVENLY! The physical body of Jesus was raised from the dead, brought out of the tomb, spiritualized, and made a spiritual body -- not a spirit, mind you, but a spiritual body. Jesus is still referred to as a man all through the New Testament. "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

The firstborn of this new creation order is a GOD-MAN upon the throne of universal power! Think of it! When you see Jesus as a divine-human, a God-man, one of the natural creation metamorphosed, spiritualized, raised up into the celestial and incorruptible, then you see exactly what God is after in the whole creation. "This

mortal must put on immortality." Oh, the wonder of it! We see the natural creation all around us, but this natural creation is not the finished product any more than the ore dug out of the earth is the fine piece of jewelry the artisan has in mind when he begins his work. The whole creation is still in the process of being made into the kind of creation God started out to make. God is still Creator!

We have in our theology limited the new creation to the church or to all mankind, as though we are the only ones or the only things that God cares about or that Christ has redeemed. God has a great plan for man, but the rest of His creation is included in it, and when God was in Christ He was reconciling not just the world, as we have it in the King James Bible, but the KOSMOS (universe) unto Himself. Then in the letter of Paul to the Colossians we have this remarkable statement, "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in the heavens. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh...to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight" (Col. 1:19-22). Here we can see the whole plan of God in a nut-shell!

Odd it is that we limit God's restoration to planet earth, when the ultimate objective of God, as portrayed in the Bible, heralded by prophets, taught by mighty men of old, is the complete redemption and recreation of the whole universe. The purpose of God reaches out to infinitude and to eternity. The formation and glorification of the body of Christ is but the first step on the way to "heading up all things in Christ," the ultimate raising up of the universe into its union with God in the Spirit where God becomes All in all. Grace has ordained that twice-born men should be the first to experience the powers of the age and the ages to come, but how much more there is beyond that for the glory of God and the admiration of His people! First of all that in His earth-born Son the fullness of Deity should dwell, and then making peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile or bring into oneness ALL THINGS, whether they be THINGS on earth or THINGS in the heavens. God in Christ proceeds to "reconcile" or to "merge" the natural world with the spiritual world, making them ONE NEW CREATION. God is not simply reconciling things to things, He is reconciling all things to Himself -- the natural to the spiritual, making something that has never been -- one new creation that is neither natural or spiritual, but both. I would draw your reverent attention to those significant words: ALL THINGS. He doesn't say all men, or some men, or all entities, or all creatures, but ALL THINGS. "Things" includes a lot more than men, and it isn't only all things on earth that He is reconciling, but all things also in the heavens or the worlds above, and the realm of Spirit. What a word!

**All the kingdoms shall become  
His whose imperial brow with crown of thorn  
The men of war in mockery did adorn.  
Peace shall prevail, and every land shall own  
His rightful sway, and low before His throne  
Shall bow and worship; angels there shall kneel.  
The soul of the vast universe shall feel  
The quickening touch of its life-giving Head,  
And shall break forth in song. The heavens shall shed  
In the lap of earth immortal joys,  
And every living thing, with thankful voice,  
Shall sweetly raise the universal psalm  
Of glory unto God and to the Lamb.  
-- BOYD**

Paul Mueller has articulated so well the travail of all creation: "The whole creation also groans to be delivered of its bondage to corruption. The creation has no language or voice, yet their message reaches from the ends of the earth to the throne of God's heavens (Ps. 19:1-6). The whole creation is expressing the desire for the kingdom, just as we are, without speaking it audibly. Every created thing groans for release from this bondage. The whole creation travails to be delivered from the curse, and to be restored and raised to enjoy the blessings of the liberty of the sons of God. Like the rest of God's creation, we may not speak forth this kingdom prayer. But it is the universal groan that emanates from every one of us. We groan within ourselves, waiting for our

adoption, which is the glorious manifestation of the Life of Christ and the kingdom of God (Rom. 8:18-23). And God hears the groans of His suffering, burdened creation, from the smallest form of life to every person on earth. In due time, death shall be conquered in us first, for God has made us a firstfruits (Ja. 1:18).

"The whole creation is attuned and synchronized in spirit with our spiritual growth. Every blade of grass, tree, shrub, bug, bird, animal, creeping thing and fish, including every microscopic form of life, has an inbred intelligence, instinct or faculty that will trigger its release from the present bondage when the manifestation of the sons of God takes place. Then, there will be no hurt nor harm in all the earth. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb. The leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling shall also lie together, and a little child shall be able to lead them in peace and harmony. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The suckling child shall play on the hole of the once poisonous serpent, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the den of the adder. **'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea' (Isa. 11:6-9).** If we truly want to see the rest of creation changed, restored and blessed with the Life of Christ, we will grow in Christ and in the knowledge and wisdom of the truth that He is. We will earnestly seek to grow to the fullness of Christ, for our spiritual growth in the kingdom of God is the only answer to the many problems facing the world" -- end quote.

What a glorious and beautiful picture the prophets have painted of this great day of the release of creation from the nature of the curse and the bondage of corruption! No genius or artist, or wisdom of poet can ever convey the glory and beauty of this bright Day! No matter where you live, you will awaken every morning to be greeted by a smiling sun that will shine through an atmosphere as pure as the very breath of heaven. The army of germs and viruses will be neutralized by the very breath of heaven. The curse and the sorrow that the curse brings will be removed. Farmers will plow the soil with the knowledge that no tares will grow, and every troublesome weed will turn to a beautiful flower at the word of the sons of God. With all curse lifted, the glories of Eden will be restored. Glorious indeed will be the sight as you stand on the summit of the mountains and gaze across the fertile plains, vibrant with beauty, fertility and color. Mankind shall no more eat bread by the sweat of his face. Nor shall men any longer return to the dust of the earth, for all men shall freely eat of the tree of life, which is the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. All enmity and strife shall be removed. All sorrows, trouble, sickness, pain, sin and death shall cease to exist. The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, literally and spiritually.

The Spirit of the Lord will draw all mankind to Himself, giving them eyes to see and ears to hear. The stranger you meet in the city will be no stranger, for all men will know one another by the spirit and all will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, both literally and spiritually -- for the literal is but the sign and parable of the spiritual. No nettle will sting the legs of the playing child, who in that glad day can play anywhere without danger from ferocious beast or reptile. No mountain lion will ever again stalk the beautiful deer, for "the lion shall eat straw like the ox." No hunter will ever sight the muzzle of his gun. The wild goose on his swift unerring flight will not have to fly at a dizzy height because of its fear of man. No woman will be afraid on the street, no one will fear anyone or anything anywhere, for "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom)," saith the Lord. No hungry man will walk the icy streets, no sobbing mother or father, wife or husband, son or daughter will gaze into the casket at the ashen face of their beloved. No aged saint will hover over her small stove to measure out her meager food -- just enough to keep body and soul together until her body wears out and her heart gives up. The heavens will no longer be as brass. The presence of the Lord will be closer to us than the air we breathe, closer even than the blood coursing through our veins. Before anyone shall call Him, the Lord will answer them. And while they are yet speaking, He will respond to their plea. The earth, without and within, shall be full of the glory of the Lord!

The whole of created life, according to Romans 8:19-21, will be delivered from the bondage of corruption. This presents a very striking truth about God's grace to the lower creations, including the animal and all other animate creatures, and to the whole system of things, who are also under the bondage of the curse, violent natures, fear, decay and death. Against their own wish they were put into this bondage. The thing that appeals to our sympathies at once is that the creation is spoken of as though conscious of this. It, too, is suffering as well as we. And the man, woman or child who has felt oftentimes to the point of pain, the mute appealing look

in the eye of some horse or dog as though asking for sympathy or help, or the melancholy braying of the burro in Mexico, will feel at once an answering within, to this marvelous promise of God. The whole creation is joining with us in unutterable groans and birth pangs, earnestly looking forward to its release with ours, out into full free Life. It is this exalted thought of the glory, that will come at the manifestation of the sons of God, that makes us so eager for the blessed Day of release!

**Creation groans in every wisp of grass blown by the breeze,  
In every stirring of the countless leaves upon the trees,  
In every minor song of feathered fowl that rides the air,  
In every blossom fading fast away just everywhere.**

**Creation groans in every dog's low whine and muted sound,  
In every kitten's tongue-tied plaintive mew the world around,  
In every caged and bright plumed singing bird that chirps its plea --  
Yea, all of these repeat creation's groan to be set free.**

**Creation groans in jungle land and fen and desert dry,  
In every mountain's soaring rocky heights that pierce the sky,  
In every rock that hides an insect's nest beneath its weight,  
In every grain of sand too numberless to estimate.**

**Creation groans -- and echoes in our hearts its longings deep,  
That YAH will manifest His own indeed, His promise keep;  
For we are groaning, too, to be released, redeemed, set free,  
That we in turn might grant creation's hope -- His liberty!  
-- CRYSTALIA**

In this connection A. E. Knoch wrote, "The resurrection of the Son of God has a wider range of beneficence than we are accustomed to consider. God's glory demands that not only mankind who sinned and marred His glorious creation, but every part of that creation itself shall be restored to Him in more than pristine perfection. Mankind has many characteristics in common with the lower creatures and is linked to them by the possession of a body...resulting in a living soul. This is the reason why Jesus did not tell His disciples to go to every 'nation' or all 'men' but, using a word of special emphasis, He tells them to go into all the world and herald the evangel of His resurrection to the entire creation (every creature). Man is not the only creature on the earth! He is not the only one to be blessed by the resurrection. The lower creatures have suffered with man in his plight. They have come in for a share in the corruption and bondage and death which is his due, and theirs only because they were made subject to him. Let us rejoice, then, that these who suffer on our account, they also shall obtain deliverance, by the same power which delivers our mortal bodies. Paul tells us, further, that the creation has a premonition of God's unveiling of His sons."

The animal world will be transformed, their natures changed, and they will prey upon each other no more, for there shall be no more death. Eventually in this restoration process God will touch even the plant life and infuse it with eternal, iridescent glory, for God will be All in all and all things shall be made new. Even the inanimate creation shall have its share in the release from the bondage of corruption. What science calls "the order of nature" is really her disorder; for all creatures feed upon other living things and all systems are slowing down, wearing out, and passing away. Every star, sun, planet and moon is moving inexorably toward its day of dissolution. Here also will be felt the renovating, transforming, spiritualizing power of God's Christ! If we can see this by the Spirit -- nature itself, an unwilling slave to vanity and corruption, stands, impatient in her bonds, with uplifted head, scanning with longing eyes the distant point of the horizon from which she looks for help, her hand stretched out to grasp and welcome the redemption into freedom and perfection which she yearns for and confidently expects. What a calling rests upon God's firstfruits -- to deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption and give them an entrance into the glory of the liberty of the sons of God! Hallelujah!

## **GOD ALL IN ALL**

"And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be ALL IN ALL" (I Cor. 15:28). GOD ALL IN ALL -- this will be the grand conclusion of the great drama of universal history and of Christ's redemption. As someone has said, there will come a day -- the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we cannot realize it -- when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that God gave Him and which He won with His own blood and established and perfected from the throne of His glory. "He shall deliver up the Kingdom unto the Father...that God may be all in all." ALL IN ALL -- such is the grand goal of our God! He will yet be everything to every one of His creatures and all things will radiate the effulgence of His glory. Nothing less will satisfy His heart for "He has created all things, and for His pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11). Nothing less than this will vindicate His love, or form a fit conclusion for the sins and sorrow and death of the ages. Let us with joy believe it! Let us exult as we receive it! Let us be "laborers together with God" to accomplish it! May this simple phrase, that the smallest child can utter, become the very basis of our being, the root of all our faith, the strength of all our dreams, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every darkness, a balm for every wound, and our ages-lasting consolation and good hope!

Let all who read these lines awake from the terrifying nightmare of Babylon's delusions and let us wing our spirits to God's glorious consummation! Here is a vision worthy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ -- GOD ALL IN ALL. And now, this ultimate reality must begin in us who have this day received the call to sonship. If this is what fills the heart of Christ; if this expresses the final end of the work of Christ, then, if I would have the Spirit of Christ within me, the motto of my life must be: Everything made subject and swallowed up in Him "that God may be all in all." What a life that will be when that truly becomes our hallmark! To walk with the Father fully, to keep ourselves unto Him wholly, only, to have Him ALL IN ALL! I am praying, believing, yielding, and pressing on "that God may be all in all." By this the day of glory is hastening! Would that all the saints of God realized what a grand cause we are made participators in, that all had some conception of the scope and power of the Kingdom we are walking in, and what a manifestation of God we are preparing for!

That God is not All in all at the present is quite obvious, for only a fraction have faintly felt that God was indeed ALL to them. Some have known Him as their Savior, some have experienced Him as their Healer, some have received gracious gifts from His hands, some have acknowledged Him as their Lord, but I am not certain that any have found Him as their ALL. Some have tasted of the cup ineffable, which quenches every thirst, satisfies every hunger, meets every need, dispels all darkness, conquers every enemy, and destroys all death. I, too, have only tasted, but I live for this and only for this -- that God may be All in all. I am living in Him, and as I move and have my being in Him I shall have a part in it all -- the Kingdom delivered up to the Father, and God All in all! I shall have a part in it and in adoring worship share the glory and blessedness with all creation. Let us permit this to penetrate deeply into our hearts that it may rule our lives -- this one thought, this one faith, this one aim, this one joy: GOD ALL IN ALL!

Everything in history is moving inexorably toward a day when Jesus will have conquered everything and everyone. Like a mountain of dirt before a gigantic bulldozer steadily moving forward, all that can be conquered is being collected into the loving arms of Jesus, whose right it is to rule. When Christ ascended on high after His resurrection, He led many captives out of the prison house and also set forth His great purpose: "Now He that ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS" (Eph. 4:9-10). The message is clear -- redemption includes the complete transformation of the entire universe (all heavens) and all that is within it so that God in Christ shall FILL ALL THINGS. There shall not be left one corner of this vast universe, nor one creature in it, where He shall not be Lord and King. EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE SHALL BE RESTORED TO THE BEAUTIFUL HARMONY AND ORDER OF THE LOVE OF GOD. Indeed, HE SHALL FILL ALL THINGS SO THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL!

All that God has ever done or ever will do, all that He has said or ever will say, will ultimately redound to His glory, that He may be "All in all" -- and why not? "In the beginning GOD..." Everything else is because of God -- God's love, God's wisdom, God's purpose, God's power, God's righteousness. And for all things to find their purpose, their reality and their end in Him is the final goal of salvation's history. It is an extraordinary thing, yet sublimely true, that the Lord Jesus gives us to understand that what He is doing on earth today and throughout the ages to come is only a beginning. What He has given us is a root, and not yet a tree, a foundation, and not

yet an edifice. The Kingdom Seed must grow, the branches spread out, the blossoms appear, and the fruit be formed. In the end the Kingdom of God will have filled all realms everywhere and God will be All in all! And yet, this work first begins in man. Those who are now being perfected in Christ are the firstfruits of this marvelous revelation of God All in all. Truly HE is becoming ALL in us, as the poet has written:

**Suddenly one day  
The last ill shall fall away,  
The last little beastliness that is in our blood  
Shall drop from us as the sheath drops the bud,  
And the great spirit of man shall struggle through  
And spread great branches underneath the blue.  
In any mirror, be it bright or dim,  
Man will see God, staring back at him!**

When God is finally All in all the Kingdom will have been delivered up to the Father. By this is meant that there will no longer be any external rule of one person ruling over another, or one group ruling over the other -- not even God's Christ! God Himself will then be everything to every one as one translation beautifully expresses it. God Himself will so be the indwelling factor, principle, mind, nature, will and power of each life that there will be no need of anyone ruling, teaching, guiding or instructing anyone else. It is evident that our God is reserving for that glorious consummation the greatest wonder of all time -- GOD ALL IN ALL! When God is all in me, what could you add? When God has become all in you, what can I contribute? God Himself will be everything we need within us! God will be all to us, in us, through us, and as us. Oh, the mystery of it!

The writer to the Hebrews spoke of it thus: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will imprint my laws upon their minds, even upon their innermost thoughts and understanding, and engrave them upon their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And it will nevermore be necessary for everyone to teach his neighbor and his fellow citizen or everyone his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for ALL WILL KNOW (perceive, have knowledge of, be acquainted by experience with) ME, from the smallest to the greatest of them" (**Heb. 8:10-11**) (Amplified).

In long ago Israel, before the people rejected God as their King and anointed a king of their own choosing, it is stated that "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Now some view that state of things negatively, as though because there was no external authority, it was just one big free-for-all, everyone doing as they pleased! But it seems to me that the state of things in Israel at that time, when the Lord Himself was King in their midst, should be the model for all who truly walk with God in the Spirit. As we enter into the relationship of sons we discover the glory of being and doing everything exactly as we desire because we desire nothing but the Father's glorification. This must have been the awareness of Saint Augustine when he exhorted, "Love God and do what you please!" When one is under the will of God by love, he is in dominion of all things.

At that same time in Israel a certain family set up a place of worship in their own home and there was much ignorance, superstition and abomination in their form of worship, until God sent a Levite to be their household priest. Is that not a dramatic picture of the priesthood of God being raised up in our own house, in that living temple of God which we are? Those who are the true worshippers of the Father do not worship Him at certain times or in prescribed places, for they worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father seeketh such to worship Him! Worship is not something we go somewhere to do, rather, it is the living expression and manifestation of our devotion, love, and honor of our glorious Father within the Most Holy Place of our own spirit and reality. When we have learned what it means to be a "true worshipper," we will see that worship is not something we do, but it is what we are. We ARE WORSHIPPERS!

During our journey into God there are varying degrees of growth, experience, fellowship, and relationship with the Lord. "In a great house" like the Kingdom of God, "there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth" (**II Tim. 2:20**). The Kingdom is indeed a great house, in which are many vessels, varying in quality, capacity, purpose, rank and order. Jesus said it this way, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (**Mat. 8:11**). Paul stated

this truth yet another way. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are but one body: so also is Christ. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (I Cor. 12:12,14-18).

The scriptures and our own experience both give ample evidence that there are degrees in the spiritual race. The fruit of God that men bear in their lives are, Jesus taught us, some thirty fold, some sixty fold, and some a hundred fold. Paul spoke of those he had fed with milk because they were babes. John wrote his epistle to three classes of believers: little children, who are the new born in Christ; young men, who are those who have grown up and become strong in many ways, but lack experience; and old men, who are the fully matured sons of God. These are not permanent states, but merely stages of growth and development. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye be perfect and entire, lacking nothing" (Jas. 1:4). "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). We see the same variety of levels of attainment in the Old Testament economy. Moses was above other prophets (Num. 12:5,8). Only the tribe of Levi were priests. The birthright was given to Ephraim and Mannaseh. The scepter was given to the tribe of Judah. David classified his mighty men according to their attainment (II Sam. 23). All men shall be made alive in Christ, but "each in his own order or rank" (I Cor. 15:23).

More than half a century ago Seeley Kinne shared the vision given to a brother David Lee Floyd who wrote: "I stood upon a large stadium, that had been erected to face a large gradual sloping hill. The hill sloped downward toward the stadium. Thousands of Spirit-filled Christians were seated upon the hillside, and they faced the stadium. They were grouped in many orders. They were also in many shades of color. I do not mean races or nationalities. Some were very white, some very dark. There were many varieties of shades between black and white. These thousands of Spirit-filled believers were gathered and seated in their various ranks. They were waiting for the Lord to give them the Last Great Message, for the preparation to set up the Kingdom of God among men. I was seated in the stadium not knowing that I was going to do more than to just view the thousands of God's people, seated in their various ranks upon the hillside. I studied their faces. I was fully aware that the Holy Spirit was opening my eyes and my understanding to discern the many ranks of His people. As I have stated above, every group or rank was of a different shade or color. The highest order was the whitest; and the lowest the darkest. Everyone was in rank according to the light of God abiding within them. This has nothing at all to do with their race or nationality. Everyone was located according to their individual rank in the Spirit. I was in deep meditation concerning their various degrees of experience. The Spirit of the Lord began to move upon me. I was moved to raise up and say something. I arose to my feet, opened my mouth, and the voice of the Lord began to pour forth like water, calling upon the people to repent...and prepare for the judgment of God that begins with His house."

In the great house of our Father's Kingdom there are different degrees of experience and various heights of attainment. In the book of Revelation we see in the progressive unveiling of Jesus Christ within His people a number of different companies or levels to which men attain in Christ -- there is one outstanding company called overcomers, or kings and priests, or the manchild, or the 144,000, or the sons of God; another called the woman, or the bride, or the New Jerusalem; another called the church, or the candlesticks, or the woman; and then the remnant, witnesses, martyrs, messengers, the great multitude, harpers, etc. These are all a variety of redeemed people who walk with God in varying degrees of light and glory, different depths of intimacy, and diverse levels of calling and experience. Some are very near to the heart of God, while others dwell and serve in the outer courts of His presence. Some are queens, virgins and concubines; others are counselors, judges, priests and kings; some are soldiers and warriors of various ranks; still others are servants, guests, and courtiers.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will impress upon all who read these lines the great truth that the end of the matter is not any or all of these various companies and ranks. These are merely the blueprint of our progression into God. In that glorious end where God is All in all there are no companies or ranks. In the end there is no Outer Court. In the end there is no Holy Place. In the end there is no Holiest of all. At the conclusion of God's great plan of the ages there is no Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles; no first Day, second Day or third Day. In the

great consummation of all things there are no servants, no bride, and there are no sons. In the end there is only GOD ALL IN ALL! God All in all reveals the blessed fact that every creature will move through the progression from realm to realm. All may not move in this Day, just as all have not moved in other Days, but God has a great, tremendous, glorious plan of the ages, and all creation will move forward!

You see, my beloved, it's just like a school -- it is the great school of God! The purpose of a school is not the school itself. The purpose of a school is the progression through the grades so that you graduate. Everybody who enters the school is supposed to graduate! So we are not to glory that we are in the first grade, the seventh grade, or the twelfth grade. We are not to cling to our status as a junior, sophomore, or senior. It is wonderful to be a senior, but if you remain a senior you will never graduate! To be senior is not the goal. The beauty of all the grades is that each in turn accomplishes its purpose, bringing everyone to the same, final state of accomplishment and attainment. Everyone receives their diploma and goes out into the world a finished product.

That's how it is in the Kingdom of God! Today we view believers as being Nominal Christians, Catholics, Orthodox, Fundamentalists, Evangelicals, Charismatics, Pentecostals, Kingdom, Sonship or some other identification. We equate their standing in God with whether they are in the Outer Court, the Holy Place, or the Most Holy Place -- but those are merely pictures of their growth and development, their progression into God. Each is just a temporary arrangement, a grade to pass through, and all creation will pass through the grades! When every man who has ever lived, or ever shall live, has received his diploma and walks off the cosmic stage of spiritual graduation -- God will be All in all! There will be a sign posted on the door of the school of God's great redemptive and restorative purposes -- "Closed." When everybody graduates, you don't need the school anymore!

Some of us have been in school for a long, long time and have moved through many levels of God's teaching. We have been passing from grade to grade, from realm to realm, from experience to experience, from discipline to discipline, from dimension to dimension in God. We have moved through the Tabernacle with all of its furnishings and compartments. We have partaken of the Lord's Feasts one after another and He has now brought us to the Feast of Tabernacles. We have arrived at the threshold of the Third Day. We have stepped into the Most Holy Place. He has ushered us into the throne room within the City, which has the glory of God. We have been passing through the grades, and all creation will pass through the same grades. God has plenty of time. His plan is the plan of the ages. It began ages ago, and will extend ages into the future. In one sense each of us is a microcosm within the macrocosm. There are ages within us. I lived a Pentecostal age, and it ended. I lived out a Latter Rain age, and it ended. I lived out an Anglo-Israel age, and that ended too. I lived out an Apocalyptic age, and God took that heaven and rolled it up. Every one of us has lived ages within ourselves, according to God's plan of the ages. All creation will come the same way, not necessarily with identical ages, but they will grow experientially into God from glory to glory, and God has plenty of time! God has brought us from Abraham to the Manchild in our brief lifetime, for the ages are within us.

There is a beautiful truth wrapped in the arms of one single verse in **I Corinthians 15:24**. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." The Amplified and a number of other translations make the import of these words clearer and more meaningful. "After that comes the end, the completion, when He delivers over the kingdom to God the Father after rendering inoperative and abolishing every rule and every authority and power." The message is just this: When Christ delivers up the Kingdom to the Father so that God may be All in all, He will have put down and nullified and rendered inoperative ALL SOVEREIGNTY AND AUTHORITY AND POWER.

All rule out of God's sovereignty that has been delegated to subordinates, as administered by authorities and powers, be they kings, presidents, prime ministers, judges, policemen, apostles, prophets, pastors, priests, teachers, or any other -- when God becomes All in all such rule becomes obsolete. God will no longer rule anyone anywhere through those agencies, as He does through the ages, for He will rule by the authority of His divine nature and the mind of God in every man. I know that these words seem to be incredible but they are the truth. Christ and His holy sons continue to reign only until all other authority is swallowed up into the Allness of God in every heart. When every enemy is subjected and all immaturity, carnality, self-will, self-hood,

rebellion, sin and death is swallowed up of HIS LIFE, God will no longer need to govern through the medium of His saints. The external rule of delegated authority will give way to the internal rule of the Spirit of Life. His will, His word and His ways will be the motivating spirit within the renewed heart and mind of all His creation. They will have found their All in Him! School will be over, classes dismissed, the teachers relieved, and all men everywhere will have obtained their diploma of DIVINE LIFE!

All the sons of Adam shall one day become the sons of God; that was God's purpose in creating man in the first place. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Those who complete their growth and development into the image of God now will be the firstborn sons of God. Theirs will be the highest possible calling, bearing the greatest of all responsibilities, for upon them rests the ministry of shepherding the rest of creation into the Kingdom of God. It is my conviction that in the ages to come there will be company after company after company graduating from God's great School of Sonship -- the second-born sons, the third-born sons, and so on. What a beautiful plan and purpose! What a glorious, breath-taking prospect! What everlasting hope and joy! This is THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM!

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 59 QUALIFYING FOR KINGDOM DOMINION

BY: J. PRESTON EBY

## KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

### PART FIFTY-NINE

"Let me help, Mommy!" cries little Mary to her busy Mom. She then proceeds to mop the floor with streaks and messy wet and dry spots here and there. Having finished, she eyes it with a satisfied sigh and says, "Didn't I do good, Mommy?" Her mother stands back and with a cheerful smile replies, "Yes, sweetheart, you did a wonderful job!" Now, does that mother need Mary's help to get her house clean? Not really. In fact, Mary's childish efforts at "helping" actually create more work for her mother. As soon as Mary is out of the house Mom will quickly re-mop that floor! But she knows that Mary needs to learn how to do housework, and feel the importance of her contribution, because one day Mary will have her own house to clean!

The question follows — Does our heavenly Father really need our puny help with the accomplishing of His great universal Kingdom work? Not really, for He is self-sufficient, omnipresent, and omnipotent! As such He is not dependent on man for the fulfillment of any of His plans or the accomplishment of any of His purposes. But — God has purposed within Himself to expand Himself in us as His very own sons and daughters, and bring us, upon our maturity, into HIS FAMILY BUSINESS. God's love for us is utterly pure and unselfish, and His plan for us is paternal, eternal and sovereign. He bestows upon us the high honor of sharing His nature, life, wisdom, knowledge, glory, power and dominion. Our work in God's family business — His great and eternal and inexhaustible Kingdom — is our response to His love. We are destined to rule all things for God and therefore we must learn how to rule! Sometimes, along our journey to maturity, we may not do the job much better than little Mary, but our Father is patient and persistent and we will eventually grow up into Him in all things, praise His name!

If a young athlete wants to play major-league baseball, he usually has to play in the minors first. Major-league teams raise their players in their minor-league farm teams. Every year they hope to get a harvest that justifies what the minor-league teams cost them. The Kingdom of Heaven is similar. Jesus said that if we are faithful in little things, He will increase our responsibilities, and that if we use our gifts and resources for His purposes and only for His glory, He will give us more to use. The reward for work well done is . . . well, more work! God has great responsibilities just waiting to be entrusted to His sons. His Kingdom has major-league openings to manage, judge, lead, supervise and rule to establish His Kingdom forever. But whom will He put in those major-league slots? Those who have been faithful in the farm leagues of the Kingdom! God is, at this very moment grooming a body, a people, a company of kings and priests to bring the glory of the Kingdom of God upon earth and throughout the universe. Men and women are being selected for this awesome responsibility from among all nations, cultures, races and tongues around the earth, and are being processed and prepared in their present walk with God. We are in contact with thousands of people who are experiencing the special dealings of God for this Day! The world as a whole is not cognizant of what God is doing, but this selection and preparation process is nonetheless well underway.

Have we, in our desire to reign with Him, forgotten that "if we suffer, we shall reign, and if we deny Him, He will deny us?" Have we forgotten the words of Jesus, which He spoke, saying, "Ye that have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Do we know what it means to follow Jesus? Do we know what it means to drink His cup and be baptized with His baptism? Are we truly followers with Him from the cross to the throne, or are we merely the throng that flock about Him seeking the blessings, the loaves and the fishes, and not brethren at all?

David, Christ's kingly ancestor, is in this way himself a type of his Lord. For chosen by God to succeed the lawfully appointed but rejected king (Saul), he was yet for many years allowed to be hunted and persecuted by the doomed monarch whom he was to follow. During these wanderings over the mountains and wilds his

faithful followers shared his hardships, and he and they together learned to endure and to fight; and thus when God's time of preparation was over, and their training had been completed, David and his men were found equal to the great task of freeing God's people from all bondage to their foes. And, of course, those brave men who had shared their leader's path, with its dangers and distresses, were rewarded with the chief positions of glory in his kingdom. Surely all who read these lines can see the correctness of this, and can appreciate how worthwhile it finally proved to be to have shared their king's rejection and persecution. And thus in intenser measure will it be in this Day of the Lord! There is truly a price to be paid to walk with God in the new order of this new Kingdom Day that is now dawning, and there is great heavenly reward to those who pay that price!

A brother we have heard from through the years shared this illustration in one of his communications: It is as a great king of old who had two sons. Twins they were. The sons grew together. Soon they reached an age when much correction came. The boys needed the rod and found it in full force for their errors. One day both sons still felt the pain of the rod and their tears still flowed. There came by a young orphan about their age. He said to them, "I am free to do what I want. I am not as you who must endure the force of a father. I can skip and play and do cartwheels in the streets. I can beg, lie, steal, and sleep anywhere I please. I have fun every day for I am under the king's protection as one in his realm but I need not suffer as you with his corrections. I am free! Why do you not come with me and we can be free together?"

The boys made a decision that day. The first said, "No, though I am hurting from my father's rod, I would endure it every day for I will grow and inherit all that belongs to my father. I will learn and follow him wherever he leads me." The other boy was sore tempted for the pain of correction and the harshness of restrictions laid upon him was so much to bear. Soon he decided to follow the young orphan. Oh, how they played for days and years! They skipped and jumped and did cartwheels. They lied and stole as they wanted. They begged in the streets when it pleased them. They rejected the call of the king to serve him in any way. They only thought of their great fun and so chased after it. The two children grew. One learned of, and thus loved greatly, his father and his ways. The other rejected the loving call to come back into the household. The father let him go to do what he wanted. He knew that a love that is forced upon another will only bring bondage and hatred. Thus, for the will of the rebellious child, he left him to his fun.

The hour came to inherit the kingdom. The first son received great honor. All that his father had became his. The other son wanted some of his father's riches, too, for he also grew old and the pleasure of being an orphan left him. Being of age, if he stole, he would go to prison. Skipping and playing failed to please him anymore. Begging got him little. He wanted some of the kingdom too. However, the judge of the kingdom deemed him unworthy of even a morsel from the king's table. In like manner, God has many who want all that is His. They say, "If it is of my Father's, I want it!" They want the mercy, the grace, the blessings, the benefits, the healings, the miracles, the experiences — anything they can enjoy without coming under the disciplining hand of their Father. Oh, they want to skip and jump and do cartwheels and shout and rejoice and prosper and get rich and use God's blessings in any way they want, and to their own ends. But they have no desire to learn God's ways, to put on His mind, to be conformed to His image, to do His will and be involved in His purposes. The churches today are filled with blessing seekers who follow the Lord for the loaves and the fishes, but have no heart for His corrections, to suffer with Him, to endure the cross, to die to all the carnality of the flesh and of the fleshly religious systems, in order to qualify to share His throne. The way to sonship is not an easy way, and some find it a little too hard, and would rather choose an easier way. This reminds me of the young aspiring musician who said to an old master, "Can you tell me of an easy way to become a great musician?" The old master just looked him in the eye and said, "Son, there is no easy way." And there is no easy way to sonship and the throne of God! This is why God has chosen certain ones, who have the stamina to seek first and only His Kingdom, to endure, and persevere, submitting to His will and His dealings, come what may.

I will have you to know that the Lord, having saved the children of Israel out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. There is a teaching that God saves, and the devil destroys. I do not believe that the devil can destroy anybody. After having saved the people out of Egypt, GOD destroyed them, not the devil! And the angels that kept not their first estate, GOD cast them down, not the devil. When Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost, GOD slew them, not the devil. I could go on and on. The old idea is, you try to live for God and the devil is on your trail trying to drive you to hell. But once God has called you and you belong to Him, whatever happens to you after that is from HIM, not the devil. When Israel was in the

wilderness, it was not the devil that sent fiery serpents. The Bible says, “And YAHWEH sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died” (Num. 21:6). God sent the plague that judged them. So we need not be afraid of the devil, we need the fear of God, the reverence for the disciplines of our Father, in our hearts. God is not out to kill people, for all of these things are examples written for our learning. God is after the carnal nature, the religious foolishness, the selfhood of the Adamic mind — He is out to slay the beast in us. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28-29). “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons” (Heb. 12:6-7).

These are the days in which God is preparing a people to reign in the Kingdom of God over all things. These will have to be those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb. They will be those who have been filled with all the fullness of God. They will be those who have learned to be led only and always by the Spirit. They will be those who have kept His word and walked according to His will. This company of people will be one with God in mind, heart, and purpose. They will have put on the mind of Christ and their will shall have given way to His will in all things. The people whom God shall use to reign over the nations and the universe, bringing God’s Kingdom to pass in all realms, will be a strong people. They will be those who live in the presence of God and breathe in union with Jesus Christ.

Those who reign with Christ cannot be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, nor deceived by every good sounding theory of man that poses as deep revelation. They will not be moved by smooth-tongued orators or fast-talking deceivers. They will perceive the hearts of men and understand the true nature of all things. God is not interested so much in what is going on today within the church systems of men. God does not want just anybody to go out and do miracles, signs and wonders. He is preparing an incorruptible order of people to do these things on a level never seen before. There are many miracles and good works done in the name of Jesus by men whom the Father has not sent. God is very selective in this hour of those He chooses to manifest His power in the earth. Not just anybody is suitable. God trains and chooses in many ways. Moses was in the backside of the desert for forty years. David went through many years of battles and trials and testings to be eligible for the throne to which God elevated him.

In the natural realm you can get away with a lot of things. You can break the law and get away with it. You can go 50 miles an hour in a 30 mile an hour zone and probably not get caught. You can squander your boss’s time on the job and cover it up. But you cannot get away with anything in the Kingdom of God! You can wallow in carnality, live in sin and partake of the harlot’s table in the carnal religious systems of man and still go to heaven when you die. That is grace. But one does not reign in the Kingdom by grace. Oh no! Paul said, “By grace are ye saved...” He did not say, “By grace you will reign...” Of a truth I tell you that God knows all of our thoughts, He knows every motive and intent of our heart, every root of bitterness and lurking power of sin, every hidden weakness, and those unexplored tendencies and propensities that, under the right conditions, would make us traitors like Judas. He just knows everything! The very hairs of our head are numbered and He knows all of our ways.

We are talking about the Kingdom of God, not about being saved by grace. If you want a shack in the corner of glory-land, you can have it. Grace will secure it. But we are talking about the power and the glory of the Kingdom and those to whom it shall be given. To be saved there is only one prerequisite — “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” But there are higher qualifications to rulership in the Kingdom! We cannot come to God and say, “I am eligible because I have attended church every Sunday for many years; I have brought a certain number of souls to Christ; I am eligible because I have paid tithes and given offerings to support the work of the gospel; I have taught Sunday School and worked in the programs of the church.” There are many reasons that we could come to God and try to pay our entrance into the Kingdom. None of these will suffice. Not even the fact that we have come out of Babylon and believe the truth about sonship, reconciliation, and the Kingdom of God. What God wants is character — the mind of Christ formed in us, the obedience, submission, love, purity and maturity of the life of Christ raised up in us as our very own reality, the image and likeness of God appearing in us, and the will of God done by us. Nothing else will suffice!

God is shaping our lives with a view to the future. What is happening to each son of God today has a bearing on what his role will be in the Kingdom of God throughout the ages to come. Our present travail will be easier

to bear when we understand this truth. A crown prince cannot live like other people. When the crown prince of Great Britain is born, he is a marked child from the day of his birth. He is different from other children. His education, his way of dress, what he is taught in the home, his associations, his activities, where he goes and when and how, his leisure time — everything about his life is planned to prepare him to be a king. The man or woman called to sonship cannot be like other people or other of God's children any longer. God has a special plan for this one! The truth is that a son of God marches to a different tune than his contemporaries. He hears the band playing the march of victory. He stays in line with those enChristed ones who march with him. He keeps in step with his leader, Jesus Christ. He marches to the music of the celestials. He marches in the procession of Christ. His music is the music of the Kingdom. Because this is a different kind of marching from that of those in the church systems, he is often out of step with them. They are not all marching to the same place! Most Christians are marching to a place in the sky with golden streets, palm branches and harps, to sing and dance and play and frolic for eternity. Sons do not have time for such frivolity, for they are marching to the throne of the universe, to a position of eminence, power, authority, responsibility, and eternal glory as lords and kings and priests and creators after the likeness of their eternal Father. Their business is not dancing over the hillsides of glory, but bringing the Kingdom of God to pass throughout the infinity of God's universe.

The great artist, Sir Joshua Reynolds, once painted a picture of Lord Holland, a prominent Englishman. The artist asked a large sum for his work, which he had completed in only a few hours' time. Lord Holland said to him, "You get money very quickly. It did not take you much time. How long were you in painting this picture?" Reynolds replied, "All of my life." The artist meant that the talents which had been developing all his life had entered into the picture and had made possible its production in a few hours. And he was correct. No great picture is painted in an hour. Life is back of it. And kings are not made in the day of their coronation. Oh, no! The willingness to submit to God's dealings and the work of conformation into the image of God's Christ is not reached in a moment. It is the outcome of an upward process by which we are transformed from glory to glory into the likeness of God. Kingship is the outcome of breakings, purgings, experience, growth, and development in the spirit throughout long months or years. God gives us a lifetime to build the character of a king, and that is generally how long it takes. It is the flowering out of the seed of Life which has been nurtured in our experience and testings day after day after day. It is not attained by one grand leap into a spiritual experience.

A. E. Knoch put it so well when he wrote, "**Those who endure shall reign with Christ for the eons**" (II Tim. 2:12). It is a great pity to make this everlasting. Eonian life will, indeed, never end, because death itself shall be abolished at the consummation. Therefore it is unwise to overstress that the word eon does not denote endlessness in relation to our life in Christ, for it does involve it. But reigning is a different matter. All will be made alive eventually, but by its very nature, all cannot reign. Some must be subject. Reigning implies submission to intermediaries, and insubordination to God. When the kingdom is handed over to the Father, God cannot be All in all so long as some of His creatures reign over others. All rule, even that of Christ, shall cease when all authority is transferred into the hands of the Father. Endurance now is the proper preparation for reigning with Christ in the future. How different would rule be today if every officeholder had to undergo a thorough course of training in patient suffering! A prominent medical specialist in Europe tried to express a similar thought when he said that every physician ought to be thrown out of the window before he should be allowed to practice on a patient. He should know what suffering is, to deal with it sympathetically and successfully. So it is with governing! Only one who has felt the pains and penalties of mortality, and has endured the consequent suffering and shame, is fitted to rule. Only such a one will reign so successfully that ruling will eventually be ruled out!"

Today God is preparing the nobility of His Kingdom. Therefore, the qualifications are exceedingly stringent. The constant challenges and testings of our pilgrimage in Christ are not for the purpose of earning our salvation; rather the challenges and testings are for the purpose of preparing us to reign with Christ. The story is told of a certain bank in which there was a trust department in which four young men and one older man were employed. It was decided by the directors that they would promote the older employee and also promote one of the younger men to have charge of the trust department after the older gentleman was removed to his new position. After considering the merits of each of the men, a certain one of the four younger men was

selected for the new position and a substantial increase in salary. It was decided to notify him that afternoon at four o'clock.

At the noon hour the young man went to a cafeteria for lunch. One of the directors was behind him in the line with several other customers in between them. The director saw the young man select his food including a small piece of butter. The butter he flipped on his plate and threw some food on top of it to hide it from the cashier. In this way he lied to the cashier about what was on his plate. That afternoon the directors met to notify the young man that they had intended giving him the promotion, but because of what had been seen in the cafeteria they must discharge him. They felt that they could not have one who would lie and steal as head of their trust department.

It reminds me of when Lorain and I were in Egypt. We took a cruise up the Nile to the Aswan Dam, visiting a number of ancient Egyptian temples along the way. At these temples are great, huge, colossal granite, sculptured pieces of kings and queens and gods. It was interesting to learn that these great sculptured pieces were all mined from one super granite quarry. The tremendous obelisks that the ancient Egyptians made were carved from one chunk of granite. These huge obelisks were monuments to history. They were placed at the entrance to a temple. Often an obelisk was more than a hundred feet high. Their sides were carved with hieroglyphs telling of the wonderful things their rulers had done. We saw a number of them at the temples, but in past centuries the finest pieces were dispersed all over the world by nations that controlled Egypt. There's one in Saint Peter's Square in Rome. Others are in Paris, France, London, England, and in Central Park, in New York City. But the best and biggest one of all still lies in the quarry up near Aswan. They spent decades cutting it out, chiseling it, filing it, sanding it — and there it lies. It is fourteen feet square at the base. We were able to walk all over it. It's 142 feet long. And it's still lying there. Why? Because just before they got ready to move it, the experts looked at it, and they saw what no one else could see — flaws in the basic quality of that granite. Flaws! And because there were flaws, they wouldn't move it. They abandoned it!

Many students who enter college are required to take an entrance exam. As with every test, the entrance exam is given to determine, and prove, those who qualify, and eliminate those who don't. Those who pass the test will remain and continue with their studies; those who fail are rejected. Every test and trial has within it the element of elimination. Those who do not stand and pass the test are eliminated — not killed or tortured — but cast off, excluded, rejected, prevented from entering in to the new realm. That this possibility exists in the callings of God is clearly seen by the earnest exhortation of Paul when he writes to the saints at Corinth, **“So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (I Cor. 9:24-27)**. The Revised Standard Version reads, “I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air (a shadow boxer), but I pummel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.” Paul realized that the thing that could disqualify him from the high calling of God was his old body with its desires, passions, and deceptions — his flesh. He fought against it, he pummeled it, he beat it down, as some translations say, not yielding to the desires of the flesh, but bringing his flesh man into subjection to the spirit, lest after a wonderful and successful preaching ministry setting forth the deep things of God, he himself would be cast away, rejected from the High Calling of God. Being a preacher, even a great preacher, articulating the wonderful truths of manifest sonship and the Kingdom of God, is not sufficient to qualify one for sonship in the Kingdom or the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. And I can assure you that there are vast numbers of preachers who will be eliminated in that day; those who have not been able to pass the test!

Listen carefully to the wonderful provision God has made for those who love Him and seek His Kingdom above all else. **“Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver...” (Mal. 3:2-3)**. In the refining and purifying process there is a purging taking place. Purging is getting rid of unwanted and unnecessary material. When Hitler came to power in Germany he instituted a purging of the government. He cast out all of those not in favor of his agenda and whom he believed he could not trust to cooperate completely with him. These were put out of office. When a conspiracy to get rid of him was discovered there was another purge. Those involved in the

purge were not just relieved of their responsibilities, they were executed. Under the communist government of the former Soviet Union there was a purge of the high officials every time there was a change of leadership. Many were demoted to a lesser office, some were retired altogether, while others were promoted to higher positions and power. This is what is called a purge.

The Lord, when He comes to His temple of living stones and purges the sons of Levi, or His kingly priesthood, He first of all purges out one man — old Adam! He comes to cleanse us from the carnal, Adamic mind, nature, and ways. He comes as a consuming fire to burn out of us all that is contrary to the righteousness and wisdom and purposes of the Lord. He is coming to each one of us in the new Day of the Lord and is executing the old man of sin in us. But on a corporate level He is also coming to those who have received the call to sonship and is separating out all who talk the Kingdom but do not walk the Kingdom. Only the ones who have completely surrendered to His will, and have walked in His ways, and have obeyed each sound of His voice, who have clean hands and pure hearts, will remain to reign with Him. How can anyone be put in a place of authority and power in the Kingdom who has not come to the place of complete SUBORDINATION TO THE KING? He will purge the sons of Levi, the kings and priests of His Kingdom, disqualifying those He cannot trust to do His will and cooperate completely in the administration of His Kingdom. The ways of Babylon and all the soul-possessing demands of the insipid church systems must be purged, the attributes of the carnal mind must be cleansed, all self-hood must be purified, and all desire to make a name for ourselves and to gather men to ourselves rather than to Christ must be purified. The ones who will abide the day of His coming and stand when He appeareth are those He is refining and purifying now.

“Kings and priests” are not honorary titles conferred on us because we have believed on Jesus, had our sins forgiven, and made it to heaven. Rather, these are positions of responsibility, authority and power. Kings and priests of God must be trained with far, far more rigor than are subjects of the Kingdom who bear little responsibility. They must also be trained and equipped more thoroughly than the church age ministries which are in part and last only until the Perfect Man is formed. The sons of God partake of a more excellent ministry and bring in a better age! The Kingdom of God is God in His Christ ruling over all things, performing the will of God on earth as it is in heaven. Obviously a great transformation must take place in our personality if we are to meet the standards for ministry at this high level!

This is a day of instant things. In the fast-paced, fast food society, we are used to having things as we want them, when we want them. Everything is instant. We can walk into a room and get instant light, heat, and air conditioning by flipping a switch. We get up in the morning and drink instant coffee, eat instant oatmeal, instant soup, instant mashed potatoes, and instant other things too numerous to name. If it isn't instant, then we turn on the microwave. All too often we also expect instant results in our spiritual life — instant perfection, instant power, instant maturity, instant sonship! But, dear one in Christ, God doesn't believe in shortcuts! Haste in the high and holy things of the Kingdom of God is freighted with grave danger. As someone has pointed out, when the almighty Creator plants a redwood tree in the womb of mother earth, He is looking forward in infinite wisdom and patience perhaps five thousand years to a day when it is a towering monarch of the forest. Think it not strange, then, that He would spend the entire span of a man's brief life-time in bringing to perfection a saint who is to rule the world as a son of God, bringing life and order out of the dreadful death and chaos that everywhere reigns upon earth. The wonder is that it does not take much longer! Let us, therefore, not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

I am deeply impressed with the words of George Hawtin penned some years ago in his paper THE PAGE. “God increases our faith through patience. At first what faith you had was void of patience. It wanted to see creation leap in response to its impatient demands. The sick must be healed right now. The world must be converted right now. You must get rid of carnality and become perfect now, of course; but as years went by and things continued much as they were before you tried to set the world on fire, you began very slowly to see that God is not enthused about impatient faith; you came to see that faith and patience are inseparable and methinks someday you will see that patience is faith. We have heard a great deal about faith, much of it springing from the desire of the carnal mind. Little indeed have we heard of patience without which there can be no real and lasting faith.

“Harvests do not come without patience and waiting. Vainly we have tried to squeeze God into our mold of haste and hurry. We have cried, wept, and teased like spoiled children in an endeavor to get our way and

hurry God in His program. We have demanded of God and tried to command Him. We have quoted scriptures to try and bolster our position but all in vain. To learn faith in patience is much more important than for us to have our own way about things. In Hebrews 10:35-37 the apostle wrote, ‘Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompense of reward. For YE HAVE NEED OF PATIENCE that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise’” — end quote.

Ah, beloved, does it seem that you shall never overcome the flesh, the world, and the devil; that you shall never live the abundant life, never arrive at perfection or attain unto maturity of sonship? Be encouraged, dear ones, for our gracious heavenly Father dropped a word into my heart in such an hour of foreboding when progress seemed so slow in my spiritual life that it appeared I was going backward instead of forward. His voice fell in quickening illumination upon my attentive ear with this beautiful word of wisdom: “My son, look back upon your walk five years...ten years...twenty years...how were you then? Have you changed at all? Have you grown some? Have you learned lessons and gained victories? Are you in any measure wiser, stronger, more enlightened, experienced, and triumphant? Do you know me in a deeper way than you did at the beginning? Have you made some progress? Can you see how much different is your life today in the deepest recesses of being than it was before? Ah, my son, if all this has been wrought by my hand in your life within the span of these years, can you not now trust me to finish and perfect that good work which I have begun in you? Do you not know that I am silently but faithfully working in you this very day to conform you to the image of my Son?”

Sons of God! Do not spend your days fretting about whether you are making progress. There is nothing in the world that grows so fast that you can see it grow! My eight grandchildren are growing every day of their lives, but I cannot see them grow. Tomorrow they will be taller, stronger, and wiser than today but I will be unable to discern it. Let God be the judge of how much or how little you have grown. Your duty and mine is to press relentlessly onward heedless of circumstances or conditions, but pressing patiently toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Few of us look in the mirror and come to the conclusion of Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath. During his heyday as a player, Namath wrote a book titled *I Can't Wait Until Tomorrow ... 'Cause I Get Better-Looking Every Day*. As egotistical as that title sounds, it can help us see how we as sons of God being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ should view ourselves in the lifelong process of becoming like Him. Scripture tells us that to become more like Christ, we need to keep getting better every day!

I will tell you a great secret. I read a story about a wonderful violinist who traveled to Houston to give a concert. He had recently spent thousands of dollars on a Stradivarius violin. Naturally all the news media carried stories about this wonderful opportunity to hear the fabulous music that such an exquisite violin would produce. The local newspapers ran photographs of the Stradivarius and published articles about its history and marvelous tonal quality. Few words were printed about the violinist himself. Most of the praise went to the violin. On the night of the concert, the hall was packed. The crowd was thrilled with every note and the auditorium filled with wave after wave of tremendous applause. The concert ended with a prolonged standing ovation.

But then the violinist did something quite shocking! He took his violin, that beautiful instrument that had been the source of such wonderful music, and lifted it over his head. After the crowd rose to its feet in adulation, he brought the instrument down — hard — across his knee. Its back was broken and the strings hung loose. Now it was completely worthless. A gasp of horror went through the auditorium as people wondered if the violinist had lost his mind. But he raised his hand to quiet the murmuring and said, “This is not a Stradivarius! I went down to the pawn shop and bought this violin for ninety-five dollars.” The message is clear — it wasn't the quality of the instrument that produced those beautiful, soul-stirring sounds. It was the quality of the person playing that instrument! And today, in our present state of spiritual growth and development, some of us may feel like ninety-five dollar pawn shop violins along side the famous Stradivarius — Jesus, the firstborn Son of God! But the reality is that it doesn't matter whether you're as gifted, accomplished, fluent, knowledgeable, wise and externally holy and spiritual as other saints. If your life is committed into the Father's hands, then you too, can produce the most beautiful music imaginable. The key is to get your focus away from yourself and on to the Great Musician — God Himself. Right where you are, let God begin to “play” you!

A dear friend of ours in the city of Detroit shared this meaningful experience with us some years ago following a message I brought along this line. She said, "I will never forget my first day in school in a rural community in the South. I arrived alone, but refused to go inside. I didn't think that I would enjoy school, and was quite certain that I didn't need an education. In my childish mind I made a firm decision not to go to school at all. Quickly I passed by and went straight to my grandmother's home. Grandmother, surprised at seeing me, asked, 'Why, Veta, what are you doing here? Didn't school start today?' I actually felt that I was in command and could carry out my plans, so I replied with finality, 'I have decided not to go to school!'

"Grandmother was a wise old woman, and appeared to respect my decision. She didn't scold, but sadly said, 'I'm so sorry to hear that, Veta. I'm really disappointed that you aren't going to school. You see, grandmother needs someone to write letters for her, and I had hoped that you would go to school and learn to write. I thought you would be the one to write the letters for me.' I loved my grandmother very much, and her words impacted my childish mind. I changed my mind, deciding to go to school just long enough to learn how to write. I left grandmother's, made my way back down the road to school, arriving late, of course, and walked in with my hat and coat on for I was certain that I would be there for only a short time. The teacher was very understanding and quite gentle with me. Later, I found myself at the blackboard, chalk in hand, the teacher's hand upon mine, showing me how to make the number 2 along with the letters of the alphabet. After some minutes I asked the teacher when would we get on with the writing. Suddenly the whole prospect loomed menacingly before my mind and irritatedly I inwardly shouted, 'If we don't go faster than this, I'm going to be here ALL DAY!' And I was, of course! I went back to school the next day, and the next, and the next for many years to come! I became a star student, and a joy to my grandmother."

So God, omniscient and omnipotent, has established here upon earth a School for the training of those destined to be the future rulers of the universe. This School is known as "the church, the body of Christ." None shall ever rule as King-Priests after the order of Melchizedek who have not graduated from this School! And what a great Teacher we have! One begins in God's School of Kingship and Priesthood in the first grade. You start with the ABC's. God opens the class and says, "Now children, we are going to learn how to rule. To rule means to govern, to control, to be master over that which is ruled. You can never rule anything until first you overcome it within yourself. To 'overcome' means to COME UP OVER THAT WHICH IS OVER YOU. When, within yourself, you rise above the circumstance, the problem, the obstacle, the weakness, the temptation, so that it no longer controls you, you are then ready to control it, no longer to be the victim of circumstances, but the master of them." That is the first lesson, the first step in becoming a King! And so, in the nitty-gritty of everyday life God teaches us how to overcome, how to reign, how to bless, how to love, how to have compassion, how to be a King and a Priest in His Kingdom.

The promises of God are vast and varied. Some of them, like forgiveness of sins and healing, are free and unconditional and may be obtained very easily. That is why so many receive them! But if you would be a King-Priest and receive the power to rule over, bless, and deliver creation, if you would learn the life, authority, and government of God to reign in His Kingdom, then that is a different matter altogether! You must become a follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. It takes patience to attain any worthy goal. It takes endurance too. No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. Even in this hour some do look back to the former orders of the church age that God has brought them through, and clinging to a lesser realm disqualify themselves for God's fullness. We do not attain sonship by a single bound. Neither do we qualify for Kingship and Priesthood in a moment of time. It is not an experience we can receive one night at the altar. It cannot be conferred on us by the laying on of hands. We cannot claim it and seize it today by faith. We have need of patience. We must through faith and patience grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. We must become mature, spiritually skilled ones through experience. Only such can serve as Kings and Priests of the Most High God!

The following historical sketch came across my desk. It was the time of the French Revolution. They beheaded the king and then the queen. The crown prince was left orphaned. Somebody said, "Behead the little prince." But then the devilish suggestion was made, "Don't behead him; you'll only send his soul to Heaven; that's too good for royalty! I say turn him over to Old Meg; she'll teach him the vile, filthy words and ways of the street. Then he'll end up going to hell." So, as the story goes, he was turned over to this wicked woman of the streets, who tried to get him to repeat these ugly, profane words and commit vile, filthy acts. But,

he would stamp his feet, clench his fists, and his little golden curls would shake on his velvet shoulders, and he would say, "I will not say it; I will not do it; I was born to be a king, and I will not do it!" I say to every person reading these lines today, you were born to be a prince, you were born to be a king with Christ upon His throne and His Father's throne, and therefore you will be an overcomer!

Ern Baxter, who worked and ministered with William Branham and the great healing revivals of the late 1940's and the 1950's was once asked to share how he later faced the change in his relationship with William Branham and the whole healing movement. He said, "In the ministry with William Branham, I saw a dimension of the supernatural that had in it such seeds of spiritual unity and other good fruits that my excitement was hard to contain. But when I saw carnality start to invade the movement — exaggeration, misrepresentation, metaphysics, and eventually the breakdown of many of the healers in critical areas of their lives because they couldn't handle the crowds, the popularity, or the money — I had to withdraw from it. That was one of the most traumatic times in my life. I did a lot of praying at that time, a lot of groaning. In fact, I did a lot of screaming because I was close to an emotional breakdown. A tremendous move of God had been sold out so cheaply; it was difficult to handle. If I hadn't had an experience with God, if I hadn't had a consciousness of His sovereignty, if I hadn't had some kind of a relationship with God based on process, I don't know what I would have done. I had maintained the pastoral oversight of a church while working with Branham, and I went back and gave myself totally to that. I was now ministering in a church, where before I had been with thousands of people in city-shaking meetings. It was quite a shock. I would go to my study, get down on the floor, and just groan. I'd talk to God, and just wait. I couldn't do anything else. If it were not for my relationship with God, my knowing God, I could have taken the extreme position that Christianity was all just a 'bunch of bunk.' But I couldn't do that, because it wasn't a matter of Christianity; it wasn't a matter of the healers; it was a matter of who was the most important person in this, and that was GOD. God wasn't bunk to me. I knew that. I knew God, and I knew where God was."

Ah, yes, my beloved, many have failed in the in-part realm and have been disqualified and fallen by the wayside, leaving heartbreak, tragedy, and disaster in the body of Christ. Of a certainty I know that it shall not be thus in the King-Priest ministry of the manifested sons of God! Those who come with the Christ making war, subduing the nations unto God, restoring all things and delivering creation from the bondage of corruption shall themselves be incorruptible, having been called, and chosen, and faithful, tested in the wilderness, tried in the fire, proven under pressure, purged, refined, purified, molded and fashioned into the very nature and character of Christ. These shall reign with Christ over all things because they have first reigned with Him within themselves!

As I have pointed out many times before, the journey to the throne of the universe begins in that small and undistinguished place where you are. The Kingdom of God is within you. The enChristed who are to reign with Christ from sea to sea, then from planet to planet, and finally from universe to universe, are being prepared. Think not in your heart, precious friend of mine, that you may pass your life here careless, indifferent to the dealings of God, suddenly to awake one fine morning to find yourself sitting with Christ governing the galaxies, because such a thing will not be. Begin today to prepare for the kingship! This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over the endless vastnesses of infinity. He is raising us up to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies. And the place which He is preparing for each one is not only a world to come, and a Kingdom of Life and Light, but a place IN HIM, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, mind of His mind, nature of His nature, wisdom of His wisdom, power of His power, authority of His authority, and life of His life!

Years ago an IBM junior executive made a mistake that cost the company several million dollars. IBM's founder, Thomas J. Watson Sr., summoned him into his office. Assuming the worst, the sullied young executive said, "I guess you want my resignation?" Mr. Watson replied, "You can't be serious. We've just spent millions of dollars educating you!" God is the founder of the most important enterprise of all — the Kingdom of God. God is now in the process of hiring, educating and developing His management team. He is training us to become powerful rulers in that Kingdom in the day when He initiates the next phase of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. How much has God already invested in your training and education? God has made a supreme investment in us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Without that price none of us could even enter into the Kingdom of God, much less attain the high-ranking positions God has waiting for those who

overcome — who graduate from His school. But God doesn't stop there. He invests in us daily through His guidance and processings, and through the continuous gracious outpourings and deep and vital dealings of His Spirit. God is at work in us!

In a very real sense, God owns us. The apostle Paul reminds us, **“For ye were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's” (I Cor. 6:20)**. The great King of this Kingdom expects to see a profit for all of His time, effort, and sacrifice. God, of course, is not interested in making money. He already owns everything. God is in the business of developing His family — sons with character. If those of us who are called now succeed in qualifying for positions of rulership, we will in turn be able to help millions of others become citizens of the Kingdom. To put it in business terms, our future profit to the Kingdom of God will more than make up for our present losses — if we stay with the organization and apply the new lessons! Saints, like the junior executive at IBM, are capable of making costly mistakes. Have you ever felt that God has given up on you? Do you feel like you are wasting His time? Sometimes our mistakes are very costly to us, too! Have you ever felt that the cost is too high, and that you are wasting your time? Let's see what God says: **“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6)**.

God will never give up on us! He is investing in us with every intention of making a profit and expanding His Kingdom. Our all-wise Father sees our potential. He knows our capacity to grow and develop. He is keener at discerning it than we are. He is also well aware of our weakness, and is ready to help. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” said Paul. The children of God make a lot of mistakes, for children are children. Our ability to learn from our mistakes is part of what God uses to build character in us. In the book of Revelation, we read that it is the overcomers — those who don't leave God's school or resign from His calling — who ultimately are given power in His Kingdom. **“And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every one according to his work” (Rev. 22:12)**. **“For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more” (Lk. 12:48)**. Have you made costly mistakes? Have you been stumbling and seemingly wasting God's time? Don't resign! Don't drop out of God's school! His investment in you is too great! He will see you through! Graduation day is coming! The positions in His authority and glory are waiting! Learn the lessons that will help you to better serve in the Kingdom of God. If you do, great heavenly wealth and power and opportunity lie ahead for you in the age and in the ages to come. Through you creation will be lifted, redeemed, restored to life and liberty and glory — and that's where the real profit begins!

Let us learn our lessons well — and let us never presume that we have attained to something in God that we have not yet qualified for. And let us never grasp after a place or position the Father has not conferred upon us. There is no need to DECLARE OUR SONSHIP — the Father Himself declares His sons. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. This is my Son, hear ye Him.” Some today have grown weary of waiting for the manifestation God has promised, so they have “watered down” the hope and settled for a lesser reality, declaring themselves sons of the Kingdom on a lower plane than God has called us to. Some have settled for a “revival” realm, or a “New Testament Church” realm and now speak disparagingly of what they term “classical sonship.” These impetuous souls just can't wait for the Father's appointed time. The place that God has called us to will be in His time, not ours. **“The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father” (Gal. 4:1-2)**. The story is told of a fifteen year old boy who stole his father's car keys. The father's plan was to give the keys to his son a year later. The boy, however, thought that he had all the attributes necessary to drive the car. The father knew better; he understood the law, insurance liability, driving skills, and such like. As a result, the court would not let the boy drive a car until he became twenty-one. Let us earnestly seek wisdom from above to avoid such a costly error of SELF-MANIFESTATION!

Brother Bob Torango wrote the following powerful exhortation some years ago, and it is still as pertinent today as when he penned it. “Are we ready now for the greater things of this word and walk? I pray so. If not, you can be sure of one thing, the Lord will be faithful to hide them from us until such a time as they will be a blessing in our life and not a curse. I believe it to be vital that we leave the rudimentary basics of this word and shove away from the shore to the deepness of the waters. We have only dealt with the surface things thus far. We have striven to be happier than we were yesterday, more prosperous than we were last year, try not to

cuss so much and love our families like we should. Excuse me for being so blunt, but shouldn't we be doing these things by now? I may be wrong, but it seems to me there are too many people connected with this revelation that are constantly having to attend self-help meetings and seminars on 'How To Keep Your Marriage' and 'Have You Talked To Your Kids Today?' Those are First and Second Day problems. Surely somebody is ready to venture into the things beyond the keeping of the basic rules necessary to live in a civilized world. The Ten Commandments should suffice to keep us from killing each other! If we can't even love our own mate or friends, how in the world can we expect to come into a word that says we must love our enemies? We need to be EMPOWERED!

"I hear from the community of Kingdom folk how much revelation we have, and we are in the Third Day, and we have arrived into the Holiest of all, and just any moment now we are going to walk on water and glow in the dark. But look around you! Ministry are still playing a game of politics and preying on feeble-minded people, and the body of Christ can't even forgive one another of wrongs or say an apology if they have wronged someone else. There has to be a people that is ready to go on into the things that God has prepared for this new dimension of ministry regardless of whether their friends are ready to go or not. We'll just have to pick them up on the next go around — visit them in the next visitation and leave them our forwarding address. We must go on! If we stay here we will die. The only hope for those who refuse to pay the price of this next transition is for you to leave them in the hands of the First and Second Day ministries and go through the door and believe that God will send you back to them at another time."

Everything that is worthy and valuable is filled with labor, and the road to it always lies through the mountains of difficulty and the valleys of testing, never through the plains of ease. Dearly beloved, let us give diligence to make our calling and election sure. Let us strive to enter the straight gate. Let us run that we may receive the prize. Let us fight, not as those who beat the air. Let us press toward the mark and never flinch under stress or the pain. Let us not be mere religious wind bags who make great claims of revelation and attainment but do not live up to them. A religious windbag claims intimate knowledge of God, but his behavior shows no signs of such knowledge. He claims to walk with God and to know the ways of God, but such a relationship has little affect on the way he treats his wife and children. He is like the farmer in the fairy tale who brags that his daughter can spin straw into gold — but, of course, that is all talk. His poor daughter is forced to try and live up to her father's lie, but she never can. Our claims to sonship must not be empty. If we want to be sure we have this Life, our expression of nature and character must be like Jesus. Love describes Jesus! Love was made perfect in Him, and it must be in us, too.

A dear brother pointed out that there was a time in our childhood when we played "grown-ups." He added, "I see in my spirit that there are children who are merely playing 'sons.' They appear to be sons, they speak like, and they act like, yet there is more pretending than being. They still cling to worldly joys, to family ties, and to the old ways and customs of Babylon. My dear brethren, this is not a voice of condemnation, for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, it is a voice of discernment, a voice of love, tenderly admonishing the precious jewels of the Father to abandon all, and to enter into the dawning of the Day of the Lord, that He might manifest Himself in us, as He prepares to manifest us to each other and then to the world." God grant it!

J. PRESTON EBY

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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 60**  
**QUALIFYING FOR KINGDOM DOMINION [continued]**  
**BY: J. PRESTON EBY**

**KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES**  
"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God... "

**PART SIXTY**

To Jesus, the firstborn Son of God, the Kingdom of God was the most precious thing in the universe and possessing the reality of it was of all things most valuable. Repeatedly He made it clear that the Kingdom had a worth which was above all earthly things and standards. He admonished, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." He said, "If your eye causes you to miss the mark, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be swallowed up of death." He spoke many parables about the value of the Kingdom. He said that once there was a man who was digging in a field; as he dug his spade struck across a buried treasure. It was the law of Israel that such finds might be kept by the finder; and so the man went away and sold every single thing that he possessed in order that he might buy the field and so possess the treasure. He said that once there was a merchant man who had spent his whole life searching for lovely pearls. At last he found a pearl which was the most perfect and beautiful pearl he had ever seen; so, when he found it, he went and sold out his whole stock and everything he had in order to buy the one precious pearl. It is that way, said Jesus that a man must be about the Kingdom! To inherit the power and the glory of the Kingdom is worth everything that a man possesses and all that a man is; and if anything hinders a man from inheriting it, even if that thing is the dearest thing on earth, it must be rooted out and thrown away.

Only the spiritually ambitious man will lay hold upon the Kingdom of God. Note — I do not say merely "ambitious," but spiritually ambitious. To be spiritually ambitious is to earnestly desire God's best — in His way and time, according to His purpose, and always and only for His glory. It means to seek first the Kingdom of God in all things. It means to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength. It means to come only to do the will of the Father, and to do only what we see the Father doing. To be spiritually ambitious is the very spirit of sonship! There is a place for ambitious men in the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." He did not turn the man away from the ambition to be great. He simply told him how greatness can be achieved — become the servant of all! And then there are degrees of this greatness. If you want to be great, be "the servant of all." If you want to be first, be "the bond-slave of all." The servant and the bond-slave represent degrees of self-giving, and they, in turn, represent degrees of greatness attained, namely "great" and "first." Beyond that is a level to which Jesus Himself had attained. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." In other words, since He went deeper than being servant of all, or a bond-slave of all, in that He gave His very life, so He becomes the Son of man, which is more than being great, or first, among a group — it is the acme of being! So the door is open for ambition. You may be least, or less, or great, or greater, or greatest, or first, or one like unto the Son of man!

Yet, it does not mean that we give in order to get — that is not the Kingdom of God at all! We do not put on humility and serve others with the motive of becoming great, attaining to exalted positions of power and honor. If we are serving to gain advantage, to receive a position of authority over others, for the sake of authority, then our motive is all wrong — yet carnal, earthly, sensual and devilish. That is not how the Kingdom works! We do not serve to be made great — we serve because we are great with God's greatness. This is not a position of exercising power over others but of serving them. Serving is the power and the greatness. The motivation of our desires must be the same as that of the Captain of our salvation. Filled with the great love of God, the desire to attain to this position is to give ourselves in sacrifice and service for the deliverance and restoration of the rest of God's creatures. Having attained to this deliverance from the bondage of corruption as the firstfruits of the creation, our only desire will be to labor together with the Lord in the deliverance of the rest of His creation, to lift them up to the same level of life as He has lifted us. The heart of God, the heart of unconditional and unlimited love and all goodness, is the greatest heart in the universe. It is not serving that makes us great, it is true divine greatness that causes us to serve! Oh, the mystery of it!

Let us see how beautifully Jesus taught this by His own example. Everything is prepared and set in order for the last supper, to the very water to wash the feet of the guests, as their custom was. Christ and His disciples gather in the upper room to eat and fellowship together on this solemn night. Each one waits for the other, for there is no servant available to perform the customary service of washing the guest's feet. Washing feet was one of the basest tasks in the culture of Jesus' day. It was a job usually done by a house slave. Just as we offer a visitor hospitality, so in Jesus' time they customarily washed a visitor's feet. Washing feet was an undesirable responsibility: the roads were dusty well enough. But the filth of the road was more than dust. The transportation of that day was the camel, the donkey, the horse and the mule. It takes little imagination to understand that the streets and roads were littered with their manure. The traveler's feet would be covered with this as well as being caked with dust. The washing of feet was assigned to the lowliest slave because it meant handling the filth of the streets. This job was thought to be below the dignity of the "good man of the house."

Not one of the twelve thinks of humbling himself to do the job, for, are they not the honored ones, the disciples of the very Son of God, the flaming evangelists of the Kingdom, the future rulers of the world! Even at the table they were full of the thought — who should be greatest in the Kingdom that was then beginning to dawn. Suddenly, unexpectedly Jesus stood up from the table, and began to take off His inner layer of garments until He was stripped to the waist, wearing only His loincloth. He then took a large towel and wrapped it around Himself, poured water into a large brass basin, and, beginning with one of the men at the end of the table, laid heavy emphasis upon His words of a few moments before, "I am in the midst of you as one that serves." Oh, the wonder of it! on which angels gazed with adoring wonder. Christ, the Creator and King of the universe, at whose word all worlds and galaxies flooded the infinity of space, who might with one word have compelled any man or legions of angels to do His bidding, Himself chose the slave's place as His own, taking the soiled, filthy feet in His own holy hands, and washes them. It was to this task that the Lord of Glory stooped!

But listen more carefully to the divine why and how of this wondrous spectacle. Jesus does it in the full consciousness of His divine glory, for the apostle John records, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, rose..." What a startling combination of sublime cause with curious consequence! How could Jesus have done this? How could the Master and the King of the universe wash dung from His disciple's feet? He could do it because HE WAS SECURE IN WHO HE WAS. He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands. He knew that He had come from the Father and that He was the Son of God and the promised Messiah. He knew that He was going back to the Father after He defeated sin, sickness, death, the grave and hell. He didn't have to prove anything to Himself or to anyone else. His life had already proven who He was to those who had eyes to see. And He didn't stoop so low to become a tyrant, to rule over this world by force. He came to heal and bless and deliver, to reign by serving! Ah, yes, precious friend of mine, once we thoroughly know who we are there is no need to proclaim it, no need to sound a trumpet, no need to wear a badge, to remind people of who we are. Once we know that we are the sons of God WE ARE FREED TO SERVE!

You see, it wasn't in spite of the fact of His greatness that Jesus took the place of the servant — it was because of His greatness! The greatness of Jesus is the greatness of the Father's heart. The greatness of Jesus is the greatness of divine love and humility. The greatness of Jesus is the greatness of sonship! For the hands into which the Father gives all things nothing is common or unclean. Because one is the offspring of the God of all grace, compassion, love, mercy and goodness, in whose hands all things are given, it is not difficult for him to stoop so low. In this taking the form of a servant, Jesus proclaims the divine order of the Kingdom of God and the house of sons. The higher one stands in attainment in the Kingdom, the more it must be his joy to be servant of all. **"Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mat. 20:27). "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Mat. 23:11).** The higher I rise in the consciousness of being like Christ, the deeper shall I stoop to serve the creation around me. The reason why we so often do not bless others is that we wish to appear to them as their superiors in blessing, calling or rank, or at least their equals. But that is not the spirit of sonship! The truth is that only as a son can we truly be a servant. It was the Son of God who assumed the form of a servant and humbled Himself. Ah, beloved elect of the Lord, walk among men as a son of the Most High God. A son of God is only in the world to show forth his Father's glory, to demonstrate how Godlike and how blessed it is to live only and always to find a way to love, bless, redeem and restore God's lost creation. Someone has said, "God has three sorts of servants in the world: some are

slaves, and serve Him from fear; others are hirelings, and serve for wages; and the last are sons, who serve because they love.”

In a book I read there is a story which beautifully illustrates why the mighty God would stoop so low as to appear as a servant in His sons in order to restore creation. A little child is handed over to the keeping of another by her own father — not that he wants to part with her, but they are poor, and so he gives her into the rich man’s keeping, making her the rich man’s daughter so far as a resolution can do it, in order to find bread for both. He then hires himself as a servant to the rich man and stays about where she is. He keeps watch and care over that little life until it is matured; and the girl, as she grows up, begins to feel that she can always rely upon the unselfish love of him who seems but a serving man. But her father, as she supposes him to be, is cold, distant, and even cruel. The day came when he repudiated her with anger, selfish and base, because she had brought what seemed disgrace on his name. Then forward stepped the serving-man, and flung his arms around her, shouting, with the fierceness of righteous indignation to the man who had evilly entreated her, “She never was your child!” Then the girl knew why it was that she had felt such rest, peace and joy in the presence of the serving-man. She had listened to his language of love many a time, not knowing the speaker was her real father.

Old father flesh, old father world, old father the devil repays all men with cruelty, injustice, baseness, lack, sorrow and death. But there is a better Father — the One that sent you here, the One who has watched over you, blessed you, cared for you, counseled you, entreated you, woo’d you and overshadowed you with His love. Even when you knew it not, He was already your Father! And in Jesus He came as a servant to minister to your need, to lift and redeem and restore you unto Himself and His Kingdom. And now, bless His name, He comes in many sons to reveal His heart of love to the whole vast creation and restore all things. We, as sons of God, are among men as Him that serveth!

This is the great miracle of sonship! It unites greatness and humility in a divine combination. This is the new creation in Christ Jesus! This is the balance that is rarely attained in this world of natural men. The great secret lies in the indwelling spirit of Jesus. Being made partakers of His nature and mind we are able to stand before Pilate, and when he says, “Are you a king?” we answer, “Thou sayest it.” At the same time it is possible to kneel before our brethren with a towel and a basin of water, washing their feet — cleansing their walk — in the spirit of service and humility. Only in sonship do power and humility find their true relationships and their true balance. Have you ever seen the President of the United States cutting the grass at the White House? How about Queen Elizabeth scrubbing the floors of her palace? Or the Prime Minister of Canada washing dishes? We don’t expect people of high position to do lowly and seemingly unimportant tasks. Yet Jesus has revealed the law of a Higher Kingdom, a Kingdom where power and humility are joined together in a divine outpouring of love, grace and goodness!

Lyn Gitchel, a dear friend of ours in Pennsylvania, shared a precious point about the meaning of what we call ministry. She wrote, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many. The whole idea that we have of “ministry” has got warped up in these days, and I believe we shall have to have a new picture of what ministry really is put into our minds by God. The word ministry comes from two Latin words, minis, (from which we get minus), which means lesser, and tri, which is the Latin word for servant. Now, when you think about it, a LESSER SERVANT is a whole lot different from what we think of when the word ministry is put in our minds. We think of famous evangelists, and large meetings, crowds with a tremendous flow of miracles and of worship, and people that can really hold your attention by their great preaching — and then we find that the word means LESSER SERVANT!

“The impact of this hit me recently and I’ll share the experience with you. For most of my life I have served in a professional capacity. Before I was an ordained minister I was a registered nurse. I have never really worked as a servant of any kind, until recently. A friend of mine was doing a little job here in town which involves helping an elderly lady who has had a stroke. You need to help her in whatever capacity she needs, from housework to bathing her. My friend had to leave town and, to help her out, I took the job. Nearly a year later I am still doing it! One day I was kneeling on the bathroom floor drying her feet when suddenly I said to myself, ‘Whatever am I doing here? — I’m supposed to be an Ordained Minister!’ Immediately the Spirit of God answered within my heart, ‘You wanted to minister, didn’t you?’

“The time has come when we must understand that ministry is not preaching but servanthood. We are going to have to learn all over again what it means to serve people with the same heart of love that Jesus had when He walked among men. It was not beneath Him to lift a woman caught in adultery to her feet and speak a word of reassurance to her, nor was it beneath Him to eat at the house of an ungodly tax-gatherer and his friends. Jesus did not hire a huge auditorium and put out publicity announcing great meetings. He simply moved among men and women where they were and touched them with love, and healing, and compassion” — end quote.

There is the story of a man who desired from the Lord a true understanding of heaven and hell. One night in a dream he was told that he would soon receive this understanding. He was taken into a room where a few dozen people were sitting around a huge kettle of stew. Each one had only a long handled spoon to eat with, and their arms were straightened so they could not bend them and bring the food into their mouths. This, he was told, was hell. Then he was taken into another room which would be a picture to him of heaven. To his surprise, the room was identical. The large pot was there, as well as people with stiff arms and long spoons. There was one major difference, however. In this room, each one would dip into the stew with his or her long-handled spoon and feed his fellow on the other side of the kettle! In this day we are being translated from hell to heaven within ourselves as we learn the way of the Kingdom of Heaven which is the Kingdom of Love — by SERVING!

Every new year the Queen of England publishes her Honors List, conferring titles and decorations upon the men and women who have rendered distinguished service to mankind or to the country or to the political party in power. I have in my mind a little Honors List of my own. There is not much point in publishing it, because you will never have heard of these people. They include a dear sister who was poor in this world's goods, who lived in a little house that approached being a shack, yet was committed to God's purposes in this Day and vibrant with the love of God. She was always sharing the word with the neighborhood children who graced her porch, continually cooking and sharing with others, fixing up and maintaining a building for the gatherings of the saints, entertaining the ministries the Lord sent their way, and encouraging everyone. She never murmured or complained about anything that came her way.

Honor goes also to a brother who prayed earnestly and is credited with “praying down” a mighty move of the Spirit of God many years ago, by which others with whom he was associated were propelled into world-wide fame, while he unpretentiously cherished the deep truths and hope of sonship and the reconciliation of all things, continuing in prayer, setting an example of righteousness and humility before his family and community, regularly visiting the widows, orphans, and shut-ins. I honor another brother whose name I do not even know who, during our Conferences in Florida years ago, would sweep and clean the meeting place until the wee hours of the morning (without being asked — it wasn't his responsibility!), while most of the brethren and the preachers were enjoying rich fellowship over food at the local restaurants. The one thing that these quiet heroes have in common is that they lived the spirit of servanthood without pretense or any motive other than a pure love and the deep desire to bless creation and advance the Kingdom of God into men's lives. Truly such shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven!

That there are different levels in the Kingdom of God, from the least in the Kingdom to the greatest in the Kingdom, Jesus clearly taught. He told His disciples, “**Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he**” (Mat. 11:11). And again we read of Jesus' disciples that “**they disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. And Jesus sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all**” (Mk. 9:34-35). Christ Himself was the greatest among them. He said, “I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.” He was the humblest, and, therefore, the greatest, but had He no authority? He had authority in heaven and on earth! Because He takes the place of deepest humility, does that strip Him of His kingly authority? No! It intensifies and magnifies it. “And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant.” “Bondservant” is the meaning of the word in the Greek. The man who is to be the greatest among God's kings and priests must be the slave of all. The man who will be the greatest, the primus, or first, will be the man who is, as it were, the very bondservant; willing to serve his brethren as if he were their slave with a deep and true humility. Jesus Christ died the death of a slave. Amongst the Romans, crucifixion was the death reserved for a bondservant. No Roman citizen

could be crucified, but the slaves were punished in that manner. Christ was the greatest, yet He took the place of the lowest. He who stooped from the highest heaven, not only to earth, but to the deepest hell, who went into the deepest depths to seek for sinful men, is greatest. That is why He exercises authority today in the heavens and on the earth. He now takes the highest place as the Head of the body, the High Priest of our profession, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and the Head of all principality and power. He is the greatest!

**He that would rise to be the highest,  
Must first come down to be the lowest,  
And then ascend to be the highest  
By keeping down to be the lowest.**

It is only when you keep down to be the lowest that you can be a power.

The following words by brother Paul Mueller clearly express another aspect of this same beautiful truth. “What does it mean to rule and reign with Christ? The Greek word *poimaino* is translated rule in some New Testament passages, and means ‘to tend as a shepherd.’ This agrees with the prophecy of Isaiah, ‘See! the Lord is coming with might, His own arm having won Him the kingdom; See! His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. Like a shepherd He tends His flock, with His arm He gathers them; the lambs He carries in His bosom, and gently leads those who give suck’ (Isa. 40:10-11, Smith-Goodspeed). ‘Like a shepherd He tends His flock,’ this is the manner of the Lord’s dealings with mankind. He cares for each one, observing them and supplying their individual needs. He gathers them with His arm so that not one is lost (Mat. 18:12). Some He carries and still others He leads, but all will be gathered into His kingdom, for He is a faithful Shepherd.

“The story is told of a person who saw himself walking in the sand as he was going through a very difficult trial. Suddenly another set of tracks were seen in the sand next to his. He knew instinctively that the other set of tracks were made by the Lord, who was faithfully walking by his side. Then, just as suddenly, he saw that there was only one set of tracks in the sand, and fearfully he thought the Lord had left him. But then he was made to realize that there was only one set of tracks in the sand because the Lord had picked him up and was carrying him through that most difficult time. Indeed, the Lord had not left him after all, but was carrying him in His bosom. And these are the ways of the Lord that must be imparted to all who will rule and reign with Him. The love of the Lord for all mankind is as the love of a faithful, loving shepherd. The kingdom of God shall be established in the earth by the omnipotent and sovereign power of the Lord. He shall rule and reign in union with all His sons in the spirit of a loving shepherd who gently leads his subjects, yet His power is mighty.

“The same Greek word is used for rule both in Matthew 2:6 and Revelation 12:5. It is the Greek word *poimaino* which means to tend as a shepherd. What does it mean to rule and to reign in the kingdom? All who are chosen for this high calling will shepherd the people into the kingdom of God. Each one of them will be like a hiding-place from the wind, and a shelter from the storm. They will cover and protect their subjects, sheltering them until they are firmly rooted into the life of the kingdom. They are like streams of water in a dry place, and like the shade of a great rock in a wearisome land. Their new Life, which is the very Life of Christ, flows from them like streams of water in the desert. They are that mighty Rock which has smitten the image of the nations, causing them all to fall (Dan. 2:34), but which now gives forth shelter and protection. They are entrusted with the ring of kingdom authority, the best robe of kingdom righteousness and life, and the royal scepter of the kingdom of God. Indeed, when one rules over men as a righteous one, when one rules in the fear of God, then it is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning cloudless and clear, after rain upon the tender grass” — end quote.

God has called a people aside in this hour and brought them to a place of brokenness, humility, and nothingness in the eyes of the world and the church systems of man. We have obeyed the word the apostle Peter admonished, “**Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time**” (I Pet. 5:6). God is about to exalt His sons, but it shall be the exaltation of humility.

The following prophecy from the late Norene Nicholls has come into my hands at this time, and it surely speaks for this Day. “A strange and wondrous thing is about to come, for the Lord has spoken to those that will hear,

and their ears have been sharpened. There is a gathering of the royal family, and the shepherds of Israel shall become rulers on the thrones. They have stood in desolate places and listened to the low sound of the sheep — even a little flock in a wilderness place, but now it shall change. The shepherds who have proven their worth in aloneness shall now come forth to be acknowledged of those who would not have Me to reign over them in times past. Behold the thing is at the door. Some have chosen high places for themselves, but others have allowed the Lord to choose for them, and thus have they been separated from their brethren and lost to sight. But now shall events bring forth the deserted ones and show them before kings who are really not kings at all. The scepter of these kings shall be righteousness and the girdle of faithfulness shall be upon their loins. They shall be recognized, not because they are of great stature or commanding of personality, but they shall be recognized because the Spirit of the Lord is upon them.

“Men shall no longer gather to men, but the men of God shall gather to the establishment of truth where the angels activate the holy ground. There shall strange but wondrous things take place, for instructions from the presence of the Lord shall be heard, and kings shall lift their voices in confidence and courage at the declaration. And, there too, shall be that peculiar anointing reserved for kings come into being; and that anointing shall teach you all things. Then from that pillar of truth shall the kings issue forth to do exploits and turn the aliens back from the shores of the land promised. Be not afraid nor amazed, for the Lord has spoken in verity and truth and shall bring it to pass. No longer shall you stand idly by and wait for another day, but there shall be activity of a new source — yet activity that is effortless and quiet. You shall slip quietly into palaces and judgment halls and speak a word in season. You shall stand before prelates and counselors, but not one of your words shall fail. You shall see the manifestation of what you have spoken, and men shall shut their mouths nor argue the point. This is a strange work to be done, but it shall come by the decree of God and stand unmovable before heaven and earth. The closing of the day is also the opening of the Day, and to this time have you been called. See to it that you be not discouraged, for you shall stand in the land and turn the enemy from the shores. So it is and shall be” — end quote.

## SONS AND SERVANTS

It is when we come to this thought of servants that there is a great deal of misunderstanding among the Lord's people. When we speak of servants, some boast that this calling does not apply to them, for they are no longer servants, but sons. That is true in the spirit in which Paul argues in **Galatians 4:6-7** wherein he says, “**And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**”

It is far from the truth, however, to say that there is no sense in which those who are sons are also servants. Paul is speaking in the passage above of our relationship to God, the Father. Under the Old Covenant the people of God had not received new birth by the Spirit, to live in the Spirit and walk after the Spirit, but were placed under the rule of law. They were not a house of sons, but a house of servants. Their relationship to God was the relationship of servants. They were not sons. God had not sent the spirit of sonship into their hearts. By the New Covenant God has redeemed us from the curse of the law that we might receive placement as sons and has birthed into our hearts the Spirit of His Son, the spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, “Father!” This has brought a change in our relationship to God. Unto Him we are no longer servants, but sons. As sons, however, we become related not only to God, but we also become related to men. Jesus is the Son of God, but He is also the Saviour of men, the Redeemer of men, the Reconciler of men, the Blessor of men, the Deliverer of men, the Sovereign Lord over all flesh. It is here that we must be very clear in our understanding. Unto God I may be a son; but unto men I must be a servant. I am God's servant, sent of the Father to serve mankind. I cannot be a servant to God, for I am His son; and I cannot be a son to men, therefore I much approach unto men in a relationship through which I can minister unto them the life of the Son who dwells in me. The only way I may minister Christ unto men is as a servant. To minister means “to serve,” and both minister and servant are a number of times translated from the same Greek word.

Can a son be a servant? Jesus, the pattern Son declared, “**Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto (served), but to minister (serve) and give His life a ransom for many**” (**Mat. 20:28**). It is the SON who SERVES! The Son is a Servant-Son. The very same Jesus of whom the Father witnessed, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,” of Him the Father also witnessed, “**Behold my servant, whom I**

uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the nations" (Isa. 42:1). Matthew 12:15-21 shows unmistakably that this servant of the Lord is Jesus. The Son came as a Servant-Son.

John understood this significant truth, for the same John who wrote, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," later stated, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). Paul understood this truth, for the very same Paul who wrote, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son," also said, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle." "Apostle" means a "sent one," therefore Paul was sent to serve! To God he was a son, but he was the servant of men. Is Jesus a Son or a Servant? Was John a son or a servant? Was Paul a son or a servant? And lest the elect of God in this Day should exalt themselves above John, or Paul, or even Jesus, we further find that of the 144,000 overcomers, that glorious company of the sons of God who stand with the Lamb on mount Zion, having the Father's name in their foreheads, it is written, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the SERVANTS OF OUR GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS" (Rev. 7:3). So there you have it! The sons are the servants! Not servants to God, but sons who are servants to men, humble ministers of the mercies and goodness of the Lord.

What blessedness, what value has sonship without the outpouring into the depths in which men dwell? The whole purpose of sonship is that God may be revealed, expressed, and communicated to men even unto the lowest hell. Sonship is not some country-club set of super-spiritual-elite-gods who spend their time polishing up their halos while basking in the meretricious brilliancy of their own self-importance. If, upon our road to manifested sonship, we first learn to identify with the creation which we are ordained to deliver, to associate with the lowest and basest of men in the blessed spirit of a servant, what a blessing we shall become to the world! THAT IS WHAT JESUS DID. If Jesus were here today He would be condemned for eating with politicians, lawyers, mobsters, drug lords, call girls, crooks, drunks, and a whole host of unsavory characters, just as He was two thousand years ago. We think of the mighty anointing of the seven spirits of God that rested upon the firstborn Son, and shall rest upon all the manifested sons of God. But is it not written of these seven spirits that they are "sent forth into all the earth" — into the earthiness of man's experience. Only as a son can one truly be a servant, for only the son possesses that life which can quicken all things!

There is a striking and beautiful parallel between sons and servants, between kings and priests. It is the son who reigns, and the priest who serves. As sons we are destined to reign as kings, as servants we are called to serve as priests. "For thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God KINGS and PRIESTS: and we shall reign over the earth" (Rev. 5:9-11). God makes us kings that we might rule; He makes us priests that we might serve, bringing reconciliation, blessing and transformation to mankind. As priests we live for others, to pray for them; to work among them; to teach and instruct them; to bless and lift them; to deliver and redeem them; to bring them to God! "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns (power, kingship) and seven eyes (perception, vision, communication, priesthood), which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6). The sevenfold intensified Spirit of the Lord is given to God's King-Priests so as to be a channel for the outpouring of His glorious life to creation. To be a king is marvelous beyond words, but to be a priest is no idle self-seeking blessedness. It is a compelling power to enter into God's presence on behalf of mankind; the power to receive from the Lamb all the blessings and provisions of His wonderful life, and to receive and carry and distribute them!

You will never be a priest without the servant-nature. The story is told of a farmer who had just sat down to the table and prayed, "Oh Lord, bless the poor people in this neighborhood, and feed them." Very soon after, there was a knock at the door and a poor neighbor came in and asked the farmer for a bushel of potatoes. The farmer began to make all kinds of excuses. He had fifty bushels of potatoes, and his little boy said, "Papa, there is a chance to answer your own prayers." That is the servant-nature, and the spirit of priesthood. So many in this hour want to be sons and kings and priests while living in their own little world, studying the deep revelations, singing beautiful kingdom songs, but never having any practical outworking of the servant-nature in the nitty-gritty of everyday living where the needs of creation are met. May the Spirit of God make very real

to all our hearts the great truth that he who will not serve cannot be a son. “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life...” The sons come for the same purpose!

What a blessing there is in giving! Even on the natural plane it is a part of the makeup of everyone that they feel good when giving or helping others. But in many people, and even in some who aspire to be kings and priests of God, this attribute is never developed into becoming a part of their life-style, so the opposite takes place. However many wonderful people spend their lives in giving service to others. When analyzed, the servant-nature is the most prized possession of the human race. What a joy is the restaurant waitress who gives true service. To be a real nurse requires this above all else. The secretary in an office can be an inspiration to everyone through her ability to be of help and support in every situation instead of merely doing what is required of her. Then there is the teacher who is vitally concerned for every member of her class. In such as these is the servant-nature revealed even on the earthly level. Serving those about you will never of itself make you a priest of God, but **YOU CAN NEVER BE A PRIEST WITHOUT THE SERVANT-NATURE!** HE makes us kings and priests! Because we have priestly hearts we shall stretch forth our hands to heal the nations and speak forth the word that brings them life!

Many years ago amidst a great moving of the Spirit of God the revelation of sonship fell with wonder upon our ears and burst with glory within our hearts. We sat enraptured for hours, day after day, and were taught by the Spirit about the Father and His purposes and about that elect company He has called, apprehended and chosen to be His sons to rule with Him in His Kingdom and restore all things. We learned that these sons would have power unlimited — power over everything. Power over sin, power over sickness, power over the elements, power over demons, power over all the power of the enemy, and power over death. We were going to rule and reign in power, and our eyes sparkled like diamonds in the light and our hearts swelled with joy in expectation of the wonderful position and authority we would soon have in the Kingdom. We could think and talk of nothing else but the power we would have, and in our glorying we tried to usurp and demonstrate this power. We were intoxicated with illusions of grandeur as we pressed our way into the Kingdom and the exalted position of sitting on the throne with Jesus and ruling the world and the vastnesses of infinity forever.

Little did we understand in those early days that the way up is down. The carnal mind would have us believe that the way up is up. Thus we have pressed our way into ministry, pressed our way into the Kingdom, “stood on the promises,” demanded of God our “rights,” presuming even to command God to do this and that, and sought to seize the throne. It is true, elect of the Lord, that God wants to take us UP — high into the realms of God — UP to the throne — but God would have us know that the way UP is always DOWN! Do you remember what Jesus said to His disciples when they aspired to greatness in the Kingdom? **“Now an eager contention arose among them, which of them was considered and reputed to be the greatest. But Jesus said to them, The kings of the Gentiles are deified by them and exercise lordship, ruling as emperor-gods over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors and well-doers. But this is not to be so with you; and on the contrary let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and he who is the chief and leader as one who serves. For which is the greater, he who reclines at table (the master), or he who serves? Is it not he who reclines at table? BUT I AM IN YOUR MIDST AS ONE WHO SERVES” (Lk. 22:24-27)** (Amplified). The one who serves the people well as a priest is the one who will also reign well as a king. “They shall be priests . . . and they shall reign.” That is the order! Though He is calling us to be kings with authority over all, yet our inner spirit must be that of a servant, that we might freely minister, loving, touching, doing good, speaking kindness and encouragement, healing, reconciling, restoring, with mercy, compassion and love. The problem with many people is that they have never learned to live for anything other than themselves and their own — me, my wife Mary, my daughter Sue, my son John, these four, no more.

God by many and varied experiences brings preparation into our lives to teach us the attitude of a servant. Pride shows that that person has failed to grasp that rulership is rooted in God, who is Love, and not in ourselves. Jesus was the most lowly and humble of all men, and also the most powerful and authoritative. He was not a super-duper-elite-country-club Son of God. He didn’t bounce onto the platform under the lights with a flare of worldly showmanship and then disappear out the back door to escape contact with the people. **“Although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in**

appeared as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

## THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

At the last supper, in addition to taking the form of a servant and washing His disciple's feet, Jesus offered His disciples bread and wine. These are the two symbols of the Melchizedek Priesthood. "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God" (Gen. 14:18). Deep down in the heart of men there is a strong and instinctive demand for a priest, to be a mediator, to lay one hand on man, and the other on God, and going between both to bring the two together into unification. A priest or priesthood infers that there is a reason why such has been called into play. It denotes that there is an estrangement between God and His creatures and the priest ministers to bridge that gulf and bring about peace or at-one-ment. Many today proclaim that there is no estrangement, no separation between God and man that it is only a false sense of duality in man's mind, that he has only to see that he himself is God, and as soon as his true identity is recognized, he can proceed to manifest out of his divine self. If that is the truth then man did not truly fall, there was no sin in Eden, and no penalty for that sin; God did not drive man out of paradise, there was no need for Jesus to come to ransom us with His precious blood, and there certainly would be no need for the Melchizedek Priesthood! Nor would there be any purpose in any scriptural teaching of forgiveness by God, atonement with His blood, redemption through His blood, justification by the blood, sanctification by the blood, regeneration, new birth, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Jesus should have just come and told us who we really are and explained to us that none of these things can add anything to our inherent divinity, and gone back to heaven.

Webster's dictionary defines priest as: a mediatory agent between God and man. In the Old Testament the word priest is translated from the Hebrew word *cohen*, the root meaning of which is "one who stands up and draws nigh for another." The Greek word, in its root, means "to minister." Thus, a priest is one who "draws near and ministers on behalf of another." And the priest always draws nigh and ministers in two directions — drawing nigh to God on behalf of the people and drawing nigh to the people on behalf of God. The priest stands and ministers unto the Lord on behalf of the people while, on the other hand, he ministers unto the people on behalf of the Lord. The ministry of the priest is an intermediary or go-between ministry. He reaches out with one hand and takes hold of God; he reaches out with the other hand and takes hold of humanity; and he brings the two together by virtue of his priestly ministrations.

The inspired writer to the Hebrews says of our Lord Jesus the Christ, "We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:1-2). What does he mean when he says that Christ is "the minister of the sanctuary"? In every temple there was a god, an unseen god, to whom the temple was devoted. But there was a priest, the priest of that temple, who was to receive the petitions and sacrifices of the worshipper and to get the answer back from the god. So it was with Aaron in the Old Testament. It is said of him and of the priests of Israel, "they shall stand in my presence to minister," and "they shall go out and bless in my name."

The High Priest in Israel was the mediator between God and the nation. He carried into the presence of God the sins and needs of the people, and carried the people in him. He obtained from God the power to declare the remission of sin and the right of blessing the people. God drew nigh unto the people in the person of the Priest. God ministered of Himself unto the people through the blessing of the Priest. "And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people" (Lev. 9:23). From this Old Testament shadow the service of the priesthood under the New Covenant is clear, first to minister to the Lord, then to minister the life of Christ to those who sit in darkness, in the region of the shadow of death, until all are fully reconciled to God. The sons of God are called to be "a kingdom of priests," the government of God ministering unto creation!

There is both a Godward and a manward work in reconciliation, redemption, and restoration. And so our great High Priest, Jesus, stands as the minister of the sanctuary, the temple of God, "which temple ye are." Not only are we God's Royal Priesthood, WE are also the temple of the living God, a temple of living stones, an

habitation of God through the Spirit! WE are the realm of His dwelling and the sanctuary in which, and from which, Christ ministers to creation! As we minister unto the Lord, there flows back from His presence a stream of blessing to impart to men upon the earth.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the important truth that ALL PRIESTHOOD has a double outreach — ministry to both God and man. It could not be otherwise, for a priest is one who “stands between” two factions in mediation, and the moment a priest ceases to touch both God and man, unifying the two, he simply ceases to be a priest. He may be a worshipper who speaks to God, or a king who rules the people for God, or a prophet who delivers a message from God, but no man can have a one-sided ministry and be a priest. The priest must touch God with one hand, and mankind with the other, bringing the two together by his ministrations. Anything less or different than this is not priesthood at all.

It is interesting to note that the Melchizedek Priesthood is likewise a priesthood flowing in two directions. “And Melchizedek, the king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of the most high God. And he blessed him (Abraham), and said, blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God” (Gen. 14:18-20). How meaningful that Melchizedek blessed Abraham, and then goes on to also bless the most high God. God is raising up a priesthood, the body of the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, that will not only be able to bless men, but they will bless God, for they BECOME THE BLESSING OF GOD in the earth.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the High Priest of the Melchizedekian Order, to which we, the members of His body, the Royal Priesthood, are called. As we grow up into His fullness we shall experience all that the Order of Melchizedek represents. In Jesus we see the dual aspect of true priesthood for while He has beautifully offered Himself up to God as a sweet smelling savor, an acceptable sacrifice, with the incense of all His divine attributes, He also “is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). I have met many would-be sons of God across the land who pride themselves that they have been called aside to minister unto the Lord, but they have no corresponding vision to bless or save men, and wouldn’t walk across the street to minister to a needy soul. I do not hesitate to tell you, precious ones, that such have no true revelation of what is embodied in the Melchizedek Priesthood. How I rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus Christ, the High Priest of the Melchizedek Order, does indeed have a ministry manward. He is still saving all who come to God by Him! He is still touched with the feelings of our infirmities! He still maketh intercession for us! He is still writing His law upon our hearts! He still has compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way! He is still reconciling by His blood all who call upon Him! Without His Priestly Ministry I, and you, too, precious friend of mine, would still be lost without God and without hope in the world. Thank God, HE REACHED DOWN HIS HAND FOR ME! What if Jesus only ministered unto the Father?!

In light of the Melchizedek High Priesthood of Jesus we are admonished, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16). “. . . that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17). “And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:2). He ever liveth to bring such victory to His creation, none left out, none rejected, none too filthy or depraved or rebellious for Him to touch, for “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (Jn. 12:32), and “all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee” (Ps. 22:27). And there shall come a priesthood that shall truly labor together with Christ until all enemies are subdued under His feet, until death is no more, until all things are made new, until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord fills the earth as the waters cover the sea, and until HIS LIFE FILLS THE UNIVERSE, praise His name!

We have received the call from our Father to follow Christ into His new Kingdom order for this New Day. He is preparing our hearts to enter into an entirely new kind and dimension of ministry that will transcend the church age ministry as far as the heavens are above the earth. This is the ministry of the Melchizedek Priesthood! The Melchizedek Priests are the genetic reproduction of God, born of His life, revealing His heart, expressing His love, manifesting His glory. The Melchizedek Priests inherit all the wisdom, splendor and power of their Father. They are the fullness of God shed upon the earth in the ministry of the restoration of all things. They

are the source of divine blessing for all the families and peoples of the earth. Being born of God, the Melchizedek Priests do not minister according to man's carnal religious ways, ideas, traditions, methods, or means. They are motivated only internally, by the leading of the spirit of God and by the outflowing of agape-love. The Melchizedek Priesthood is the new, spiritual state of being God's sons for the new age of the Kingdom now dawning.

The Melchizedek Priests are born of this new order and character that transcends the in-part ministry of the church systems wherein we walked in our childhood in Christ. These Priests are not apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers — they are King-Priests after the order of Melchizedek, which is the order of manifested sonship. They live in the fullness of God, but come forth with bread and wine to nourish and bless and restore in the form of servants. They are the sons of men who become the sons of God. They are born of agape-love, enter the Melchizedek Priesthood, and become God's Kings and Priests unto all creation. Becoming a son is not an ego trip. It is a position of great responsibility. We pray that we will be equal to the challenge God has set before us, and that we will be enabled to fill the place He is calling us to. Amen.

J. PRESTON EBY

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