

Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing as a group in the gospel of the kingdom

INTRODUCTION & INDEX To Kingdom Growth Guides

INTRODUCTION (#000)

Kingdom Growth Guides are for assisting individuals and small groups to move toward the kingdom lifestyle. These session guides for growing as a group in the gospel of the kingdom are loosely based on the book "Overcoming Life On A Small Planet", which was written in the late 1980s and is yet a useful tool for moving toward the reality of the kingdom of God lifestyle. The Kingdom Growth Guides are updated from the Overcoming Life book and focused on the current transition from religion to relationship. This is a Journey that we all are yet seeking to complete. Using the Overcoming Life book "Overcoming Life 3" book included on the CD will provide additional information and illustrations to use with the Kingdom Growth Guides.

These guides are NOT intended to be a lesson plan for a teaching.

They are intended as a guide to be administered by the Holy Spirit according to His leading for each specific group. The material should help spawn many questions and discussions leading to the experience of the ministry of the Holy Spirit bringing life changes. There should probably always be a spoken invitation for the Holy Spirit to come and to do His work in each session. For most groups the Holy Spirit will probably lead into seasons of discussion and seasons of quietly waiting before God allowing time for the Holy Spirit to minister to and speak to individuals. And there may be seasons of formal prayer especially prayer as a group in receiving and applying the word and ministry that has come forth. Let Christ by the Holy Spirit be the only head joined to the group.

Recommended usage in small groups

Print copies of Kingdom Growth Guides. Hand out copies for the next meeting to be read and meditated before the next meeting. Come together and ask God to reveal truth and make it alive in our hearts. Ask the Holy Spirit to take full charge of the meeting and follow His leading. Take as much time as needed on each Kingdom Growth Guide. It is not necessary to spend only one meeting on each guide.

Recommended usage for individuals

Print a copy of the Kingdom Growth Guide. In your quiet time ask the Holy Spirit to reveal truth and make it alive in your heart. Consider only one guide at the time and take time to meditate and allow the Holy Spirit work in your heart.

My intention is to make myself available to answer questions or discuss situations by email. Feel free to contact me by email any time. Response will normally be within a day. Send email to: basileia@earthlink.net .

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

HEARING BY THE SPIRIT (#001)

Is it possible that after all this time we are beginning to realize that we have not been preaching the same gospel that Jesus preached?

Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. Some of the smartest men in history have diligently studied and searched the Scripture in minute detail yet could not hear the gospel of the kingdom.

Jesus preached and taught profound deep, hidden mysteries of the kingdom of God that cannot be discovered by human intellect. They are spiritual truths that can only be transmitted by the Holy Spirit and must be received in the spiritual ears of man. These spiritual truths imparted into the heart of man become keys to unlocking the supernatural reality of the kingdom of God that can enable man to live now on earth in heavenly order and power.

The wisdom from heaven that Jesus imparted to His disciples is higher and greater than the earthly wisdom of man. It cannot be discovered by the intellect of man. Only the spiritually mature who truly love God are given ears to hear the mysteries of the kingdom that Jesus preached.

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God.... 1 Cor 1:2

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1 Cor 1:25

*However, we speak wisdom among **those who are mature**, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the **wisdom of God** in a **mystery**, the **hidden wisdom** which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for **those who love Him.**' **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.** 1 Corinthians 2:6-10*

Jesus spoke in parables of figurative symbolic language that appeared, to those who did not have a spiritual ear as only simple stories. The deeper kingdom meanings have been misinterpreted by generations of theologians who could only ascribe meaning according to the limited light of the time. But for those who could hear, Jesus' figurative language imparted treasures of wisdom of God's kingdom principles and values for life.

Matthew 13: 10-17: And the disciples came to Him and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing, you will see and not perceive; for the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart and turn so that I should heal them.'

But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Jesus made it clear that some were given an ear to hear the mysteries and others were not. They couldn't hear because their hearts had grown dull. Spiritual eyes and ears must be open to hear the mysteries. Without hearing, no amount of study can unlock the mysteries of the kingdom. These things must be received by impartation through intimate relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

Are our spiritual eyes and ears opening?

Only in the past century has a portion of the religious church returned to the practice of seeking to hear God directly. For many centuries the general view was that the only way to hear God was through reading the Bible. There has been a long season of dull hearts, hard-of-hearing ears and closed eyes. The marvelous power and flow of God's Spirit, which had been birthed at Pentecost was lost to dulled hearts. Religion replaced a living relationship with God.

The backbone of the religious church for centuries has been studying about God in the Bible. Theology (the study of God) is an intellectual exercise that cannot discover the hidden mysteries of the kingdom that Jesus imparted to His disciples. The supernatural power and heavenly wisdom of God is not obtained through intellectual study. The Bible is a spiritual book that becomes alive only by the Holy Spirit. Intellectual knowledge of the Bible can only produce opinions that are determined in the minds of men. The many different opinions of men in the religious church created schools of thought that divided people into many thousands of powerless denominations.

The backbone of the relational church is intimately relating to God and hearing Him by the Spirit. The objective of assembling in groups in His presence is not to learn about God but to know Him and intimately relate to Him. The purpose of assembling in groups is to experience intimate relationship with God and with one another. Our gathering is to be a living experience with the life-giving Spirit of Christ in the Holy Spirit imparting life and wisdom. A corporate gathering is also an experience of expressing our love for God in sincere praise and worship.

The kingdom-age church is returning to the reality of hearing and following the voice of God. Jesus instructed us to hear Him through the Holy Spirit. The disciples saw and heard God and listened to Him above the words of men.

*John 10:27: "My sheep **hear** My voice, and I know them and they follow Me."*

*Acts 4: 19-20: But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to **listen** to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have **seen and heard**."*

*John 16: 12-14: "I (Jesus) still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not **speak** on His own authority, but whatever He hears **He will speak**; and **He will tell you** things to come. He will glorify Me for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."*

*John 16: 25: "These things I (Jesus) have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but **I will tell you** plainly about the Father."*

What hinders our hearing the voice of God? What prevents our receiving the revelation of the deep, hidden mysteries of the kingdom?

The first century disciples heard and walked in miracle-working power. Why can't we?

The short answer is that we do not have ears to hear. **But why?**

Here is a big clue for us.

The disciples that walked with Jesus heard but didn't really hear until after the Holy Spirit came and filled them. After Pentecost the things they previously heard began to make sense and they walked in the beginning of the kingdom of God lifestyle. Jesus did not speak or demonstrate the miracles of the kingdom of God until after the Holy Spirit came upon Him and remained.

Hearing from God involves the Holy Spirit.

Hearing the deep hidden mysteries involves having ears to hear the word of the kingdom. Many who are involved with the Holy Spirit may hear God; yet, may not have ears to hear the deeper mysteries of the word of the kingdom. We cannot by effort attain ears to hear but we can meet the qualifications and get into position to receive ears to hear. In *1 Corinthians 2:6-10* that we have already looked at, two major keys are pointed out to hearing the deep, hidden wisdom:

Spiritual maturity and loving God

Spiritual maturity has to do with the experience of walking in the Spirit. It is not necessarily a chronological matter. The process is to be filled with the Spirit and emptied of self. It involves looking to the Spirit for guidance and not to our own understanding. This will be a big change for most Christians and can be very difficult for the theologically-trained mindset. Our first tendency may be to quickly turn to our past methods of employing our minds to search our stored knowledge and the Scripture to figure out what to do and to discern truth. Asking and then waiting for God to speak to us by His Spirit will require some retraining of ourselves. Maturity comes from the exercise of walking in the Spirit's governance and not our own. But

solid food belongs to those who are of full age (mature), that is, those who by reason of use have their (spiritual) senses exercised to discern both good and evil, (Heb 5: 14).

Loving God involves laying down our lives and truly loving Him with our whole hearts.

Mark 12:29: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

Only the pure heart can truly hear the hidden mysteries. The **desire** to have a pure heart is not the same thing as having it. The intent of the heart is not enough. It is from the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks and our conversation of life emanates. If our hearts are filled with love by the Spirit we have a pure heart

Do we really love Him? Is there anything in our lives that we love as much as, or more than, we love God? What really abides in our hearts? What fills our thought life? What desires truly are deep in our hearts? What really is important to us? Where do we really get our delight? Do we really delight and abide in the Lord? Or do we just **say** we do? Do we **hope** we love God more than anything, and **hope** we delight in Him, and **hope** we abide in Him? Mature love knows that nothing else comes close to God. There is no very close second to the love for God in the spiritually mature.

The price we must pay to hear the deep, hidden mysteries of God's kingdom wisdom is a **willingness to lay aside everything** in our lives that is important to us, to figuratively sell all that we have to buy that "perfect pearl", that "field of hidden treasure". We must be willing to lose our lives to find the true life in God.

*Matthew 13:44-46: Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and **sells all that he has and buys that field.***

*Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and **sold all that he had and bought it.***

Luke 14: 33: (And Jesus said), "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

Matthew 16:24-25: Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

*Mark 10:29-30: "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold **now in this time** houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands and, with persecutions and in the age to come, eternal life.*

Let us purpose in our hearts this moment to release to God everything that is precious to us. Let Him have our wives, our husbands, our children, our ministry, our business, our hobbies, our health, our reputation, our need for acceptance of men,

our religious convictions, our pet doctrines, all traditions, our secret desires, our very lives, anything in which we delight. Can we trust Him with these things? If we truly believe that He loves us and what He will do is best for us, we can release all to Him without reservation, to do with as He pleases.

If you are **willing**, or if you are **willing to be made willing** to release all that is in your hand, head, and heart, so that you may hear mysteries of the kingdom, pray the following prayer from your heart. Fill in the blank with those special things you need to release. It is important for you to sign and date the prayer agreement. Entering into and signing the prayer agreement serves as a spiritual stake of commitment set in time. The signer is not seeking to hear a word from the author or even just to receive revelation from this work, but is specifically seeking to hear deep mysteries from God that will greatly impact and empower his or her life.

Only as God's ultimate wisdom permeates our hearts can we know real peace and fulfillment. And only as we give our all to God - all we have, all we are, and all we care about, will we be in position to be given **ears to hear** the deep hidden mysteries of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 13:9: He who has ears to hear let him hear!

PRAYER AGREEMENT

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I repent and turn from all that is in my heart before You.

Now by an act of my will, I release to You all that is precious in my life. I specifically release to you my business, my family, my ambitions, my possessions, my _____, _____, _____, and my _____.

God, I am one who truly loves You. Jesus, You are my Lord. I esteem You above all else. Nothing or no one else is my Lord.

In the name of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I bind all the works of darkness, blindness, deception, delusion, man's traditions, and religion that are affecting my life. I loose the Spirit of revelation in my heart.

Father, in the name of Jesus, I choose to open my spirit to receive that which was previously hidden, to receive Your wisdom. Grant to me the mind of Christ. Holy Spirit come in power, speak into my heart hidden mysteries of the wisdom of God. Fill my heart with the light and life of God. Give me ears to hear in my heart. In Jesus' name, Amen

Prayed on this date _____

Signed _____

For questions or assistance contact Ron McGatlin basileia@earthlink.net

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REVELATION LIGHT (#002)

*1 John 1:5-6: God is **light** and in Him is **no darkness** at all.*

*Mark 4:22: "For there is nothing hidden which will not be **revealed**, nor anything been kept secret but that it should come to **light**."*

God desires to reveal Himself to purified hearts imparting His attributes of love, wisdom, understanding, and peace. Man by his intellect cannot receive spiritual light. Only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit does the Bible become alive and speak of hidden secrets. As the Holy Spirit reveals truth it becomes the light of God.

The written word was spoken by the Holy Spirit to man before it was written. It was light and life when spoken by God. It becomes light and life again when revealed to the reader by the Holy Spirit. There is no life in the written word without the revelation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is essential for hearing from God.

Jesus is the word that was made flesh (John 1:14). Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). The Holy Spirit reveals and imparts Jesus into His people. Our relationship with Jesus and the Father is by the Holy Spirit.

Parables and symbolic or figurative language

God often uses language of natural things to communicate spiritual matters. Parables and symbolic or figurative language are common throughout the Bible. Jesus often taught unseen spiritual things by parable using visible natural things such as grain fields, vines, branches, mustard seeds, pearls, soil, and many other natural things. He told stories of natural people doing natural things all with deeper hidden spiritual meaning. These hidden truths must be revealed by the Holy Spirit to become spiritual light to the hearer.

God has also recorded spiritual truths in His natural creation. Creation may be thought of as an unwritten word of God, a natural expression of spiritual God. The handiwork of the Creator speaks of the One Who created it. **God spoke all creation into existence.** The spoken words of God carry the power to create and change. Nothing can resist the spoken word of God.

*Romans 1:19-20 KJV: Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed unto them. For the **invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made...***

*Hebrews 11:3: By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the **things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.***

Man's intellectual understanding is limited. It always sees only a portion and mostly only the surface. The fullness and the depth of truth is only perceived by the spirit. Often the partial sight of intellectual discernment is erroneously thought to be the whole of the matter. Man seeing only a part and thinking it to be the whole is like seeing only in black and white. Everything is either right or wrong according to man's limited view.

Religion based largely on man's intellectual discernment, generally has a black or white, right or wrong view. Anything in between the black or white is despised as grey. In the Spirit the full color of the many aspects of whole truth can be perceived. Spiritual revelation imparts the depth of the many interlocking parts of the whole that cannot be seen by man's intellect. Spiritual things are only perceived in the spirit of man by the Holy Spirit.

With God it is not black or white; it is all perfectly clear like bright sunlight.

We can learn about spiritual light of God by comparing it to natural sunlight. Sunlight as we see it is neither red, blue or yellow; it is perfectly clear. Yet it contains all of the colors of the rainbow. If that same clear whole light is broken down and separated through a prism it becomes red, blue, yellow, and every shade in between.

Like the light of the sun, the whole clear light of God can be divided into all the colors of the rainbow. Yet when the whole light is together, it is perfectly clear light.

"Black" and "white" are terms that can be compared to religious doctrines created by men intellectually approaching and interpreting the Bible. "Crystal clear" and "beautiful colors" are terms that can be compared to the spiritual revelation of God. Crystal clear relates to the whole revelation. Beautiful colors relate to the separated individual segments we may have received.

Have you ever wondered how so many men of God with apparent light from Him could have had so many different and seemingly opposing views? Let's begin to answer that question with another question. Does anyone have all the light of God? Has God revealed all the light to any one person? He probably hasn't. Only Jesus has all the light. Our revelation is partial and therefore becomes as a color segment in the rainbow of God's whole clear light. We personally may be able to see one color such as red, blue, or yellow; but we have not received by revelation the clear whole light of God.

We've probably all seen a color wheel with the pie-shaped sections of the primary colors of red, yellow, and blue, with all the blended shades between the primary colors. We can imagine that spiritual light from God, when broken down to its different parts, is like these pie-shaped sections of natural color. If we individually do not have all the light, but we do have some light, then we must have only a part. The portion that has been revealed to us by the Spirit may be a pie-shaped piece of red. But if God has not revealed the blue or yellow part to us, then we have a big empty space in our color wheel of spiritual understanding.

Many severe problems have developed in the religious church as we began to fill in the empty spaces in our color wheel of spiritual understanding apart from the revelation of God. God had not revealed it to us and yet we needed answers to needs in that area. In an attempt to fill in the missing colors of understanding, theologians

went to the Bible and sought by intellectual discernment to fill in the missing parts. But the word of God cannot be received and understood by the intellect of man. Therefore, while we searched for light, we found darkness. We began to build religious doctrines of black and white from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We became a mixture of truth from God (our revealed pie-shaped, color part) and darkness (the other parts filled in with intellectual discernment).

Differences turn into denominations as each of us, from our own perspective of revealed color (red, for example) look at our brother's different color (blue or yellow) and decide he must be deceived. **We must recognize that we do not have all the light and must receive our brother's part to more completely fill out our circle of color.**

Intellectual discernment of the Bible is darkness and will never match up with spiritual revelation of the word from God. We must receive our brothers who have been given that part of the true, revealed color to complete the color circle. **We must have spiritual discernment.** If by the Spirit, we can discern truth, we need not fear darkness. We can receive our brother and his area of light without fearing that his darkness will contaminate our areas of light. Light overcomes darkness.

Religion divided us into isolated denominations each with a dangerous mixture of light and darkness.

Relationship is bringing us into an increasingly harmonious body of increasing light and decreasing darkness.

Religious systems were built from someone's partial area (color) of light with the rest of the color circle filled with intellectual discernment (darkness) rather than the light (color) revealed to others. We can only come to the whole clear light of God by spiritually discerning and receiving the additional colors of revelation from our brothers – while they, at the same time, fill in their areas of darkness with our color. Harmony with all segments of our brothers is necessary to bring together the whole light and dispel our darkness.

*1 John 2:8-11: "Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the **darkness** is passing away, and the true **light** is already shining. He who **says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness** until now. He who **loves his brother abides in the light**, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the **darkness has blinded his eyes.**"*

If we do not receive our brothers and their area of revelation, we may say we are in the light but we will remain in darkness. We will hold to our religious darkness, despise our brother's light and continue to be a stumbling block to others.

Different emphases for different spiritual works

Religious church sought to make every person believe the same and function as carbon copies of the leaders. Relational church seeks to bring the many different parts into harmony functioning together as one Body under one Head. Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit is the only Head of the church.

Uniqueness is of God and is a vital part of the living Body of Christ. The life of the natural body is in the blood. Each member of a natural body partakes from the lifeblood and uses its nutrients to form very different parts to do different works. The toe is different from the eye because they each have different works to do.

Individuals within a small group will have different callings or emphases that will add to the fullness of that particular group. One person may bring an emphasis on healing, another on caring for the needy, another on worship, prayer, reaching the lost or whatever.

In addition to the individual distinctions, each small group may also have a somewhat different general emphasis from other small groups. The differences will lead to different outreaches in the community.

Each person or each small group will partake of the same Holy Spirit and form different emphases of ministry. As an example, one prophetic ministry may have a clear message of judgment for the rebellious and ungodly, while another may have a clear message of restoration and revival leading toward the kingdom of God on earth. Both are correct. They are different colors of the same light of God. They fit together harmoniously when each is delivered in the right place at the right time.

Only Jesus through the Holy Spirit of God can lead all the parts to harmoniously function together to do the whole work of God. Religion tries to make everyone the same. Relationship brings the different parts into harmony functioning in their individual places all under the headship of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Balance is achieved in the overall Body by many different parts in harmonious relationship. Since individuals will have a specific emphasis, alone one will not achieve perfect balance. There are various works but they all work together to accomplish the purposes of God. Worship may have many parts but only one Object. The harmony of the many works under one Head with one focus is God's plan for releasing the glory of God.

The glory of God will fill His kingdom Church even greater than He filled Solomon's temple.

*2 Chronicles 5: 11-13: "And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place **(for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions)**, and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with **trumpets**—indeed it came to pass, **when the trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound** to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: 'For He is good, for His mercy endures forever,' that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God."*

The Church is to become the purified, cleansed and holy Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem of God on earth. As the Bride Church is healed and purified, she is able to come together bringing all colors of the rainbow of revelation back together and her light becomes crystal clear. The glory of God is manifested in her and God's kingdom

rules on earth (*Rev. 21: 2, 9-11*).

We each have a part in the kingdom of God. As our hearts are purified we can reflect the bright color of revelation God gives to us. We are then well equipped to bring forth our part and to be blended with the others forming the whole clear light of the Bride of Christ.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

Lots of Love,

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
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Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

MY PART IN THE KINGDOM (#003)

In the kingdom of God, if we are a part, we have a part. There are many parts with various functions that all fit together to form the whole. As believers, if we truly know and love God and walk in the Spirit we will naturally flow into our part and place with little thought about a label or mental effort in defining our part. Jesus gave us a few all-inclusive foundational instructions that bring our lives to flow naturally into place. He gave two great commandments that encompass all the law and the prophets.

Mat 22:37-40: Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself, 'On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'

Jesus said to love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself.

Knowing we were not able to accomplish this on our own **He further instructed us to abide in Him and allow Him to abide in us.** This is a spiritual reality carried out by the Holy Spirit. **The provision of being baptized in the Holy Spirit and then walking in the Spirit** supplies the reality of loving God and our neighbor which will cause us to know and do naturally the desires of God. Thus we walk into our part and place in the kingdom.

John 15:4-5: 'Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.'

Acts 1:8: 'But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;'

Gal 5:25: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

How do we appropriate this into a practical reality in our lives?

Jesus gave us clear instruction for this. He said to pray and to seek. This is a directive to focus our lives. **He said pray for the kingdom of God to come on earth as it is in heaven and He told us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.**

Mat 7:7: 'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.'

*Mat 6:9-10: 'In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**'*

*Mat 6:33: '**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**'*

None of these instructions are optional. None can be left out. If you don't know what they mean, you must find out. If you aren't sure you believe in some of them call upon God and search the Word until you are. We cannot progress into the reality of the kingdom of God until we can obey these directives and commands from our Lord.

Having received this word, you will now make a decision to commit to praying and seeking until these directives are reality in your life or you will decide to let it slide. If you let it slide, it will probably be because you think you already have it or that for some reason you don't really need it. If you make the commitment to become obedient to these directives then the coming sessions of this material can help guide you into the reality of the promised kingdom lifestyle.

Father, in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I commit to abiding in Jesus and ask that Jesus abide in me. I commit, Father, to seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit and to seek to continuously walk in the Spirit. I pray, Father, for your kingdom to come and Your will to be done on earth as it is in heaven and I focus my life to seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness before all else. God, from this moment on I am a seeker of You and Your kingdom. Jesus, empower me with Your life by the Holy Spirit to love God with my whole heart and to love my neighbor as myself. Amen

Date _____ Signed _____

Kings and priests to God

Religion has taught us that we should fit into one of its defined molds of service and that it is important to know and label our part. Religion makes many distinctions, definitions, and divisions. The religious church divided the entire Body into two major categories, one labeled "clergy" and one labeled "laity". The clergy referred to "full time ministers" who generally performed all the spiritual duties of the church. Everyone else was referred to as laity. This concept was an erroneous carryover from the old-covenant Jewish religion into the new covenant church. The old covenant provided for a separate class of men who were the priests and performed all the temple duties including the animal sacrifices for all the people.

In the new covenant church there is not to be only one who represents Christ as His vicar on earth, but in fact, every believer is to be His representative. We are a Kingdom of kings and priests. We relate directly to the King of kings and Lord of lords. We pray directly to Him. We hear His voice spoken directly to us and are each His divinely appointed agents. We are all full time ministers serving God and serving His people in every activity in which we are engaged. God's kingdom is much bigger than church work. Every aspect of life is to be the domain of God and all we do is to be serving Him, serving His people and governing His earth.

*Rev 1:5-6:Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us **kings and priests** to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

What is my work as king and priest and how will I specifically know?

What is **your** work in the kingdom? How can you know for sure? Simple. **What is the desire of your purified heart?** Psalm 37 says, *"Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."* John 15 says, *"Abide in Him and you shall ask **what you will** and He will give it to you."* **The key is in abiding and delighting in Him and following the desire He puts in your pure heart.**

If we need or desire to get our delights from any source other than God, our hearts' desires will be adulterated. We will have difficulty in knowing our part. Some search all their lives trying to find themselves. Who am I? What is my purpose? All the while they are delighting in many things other than the Lord.

Needy people are not free.

Only those individuals with healed hearts can be free from all need to delight themselves in something other than God. If we have unhealed pain stored in our hearts, we will always need something to make us feel better. As long as we have that need, our desires will be to fulfill it. We will get our delight in filling the needs of our hearts with money, power, position, fame, romance, sex, or whatever makes us feel better. Seeking these things will never produce the good fruit God intended. After being healed by fully appropriating the ministry of Jesus, we can choose to delight ourselves in the Lord, and our desire will be to bear the fruit God intended. **We need only to follow our God-given desires, and we will walk in the middle of His plan.** We each will know who we are and what our purpose is. We will simply carry out our heart's desire.

We are then free to do the will of God. We are no longer constrained to fulfill any needs of our hearts. **Freedom is the ability to live righteously in Christ Jesus by following the desire He has put into our hearts.** The bondage of trying to follow a religious order or set of rules is gone. Trying to be like someone else and do what they do, like they do it, is in the forgotten past.

God has provided five special servant-gifts to edify (grow up) His people.

The Bible refers to these as apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. They are five different types of gifted people to mentor the Body. They are all servants. They each provide for God's people, but each in a distinctly different way. Each must think differently than the others. Each must have different abilities and different revealed understandings of the Word. The shepherd will always understand the Word as it relates to his service. The evangelist and the shepherd may sit in the same gathering, hearing the same Word from the same apostle, yet each will receive the part that feeds his calling.

*Ephesians 4:11-13: And He Himself gave some to be **apostles**, some **prophets**, some **evangelists**, and some **shepherds**, and **teachers**, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

The **apostle** tends to see the overall larger picture. He sees it first in the spiritual and then seeks to bring it forth into the natural realm. He is like a pioneer. Apostles were a major part of the original **formation** of the church. In this day the apostles have been restored for the **re - formation** of the church to its original design and intent. In this re - formation major foundational and structural changes are required that call for the gifts and strengths of apostles.

The **prophet** is primarily an ear and a voice to people who are dull of hearing and do not hear the voice of God clearly. Prophets were very prevalent and most important in the old covenant when the Holy Spirit did not reside in God's people; therefore, they had no inner voice of God. In this day much of the church is yet dull of spiritual hearing and seeing. For many reasons they do not have intimacy with God through the indwelling Holy Spirit and need prophets to hear God for them and speak direction to them.

The **evangelist** is a seed sower who loves to plant the word of Jesus in the heart soil of those who have never received it. In the recent past the evangelist has preached the portion of the gospel dealing with being "born again" or spiritual new birth. Evangelists are now beginning to, and will in the future even more, preach the fuller gospel of the kingdom that Jesus preached with the same powerful works that Jesus did. The gospel of the kingdom includes the gospel of being born spiritually that we have preached before but also includes the good news of growing up in Christ to rule and reign in this life with Him as kings and priests.

The **shepherd** is the mentor who sees to the growth and development of the immature as they grow into their gifts and places of service. In the religious church the shepherd was called "pastor" and served as a vicar of God. He was a person who vicariously represented Christ to the people all of their lives. This allowed little or no opportunity for the believers to mature into the priests and kings as God intended. In the relational church Christ and the mature people relate directly and not through a vicar. The sheep grow up to be shepherds or do other works as mature sons in the kingdom.

The **teacher** is the one who brings spiritually anointed definition to the fine points of spiritual reality. He is gifted to take natural illustrations and teach spiritual truths to the immature. In the religious church the teacher often brought dry "church doctrine" of many words and little real spiritual life. In the relational church the teacher is a light bearer bringing spiritual enlightenment in detailed pieces of real spiritual life.

These **gifts** function in the church, in business, and in all walks of life. The apostle in business may be thought of as one who starts businesses from nothing and serves as C.E.O. In business a prophet might be a troubleshooter. A pastor might be a personnel manager. An evangelist might be a traveling salesman. A teacher might be a technical instructor.

There are many other gifts with each having its unique function in God's overall scheme. All gifts and parts are needed. And they all need to be in their proper places doing their particular jobs. One of the greatest hindrances to each part doing its job is the lack of understanding and acceptance of the role God has given to each one of them. Often our temptation has been to try to mold everyone into whatever we are.

We don't need for everyone to be what **we** are. We need to help others to become what God has designed **them** to be. We must resist trying to form people in our image and stop rejecting people because they are different. We must stop thinking that we are more important than others. We must learn to submit to the servant that God has sent in the area of spiritual grace God has gifted that servant in. Our ideas that we are superior because we have some status in the church or in a business can be a serious hindrance to our submitting to the one God has sent for a specific job. Pride in who we are and in what a great position we occupy is deadly. **There are no big-shots in the kingdom of God.** When God sends someone with godly ability in a specific area, we need to submit to them in that area and not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.

The need to be a big-shot comes from "unhealedness" in our hearts. If we are healed by the ministry of Jesus, we feel abundance in our lives and don't need to be bigger than our brother. We are free to allow the love of Jesus to flow to everyone. **Love is the key that allows us to receive one another, to hear and see Jesus in our brothers and to submit to the Jesus in them.** Also by love, we do not fear boldly stepping into the position of responsibility that He has called us to fulfill. **In love, we serve one another.**

Love is the greatest principle or law of the kingdom of God. God is love. Love causes the Body of Christ to fit together and to "flow life" from joint to joint. Love produces true unity, and unity leads to production and prosperity of life. Love is the power of the kingdom. It is the single greatest motivational force in the world.

"Unlove" separates and starves the members of the Body. It creates disunity which leads to a lack of production and increased poverty. Unlove flows death from joint to joint. Unlove is simply the lack of love. All sin flows from unlove. Love fulfills the law; unlove breaks the law. Every human conflict has its roots in unlove. Without unlove, there would be no church splits, no divorces, no wars, no crime, no bitterness, no angry hostility, no depression, no fear, no pride, no rebellion, no evil lust, and no need for hell.

Our first and most important "part" in the kingdom is that of loving.

Regardless of what our individual functions are, we must be connected by love. Spiritual gifts, ministry, and good deeds are useless without the God-kind of unconditional love.

1 Corinthians 13: 1-3: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

REVELATION OF KINGDOM (#004)

It is not often that I recount personal experiences in these sessions. I believe this personal account is the best way to communicate some universal realities of receiving the revelation of the kingdom.

The Living Word

For many years I read and studied the Bible. It was the focal point of my life, my guide and source of direction. The living Word continued to amaze me day by day as old familiar passages continued to yield new light and meaning. To some degree I was accustomed to this wonderful phenomenon.

From time to time, as fresh revelation shed new light on the Word, it seemed my whole Bible became new. When I was born again, the Bible suddenly spoke clearly of salvation by grace through faith in the cross of Jesus Christ. Later, when a deeper experience of Holy Spirit baptism occurred in my life, passages suddenly became alive to me that I had some way not even noticed before. Many scriptures about healing, miracles, powers of darkness, casting out demons, healing the heart and the baptism of the Spirit "appeared" in my Bible.

These and other experiences, as great as they were, had not fully prepared me for what happened to me in January of 1986. I had left the ministry where I had been serving and had no other occupation at the time. My days were spent in a nice, quiet travel trailer beside the house praying and studying the Word. I had begun again to read the book of Matthew. This time one word seemed to be on almost every page and again and again came from the lips of Jesus. He seemed to preface many of His teachings with this word. I knew I had read it hundreds of times, but it had never really "been there" before. It had always just seemed to flow "under" or "behind" what was being said without adding meaning to the passage.

Because this word had suddenly "appeared," and because I knew little or nothing about it, I became curious. So, I prayed a simple prayer. The answer to that prayer changed my entire life forever. Suddenly, in a moment of time, it seemed everything I had ever known was shaken and began to take on a whole new light, a new meaning. Mysteries began to clear up about things I had wondered about for years. Pieces began to fit together that I could never get to fit before. **A deep satisfaction began to come into my heart as things began to become real and make practical sense for the present** instead of religious ideas and doctrinal systems from the past or for the future.

I had simply prayed, **"God, what does this word "kingdom" mean? What is the kingdom of God - kingdom of Heaven - why did Jesus talk about it so much?** That simple phrase, "kingdom of God," that did not even appear to be there before, has become the focal point of my life as it was with Jesus. In the days that followed this prayer, the heavens were opened to me. God was closer to me than ever before. Every question I asked was instantly answered with staggering impact and clarity. I was amazed again and

again and often overwhelmed, my mind reeling as God poured simple yet profound revelation of His kingdom into my heart. I became very careful about the questions I asked.

Revelation from God often will not match up with our previous understandings.

One of my reactions to all of this was that of thinking that people would surely come against me because many of the things God was revealing to me were different from the way my church had taught them. I had never before heard a word of the kingdom message like God was giving to me. I was afraid I would be the only person with this radical message. Then, **God told me He was giving this message to certain men around the world and that it would eventually just seem to come up from everywhere like the grass in a field.** In the years that followed, He allowed me to receive tapes from men in various parts of the world who had received the same message.

Now, in the mid-2000s, this has come to pass just as He said it would - like grass in a field seemingly coming up everywhere at once. Not as a few tall trees, but close to the ground, all at the same level. The seeds of the gospel of the kingdom are sprouted and growing forth into the world. Today there are many men of God proclaiming the message of the kingdom and a great shift has begun.

This is the season for rediscovering the gospel of the kingdom of God. The history of man has completed six millennia and has begun the seventh millennium since Adam. Since Jesus, two millennia have been completed and the third has begun.

*Matthew 24: 14: "And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in all the world to all nations, and then the end will come."* The word "end" in this verse is the Greek word "telos," which means a definite point or goal.

A new wineskin is required to hold the revelation of the kingdom.

When Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom two millennia ago, many religious people had a hard time receiving it. The message He preached didn't fit their system of theology. Jesus warned them not to try to fit the new revelation into an old system.

Luke 5: 36-39: Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one having drunk old wine immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'"

The revelation of the kingdom cannot be patched into the old garment; nor can it be contained in old containers. Receiving the gospel of the kingdom makes all things new, more alive, more real and very satisfying to the soul.

To me our wineskin is like a filing system. We each have within us a spiritual data filing system, a system of mental file folders with headings and sub-headings. As an example, some of our headings might be something like: salvation, the cross, resurrection, Pentecost, Holy Spirit, baptism, healing, deliverance, second coming, and many more. Each piece of new data, when received, is analyzed, compared to the data in the system, and then filed under the proper heading.

The new wine of the gospel of the kingdom will not fit our old filing system. We don't have a folder for it. And the revelation of the kingdom will not fit under any of our

headings. We cannot simply make a new folder and stick it in somewhere. It will not fit under any other heading. **The gospel of the kingdom becomes the system into which all other revelation and truth of God regarding man and earth will fit.** The kingdom that Jesus preached is the major heading under which all other God-given understanding about God's relationship to man and the world can be filed. We must have a new wineskin. If we try to patch in the gospel of the kingdom, we will become frustrated.

Receiving or becoming a new wineskin or a new garment is the process of laying down all our previously held religious convictions at God's altar and allowing Him to reform and return to us those He desires for us to keep. The others are just left there and will be replaced with fresh new spiritual reality. Our file system must be redone under the major heading of "The Kingdom of God".

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

The phrases "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" mean exactly the same thing and are used interchangeably in Scripture. People have different thoughts about the kingdom of God. Some see it as a generic term for anything relating to God. Much the same as one might say "the animal kingdom" when referring to everything about animals. Others relate kingdom to heaven someday. Some think of the kingdom negatively as a human attempt to impose religious rule over other people. Others think of it as a means for men to gain personal wealth and self-gratification. Some others think of cults or false extremist sects when they hear the words "kingdom of God." The enemy desires that doubts and confusion would enter our minds when we hear the word "kingdom," because he greatly fears the kingdom of God coming forth in God's people. The enemy knows that, when the kingdom matures in God's people his inordinate rule on earth is completely over.

So what was the kingdom Jesus taught so much about? The Greek word "basileia" is translated "kingdom" in English. Jesus spoke of the kingdom (basileia) over one hundred times in the Gospels.

Ern Baxter, one of the wonderful men of God who began to hear the gospel of the kingdom in the 1980s, said he had trouble with the word "kingdom." He asked God for another word to replace kingdom and heard the word, "government." A kingdom is a government ruled by a sovereign. Perhaps it will help us to think of the kingdom of God as "the government of God."

Most of Jesus' teachings were aimed at explaining the kingdom (government) of God, how it works and how to enter it. The thread or general theme of the kingdom of God runs through all the teachings of Jesus and much of the rest of the Bible. But the Holy Spirit, speaking through Paul in Romans 14: 17, gives us perhaps the most clear, concise, spiritual definition of the kingdom of God.

*Romans 14-17: ... for the **kingdom of God** is not food and drink, but **righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.***

The word translated "kingdom" in the New Testament is the Greek word "basileia" which comes from the root word "basis". "Basileia" means "foundation of power, realm, rule, or royalty." "Basis" means to walk, to pace, or foot.

KING / DOM

"King" means "ruler or sovereign." "Dom" is the root from which we get words like

“dominion, dominant, domain and dome.” Thus, the kingdom of God means the **“sovereign ruler/dominion walk of God, the ruler/dom of God.**

The kingdom of God is a realm or walk. It is a lifestyle, sovereignly ruled by the basic foundational power of God through which God’s ruler/dominion is established on earth.

The kingdom walk or lifestyle is produced by the appearing or manifesting of Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit within God’s people.

When the character and nature of Christ is developed in the hearts of God’s people, they become the purified Bride of Christ. God’s love flowing in and through His bride produces obedience and righteousness prevails. Righteousness always leads to peace and joy. The bride or wife of Christ carries out her part as pictured in Proverbs 31:10-31, and the ruler/dominion of God is functioning in the world.

The secrets of how to rule our planet God’s way are locked up in the revelation and understanding of the kingdom of God. They are extremely potent and can produce the overcoming of any negative force in the world. There is nothing impossible to those who possess the reality of the practical working of God’s government on Planet Earth. This powerful possession of some of the secrets could bring quick self-destruction in the hands of impure men who would seek to use it to establish their own kingdom. That is why God’s kingdom ways will be revealed only to the purified heart.

The kingdom of God begins with the purification of the motives of our hearts.

Only a pure heart can hear the secrets of God’s kingdom. This means a heart free from all other allegiances, a heart healed of all the enemy’s wounds, a heart that not only intends to serve God and no other but also has the freedom to actually do it. It is a heart that has no needs or desires apart from God. That is why Jesus saves the lost, heals the brokenhearted, and proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. God will give us ears to hear His kingdom truth to the level that we are purified.

My personal purification journey

For about two years before I began to hear the word of the “kingdom,” the Lord dealt with me extensively in what I call the personal ministry of Jesus. He led me to people who had gifts and anointing to assist in appropriating the ministry of Jesus to heal my broken heart and to bring about my deliverance.

For many years I had sought to serve the Lord with great zealousness and commitment. Yet, areas of serious lack and defeat were in my own life. The best I could do with all the help I could get was not enough. The zealous application of all the biblical doctrines I knew could not keep me on track and bring me through. The firm directives to adhere more firmly to doctrine by my well-meaning brothers in Christ only worsened my condition.

It took a bold, fresh revelation and work from God to loose my bonds and set me on a road to restoration and greater heights than I had ever known before. For me it also required my life to be turned upside-down and the severance of all things that were precious to me - all the bad things, all the good things and all the people from which I drew life. He wants to become our only source of life.

When the Lord revealed “kingdom” to me and commissioned me to plant the seeds of the

kingdom in His people, it seemed He was directing me in two directions at once. One was the kingdom lifestyle, and the other was personal ministry. He has since shown me they are not at all different directions. **The personal ministry of Jesus is the cleansing process that we must go through before we can walk into the purified Bride of Christ, kingdom of God lifestyle.** Personal ministry and kingdom revelation are not separate directions, but are aligned in one direction toward the kingdom of God lifestyle.

The goal of personal ministry is to eliminate, remove, or heal all hindrances to the manifesting or appearing of the life of Jesus in the person.

In Luke 4:18 Jesus said, *"He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed"*

Note: Approximately the first one-third, parts one through three, of these guides will deal with seeing the goal of kingdom. The second third will deal with the cleansing process of removing all hindrances. The last third will deal with the deeper ministries and principles of living the kingdom of God lifestyle.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF KINGDOM (#005)

The kingdom of God was established on earth in Adam. From the ruling city of the Garden of Eden, Adam had dominion on the earth and lived in God's presence in intimate fellowship with Him. God breathed His **life giving Spirit** into Adam.

Gen 1:26: Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Gen 2:7: And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Adam lost dominion rights to Satan; the kingdom of God was taken captive, and the kingdom of darkness was loosed on earth. Adam also lost intimate fellowship with God.

The kingdom of God remained in captivity until Jesus came to redeem it. Christ Jesus came to earth to recapture the kingdom, destroy the kingdom of Satan, and re-establish the **kingdom of God from heaven, on earth** (*Matthew 6:10*).

God is and always has been in complete authority over all things. He made man in His image and chose to delegate the rule of earth to mankind. Man was made God's agent on earth to faithfully carry out the will of God on earth. God chose to limit Himself to work with what man would do on earth. He truly gave dominion and rule to man. Man is free to make right or wrong decisions and will live or die by them. Satan and his powers of darkness were present in the Garden of Eden, but were totally powerless until man chose to disobey God and thereby released the power of Satan.

Potentially, the devil was completely defeated and the kingdom, including mankind, was completely redeemed at the cross. In actual experience, Christ Jesus is now establishing in the natural what is already established in the spiritual. Man has not been removed as ruler of the planet. Jesus became a **man** to redeem the kingdom. After the cross and resurrection, He "*became a **life-giving Spirit***" to now indwell believers, empowering men to live in obedience and thereby establish His kingdom in the natural realm on earth (*1 Corinthians 15:45*) (*2Corinthians 3:17*).

Now on planet earth, including up to the second heaven around earth, the two kingdoms are operating in conflict (*2 Corinthians 12:2*, *1 Thessalonians 2:18*, *Daniel 10:13*). They are vying for control as each attempts to rule the earth. The kingdom of light and truth (the kingdom of God) and the kingdom of darkness and lies (the kingdom of Satan) both seek to sway the minds of men. Only mankind has the

ability to decide which kingdom will be released to rule and which will not.

One of the greatest lies the kingdom of darkness has perpetrated is that the kingdom of God is not available on earth today. Satan's first attempt is to try to make us believe there is no God or He isn't involved with us today. If that doesn't work he will try to convince us that God's kingdom is for another time, not today, or for another place, not earth. Satan would have us believe that the teachings and promises of God throughout the Bible describing His glorious kingdom life are for heaven in the future or maybe for earth someday, but surely not for you and me, here and now. A university professor in Texas was quoted as saying, "Everything in the Bible is in the nebulous past or possible nebulous future."

*Matthew 6:10: "Your **kingdom come**, your will be done **on earth as it is in heaven**. Give us this day our daily bread."*

Just as Jesus taught us to pray daily for our daily bread, He taught us to pray daily for the kingdom of God to come on earth. Our daily bread is not just for the future sometime, but is a very present day issue. Neither is the kingdom (ruler/dominion) of God just for the future, but is indeed a very present day issue.

The kingdom of God that Jesus taught about is the rulership of God on earth now. It is available to us now. Its righteousness, peace, joy, abundance and presence of God are available to us now. The kingdom of God lifestyle is for us today and many are missing it. That's why Jesus preached, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven (the ruler/dominion of God, from heaven) is at hand."

Why repent? Repent because the kingdom lifestyle is here now for us and we're missing it. We've preached "repent" for many reasons: so you won't go to hell, so you can go to heaven, and others. All of these reasons are good; but, again, they may seem a bit distant to the person who is suffering in this life now. The "at hand" kingdom promises life now as well as later.

*Matthew 4:17: From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**."*

*Mark 1:14-15: Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the **gospel of the kingdom of God**, and saying, "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand**. Repent, and believe in the gospel."*

*Matthew 4:23-24: Now Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, preaching **the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing all kinds of disease among the people.they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.*

Jesus taught and preached the gospel (good news) of the kingdom of God and demonstrated the authority of God's kingdom over the enemy kingdom of Satan by casting out demon spirits, destroying their work, and healing the people.

Matthew 12:28: "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you."

*Matthew 9:35: And Jesus went about **all the cities and villages, teaching** in their*

*synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

Multitudes began to come as they saw the authority of the kingdom of light overcome the kingdom of darkness. Jesus instructed and sent out the 12 disciples to ***“preach the gospel of the kingdom is at hand, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons...”*** (Matt. 10: 7-8).

When Jesus sent out the 70 other disciples, they were instructed to heal the sick and say to them, ***“The kingdom of God has come near to you.”*** But for those who were aligned with the opposing kingdom and would not receive them, they were to wipe off the dust of their feet against that city and say, ***“Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near to you...”*** (Luke 10: 9-11).

Immediately prior to Jesus' ascending to the right hand of God, He spoke these words of instructions to His disciples, ***“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature...”*** (Mark 16: 15).

He went on to include casting out demons and healing the sick. What gospel was he talking about? Yes, He meant for them to **preach the gospel of the kingdom.**

Hearing the gospel (good news) of the **now** kingdom of God life, with all its qualities and benefits, and realizing we are missing it, is a greater reason for true repentance. This real repentance turns us toward salvation. Those who hear the gospel of the kingdom and believe will repent and be saved, ***“but he who does not believe will be condemned”*** (Mark 16: 16). **When we see the goal, the abundant, overcoming kingdom-potential life of peace and joy, we will turn toward the light and persevere until we overcome.** As the Spirit of Christ lives in us, we by His power overcome the enemy kingdom in our personal lives and eventually overcome the enemy's hold on the world. In a practical, real sense, we destroy the works of darkness and establish the works of the kingdom of light.

The devil and all the powers of darkness fear the gospel of the kingdom more than any doctrine or teaching. The “dreaded” gospel of the kingdom will end their reign of darkness on the earth. As people realize the wonderful potential of Jesus Christ living in them to destroy evil and bring forth true righteousness with all its joy and peace, they will persevere and overcome. **The powers of darkness will do all they possibly can to prevent, delay, and pervert the teaching of the gospel of the kingdom.**

Some of the enemy's tactics will include sending out a smoke screen of false teachings that look and sound much like the true message. These deceptive teachings will always have enough error in them to discredit the teaching when the error is discovered. This sets the stage for the disciple to also reject the truth when it comes to him, because it looks or sounds much like the false doctrine. The disciple must, from a pure heart by the Holy Spirit, spiritually discern the truth to determine the difference.

Another tactic of the enemy is to discredit the teacher and his motives. The adversary will preach and teach a perversion of the kingdom message. The perversion will make it appear that the message is a means for men to take dominion in order to get what they desire and to control from their own fleshly hearts.

The enemy will set up extensive snares to find grounds for discrediting accusations against the kingdom teacher. Insignificant incidents, that would normally be dealt with and quickly forgotten, will be blown out of proportion and used to slander kingdom men. When the enemy can find nothing, he will invent something from nothing. He will build an illusion from the impurities of a person's own heart and cause him or her to project that illusion on the man of God. Others will accept the illusion and corroborate the accusation.

Perhaps the most effective scheme of the devil is to assist men to develop alternate doctrines to replace the truth. For many years I personally accepted some of these alternate theological teachings. I was taught that the "at-hand kingdom" meant Jesus came and made an offer of the kingdom to Israel, which they refused. The kingdom was in Jesus and "at hand" at that time. However, since they refused the kingdom, Jesus returned to heaven, taking all potential for the kingdom with Him and would return at a later time and establish the kingdom of God. The best we could hope for at this time was to get people saved and try to hang on until He came to take us out of this wicked world, or until we died and went to heaven. It always bothered me that Jesus spent most of his brief ministry and most of what He said in the recorded Gospels teaching kingdom principles that we could not use until a future thousand-year reign.

Unfortunately, many of us are testimonies to the enemy's effectiveness in hiding the gospel of the kingdom. We yet need to know what the gospel of the kingdom really is. In the next session we will deal with the gospel of the kingdom as Jesus preached it.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM (#006)

Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. He sent the twelve and the seventy disciples out to preach the gospel of the kingdom and instructed all His disciples to preach this same gospel.

Is the gospel of the kingdom any different from the gospel of salvation or being born again?

We have preached the cross and personal salvation in Jesus for many years. Is that the gospel Jesus preached? Is it the gospel that the twelve and the seventy preached?

Shouldn't we be preaching the gospel Jesus preached?

God has been restoring revelation to His church in waves or layers. After one wave comes and men receive it and that layer is in place, then another wave of restoration brings another layer. The newer layer does not replace the last one; it builds upon it.

The gospel of being born again is the first part of the gospel of the kingdom. Although it is vital and completely necessary, it is only a part. **One must be born again to see the kingdom of God.** To stop at the first part of being born again is stopping and forever remaining just inside the door of the vast kingdom and never experiencing the bountiful life and treasure of the kingdom prepared for us before the foundation of the world.

Most of the teachings of Jesus were focused on what the gospel of the kingdom is and how it works. Vital, basic, foundational principles of the good news of kingdom living on earth are contained in the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament gospels. We will explore these powerful kingdom principles in later sessions.

In recent years, the gospel of the kingdom has been widely restored. The gospel previously preached focused on missing hell and getting into heaven when we died. For the most part, there was little or no real help for living life today. We tended to write off this life and looked forward to dying to have victory or to Jesus' coming back and rescuing us from this mess. Certainly, the Lord's bodily return and Heaven, with all its wonder, are primary to our Christian faith. However, the gospel of the kingdom focuses on restoring the rule of God from heaven on earth.

The gospel of the kingdom that Jesus preached focused on heaven's ways coming to earth more than our going to heaven. (*"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*) He taught how to live in the highest order of life that would bring peace on earth and goodwill toward men. There is, however, another being on earth that desires his will on earth and not God's. I wonder who would like to cloud our minds and prevent us from seeing the potential of the will of God being done on earth.

Gospel means "good news"; kingdom refers to "ruler/dominion." The gospel of the kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God means "the good news of the ruler dominion of heaven, or God". Or another way to say it is, "the good news of the government of God from heaven on earth." The good news is that the blessings of God's rule are potentially available to His children now in this life.

Jesus announced the blessings of His kingdom in that portion of Scripture we call the Beatitudes. He had been preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing the sick, and casting out demons all about Galilee. And **seeing the multitude**, He began to speak to His disciples, telling them that the needy people were blessed **now**. The kingdom is finally here, and those who are entering are blessed. Before the kingdom, those who mourned simply mourned. Now they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:3-6: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Let me illustrate the difference between the gospel of being born again just to go to heaven and the gospel of the kingdom with this story.

A man had set out to cross a large swamp in a small boat. He paddled well into the swamp and was attacked by several large alligators. The attack was so vicious that the small boat was damaged and sank. The man was left standing in about waist-deep, murky water with only his paddle to fight off the alligators. The fight was so fierce that his paddle was broken. He was now left with only a stub of a paddle with which to jab and beat the alligators.

A voice heralded from a distant shore, "Hey out there! I've got good news for you. An important government man was here a while back and looked at this swamp. He promised to come back someday with a big crew to drain it."

Jesus' coming back and the "heaven someday" message is good news. But the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus preached can also help us with our alligators now. Let's continue our story.

A man in a boat appeared and glided quickly to the man in the water and asked, "Do you need some help?"

"Yes! Please help me!" the man anxiously replied.

The man in the boat commanded the alligators to stop their attack. Immediately, the alligators swam away. The man in the boat helped the tired, wet and bloody man into his boat. He gave him dry clothes and medicine, which quickly healed his wounds. They immediately were at their destination.

As mankind sees the reality of the kingdom message and its overcoming power the devil will be made powerless. This is why the kingdom of darkness so violently opposes the kingdom of God now message. There is a violent pressing involved in entering the kingdom of God walk. It is not a pressing or violence toward or from God, but from the opposition, the kingdom of darkness.

*Luke 16: 16: "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is **pressing** into it."*

*Matthew 11: 12: "And from the days of John the Baptist till now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by **force**."*

Often there is more opposition toward the kingdom message than any other. The devil is much less threatened by a message of "heaven some day in the future". Our seeing the rule of God only in the future allows the devil to continue his dirty work now. The simple message of Jesus, "**Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand,**" the kingdom-is-now gospel, draws violent reactions from anyone who, in some way, is infected with or influenced by the opposing kingdom. Religious people and those of one's own household often become the most violent. The Lord spoke of kingdom rising against kingdom and nation (or tribe) against nation (*Matthew 24: 7*).

*Matthew 24: 10-11: "... many will be offended, will betray one another and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many, and because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in all the world to all nations, and then the end will come."*

Matthew 10:21: "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death."

Matthew 10: 34,36: "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. And a man's foes will be those of his own household."

Remember that the conflict is between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. "*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness*" (*Ephesians 6: 12*).

The spiritual battle is for the prize of entering and walking in the kingdom of God lifestyle, not just being born again, nor just going to heaven when we die.

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Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

UNDERSTANDING KINGDOM (#007)

The rich understandings of the kingdom of God are hidden in the Word of God, veiled in **figurative, symbolic language** that can be revealed to the mind **only by the Spirit of God**. For centuries we have read and studied the Bible; yet, the understanding of "kingdom" will be revealed to us only at the level we are ready to receive it and in the season that God desires.

The Bible often uses a natural word about a natural thing to represent a spiritual thing. Once we have the spiritual meaning of the natural word, we can use that word to communicate the spiritual thought. For example, we have referred to the "Bride of Christ" several times. We all know that we are not referring to a literal bride. A natural bride is one female person who is being married to a husband. The "Bride of Christ" is a figurative term representing all purified believers who are intimately related as one with the indwelling Christ. The believers may be male or female, old or young, of any heritage, and of any number. Yet, they can all be collectively described in the term "Bride of Christ." When the Bible speaks of the "milk of the Word," we know it is not talking about a white liquid in a bottle. When it speaks of the "meat of the Word," it is not talking about a beefsteak.

*John 16:25: "These things I (Jesus) have spoken to you in **figurative language**; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but **I will tell you plainly about the Father.**"*

*John 16: 12-13a: "I (Jesus) still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However **when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth ...**"*

*Matthew 16:17b.19: "... **for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**"*

*Mark 4:22-23: "For there is nothing **hidden** which will not be **revealed**, nor has anything been kept **secret** but that it should **come to light**. If anyone **has ears to hear, let him hear.**"*

There are key words that unlock the figurative, symbolic language of the Word and open vast areas of kingdom revelation. Many of these symbols and types have been revealed for many years. But some have been more recently revealed; and, most of those we have known for some time have a deeper, freshly-revealed kingdom meaning.

In the figurative Biblical language, much is revealed from simple symbols -- from the "sea" (unstable masses of unsaved without structure), to the "fruitful plains" (the saved stable Christians), to "trees" (men's life structures), to "hills" (authority

structures), to the "high mountains" (great structures of authority), and on to the "highest mountain" (the ultimate, authority of God).

To understand the "word of the kingdom" from the Bible, the disciple must be able to hear the spiritual meaning of the figurative or symbolic language from the Holy Spirit. When I study a passage of Scripture, I pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give me revelation of the hidden, symbolic, spiritual meaning of the words. Then I meditate the passage allowing quiet time in my spirit and mind while waiting to hear from God. After enlightenment or understanding comes, then I begin to check out the concordance, Greek and Hebrew dictionaries, and other Scriptures for confirmation or clarification.

The following are a few possible examples of symbolic language to consider. Try using these as you study and meditate the Word.

Mountains-Great structures of authority; may be godly or ungodly.

Hills-Structures of authority as mountains; except lesser.

Fields-Lower structures of authority, but still firmament. Usually indicate those saved, as opposed to the sea of lost. As such, they are the fruitful, production areas where grain, fruit trees, etc., are grown.

Valleys-Lower structures than fields, often fertile and well watered by neighboring mountains. May also indicate a very low period -- a time of difficulty and hard decisions.

Sea-No structure at all, fluid, blown about, sometimes roaring, unsaved masses of people.

Trees-Natural structures of life; individual men and their life structures, ranging from great men or rulers as great cedars, strong and stable men as mighty oaks, olive and fig trees as prophets or ministers, fruit trees and vines as fruitful Christians to insignificant bramble bushes and ungodly thorns and briars.

City-A corporate structure of life; a spiritual community for the protection and well-being of its citizens, governed by spiritual laws, ruled by spiritual powers, which determine the personality of the city and the quality of life within the city. A city is structured by **patterns** of life. A **great city** is a capital or ruling city, whose patterns reach out beyond its city walls or limits to govern a greater area.

Israel-The overall church, including its ruling city, its many different cities, and wilderness areas.

New Jerusalem-The purified, holy, renewed ruling city of God; the remnant Bride Church, the Bride of Christ without spot or wrinkle.

Babylon-The ruling city of the kingdom of darkness; the great soulish system of man characterized by covetousness, immorality, and sorcery; the mother system of harlots and adulterers.

Bride and Wife-The obedient, perfected, faithful and true, ruling city portion of the church where reproduction takes place and mature sons are brought to glory. She is God-seeking and God-serving.

Harlot-The unfaithful, rebellious mistress (person or church) who sells her purity to fulfill her own desires and meet her needs; she does not seek the true God, but is self-seeking and self-serving.

Adulteress-The unfaithful part of the church who has a Husband and pretends obedience to Him, but has other lovers. She seeks to fulfill her desires and meet her needs from sources other than her Husband. She has a divided heart, and her desire is both self-seeking and God-seeking, self-serving and God-serving.

Assyrians, Philistines, Canaanites, etc.-Evil, enemy spiritual forces, demons.

Dragon, Serpent, Roaring Lion, Wild Beast, Fowls of the Air, Adverse Wind, Storms, etc.-Satan and/or demon spirits.

Seed-A living pattern, word, thought, idea, vision; also the offspring made from the pattern. A word or vision from God is a **good seed**. A **bad seed** would be the same, but from the enemy.

Soil, Land-The heart of man; the spiritual/natural interface through which seeds from the spiritual realm are planted in the fertile creativity of the heart to be brought forth into the natural realm.

Holy Spirit may be represented in His different aspects or facets as, Oil, Water, Wine, Strong Drink, Light, Rain, etc.

Oil-Comfort, healing, joy, anointing.

Water-Cleansing, washing, or life-giving Word or Holy Spirit.

Wine-Revelation from God, a "rhema" word from God, unveiled truths of God's Word by the Holy Spirit.

Old Wine-Revelation from the past; usually a taste has been acquired for it. It is smooth and comfortable to the taste and can put one to sleep.

New Wine-New revelation from God. It is fresh and exciting, but may be very different to the taste and cause discomfort for those who have not yet acquired a taste for the new. It can be intoxicating if we take too much of it by itself. One must continue to feed on the bread and the meat along with the new wine.

Strong Drink-A hard word such as, correction, rebuke, or warning, etc. by the Holy Spirit.

Light-Understanding; discernment; life giving, growth-stimulating word or revelation by the Holy Spirit.

Rain-Outpouring of grace gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Rivers-Continuous flow of spiritual life; flow of Holy Spirit.

Wineskins-The container, or framework, of the inner organized filing system for the revelation of God.

Cloth-A woven network of understanding of life, which may contain intricate patterns of design, each thread fitting together to make the whole.

Flood-A great outpouring of damaging words.

Jewels-Perfected sons or daughters of God.

Fire-Intense adversity for purification or judgment; judgmental or critical words.

Stars-Spiritual persons; men of God.

Heat-Correction or judgment; the heat of the sun, particularly, is intense light that brings correction from God the Father.

Angels-Sometimes symbolizes men of God sent to the church, ministers, messengers, preachers of the message from God.

Trumpets-Sometimes are the voices of the prophets speaking forth the message of God, calling an assembly, focusing attention, and especially blasting forth the judgments of God.

Grain and Grain Fields-Production, particularly annual or periodical production.

Green Grass-Production of the fields, including grain.

Birds-Spirits, either godly or evil.

Crowns-Authority to rule.

Temple-A permanent dwelling place of God, the eternal heart of man where God dwells.

Tabernacle-A temporary dwelling place of God.

Consider the meaning of the figurative words used in *Luke 5:36-39*. The Lord speaks of patching new **cloth** onto old and of putting **new wine** in **old wineskins**. He also mentions that a man having drunk **old wine** does not immediately desire the new. Using the key words, it is easy to discern what He is saying spiritually.

What is being said in Isaiah 55, when the **mountains** and **hills** are said to break forth into **singing**, and the **trees** of the **field** clap their hands?

One of the most devastating mistakes people make when seeking to know God through His Word is taking every passage, which can be **literally** interpreted and applying **only literal** interpretation to it. The spiritual man learns to **literally interpret** the true spiritual meaning of the passage through the **figurative** language of the Holy Spirit. Often there is both a literal meaning and a spiritual meaning. Much

prophecy has had a literal, historical fulfillment and a greater spiritual implication. One might think of this as a railroad with two tracks running side-by-side. One track is the literal meaning of the passage; the other track is the spiritual. Many Old Testament terms and passages have a very literal, natural meaning, and may also have a vital spiritual meaning to New Testament believers about the "kingdom of God". Many Old Testament events were recorded as examples to us.

1 Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

Natural Israel And Spiritual Israel

The nation Israel is extremely significant as God's chosen people. It was through this nation and the Jewish people that the Son of God came and the Bible was written. The many prophetic writings and historical events of Israel all have spiritual meaning to the church. God has chosen Israel and its ruling city, Jerusalem, as a living message to the world. God's dealings with **natural Israel and natural Jerusalem** become **spiritual messages to spiritual Israel and spiritual Jerusalem**. The spiritual kingdom, the **Israel of God**, is a new people, a spiritual people to whom origin of nationality, race, color, social cast, or political standing is of little or no significance. It is a kingdom in which all are adopted by the heavenly Father and become true brothers and sisters.

*Galatians 3:7,14b, 29: Therefore know that those who are of faith are **sons of Abraham** ... that the **blessing of Abraham** might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. And if you are Christ's, then you are **Abraham's seed** and heirs according to the promise.*

*Galatians 6:15-16: For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but **a new creation**. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy upon them, upon the **Israel of God**.*

Spiritual Jerusalem or New Jerusalem is the ruling city of spiritual Israel just as natural Jerusalem or old Jerusalem was the ruling city of natural Israel. As old Jerusalem was the natural figurative mother, that birthed the kingdom into the earth, so now the New Jerusalem is the spiritual mother, the wife of God, the Bride of Christ that is birthing the spiritual kingdom of God into our world. The New Jerusalem is the Bride of Christ, the holy, purified, overcoming portion of the church.

*Revelation 21:9-11: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the **bride, the Lamb's wife**." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me **the great city, the holy Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. And her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.*

*Revelation 21:2: Then I, John, saw the **holy city, New Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a **bride** for her husband.*

*Galatians 4:25b, 26: Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But the **Jerusalem** above is free, which is the **mother** of us all.*

*Revelation 19:7-8: "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and **His wife has made herself ready**. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for **the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**"*

New Jerusalem is now coming down from the spirit realm and is now beginning to be formed on the earth. It is the Bride Church, the holy, purified, kingdom people of God. Just as it is possible for a person to be in the nation of Israel, but not in the city of Jerusalem, it is also possible to be in the church, but not yet in New Jerusalem. Not everyone in the country of Israel is in the city of Jerusalem. Neither has everyone in the church become the purified, holy Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem.

In the beautiful, illustrative, figurative language of God, which is characteristically used by the Holy Spirit to communicate spiritual truths to mankind, God describes the kingdom of God lifestyle in the picture of New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 & 22:1-5.

In the New Jerusalem lifestyle, we continuously live in the presence of God as the tabernacle of God is with men. The glory and light of God fills our lives. Pain and sorrow are gone as God wipes away our tears. No more death as eternal, abundant life prevails; we pass from life to life. Righteousness and holiness prevail in our lives as pure gold and clear crystal. There is no night; there are no dark, threatening seasons. There is no more curse. We are under the dome of His protection, and there is perfect peace. We serve Him and rule over the circumstances of life.

*Isaiah 62:5b, 12: "...and as the bridegroom rejoices over the **bride**, so shall your God rejoice over you. And they shall call them **The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; And you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.**"*

In Isaiah chapter 60, Isaiah begins to picture and describe the glory and prosperity of "**The City of the Lord**, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel". (v. 14)

THE KING-DOME

Let me share an illustration that helps me understand the concept of the spiritual city of New Jerusalem. Imagine a giant, glass dome filled with the glorious presence and light of God. Inside this huge, spiritual dome everything is as it should be. Everything is in perfect obedience to God's laws, and nothing that defiles can enter in. The environment is perfectly controlled like a greenhouse. Those who overcome enter and abide inside the dome where they enjoy all the victorious aspects and attributes of New Jerusalem. The enemy has no part and can do no harm inside the dome.

The bright light inside the dome flows out to the countryside in a large circle around the dome. Everywhere the light reaches, the darkness must flee and cannot return unless the light is lessened or drawn back.

People who sit in darkness may see the light from a distance and begin to move toward it. At the point where they actually leave the darkness and enter the light, they have entered the Israel of God, but have not yet reached and entered Jerusalem, the city of God. They have come out of darkness into the light and must

continue to journey to the dome. Their goal is to enter the king-dome, the New Jerusalem-purified-holy-Bride-of-Christ lifestyle.

Matthew 4: 16: The people who sat in darkness saw a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.

*Hebrews 12:22: But we have come to Mount Zion and to the **city** of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and **church** of the first-born..."*

We must, through a purifying growth process, come to maturity and walk into the New Jerusalem lifestyle. Many people in the church are now beginning to see the kingdom lifestyle and are moving toward the Holy City.

Just as it is possible to be in the nation but not in the ruling city, it is possible to be in the outer court of the tabernacle but not in the holy place. Many have entered the tabernacle into the outer court, but now must be purified to enter the holy place. The presence of God is in the holy place; all the promises of New Jerusalem are in the holy place. We must come in the gate and partake of the brazen altar, the blood sacrifice for our sins, the atoning blood of Jesus. Next, we must be washed by the water at the brazen laver in preparation for entering the holy place. We must journey on to the candlesticks of the Holy Spirit ministry and on to the showbread being broken before arriving at the altar of incense and the Holy of Holies, the intimate communion with God (the king-dome).

Walking in the kingdom of God lifestyle is all about intimate relationship with God. It is becoming one with God through Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is the five virgins with oil in their lamps entering into the wedding with Christ the Bridegroom. Holiness is produced by the indwelling Christ living in us by the Holy Spirit. It is the mystery Paul spoke of as "Christ in you the hope of glory".

*Psalm 15: Lord, who will abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who **walks uprightly**, and **works righteousness**, and **speaks the truth in his heart**....*

*Hebrews 12:28: Therefore, since we are **receiving a kingdom** which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we **serve God acceptably** with reverence and godly fear.*

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Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

ENTERING THE KINGDOM (#008)

But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, Revelation 21:27

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. Matthew 7:21

Jesus taught much about entering the kingdom and walking or abiding in it. Jesus preached and taught more about what the kingdom of God is like, how it works, and how to enter it, than any other subject. The parables that Jesus taught in the four Gospels are the richest teaching on the kingdom of God in the Bible. However, what the kingdom of God (the ruler/dominion of God) is like and how it works spans the entire Bible, and is the predominant theme of the Word of God.

Jesus was not greatly concerned with teaching us how to live in heaven someday. His great concern was revealing to us how to live on the earth in this life now. God's plan is the establishment of His kingdom on earth in and through redeemed man.

Many people have great difficulty really understanding the good-news message of the kingdom of God because they must first lay aside their strong convictions (rocks in the heart) that "kingdom" means only heaven someday or a future millennial reign. This mentality leads to a focus on what we refer to as the "salvation" or "born-again" experience, after which, we do the best we can to "hang on" until we die and go to heaven or until Jesus comes to rescue us. In Matthew 13, Jesus referred to these types of strong convictions as "rocks" in the heart-soil that prevent the fruit of the kingdom from coming to completion.

The gospel of the kingdom does not do away with the gospel of being born again. It includes the gospel we have preached in the past, as well as all true Bible doctrines. Jesus focused on preaching the gospel of the kingdom because it encompasses all the parts of revealed doctrines and is the umbrella that covers them. Some doctrinal groups have referred to themselves as "full gospel," because they received and incorporated into their structure the latest revelation. God is still restoring His message on earth. As each new area is restored, we are tempted to think we now have it all. However, about the time we get comfortable with what we have, He again gives us more. When He provides more light, some of the error we previously believed was accurate and complete begins to melt away.

We must come to grips with the reality that entering the kingdom does not mean only going to heaven when we die. **We are not waiting for Jesus to come back to earth to establish His kingdom. Jesus has already returned to earth in the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower the people of God to rule and reign, to overcome, and to retake and possess the land.** Yes, He is coming back as Lord of lords and King of kings to receive His prepared Bride. Yes, His bodily return to rule and reign with His purified Bride is the fulfillment of the kingdom. But the establishment time is now! **Jesus has already done all that is necessary to**

defeat the devil and his rule. He now lives in us by the Holy Spirit to empower His purified Bride to overcome. According to Romans 14:17, the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy **in the Holy Spirit**.

Is it any wonder why there is so much conflict, confusion and controversy about the baptism of the Holy Spirit? It is easy to see why the enemy so fiercely comes against it, when we recognize the role of the Holy Spirit in walking in the kingdom of God potential now. **The kingdom of God** is righteousness, peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**. The potential for experiencing the Bride of Christ life **now** is in the Holy Spirit.

The kingdom of God potential first returned to earth in Jesus at the time of His baptism. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus and remained on Him, in an experience of spiritual life of a different dimension that had not been known before. The heavens opened to Him. Jesus saw into the spirit realm, the heavenly realm. The voice of God spoke clearly to Him, affirming Him as His Son, and expressing His pleasure in Him. The kingdom of God age came into the earth. The potential for man to intimately communicate with God returned to the earth into Jesus, in that moment.

The Baptized was to become the Baptizer and baptize many with the Holy Spirit, opening to them the potential to walk in a new level of obedience and power, and enabling them to walk in the glorious Bride lifestyle. John the Baptist, the last great prophet of the captive kingdom, did not experience the greater kingdom life available to us.

Matthew 11:11: "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

*Mark 1:7-8: And he (John the Baptist), preached saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.**"*

*Matthew 3:16-17: Then Jesus, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water; and behold, **the heavens were opened to Him**, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him, and suddenly a voice from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

*John 1:32-34: And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is **He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."*

From this point forward, the kingdom was now on the earth in Jesus. Jesus was empowered to demonstrate the kingdom authority, and His earthly ministry began. When He later left the earth, the kingdom potential went with Him. However, before He left, the King promised His disciples that He would **soon return** with His kingdom.

Matthew 16:28: "Assuredly, I (Jesus) say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His

kingdom."

Luke 9:27: (And Jesus said), "But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

These verses plainly and emphatically state that some of the people present were going to be alive and see Jesus coming in His kingdom, the kingdom of God. Jesus made it clear that He was going away and coming back quickly, bringing the kingdom with Him. This is a strong statement by the Lord that He was returning to earth, bringing His kingdom with Him, during their lifetime. When did this happen? Or did it not happen as the Lord said it would?

In the past, the only way I could get around this statement was to assume He was speaking of the mount of transfiguration when the disciples caught a glimpse of His glory. It was always a bit of a stretch for me to believe that the brief glimpse of Jesus in His glorified state was what He had in mind when He said they would "see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." The revelation of "kingdom" brings much seemingly difficult scripture into such sweet harmony.

Jesus returned to earth as a "life-giving Spirit" at Pentecost. How many Gods do we have? We have only one God! He manifests Himself in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus made it clear that "if you have Me, you have the Father, and if the Holy Spirit dwells in you, so does the Son and the Father." Many Christians will quickly tell you that Jesus lives in their heart; yet, they don't realize **He could not be in their heart if He had not returned to earth.**

*1 Cor 15:45: And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." **The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.***

When Jesus walked on earth as a man, He could be in only one place at one time. He bodily went to the right hand of the Father and then returned as Spirit; now He can be everywhere at once. He can indwell all believers at one time, empowering us to obediently walk in His kingdom lifestyle. Thus, the will of God can be done on earth as it is in heaven. Many are yet looking for Jesus to return to do what He has already done or is now here to do.

In John 14:15-28 and John 16:12-25, Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit that is to come after He (Jesus) goes back to heaven. He makes it clear that He will return to His disciples. When He says, "I'm going away and coming back to you", He does not mean to their descendants thousands of years later.

*John 14:18: "I will not leave you orphans; **I will come to you.**"*

*John 14:20: "At that day you will know that I am in the Father, and you in Me, and **I in you.**"*

*John 14:21: "I will love him (those who love the Father) and **manifest Myself to him.**" (Or "manifest myself **in** him")*

*John 16:14: "**We** (Jesus and the Father) **will come to him and make Our home with him.**"*

*John 14:28: "I'm going away and **coming back to you.**"*

*John 16: 14: "He (the Holy Spirit) Will take of what is **Mine (or Me)** and declare to you."*

Jesus finishes up the discussion in John 16:23-24 by saying, *"In that day you will ask me nothing ... whatever you ask the Father in my name, He will give you."*

Obviously, the day he is talking about is today, not some future day when He bodily returns.

Jesus came to earth, reclaimed the kingdom, was crucified, resurrected, ascended to the right hand of the Father, **returned to earth** in the Holy Spirit, and now lives in believers to establish His kingdom on earth. Yet, He is still at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. Though Jesus possessed the fullness of the kingdom potential after His baptism with the Holy Spirit, He was not omnipresent in His natural body on earth. Now that He has returned to earth in the Holy Spirit, He is omnipresent.

Christ Jesus in us by the Holy Spirit will produce righteous obedience to God. Real holiness which includes true righteousness and perfect obedience is the only way to enter the fullness of the kingdom of God and become the Bride of Christ. **Positional righteousness does not in itself cause us to enter or become the purified Bride.** Only practical righteousness and practical obedience will enable us to live on earth in the kingdom of God. We enter and walk in the kingdom by obedience to the will of the Father.

Matthew 5:20: "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

*Matthew 19:17b: "...But if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments.**"*

Remember, we are not talking about being born again; nor are we talking about going to heaven when we die. Those are "parts", but what Jesus is talking about in these verses is entering and living in the kingdom of God **now**. We enter and walk by obedience to the Father. **Only Jesus, by the Holy Spirit living in us, will always obey the will of the Father.** Because Jesus is seated in heaven, He is available to carry out miraculous works of God through His disciples on earth.

*Mark 16: 19, 70: "...He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, **the Lord working with them** and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.*

Luke 17:20-21: "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed the kingdom of God is within you (or in your midst)."

As Christ Jesus manifests Himself in our being, we truly become the body of Christ, a body for Jesus to live in on earth. Jesus the Christ has returned to earth and lives in

His people. We now have the potential to rule and reign over the kingdoms of the earth as His glorious life, His love, His power, His wisdom, His peace, and His faith rule and reign through our being. We can now take dominion over all the earth and over all the powers of darkness. We can reclaim every area of the kingdom. **Nothing is impossible to Jesus in us.**

When God's messengers receive the "kingdom of God now" truth in their hearts and proclaim it with their mouths to the world, then the kingdom of God will be established. But as long as it is preached as a "someday kingdom", it will not be fully established on earth. The other kingdom, **the kingdom of darkness, can continue to run the governments, businesses, finance, religion, arts, music, media, sports, educational systems, entertainment industry and all other aspects of our world. Evil can continue to poison the minds of our people, inflicting pain, perverting, killing, and destroying men, women, and children of our land.**

Wake up, Christians! Wake up, preachers! The saints who have gone on to heaven are not going to take back the earth, reclaim it and establish the kingdom of God on the earth. Yes, they are cheering us on. Yes, their work is made perfect in us. We are establishing what the great men of faith have begun -- building upon the foundational heritage of generations of men of faith. But, only those alive on earth have the opportunity to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts to bring forth the work of Christ. Only then will the Spirit of Christ Jesus can come forth in their lives in glory and power sufficient to overpower the kingdom of darkness and establish the kingdom of light. This new generation has the potential to see the kingdom of God established in hearts today, individually, and then in the earth.

All who have gone before and paid a great price are looking to the people of God on earth today to **make perfect** their works and sacrifices by bringing forth the kingdom of God on earth.

*Hebrews 11:37-40: They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented - of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that **they should not be made perfect apart from us.***

*1 Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, **on whom the ends (purposes) of the ages have come.***

Each of us is in one kingdom or the other. Either the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of light rules us. We are bringing forth, from our hearts, either one kingdom or the other into the earth.

There is great conflict between the two kingdoms and keen competition for the hearts of men. The propagation of either kingdom depends on the hearts of men. Men must cast the deciding vote as to which kingdom will rule the earth. Only in the heart-soil of man is the potential for ruling the earth. **Whichever kingdom rules the hearts of men rules the earth.**

Boiling it all down; man has one great continuous **“yes and no”** decision to make. He must decide **“yes”** to the kingdom of light and **“no”** to the kingdom of darkness. Many generations ago, mankind decided “yes” to the kingdom of darkness and “no” to the kingdom of light. **Men need make no further decision to remain in the kingdom of darkness.** A decision not to come to the light is a decision to remain in darkness.

God will furnish all the power, all the direction, and do all the work to establish His kingdom; but man must decide with his own will. God has given us dominion on earth and has chosen not to overrule our will. What we bind is bound and what we loose is loosed.

Matthew 16: 19, “And I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

The Bride of Christ is prepared by practical obedience and holiness. Now is the time for the church (ekklesia) to make herself ready and become the perfected Bride, the New Jerusalem. Each of us must go through a process of becoming obedient and holy, or “growing up” in the kingdom walk. We must receive true understanding of the kingdom of God by spiritual revelation of the Word of God.

For anyone who might have a tendency toward thinking “this is something I can humanly do,” please be aware that it is all by the grace of God. **The grace of God is the empowerment of Christ within the individual to live righteously.** The grace of God is not a whitewash covering for our continued disobedience.

Grace is freely given but never forced upon an unwilling individual. Our part is to become willing to lay down our own way, our selfish desires, our religious order, our inner needs, to empty ourselves of ourselves that the Spirit of God may fill us with Christ. God will do it all. The grace of God can even make us willing but we must be willing to be made willing.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

SEVEN STAGES OF KINGDOM (#009)

Spiritual birth and the maturing process into the kingdom of God lifestyle are taught in the Bible in parables of the natural. Remember, we can receive insight and understanding of spiritual things by looking at natural things. Again, the figurative language of Scripture speaks of natural things to communicate spiritual, kingdom-truth to those who have an ear to hear. We can identify seven stages of development into the maturity of kingdom living by looking into the Word and comparing natural development.

Each of us must go through a process of becoming obedient and holy or “growing up” in the kingdom walk. It is not enough to be born spiritually, any more than it is enough to be born in the natural. Before ruling as a natural man, one must go through a growth process, being nourished and trained in order to grow from a baby to manhood. Likewise, in the spiritual realm, we cannot rule or even walk in the kingdom of God as babies.

Jesus said we must enter the kingdom as a child. He said that we must be born into the spiritual kingdom as we were born into the natural world.

*Matthew 18:3: “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become **as little children**, you will by no means **enter the kingdom** of heaven.”*

*John 3: 3, 5-6: Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born again** (or from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God. Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born** of water and the Spirit, **he cannot enter the kingdom of God**. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*

IN THE WOMB STAGE

In the natural, there must be conception before there can be birth. Life does not begin at birth but at conception in the womb of the mother. There must be a mother and a father coming together in intimacy. A seed from the father comes together with an egg in the mother and conception occurs; life begins. Is the new life in the world at this point? Yes, it is in the world. It is in the womb of the mother who is in the world. But it is not yet birthed or released into the world by itself.

When the church is properly related to God, that intimate communion produces spiritual children. We can relate the natural process of conception and birth to the spiritual. The Seed (word) from the Father is planted in the heart soil of a person and if mixed with faith, a living spirit is conceived. God's people are the mother (church) that is to carry the new life in her womb, the Holy Spirit, until the time of birth into the kingdom.

The seed of the Father is always perfectly holy. We are born with a heritage of the first Adam through our spiritual mother and therefore must grow through a process before becoming holy, mature kingdom of God sons.

*Hebrews 4:2: For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the **word** which they heard did not profit them, not being **mixed with faith** in those who heard it.*

If you received Christ as an adult you may remember a short season after first receiving the Lord in which everything seemed to be perfect. If you remember, the season probably lasted about nine months. You were being formed in the womb of the Holy Spirit.

Life begins when the **Word and faith** come together, but the new life must be protected and nurtured in the womb because it is unable to sustain itself. It is dependent on the mother (God's people) to breathe for it, receive and digest food, provide protection from the elements, and flow love, comfort, and acceptance to it. The embryo cannot walk in the kingdom on its own. **It can only go where the mother carries it in her womb.**

*Galatians 4:26: ...but the **Jerusalem above** is free, which is **the mother of us all.***

*Isaiah 44:2: "Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus says the Lord Who made you and **formed you from the womb**, Who will help you."*

When the Word comes and is received in faith (believed), we repent of the old and are conceived as a new creation. We should then go through a season of being formed and developed in the womb before being birthed into the kingdom. Remember we are talking about walking in the kingdom lifestyle that Jesus taught, not just getting into heaven when we die. **In relation to kingdom living, what we may have viewed in the past as being born again may actually be conception.**

WITH THE MOTHER STAGE

Birth is that time at which we begin to breathe on our own. Spiritual breathing is spiritual communion, praying to and **hearing from God** on our own. In natural birth, we are suddenly pressed forth from our warm, protected environment in the womb into the real world. For the first time, we will feel the exhilarating rush of life-sustaining air into our own lungs. We will, for the first time, begin to taste food given to us in our own mouth.

As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. We are birthed into the kingdom life when we begin to spiritually breathe on our own, when we can first begin to **speak to God and hear God** for ourselves. People who cannot yet hear God on their own are not yet birthed into the kingdom. Religion has caused multitudes to not be completely birthed into the true kingdom of God on earth now. Many have been made to believe that they must depend on someone else to hear for them. They have been conceived by receiving the Word in faith but are not living the kingdom of God lifestyle. In a sense they are stuck in the birth canal. Again, we are not speaking

about going to heaven; we are speaking in reference to the kingdom of God lifestyle on earth now.

There is a season of growth after we are birthed and can hear God on our own when we continue to need nurturing and training by the mother. We are not yet mature enough to live on our own. We are eating on our own but could make some bad decisions regarding what to eat. We yet need the wisdom of our mother and our Father. This season of learning to accurately hear the Father and obey Him more perfectly with the help of our mother, is a time of rapid growth and a time of receiving further instruction.

*Isaiah 46:3: "...all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been upheld by Me from birth, **who have been carried from the womb.**"*

*Genesis 49:25b: "Blessings of the **breasts** and of the **womb.**"*

*Isaiah 66:8b-11: "**For as soon as Zion travailed, She gave birth to her children.** Shall I bring to the time of birth and not cause delivery?" says the Lord. "Shall I Who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God. "Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her; rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her **that you may feed and be satisfied with the consolation of her breasts, that you may drink deeply and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.**"*

Remember, we are on a journey to the holy place, the City of God. We are moving through the process of maturity and holiness that will lead to the establishment of the kingdom (ruler/dominion) of God in our lives and then in the world.

THE INDEPENDENT STAGE

Well, we've finally made it! We're ready to move out and begin to minister on our own. We can leave the close confines of the mother. Our intense training period is over. We're ready to go out to save all the lost and conquer the world or make our fortune. Our life is filled with the excitement of doing and building. Our goals are clear and our ambitions and confidence are high. We know beyond any doubt that we can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us.

We are really doing great. We have the respect of everyone -- those we minister to, our peers, and our authority. Everyone seems to want us on his or her team. We're really cruising. Almost all our ideas work. We think to ourselves, "This kingdom life is great. I've got to remember to try to be humble, and to be kind to all the little people."

We flex our spiritual muscles and with firmness let the world know that we have arrived. Our convictions are even more firm than our muscles. If there is anything we don't know, it probably isn't worth knowing anyway. Our doctrinal position is so rigid and complete that nothing can be changed or added. It is inconceivable that anyone would be dumb enough to have a different position. Surely, part of our calling must be to correct all those older, fuzzy-minded men that seem to border on being foolish. We know we have it right. After all, haven't we accomplished more in the one year we've been working than they have in their thirty-plus years of service?

Sadly, we are blind to the fact that our harshness and lack of real love may be tearing down as much of the kingdom as our wonderful preaching or intense labor is building. While we are out pounding people with our Bible, the wife and kids are trying to get over the wounds of neglect and rigid authority we've harshly administered to them. What does it profit a man to save the whole world or make a great fortune and lose his own family? Our empire will surely crumble. Thank God He does use us some even in spite of ourselves.

Praise God for His mercy. No one could tell us the truth, that we've not even entered the real kingdom of God walk yet and that our real training is about to begin. Oh, yes, we've heard those sermons on suffering and the testimonies of enduring hardship; but we surmise that in some way those guys must not have things quite right. Quickly we learn to deal with backbiters and to kick the devil off our heels. **So we think we are overcoming warriors, mighty men of valor!**

THE SUFFERING STAGE

*Acts 14:22: **We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.***

"It seems so strange! It doesn't make sense! I was doing everything right! My desire was to serve God! I thought they would like me!"

Suddenly, we are cut to pieces and run through the stomach with a sword - not through the back, but right to our face -- from those close to us -- those we've helped and even loved. Then, the big rocks begin to smash us even from above. The authority that was so pleased with us suddenly does not seem to understand us any more. We are accused and abused from every direction. We are chewed to pieces with razor-sharp teeth of steel. And the more we do, the more we say to try to let them know that they are making a mistake -- that we really didn't do anything wrong, the worse it gets.

Now we are really about to enter the kingdom walk. Remember, we enter and walk in the kingdom by obedience. And though we are sons, we must learn obedience by the things we suffer. We will never really know the love of Christ until we've learned to love those who persecute us. This is our great opportunity to really die to self and see the love of Jesus manifest within us. The love, the great blessing, the presence of God in our lives that will come through this experience is the manifestation of the **glory of God**.

*Luke 24:26: "Ought not the Christ to have **suffered these things and to enter into His glory?**"*

*Hebrews 5:7-9: ...Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and **supplications, with vehement cries and tears** to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, **though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.** And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all **who obey Him.***

*1 Peter 4:12-14: Beloved do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you: but rejoice to the extent that **you partake of Christ's sufferings**, that when His glory is revealed, you may*

also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the **Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.**

Matthew 5: 10-12: *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the **kingdom** of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

2 Corinthians 12: 9-10: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for **My strength is made perfect in weakness.**" Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

1 Thessalonians 1: 4b-5: *...for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulation that you **endure**, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted **worthy of the kingdom of God** for which you also suffer.*

1 Peter 2: 19-23: *For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? **But when you do good and suffer for it, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called**, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps; Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth, Who when He was reviled did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.*

Romans 8: 18: *For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the **glory which shall be revealed in us.***

In the suffering stage, our motives are further purified. If we are serving God for comfort, fleshly benefit, or out of a guilt motivation, we will not endure this stage except our motives be changed. If there remains a need for healing from the past in our hearts, we will experience bitterness being formed from the pain we are suffering. If we are not dead to self in any area, we will react or revile in return when the pain becomes severe.

We may not be able to stay on top of things and remain "up" in our spirit or emotions during severe suffering. We may wish to die and despair of our lives, but let patience have her perfect work. **Endure** suffering as a good soldier. When the Man Jesus suffered to the limit, He cried out, *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"* (Matthew 27: 46).

In 2 Corinthians 1: 8, Paul said, *"For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia; that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that **we despaired even of life.**"*

Elijah, in 1 Kings 19: 4: *"prayed that he might die," and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life."*

After we are broken, through the endurance of suffering, and have no further

kingdoms of our own to build, we are ready to be used by Him to build His kingdom. All our independent desires and inner needs must die. His desires must replace those that drove us during the independent stage. When it does not matter to us whether men respect us or not, when we really are completely fulfilled in knowing that the Lord is pleased with us, then we are free to follow the Lord and are not moved by men. Man, the world, or the devil has no place in us to hang their hook of control. When there is no fear in us except the fear of disappointing our loving heavenly Father, we are very dangerous to the kingdom of darkness. **If we fear men, we do not yet fear God. If we truly fear God, we have no fear of anything else.**

THE OBEDIENT STAGE

When our motives are right and our hearts are being healed, **the pain we feel is converted into love** and not bitterness. There is no other way to have and know that we have the perfected love of Jesus manifested in our everyday life. Being persecuted, suffering wrongfully, being wronged, and patiently enduring and forgiving, is the method by which we have love. **Pain plus forgiveness equals love. Pain plus resentment equals bitterness.** When we really love our enemies, God's love is perfected in us. This perfected love causes us to obey the commandments of Jesus and to do the will of the Father thereby entering by obedience into the kingdom of God walk.

John 15:12: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

1 John 2:5: "But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him."

*1 John 5:3-4a: "For **this is the love of God that we keep His commandments.** And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world."*

*Galatians 5:14: For **all the law is fulfilled in one word**, even in this: "You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself."*

Our obedience and pure motives make us worthy or trustworthy to receive the kingdom of God. We can be trusted with the riches and power of God. He can safely release to us secrets of how to rule in the earth. We will use all He gives us to serve Him according to His directions. The enemy will be unable to tempt us to use the power of God to provide for our own needs or wants. Our love for Him and our desire to please Him will so outweigh any other wants or needs in our lives that we would sacrifice everything, even our own lives, to obey Him.

Love is the greatest law of the kingdom. Every other law or principle is held together by love and works by love. It is the strongest force in creation. By love, one can be motivated to pay the supreme sacrifice and do what one would not do for all the riches in the world. **The kingdom of God is characterized and held together by His love.** We can truly thank God and call it all joy when persecutions and suffering come to break us down to love.

THE SERVANT STAGE

Now we are ready to really accomplish something in the kingdom, not from our own zealously, as in the independent stage, but from a **love motive to serve**. We serve Jesus by serving His people. We really become humble servants serving from the heart, producing heartily and reaping great blessings as a result. We no longer are trying to build our dream or "do our thing". As He pours out His grace to empower us and His wisdom to guide us, we are more humbled.

*Matthew 25:34-40: "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come you blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and fed You, or thirsty and gave You drink?... And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, **inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.**'"*

Business in the kingdom of God is serving. It is serving God by serving His people. The more profitably we serve, the more we rule. Through the love of Jesus made perfect in us by suffering, we become obedient, which causes us to become profitable servants to God as we do only His will. The Father can specifically direct our lives through the Holy Spirit when our self-desires are dead and Christ is formed in us. Then, we are able to hear His voice and receive direction that will cause us to align with His desires and become prosperous servants in the kingdom.

THE SEATED STAGE

*Matthew 8:11: "And I say to you that many will come from the east and west, and **sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven.**"*

We shall not be seated until we have entered the "king-dome" where we will be seated at the table of the Lord. We will sit in His presence and have supertime communication with the Lord. The goal of the entire journey has been to be spiritually seated at His table in His kingdom -- to sit down and **cease from our own labor**. Our soul is to be completely at rest while His life flows through us. Our goal is to be intimately present with the Lord and to faithfully carry out His will, to rule and reign with Him.

The seated-in-the-kingdom stage is the **mature-son** stage, the time of entering into the **rest** of God. It is the time for **ruling** in the kingdom on earth from that special spiritual place of closeness to the throne of God. It is leading the people of God and **interceding for them before God**.

*Galatians 4:6-7: And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts ... Therefore you are **no longer a servant but a son**, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

Romans 8:14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are (full grown) sons of God.

*Romans 8: 18-19: For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be **revealed in us**. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the **revealing of the (mature) sons of God**.*

The world is groaning and waiting for us to become the holy, purified, obedient, mature sons who will release the power of God to restore the kingdom of God on earth. It is waiting for us to heal and deliver our planet from the rule of darkness and oppression -- to forever break Satan's cruel bondage from the earth and to establish the reign of righteousness, peace and joy, the kingdom of God. Thus, we, as the mature sons, are to extend the kingdom and its light to the world (Romans 8: 21-22).

The seated stage is a time of resting in closeness with God. We are no longer in the outer court or cast into outer darkness. We now serve as a pillar in the temple of God. We have a quiet, confident assurance as the power and love of God effortlessly flow through us to heal the brokenhearted, set the captives free, and rebuild the ruined cities.

Hebrews 3: 18: And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?

*Hebrews 4: 6b, 9-11: ...those to whom it was preached did not enter because of disobedience. There remains therefore **a rest for the people of God**. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from **his** works. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.*

In the seated stage, faithful servants become rulers in God's kingdom. We serve by ruling after having faithfully served in obedience to God in smaller matters.

*Matthew 25: 21: "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things. I will **make you ruler** over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"*

*Luke 19: 17: "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant: because you were faithful in a very little, **have authority** over ten cities.'"*

*Luke 12: 44: "Truly, I say to you that he will **make him ruler** over all that he has."*

*Luke 22: 26b-30: "...he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who **sits at the table**? Yet I (Jesus) am among you as the One Who serves. But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that **you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom**, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*

The highest order of ruling is intercession. Those who are seated at the table of the Lord have the opportunity and the responsibility to make intercession; to serve as an advocate for the Israel of God. It is bringing the people of God with their needs to Jesus, and bringing ministry from the Lord to His people that they may also be brought to the table of the Lord. As seated, mature sons, we reign with Jesus Christ on earth.

*Romans 5: 17b: ... those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will **reign in life** through the One Jesus Christ.*

*2 Timothy 2: 12: If we endure, we shall also **reign with Him**.*

*Revelation 5: 9b-10: ... and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us **kings and priests** to our God; and we shall **reign on the earth**.*

Jesus has provided and is providing full redemption and restoration. It is more than spending eternity with Him in heaven and missing hell, though certainly this would be more than sufficient reason to endure. But the Word says that by His abundance of grace and gift of righteousness we will **reign in life with Him if we endure (overcome)**. Jesus has provided and is providing all we need to reign as kings and priest on the earth as He ever lives to make intercession for us. He is bringing many sons to glory (Hebrews 7:25).

*Hebrews 2: 10: For it was fitting for Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in **bringing many sons to glory**, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

Seeing the goal of ruling and reigning with Him in this life encourages us to continue during the difficult life purification and reformation processes.

Though we are sons on our way to the seated stage, we may encounter experiences of what the Bible refers to as "outer darkness."

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

OUTER DARKNESS (#010)

*Matthew 25:30: "And cast the unprofitable **servant** into **outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Revelation 21:27: But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes abomination or a lie.

*Matthew 8:12: "But the **sons of the kingdom** will be cast out into **outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

The illustration we used earlier of the king-dome helps me to understand about outer darkness. You remember the gigantic glass dome filled with the presence and light of God. The light flowed out in all directions and dispelled the darkness. Everywhere the light is, the darkness must flee. But everywhere the light has not yet reached, the darkness remains. Envision the light reaching out in a large circle around the dome. As far as it reaches, there is light; at the point where the light stops, the darkness begins. These outer regions from the dome could be referred to as "outer darkness".

The powers of darkness lurk in that darkness around the light, waiting to do their dirty work. They concentrate in the area around the light to try to prevent people from entering the king-dome light. That is why Jesus said the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. There is a "pressing" involved in entering the kingdom - not a violence from or force toward, God, but a violence from the enemy and a pressing or taking it by force by those who enter.

*Luke 16:16: "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is **pressing** into it."*

*Matthew 11:12: "And from the days of John the Baptist till now, the kingdom of Heaven suffers **violence**, and the violent take it by force."*

If disobedience is found in us, even though we are sons and are well into our journey in the light toward the Holy City, we are returned to outer darkness for more suffering. God loves us and is faithful to allow us to repeat this cycle as many times as is necessary to bring us to purity and holiness as mature sons of the kingdom. The devil is predictable and will always be waiting for us in the outer darkness to inflict fresh pain upon us until we are able to reckon ourselves dead to self that Jesus may be manifested in us. Then, with repentance and fresh love, we return to our journey into the light toward the Holy City of God.

This does not mean we are eternally destroyed. The powers of darkness mean their dirty work for our death; but, God limits what the enemy can do to His children and all these things work together for our good (Romans 8:28). It is not for our death; it is for our purification. As we walk closer and closer to the dome, the light becomes brighter exposing impurities or imperfections that we could not see in the lesser

light. As these imperfections are exposed, we always have two choices. We must repent and allow the light to purify us further, or deny the fault and blame someone or something else. If we do anything other than quickly repent, we again are on our way to outer darkness for more pain and suffering. In the pain of outer darkness, we may think something like this, "It sure didn't hurt this much back in the light. I believe I will become obedient." We repent, die to self some more, and are returned to the light on our journey to the king-dome.

I am very sorry to say that, in my own experience, it has required many of these cycles to deal with my independence. The secret is to very quickly and humbly repent. If we do not quickly repent, while we debate it in our minds we are already slipping back toward the darkness.

It is very easy, once we are out of the suffering stage, to begin again to feel our muscles and go back to the independent stage. We think something like, "Wow! I'm glad that's over. I've got it now. It's all working again now. I can really do it this time". Here comes the man of faith and power for the hour. Guess what stage we are just about to enter again?

*Revelation 21:27: **But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes abomination or a lie.***

*Matthew 8:12: **"But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."***

*Matthew 22:11-13: **"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"***

*Revelation 7:13-17: Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in **white robes**, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who came out of great **tribulation**, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore, the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

*Revelation 19:8: And to her (the Lamb's wife) it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, **for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.***

The wedding garment we must have on is "the righteous acts of the saints." True righteousness is the white robe washed in the blood of the Lamb. The wedding garment customarily was furnished by the host, the lord of the feast. The man who is not wearing the garment is without excuse. It is by his independent thinking that he elects to refuse the offered garment and provide his own. Self-righteousness in its purest form will not be good enough to enable us to walk into the Holy City. **The Pharisees did not make it. The spirit of Pharisee will not enter the kingdom walk and, unfortunately, will hinder all that it can from entering.** Religion and its pharisaical laws and traditions are part of the darkness that must be pressed

through. The kingdom disciple can expect violent resistance from people affected by the spirit of Pharisee.

Matthew 23: 13: "But woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for, you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."

As we enter and continue our progress, we must continue to become less and less that Jesus the Christ may live in us more and more. Christ living in us provides all the love and power of heaven to work God's obedience in us. This is the only garment, the white robe of fine linen that we must wear on our journey to becoming "New Jerusalem", and living the overcoming life.

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
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Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

GOD'S JEWELS (#011)

As the Israel of God (the church, "ekklesia") attains practical obedience and holiness through inner empowerment of the grace of God, the Bride of Christ is prepared. Now is the time for the church to make herself ready and become the perfected Bride and City of God on earth. The religious church for the most part has thought that the kingdom was not for today, and has focused on getting in the gate and hanging on until Jesus comes or until we die and go to heaven. Therefore, we have multitudes of Christians hanging around the gate in the outer court. We've expected these neophytes to demonstrate the "Christian life." It is no wonder most of the church has decided to disregard kingdom teaching as not being for this time since, seemingly, no one has the power to realistically live it. Therefore, we have reasoned, the kingdom must be for heaven when we die or some future day.

Another beautiful, figurative word God uses to describe His mature "sons of the kingdom" is "**His jewels.**" His children are being perfected into beautiful jewels. It is so amazing that God, who has all the gold and precious stones in the world, considers His kingdom people as jewels, jewels now being perfected, cut and polished to reflect His glory.

*Malachi 3:17a: "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "on the day that I make them **My jewels.**"*

*Isaiah 61:10b: For as He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has covered me with robes of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and **as a bride adorns herself with jewels.***

The remnant church is being prepared as precious jewels to reflect the glory of God. The spotless, perfected Bride Church will reflect the glory of God in every facet of life. There must be no internal imperfections or flaws if we are to perfectly reflect His glory. Each facet must be cut to perfect shape and polished to perfection, if we are to become one of the jewels of New Jerusalem—one of the adorning stones set on the foundation of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

In God's pictorial language, the twelve tribes of Israel are the "gates" of entry to the city of God. The purified church (the Israel of God) is the "gateway" as it brings forth the ministry of Jesus in the world. The twelve apostles of the Lamb are the "foundations" of the spiritual city of God.

Revelation 21:12, 14: Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

*Revelation 21:18-23: "And the construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city **were***

adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the **glory of God illuminated it, and the Lamb is its light.**

*Isaiah 62: 1,3, 5b: "For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as **brightness**, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. You shall also be a **crown of glory** in the hand of the Lord, and a **royal diadem** in the hand of your God. And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."*

As God is perfecting us the finished jewel may be much smaller than the initial, damaged, rough stone. But when He is finished, there will be no impurities to impede the glorious light of God from flowing out every window or "facet" of our lives. If there are imperfections yet within us which indicate a need for further healing or dying to self, they will block or hinder the flow of God's glory and keep it from being reflected in one or more of our "facets."

Another word demonstrating the unimpeded ability to "flow" the glory of God from all the facets of our jewel is **freedom**. In the natural dimension, a cut diamond that has an impurity in it, such as a carbon deposit, is not free to "flow" the light out of some of its facets. Additionally, if the diamond is not cut properly or has blemishes in its surface, the light flowing through it will be distorted. In the spiritual if we, the children of God, have some spot of impurity remaining in our hearts, we will not be free to "flow" the glory of God in that area of our lives. Also, if we are not yet perfectly cut and polished, we are not free to "flow" His light without distortion. The process of being formed, cut, polished, and purified might be considered very difficult by the diamond that is experiencing the cutting and grinding.

The overcomer will want to locate these imperfections and allow God to deal with them. Jesus came to fix our imperfections and repair the damage inflicted upon us by the devil and by our own foolishness. We can learn to recognize problem areas by the lack of the glory of God flowing through a particular area or facet of our life or daily walk. There are seven easily defined general areas or facets of freedom in each of us.

*Zechariah 3:9, Amplified.: "For behold, upon the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon that one stone are **seven eyes or facets** " [the all-embracing providence of God and the **sevenfold radiations of the Spirit of God**]. "**Behold, I will carve upon it its inscription,**" says the Lord of hosts, "**and I will remove the iniquity and guilt of this land in a single day.**"*

Freedom is having all hindrances to receiving and reflecting the light of His glory removed. If freedom in a certain facet does not exist, we will know to look in a corresponding area in the heart for impurities or imperfections to be healed or removed. **We must appropriate the ministry of Jesus to heal the brokenhearted and set the captives free.** We must allow Him to burn out impurities or cut away a portion of our stone to eliminate the impurity in our jewel.

In love He may use the chisel and hammer of traumatic events and abrasive relationships to cut and polish our jewel.

In the natural realm, the facets of a jewel are “windows.” Light flows in through some and out through others. When the jewel is moved, the light shifts from window to window and sparkles brightly as it reflects the light from each facet. **The jewel has no light of its own, but does a beautiful job of reflecting available light.**

The major facet of our jewel is **obedience**. Usually the major facet on top of a jewel receives the light in to be reflected out the other smaller facets. **We will reflect whatever light we turn our obedience toward.** If we turn our obedience toward evil, we will reflect the darkness of evil. If we turn our obedience toward God, we will reflect His glory. Freedom is both freedom from reflecting evil and freedom to reflect good.

SEVEN FACETS OF FREEDOM

Seven facets of freedom are obedience, contentment, prosperity, enjoyment, harmony, health and service. Probably all needed areas of freedom are defined under these seven headings. If we have these freedoms, we can walk in the kingdom of God, New Jerusalem, purified, Bride-of-Christ lifestyle.

Freedom is both freedom from reflecting evil and freedom to reflect good.

OBEDIENCE IS FREEDOM

Freedom from rebellion, stubbornness, self-will, perversion, arrogance, compulsiveness, impulsiveness, pride and impatience.

Freedom to be submissive, yielding, faithful, loyal, humble and repentant.

CONTENTMENT IS FREEDOM

Freedom from want, lust, needs that cause stress, fear, doubt, worry, anxiety, insecurity, suspicion, distrust, hopelessness, nervousness, tension and confusion.

Freedom to be satisfied, thankful, fulfilled, secure, trusting, believing, hopeful, peaceful and stable.

PROSPERITY IS FREEDOM

Freedom from lack, poverty, wastefulness, fruitlessness, loss and not having enough to complete God's plan.

Freedom to be adequately supplied to complete God's plan, fruitful, flourishing, receiving, increasing and conserving.

ENJOYMENT IS FREEDOM

Freedom from ungodly pain & sorrow, torment, guilt, boredom, condemnation,

depression, self-pity, shame, withdrawal, loneliness and frustration.

Freedom to be experiencing pleasure in God, delighting in the Lord, being joyful.

HARMONY IS FREEDOM

Freedom from strife, contention, jealousy, envy, hostility, discord, rejecting, rejection, resentment, retaliation, criticizing, hate, selfishness, manipulation and gossip.

Freedom to be unified, compatible, in accord, friendly, open, in fellowship, accepted and accepting.

HEALTH IS FREEDOM

Freedom from (physical, emotional, or spiritual) sickness, disease, wounding, disorder, malfunction, malformation, perversion and weakness.

Freedom to be (physically, emotionally, or spiritually) whole, well, healed, strong, in order, sound, able-bodied and hearty.

SERVICE IS FREEDOM

Freedom from unproductiveness, slothfulness, uselessness, incapability, lack of purpose, worthlessness, futility, vanity and hindering.

Freedom to be productive, purposeful, providing, useful, capable, valuable and helpful.

Remember: **We must turn our facet of obedience toward the light and away from darkness.** We will reflect whatever light we turn our obedience toward. If we turn our obedience toward evil, we will reflect the darkness of evil. If we turn our obedience toward God, we will reflect His glory.

Impurities within a natural jewel will block the light by absorbing it and converting it into heat.

If we have impurities in our jewel, we feel very uncomfortable when we turn fully toward the light. The bright light generates heat within as it contacts impurities and is blocked from flowing out. For comfort's sake, some will turn their "obedience facet" away from the light, away from focus on closeness with God. They may turn away from intimacy with God and instead turn toward religious forms and rituals.

*Romans 6: 16-18: Do you not know that **to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slave whom you obey**, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you **obeyed from the heart** that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been **set free** from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

Some will lift up a **shield of religion or unbelief and self-deception** to keep the light from burning within them. The enemy will provide the shield for us if we will use it. He has a whole suit of armor for those who will obey him.

*Luke 11:20-22: "But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, **fully armed**, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when one stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him **all his armor** in which he trusted, and divides his spoils."*

The armor of Satan is the opposite of God's armor. Those who obey the enemy have their waist girded with lies, a breastplate of unrighteousness, their feet shod with the bad news of conflict. They carry the shield of unbelief and self-deception. They take the helmet of damnation and wield the sword of evil which is words of accusation and condemnation.

Self-deception begins with replacing what God has said with human rationalization and self-justification. Rather than repent and change, some will attempt to alleviate uncomfortable feelings of guilt with self-deception by denying their own guilt and blaming others. They accuse and condemn others for their own inner impurities and imperfections. The enemy will assist them with his religious belief systems and doctrines, which will seem to justify one's faults rather than change them.

Only by directly turning toward the light of God and continuing to move toward the light, can one's inner-impurities and imperfections be exposed and dealt with. Only by repenting and allowing the power of God to change us will we become purified.

Belief and obedience cause man to be conformed to God. Unbelief and self-deception attempt to conform God to man.

If we are to become the jewels of God, there are things in each of our lives that must be overcome. As we journey toward becoming His jewels, the damage previously done to us by the enemy and the resulting negative life patterns must be overcome. We must become overcomers by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony and not loving our lives to the death.

Rev 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

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Kingdom Growth Guides PART 2 (#012) thru (#023)

Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle *Journey From Religion to Relationship*

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE OVERCOMING LIFE (#012)

Before the kingdom can come forth in the world, it must come forth in a people. Many of us are yet dealing with spiritual infirmities and weaknesses related to sin and human frailty. In this Part 2 of Kingdom Growth Guides we will deal with overcoming hindrances to walking in the kingdom of God lifestyle.

For many the reality of the kingdom of God coming forth in our lives and in our world may seem an impossible dream. We may feel there is too much to overcome in our own lives and far too much to be overcome in the world. However, there is a source of overcoming power in the spiritual realm that far exceeds our natural strength. The following are a few stories of people who have tapped into that spiritual overcoming power.

The crowd at the finish line leans forward and intently peers down the track to see which one of the well-trained cyclists is leading as they all come into view over the last hill of the race. The young men who have trained diligently are now pushing their bodies to the very limit. Their lungs work to the fullest capacity to gather oxygen for pounding hearts to rush it to their powerful, muscular, sinewy legs—legs pumping like engine pistons in an effort to push their bicycles ahead of the others.

The burst of applause and cheers from the crowd is delayed for an instant. The crowd is shocked into silence for a split second while their minds try to accept what their wide-opened eyes are seeing. Gaping mouths begin to burst forth cheers and shouts of jubilation as the momentary disbelief of their own eyes is dispelled. Many eyes fill with tears as the crowd wildly applauds the young man with only one leg and one arm as he crosses the finish line first.

At another time and place in a high school auditorium, hundreds of teens gasp and draw back a little as they get their first look at a man walking out on stage. After only a few minutes, the man behind the disfigured face seems like one of their best friends. They are hardly aware of the massive scars or the knurled, maimed hands. They are mostly aware of the gentle love and real, caring attitude they feel coming from their new friend. Soon they are laughing hilariously with him as he humorously relates true stories of being burned almost to death in a military ordeal. All are moved and must consider the God he tells them about. His joyous love proclaims overcoming victory over the years of intense pain and great loss, and testifies of the powerful grace of the love of Jesus.

Many such true stories of people overcoming tremendous obstacles could be told. Our hearts would probably be touched by each of them. Something inside us seems to be excited. In some way we begin to feel encouragement in our own soul. Is it possible our own problems may seem to be a little less of a mountain when we consider their victories? Is there perhaps a new ray of hope released in us?

Something like this thought might cross our minds, "If God helped them to overcome, possibly He can also help me." Perhaps our doubt that God will do anything about our world is challenged a little. If He worked in these individuals' lives to overcome, isn't it possible that He might work in many lives across the world? What might be the result of multitudes, one at a time, overcoming? Is there perhaps hope birthed in our hearts for our own lives and for the world by these examples of overcoming?

How did they do it? How can I do it? Many books are written in an attempt to answer these questions. We surely do not have all the answers, but one common denominator is always present. In a word, it is **faith**. What the individual believes, how he views God, himself, and the problem is the key. Most overcomers will say something like, "I never thought of myself as handicapped—only challenged." Or, "It never entered my mind that it could not be done". A challenge seems to be there for the purpose of our overcoming it. Therefore, it is temporary, and if temporary, then temporal and not eternal. **The temporal must yield to the eternal. The power for overcoming is in the eternal God.** "Handicap" implies a forever, negative condition we cannot overcome, but must succumb to. In faith, overcomers see God as greater than the problem and believe He is working with them. When God is working on the problem, it does not matter that it is too big for us. We know we could never do it alone. **How we see God, ourselves, and our problems makes the difference!**

Many lives have been damaged or crippled by bad things that have happened. Sin is always at the root of every bad thing. We each have been harmed to some degree by the results of someone's sin. **If we view our problem as a challenge that Jesus came to help us with, we can overcome. Our worldview can change if we see that the world's crippling sin problem is no greater than the individual's sin problem. There is just more of it.** A bricklayer can lay one brick in a few seconds. It takes longer to lay an entire brick wall; however it is still the same problem and can be done only one brick at a time. If many bricklayers are working on the wall simultaneously, the wall is built much faster. **If it is possible for one person to overcome, then it is possible for the world to overcome through faith in God.**

"Overcoming" is one of the major teachings of the New Testament. Yet it has not been well understood or applied in past generations. Overcoming has been seen, for the most part, as pertaining only to the area of personal sin. Once we receive revelation of the "at-hand" kingdom, our overcoming begins to take on a much broader scope. Jesus has not only provided the potential for His children to overcome personal sin; but He has also provided a way for our overcoming to have an effect on the Church, the community, the nation, and eventually the planet.

Surely, the lack of overcoming in God's people is heavy on God's heart. **Those who do not overcome are overcome.** Overcome by negative emotions of depression, hopelessness, pride, anger, rage, violence, fear, worry, insecurity, jealousy, etc. These negative emotions lead to being overcome by lust of all kinds, bondages of immorality, drugs, alcohol, sexual perversions, selfishness, greed, etc.

This is not the lifestyle for which Jesus gave His life. He did not die to purchase failure for His people. If we are to ever see the overcoming of poverty, racial hatred, injustice, political aggression, child abuse, family violence, abortion, gang violence, and every other social sickness and evil, we must begin to understand the

overcoming power of Christ. We must in reality grasp the ability to appropriate the great mystery of the overcoming work of Jesus.

The enemy wants you to believe the earth is his and the fullness thereof. He wants you to hide out and just try to hang on until you die and go to heaven. The enemy sure doesn't want you to know that in appropriating the work (the ministry) of Christ Jesus you have the power to overcome him and all his dirty work. The truth is that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.

Psalm 24: 1: The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

The only right the devil has to this world and its people is the right that we give him. His only power is the power of deception. If he can make people believe his lies, then he can carry out the lies. The Word is clear. Jesus has overcome the enemy and all of his work. We do not belong to the devil. We do not need to believe or obey him in any area. Neither the earth nor anything in it belongs to the enemy, and we do not have to give up anything to him. He has no right to cause the earth to be burned in judgment. He has no right to the governments of the world. The world system does not belong to him. It is God's. God gave His only Son to repurchase it. He is waiting for His people to overcome and possess His world. Is there any mission on earth more important than overcoming?

Perhaps there is no more vital word in the Bible relative to overcoming than the following verse. If we can receive revelation light regarding the meaning of this verse, we will be on the way toward overcoming.

KEY VERSE

Revelation 12: 11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

The Greek work translated "overcame" is "nikao" (nik-ah'-o) meaning "to subdue," or "to get the victory." It comes from the word "nike" (nee'-kay), a prime root meaning "conquest", or "means of success."

The Greek word translated "testimony" is "marturia" (mar-too-ree'-ah) meaning evidence." It comes from "martus" (mar'-toos) meaning "witness" and implies "a martyr."

Our overcoming begins with the blood of the Lamb. It is only by the cross that the enemy's power was and is broken. When the perfect, sinless Son of God gave up His pure life on the cross to die for all sin, the penalty for all sin was and is forever paid. From that point forward, the enemy has no further hold, no further right to impose evil on any person on earth except as we allow it. In our ignorance of the work that Jesus has done and because of our doubt and unbelief, mankind continues to suffer needlessly. As the blood flowed from Jesus' body on the cross and was absorbed by the soil of the earth, the earth was forever changed. God's economy relative to man, the earth, and the devil was, for all time and eternity, changed.

God's full acceptance and acknowledgment of the completed work of the cross as payment for the penalty of all sin is proved in the resurrection of His Son. Had the work of redemption not been perfect, had the law not been totally satisfied, there

would have been no resurrection. It is forever settled. The enemy has no further right to impose evil without our (mankind's) approval. That's why the Scripture says, *"the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he **may** devour."*

Jesus then ascended to heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father to make intercession for us. The finished work of the cross, the blood of Jesus the Lamb, is ever before God to plead our case. The enemy has no rights. The case is always decided by the blood of Jesus, **if we so plead**. The matter is in our hands. We can deny the blood. We can plead our own case. We can, if we choose, deny our sin. We can choose to do it our way. We can walk in unbelief toward the blood of Jesus. This is disobedience to God and our invitation to the devil to impose evil upon us. We then become one he may devour.

Not only is Jesus interceding for us at the right hand of the Father, He has also returned to earth in the Holy Spirit to personally indwell each of His children. The Word says He became a life-giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:46, 2 Corinthians 8:17). Living in us, He is our source of power and righteousness for daily living. He is always with us, always available to communicate with us regarding every situation we encounter. His love in us causes us to desire to walk in obedience to God. It also grants us the power of His life enabling us to walk in the practical reality of being and doing exactly as He is and does. And, He always obeys the Father.

There are many things that can affect our ability to walk in the Spirit of Christ, but our walk must begin with our desire to lay aside any and every thing that hinders.

One major hindrance might involve our need to do things our way. Our will must take second place to His will. Eventually **our will must be changed to His will**. Daily we can attempt to live righteously on our own. We can strive to do things right. We can seek religious orders, systems, and practices to cause us to live righteously. In doing so, we deny the Lord. We deny His Holy Spirit living in us.

The evidence or **"word of our testimony"** comes forth from Jesus living in us. As we **"do not love our own life to the death,"** we give up our own way and allow Christ Jesus to live in us by the Holy Spirit instead of allowing our own life to live in us. As He lives in us and we listen to and obey Him, we overcome.

*Revelation 2:7b: "To him who overcomes I will give to **eat from the tree of life** which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

Eating from the tree of life means hearing and receiving living revelation of God, as opposed to reasoning things out from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It means experiencing eternal (abundant) life now.

*John 10:10: The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that **they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.***

Eternal life is a **quality** of life, not just a quantity. The Greek word translated "abundantly" is "perissos" (per-is-sos') which means "beyond," "super abundant (in quantity)," "superior (in quality)," or "preeminence."

*Revelation 22:14: Blessed are those who **do His commandments**, that they may have the right to the **tree of life** and may enter through the gates into the city.*

Western culture has taught us to depend on our intellect. Education is seen as the answer to mankind's social ills. The basic theory seems to be that, if we have enough knowledge, we will become smart enough to rule our own lives successfully. Independence is very important to our way of thinking. We feel, if we are intellectually sharp enough and have enough money, we can do what we want and have all we want. We think surely this will produce peace and happiness. This is partaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Yes, education and mental skills are important aspects of life; but they alone cannot bring us the abundant, overcoming life of the kingdom of God.

A number of years ago a man in his fifties came to me for personal ministry. We will call him Dr. Smart. I chose this name because he was one of the most intelligent men I had ever met. He held several doctors' degrees, including a theological degree. Dr. Smart came looking for help with great emotional problems. I don't believe I have ever seen a more miserable person. He was dealing with great inner pain and strife. Personal and professional relationships would not function properly in his life. He was intensely frustrated, lonely, and angry.

As we talked, I mentioned a scripture. He quickly told me where it was found, who wrote it to whom, the intent of the writer, and the cultural conditions at the time and place it was written. Yet, this poor man had no spiritual revelation of the Word. He did not have the first revelation of Jesus as Savior and Lord, and would hear nothing of spiritual revelation at all. He would debate and even become angry with any suggestion of spiritual revelation. His whole understanding came from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, He had no part with the tree of life. **Jesus is the only source of abundant life, the kingdom of God lifestyle.**

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

JESUS THE OVERCOMER (#013)

The Bible teaches us that Christ Jesus has overcome the enemy and the world. The gospel of the kingdom, which Jesus taught in the Bible, deals primarily with experiencing overcoming life now. Man has the awesome responsibility of finishing the job of making all God's enemies His footstool. Certainly, Satan and his demonic hosts are totally defeated in the finished work of the cross and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Yet because man has not fully appropriated the work of Jesus, the enemy is still killing, stealing, and destroying. Many Christians are severely wounded and at least have had their lives partially destroyed by the enemy.

Psalm 110: 1-3: Jehovah (self existing, eternal One) said to Adonai (sovereign, ruling, controlling One), "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool." Jehovah shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be willing (volunteers) in the day of Your power. In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning...

This and other scriptures are very clear that the final responsibility for overcoming power comes from Jehovah. The people of Christ are to be willing volunteers to "flow" the rod of Jesus' strength out of Zion (the purified, holy, bride-Church) in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning.

There is no other method for overcoming apart from the blood of the Lamb and the expression of His strength through His people. There is no enemy or power on earth, which cannot be overcome by the Spirit of the Lord working through His willing and obedient people.

You are greatly blessed to be a part of the awakening generation of believers who are throwing off the old garment of a defeated life, which only hopes to escape. We are putting on the new garment of praise and power of the overcoming life in the beauty of holiness. The morning is birthed. Let it be birthed in your heart. Pray for the Morning Star to arise in your heart. The freedom of the kingdom of God is available. Let's get in on it. Let's go on to all the fullness of the kingdom of God lifestyle, the overcoming life.

All the relics of religious rules, traditions of man, and our striving to keep them will never overcome. The law has no power to fulfill itself. Christ Jesus is the One who fulfills the law. The power of the law is to make us aware of our sin. The law that is set into nature brings forth the natural penalty of our sin. The law kills; the Spirit brings life (Romans 3: 20, 2 Corinthians 3: 6, Galatians 3: 13-14). Trying hard with all our strength can make us very tired, but it will not enable us to keep the rules and overcome.

Only as we are willing to die to our self-life and our own strength, take up our cross, and trust in His life can the Morning Star (His own law-fulfilling life) be birthed in us.

Then, we can begin to live righteously by His strength. Overcoming is a natural result of the Spirit of Christ Jesus living in our mortal bodies.

Our method is not to try to know rules and keep them. It is not to strive to know about God and about His Word. Our method is to know God Himself in intense, personal intimacy. We must know Jesus, the Word from God. We seek the God of the Word, not just the words about God. The overcoming life is intimacy with Christ Jesus and Father God by the Holy Spirit in a personal, intimate, real, penetrating, covenant relationship as the bride of Christ.

By His death we are forgiven. We overcome by His life in us.

The penalty of our sin was paid by **His death** on the cross, which reconciled us to Holy God. Our **life** is being saved, healed, made whole and we are now being delivered by the indwelling **resurrection life** of Christ Jesus through the Spirit.

*Romans 5: 10: For if when we were enemies **we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life**.*

Two aspects of our redemption are referred to in this and other verses. One is **through the death of Jesus**; the other is **by the life of Jesus**. The cross of Jesus provides reconciliation. His resurrection life saves (heals, makes whole, delivers, protects, and preserves) us **as He lives in us**.

The Greek word translated "**saved**" is "sozo" (sode'zo) which means "to save, deliver or protect." It is also translated "heal, preserve, do well, to be whole, or to make whole."

*Romans 7:23-25a: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me** from this body of death? I thank God—through **Jesus** Christ our Lord!*

*Romans 8: 9-11, 14,16-17: But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the **Spirit of Christ**, he is none of His. And if **Christ is in you**, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are **sons of God**. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs —heirs of God and **joint heirs** with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be **glorified together**.*

Speaking of those who are not entering into the overcoming kingdom of heaven lifestyle, the Lord said in Matthew 7: 23, "**And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me you who practice lawlessness!**"

We may know Him to some degree, but does He intimately **know us**? Unless we are related to Him as His bride and his life is actually within us, He does not know us in the sense of this verse.

Paul in *Philippians 3: 7-16*, speaks of suffering the loss of all things, and that he

counts them only as rubbish that "I may **gain Christ,**" and "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead".

As we are conformed to His death now in this life, we may attain His resurrection life now in this life. Verse 16 says, "to the degree that we have already attained let us walk." Suffering plays a part in being conformed to His death and attaining His resurrection life. The important thing for us is to "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus". **Intimately knowing Him and being known by Him is the power for the overcoming life.**

ENDURE TO THE END

Overcoming means we must finish the course. We have not totally overcome until we have overcome to the end. **Overcoming is the victory of finishing.**

Years ago, I heard a story that supposedly took place some time in the early 1900s. Several schools had come together for a track meet and field day. The grand finale was a mile footrace four times around a quarter-mile cinder track. The runners all got a good start and were still running as a pack together after the first lap. A careful look at the runners revealed that one boy was having a harder time keeping up with the pack. His face was showing signs of stress more than the others. In the second lap the boy began to fall behind the pack. The third lap saw the pack spread out as the strongest runners begin to pull away. This one boy was now almost half a lap behind the last runner.

When the crowd cheered the winners across the finish line, this boy was far behind on the backside of the track. It was obvious to everyone that he was badly fatigued and could hardly keep going. Suddenly, the crowd moaned a little as the young man stumbled and fell on the track. Every one watched as he struggled, got up on wobbly legs, and with bleeding knees and hands, continued to try to make it around the track. All the other runners had finished. Only the one wobbly runner remained on the track. He was finally rounding the last curve and headed toward the finish line when, apparently, he got a second wind and began to run a little better.

He crossed the finish line and immediately collapsed face down on the track. Those nearby ran to him and rolled him over. A doctor arrived and began to do what he could. The doctor called for a stretcher and moved the boy from the track to a shady spot on the grassy infield. As the young man began to recover, the doctor working over him asked the question that the crowd had been asking each other. "Son, why didn't you just step off the track? There was no chance for you to win the race. No one would have paid much attention if you had stepped off the track on the back side."

The boy replied, "You see, Sir, it was this way. A bad sickness hit my school, and all of our best runners that had trained for this race were too sick and weak to come. I was the best my school had to send. Sir, I couldn't let it be said that my school could not even finish the race."

You are the best God had to send to accomplish the purpose of your life. Only you can do and be what God has sent you to this race of life to do and be.

God is not so interested in our being first across the finish line. His primary concern is not that we run the race of life with perfect form. He does not count us out if we fall down on the track. The only way we can lose is to step off the track. No matter how far behind we are or how many times we fall, we can, we must, get up and keep moving toward the finish line. God has a significant purpose for our lives that may not be fully known to us now. Who knows what future multiplied results may come in the generations ahead from your overcoming and finishing the course God has set for you? Who knows what eternal matters may be affected?

We are not in competition with our brothers and sisters to be as good as or better than they. The race is not against others. God just wants us to be all **we** are meant to be. We are not here to please the crowd; we are here to finish the course and to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

In the following verses, the Greek word translated "**endure**" is "hupomeno" (hoop-om-en'-o), which means, "to stay under or behind, remain, undergo, bear trials, have fortitude, persevere."

The Greek word translated "**end**" is "telos" (tel'-os), which means "to set out for a definite point or goal," "the point aimed at as a limit," by implication "conclusion or termination," literally or figuratively "result or purpose".

*Matthew 24: 12-14: "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who **endures** to the **end** shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached to all the nations, and then the **end** will come."*

*Matthew 10:22: "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who **endures** to the **end** will be saved."*

*1 Corinthians 13: 7-8a: (Love)—bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, **endures** all things. Love never fails.*

In contrast, a different Greek word is used in the following verse, which simply means "is or are."

*Mark 4: 17: "And they have no root in themselves, and so **endure** only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble."*

Overcoming (subduing, having victory) means being delivered **from** some things and being delivered **through** some things. To strive to be delivered from all tribulation and persecution may be an unfruitful endeavor. Also, who can explain why some are delivered from having a divorce and some are delivered from the devastation through and after a divorce? Both the one delivered from getting sick and the one delivered through a disease are overcomers if they endure. Perhaps it would be best to seek to know God's plan and purpose in each situation.

Overcoming may mean having victory in and during the fire. It means living in Him, in His peace and joy, for example, even in the midst of divorce, slanderous attacks, defaming accusations, and vile insinuations regarding our moral character and inner motives, even by those we may have loved the most.

Paul and many other men of God have been overcomers while in prison, being stoned, mocked, and falsely accused. Many have been free in prison while many others have been in bondage walking the streets. Overcoming has to do with peace that passes understanding. It does not always mean a change in our external circumstances.

Overcoming and enduring to the end often eludes Christians. Though we strive hard to learn and obey the apostles' doctrine, we may experience a breakdown in our fortitude. "Many are called but few are chosen." Only the finishers are chosen to receive the promises to the overcomers.

We will overcome only by our covenant relationship with the Overcomer.

Only as we are braided into one with Jesus, will His strength become ours. We trade our strength (weakness) for His strength to overcome and endure. **We must intimately relate to Him continuously if we are to overcome consistently.**

The impact and results of overcoming in an individual's life can be tremendous. For many it is difficult to even imagine the beauty of walking in daily peace, joy, and prosperity of spirit, soul, and body. The end of financial stress, marital stress, and other forms of stress seems an unattainable dream to many people who have come to accept stress as normal life.

The frustrations of life endured by mankind are generated by man's lack of walking in God's ways (kingdom living). The mountains of frustrating problems and insurmountable obstacles will melt away as the power of Christ by the grace of God flows in and through the individual's life. The corporate effect of many individuals overcoming and living God's way will impact everyone and everything on the planet.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

CORPORATE KINGDOM (#014)

One of the results of personal, individual, kingdom righteousness is that corporate patterns of life will begin to be ordered by the ways and will of God. Men begin to rule everything over which they have authority according to the ways of God instead of the ways of fallen man.

Some people are beginning to realize the degree of dominion and potency delegated to mankind for ruling the world systems and the planet. Mankind is not at the mercy of "mother nature" or any other aspect of the world. On the contrary, the world systems and planet Earth are at the mercy of mankind. The collective effect of multitudes of people living their lives according to the ways of the Babylonian kingdom of darkness is great disorder and stress on all the systems of man and earth. Left unchanged this could eventually lead to total destruction. In contrast, the collective effect of multitudes of people living their lives according to the ways of the New Jerusalem kingdom of God is great peace, order, and prosperity for mankind and the planet.

All systems of life on earth will be positively affected by the kingdom of God lifestyle in men. **Social, economic, political, and ecological systems** will prosper and eventually come into peaceful order. The negative trends of destruction and disorder brought about by selfishness will reverse and the earth can become renewed. Even the weather will improve as delicate ecological balances damaged by man's selfishness and greed are repaired. Storms will decrease in number and intensity as global warming is reversed and stabilized causing tropical temperatures to moderate slightly.

*Romans 8: 19, 21-22: For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...because **the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

With natural understanding, we cannot see nor understand the link between man's beliefs and actions and the natural systems of the planet. Even with all the knowledge we have acquired, natural man cannot see very far into the spiritual realm. Therefore, we have little understanding regarding the impact of what we believe, say, and do upon the natural occurrences of the planet. We can, however, with the application of some wisdom, begin to realize the cost of the negative ways of man upon the ecological, social, economic, and political systems of our world.

It may be impossible for us to imagine all the ramifications of mankind living in obedience to God. There is more than plenty of everything on this planet that mankind could ever need. Consider what good could be done with the vast amounts of money, resources, and manpower that mankind would not spend on war, if nations no longer went to war. What about the many billions of dollars and man-

hours spent on sin-related diseases like AIDS or property loss due to violence and negligence. Consider the tremendous cost of crime. Unbelievable efforts and resources currently go toward providing law enforcement agencies, costly prisons, and an expensive judicial system. And what about the therapy and counseling needed to try to put back together the confused psyche of masses of people damaged by stress and fear? Who can even imagine the total cost of productive lives lost due to drugs and alcohol? The list of costs for disobedience goes on and on. If all this cost could be saved and applied to doing good and loving one another, there would be plenty of everything for everyone.

“Oh!” you say, “This is an impossible dream and can never really happen.” **Tell that to Jesus! This is why He came to earth and taught the kingdom of God way of life. This is why He died on the cross, was resurrected, ascended into heaven, and returned to earth in the Holy Spirit to live in man and produce His kingdom lifestyle!** You tell Him it can’t be done! Personally, I know by the authority of His Word, **it is being done** one heart, one life at a time; he is establishing His rule, His kingdom. God is looking for and finding people who will give up their ways, their greed, their needs and wants, to obey Him and walk in intimacy with Him.

Yes, the wicked are becoming more vile. Yes, the numbers of greedy men who despise the way of God are increasing. Yes, the enemy is having a blast stealing, killing, and destroying men, women and innocent children while much of the church seems powerless to do anything about it and, often, even becomes a part of the problem. Yes, we see governments faltering and unable to even slow down the degradation of society. Yes, we see mankind on the verge of destruction by his sinful ways. No doubt the fires of judgment are kindled on earth and the wrath of God is stored up against this evil. Yes, it may get worse before it gets better; **but as Christ Jesus lives in godly people it will get better.**

What part of this worldly wickedness is greater than God? Even during this rampant evil, there are many extremely godly men and women that God is raising up in the world. These are men and women with levels of commitment toward God and a sense of destiny that compels them to live godly in Christ Jesus. These are not just churchy, religious, baby Christians. They are a mighty army of mighty men and women of God, people of valor that God is raising up in business, in the military, in government, in the family, etc., as educators, scientists, apostolic ministers, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and kingdom teachers. Their primary purpose in life is to intimately know the Lord and totally serve Him.

People of God, it is not time to draw back nor to be downcast. We are entering the most victorious season of earth—the season in which **the wrath of God’s love** will cleanse the earth and the season when **the mercy and grace of God’s love** will cause the righteous, mature sons to shine forth as the sun (Matthew 13:40-43).

The focus of Christians has been so greatly diverted by theological teachings toward events in the future, that many have missed and are yet missing the awesome potential of God’s provision for today. We are now living in the “end of the age.” This is the time looked forward to by the writers of the New Testament. God is ready and everything is in place to restore His ways to our world. Many individuals are bringing forth the kingdom of God on earth in their own lives and families. Some are doing it without realizing what they are actually doing. Enlightenment and understanding of the kingdom will move our focus from “future

end-time theology" to overcoming the kingdom of darkness and bringing forth the kingdom of God now on our planet.

THE END TIMES

End-time theology is an area I have not received great revelation on or that I greatly enjoy looking into. By no means do I think I have all the answers. Bible school and years of being taught different teachers' views gave me traditional knowledge through other men. Please do not think the things we present are because of ignorance of the traditional views as taught on the "pre's and post's" of eschatology. Though I know the views and at different times have held different ones, I cannot rest in any of the many camps of theological traditions. The revelation of the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus preached and taught replaces our many end-time theological views.

We must begin with the firm realization that the kingdom of God is now, always was, and forever shall be.

We must also fully recognize that Jesus has completely and forever defeated the devil and given authority to believers in His name over all the power of the enemy.

There is no more for Jesus to do apart from mankind to establish His kingdom over the kingdom of darkness on earth. He does not need to return bodily to defeat the enemy and set His people free from the devil's bondage. Neither has He surrendered this planet or His people to the devil. He does not need to plan another rescue attempt for His children. **Jesus has already gained the victory and now lives in His people as the Victor.** He waits only for us to stop listening to the deception of the devil and begin to hear and believe the good news of the sovereign "ruler/dominion" (kingdom) of God in us.

Before getting deeply involved in what happens next, we need to fully grasp what is happening now. The urgent matter is not when or exactly how the next theological event will occur. The most important thing by far is that we get a real revelation of who we are in Christ now according to the Word and the Spirit of God.

We would think it very strange if some people were seated at a table of wonderful, tasty food, which included all their favorite dishes prepared just the way they like them. Yet, all they could think or talk about was what they were going to have for supper later. We would think it a real shame and loss for them to miss the wonderful meal prepared for them. The one who prepared the delicious meal would probably be very disappointed as the bountiful gift was ignored in favor of what might come later.

If I was an enemy and desired to steal a bountiful meal from you, one of the things I might do is try to divert your attention elsewhere. Diversion is a trick used by pickpockets and sleight-of-hand artists. **God, help me not to be tricked out of Your wonderful provisions. Open my eyes to see who I really am and what I really have in Christ Jesus NOW.**

THE NOW TIME

I AM THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS!

2 Corinthians 5:21: For He made Him Who knew no sin to be sin for us, **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

I'M BLESSED WITH ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN HEAVENLY PLACES!

Ephesians 1:3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.**

AS JESUS CHRIST IS IN THE WORLD SO AM I!

1 John 4:17b: **as He is so are we in the world.**

I'M BORN AGAIN BY THE WORD OF GOD!

1 Peter 1:23: ...having been **born again**, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, **through the word of God** which lives and abides forever.

I'M REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD!

Ephesians 1:7: In Him we have **redemption through His blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

I AM COMPLETE IN JESUS!

Colossians 2:9-10: For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and **you are complete in Him**, Who is the head of all principality and power.

MY SINS ARE NAILED TO THE CROSS!

Colossians 2:14b: And He has taken it out of the way, having **nailed it to the cross.**

I'M SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE!

Ephesians 1:13b: in Whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.**

I RULE AND REIGN IN THE NAME OF JESUS!

Romans 5:17b: those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness **will reign in life through the One Jesus Christ.**

I AM MORE THAN A CONQUEROR!

Romans 8:37: Yet in all these things **we are more than conquerors** through Him Who loves us.

I TAKE DOMINION!

Genesis 1:28: Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and **subdue it; have dominion**"

I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME!

Philippians 4:13: **I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.**

I AM STRENGTHENED IN ALL MIGHT BY HIS GLORIOUS POWER!

Colossians 1:9b-10a: being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **strengthened with all might according to His glorious power...**

ALL THINGS ARE UNDER THE FEET OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST! HE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO BE THE HEAD OF ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH!

*Ephesians 1:22-23: And **He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church**, which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all.*

MY WEAPONS ARE MIGHTY IN GOD, TO THE TEARING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS, CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS, SPECULATIONS, EVERY HIGH THING THAT EXALTS ITSELF AGAINST THE WORD OF GOD! I BRING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST!

*2 Corinthians 10:4-5: **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.***

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST HAS ALREADY APPEARED FOR THIS REASON, TO DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE ENEMY!

*1John 3:8b: **For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.***

HE DISARMED HIM, MADE A PUBLIC DISPLAY OF HIM!

*Colossians 2:15: Having **disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them** in it.*

HE HAS GIVEN ME AUTHORITY, WITH THE WORD AND IN HIS NAME TO HAVE POWER OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY!

*Ephesians 1:19, 3:20b, 6:10: and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of **His mighty power**, — according to the **power that works in us**, Finally, **my brethren, be strong in the Lord** and in the **power of His might**.*

*Philippians 2:10: ... that at the **name of Jesus** every knee should bow...*

*Colossians 2:9-10: For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, Who is the **head of all principality and power**."*

Hebrews 4:12a: For the word of God is living and powerful...

*Luke 10:19a: **Behold, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy...***

I ALWAYS TRIUMPH IN JESUS' NAME!

*2 Corinthians 2:14a: Now thanks be to God **Who always leads us in triumph** in Christ...*

HIS WORD NEVER RETURNS VOID!

*Isaiah 55:11: **So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void**, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

I COME BOLDLY BEFORE THE THRONE OF GRACE! I RECEIVE MERCY AND GRACE!

*Hebrews 4:16: Let us therefore **come boldly to the throne of grace**, that we may **obtain mercy and find grace** to help in time of need.*

IN THE NAME OF JESUS I COMMAND THE POWERS OF DARKNESS!

*Mark 16:17a: And these signs will follow those who believe: **In My name they will cast out demons...***

What I bind on earth is bound from heaven, and what I loose on earth is loosed from heaven (Matthew 16:19, 18:18). If any two agree on earth, they will have what they ask (Matthew 18:19). If I believe in my heart when I pray and doubt not, I shall have what I say (Mark 11:24). All things are possible to him who believes (Mark 9:23). If I abide in Him, I ask what I will, and it shall be done (John 15:7). I receive the finished work of the cross, proclaim liberty and freedom, and speak peace. **God, help me to realize my potential and to be who I am in Christ NOW.**

These attributes are promised in the Word of God. If you are not experiencing them in your life pray in faith and ask God to make them real in your life. Believe you receive them when you pray and you will have them (Mark 11:24). If you have difficulty believing them in your heart, begin speaking them out loud repeatedly. You will find that your heart will begin to believe the truth that you are speaking and eventually you will have what you say (Mark 11:23).

With the heart we believe unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Romans 10:10). It will greatly benefit our life to plant these truths of the Word in our heart. A good way to do that is to stand and speak them out loud with strength until they become planted in our spirit.

NOW

I AM THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS!

I'M BLESSED WITH ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES!

AS JESUS CHRIST IS IN THE WORLD SO AM I!

I'M BORN AGAIN BY THE WORD OF GOD!

I'M REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD!

I AM COMPLETE IN JESUS!

MY SINS ARE NAILED TO THE CROSS!

I'M SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE!

I RULE AND REIGN IN THE NAME OF JESUS!

I AM MORE THAN A CONQUEROR! I TAKE DOMINION!

I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME!

I AM STRENGTHENED IN ALL MIGHT BY HIS GLORIOUS POWER!

ALL THINGS ARE UNDER THE FEET OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST! HE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO BE THE HEAD OF ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH!

MY WEAPONS ARE MIGHTY IN GOD, TO THE TEARING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS, CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS, SPECULATIONS, EVERY HIGH THING THAT EXALTS ITSELF AGAINST THE WORD OF GOD! I BRING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST!

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HE HAS GIVEN ME AUTHORITY, WITH THE WORD AND IN HIS NAME TO HAVE POWER OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY!

I ALWAYS TRIUMPH IN JESUS' NAME! HIS WORD NEVER RETURNS VOID! I COME BOLDLY BEFORE THE THRONE OF GRACE! I RECEIVE MERCY AND GRACE!

IN THE NAME OF JESUS I COMMAND THE POWERS OF DARKNESS!

We must recognize our potential and become the purified, powerful Bride. Now is the time to lay aside our powerless religious traditions and be prepared as the Bride of Christ, the Body in which Christ dwells. There is a need for healing in the church. The concepts of Babylon have become unhealthy traditions within the church. The faith and practices of individuals have been perverted by relentless attacks from the enemy. God has provided and is providing all that is needed to heal and prepare His Bride.

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

PREPARING THE BRIDE (#015)

The mature church must become the body of Christ, a living organism, a network of spiritually-connected cells and parts, individuals emptied of self, filled with Christ. It must be without man's leadership or man's structure. There will be no human hierarchy in the Bride. One individual will not rule over another, but all will serve one another. **Christ Jesus will spiritually rule within each individual and serve as overall Head of the church thereby establishing spiritual structure, not human.** In the natural, the head rules a healthy body, life from the head sends signals to each individual part and every cell responds in obedience to the head. So it is in the Body of Christ.

Much of the church is sick; much like a person would be if any part failed to obey the head. The great apostasy of the past continues to affect the health of the body today. Men establish themselves as heads and develop hierarchical systems of church rule. This defection from the true Head is fostered by the enemy and is carried out by a spirit of antichrist, which opposes or replaces Christ as Head. Religious spirits in the church sustain spirits of spiritual blindness, darkness, deception, and delusion.

The enemy has effective tools for stirring men and causing them to have strong desires to rule. The enemy must work in and through the individual parts of the Body because he cannot affect the true Head.

Our purpose in this part of Kingdom Growth Guides is to expose the enemy's schemes and plans to rule, and to help us recognize true patterns of God's rule, which can produce the overcoming life, the kingdom of God lifestyle.

People are the church.

The church is sick because individuals are sick. The enemy's plan is to cause strong needs or desires within the individuals. To accomplish this, he must prevent them from being in contact with the reality of the love of God. He uses negative life-experiences and deceiving spirits to blind individuals to God's love and power. This causes each individual to become keenly aware of his own needs and to look only to himself to supply them. This self-focus becomes self-centeredness. Selfish thoughts and actions lead to fear, pride, greed, lust, and disobedience to the true Head.

Once a disobedient lifestyle is established, the enemy can bring much inner turmoil and outer conflict thereby causing increasing emotional wounds and spiritual deception. Spiritual darkness, deception, and delusion open the door for occult and other demonic influences. The inner turmoil will eventually produce negative behavior such as aggressiveness, defensiveness, or withdrawal, which can produce conflict, marital strife, racial strife, religious strife, and power struggles in the church as well as in the world.

The strife, turmoil, and conflict cause stress and deterioration of mental, emotional, and physical health. Often the individual will seek escape from the inner turmoil and stress. Many avenues are available that seem to offer some temporary escape, but often lead to more stress and turmoil. Drugs, alcohol, immorality, some kinds of music, sports, gaining wealth, entertainment, withdrawal, overworking, overeating, violence, and religion are some of the common escapes used. The buildup of stress often leads to increased conflict, strife, and more intense power struggles resulting in violence, beatings, murders, and suicides. Sickness and premature deaths then become normal in such a violent society.

Remember, the enemy's purpose in all this is to cut us off from the knowledge and experience of the love of God. It is easy to see how difficult it will be for a child growing up in this violent culture to even imagine the love of God. Power and strength are seen as synonymous with "mean and violent." God is often seen as only judgmental, and except the individual be healed in their heart, he cannot begin to know the love of God. The person is, therefore, locked into the bondage of the enemy, doomed to live and die in the torment of inner turmoil and stress. There is truly no rest for the wicked.

Most churchgoers feel that, if they can control their stress and in some way contain it; they are doing as well as can be expected under the circumstances. As someone once asked, "Why are you under the circumstances?"--Implying that there is potential life in Jesus that is over the circumstances. And it is really true. Jesus can totally remove our turmoil and stress—not merely help us to live with distress until we die and are relieved of it in heaven someday. We are not talking about perfect circumstances, although they may improve in time. We are talking about living above them **now** in the real peace of God. As we live in real peace, we become a part of the solution instead of part of the problem. As our lifestyle changes, we stop affecting those around us for bad and start affecting them for good.

Until we can see Jesus the King as He really is, we do not have the power or motivation to move toward ultimate closeness with Him. When we see the true abundant love and magnificent glory of the King, we will decide to move toward Him. Once we experience the reality of the glorious peace and eternal joy found in the King's presence, we will repent in order to enter intimately into His glorious presence.

Preaching the Cross, personal salvation, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling Spirit of Christ are foundational building blocks of the overcoming life. Preaching the kingdom of God **now** establishes the goal or objective. Teaching God's kingdom patterns and exposing the enemy's schemes allow us to see where we are and what changes need to be made. Jesus the Anointed One is our source of power for change.

THE RESTORATION MINISTRY OF JESUS

Luke 4: 18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

The restoration ministry of Jesus is the cleansing process that we must go through before we can walk into the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, purified Bride-of-Christ,

kingdom-of-God lifestyle. It is the work of Jesus by His grace and power through the Holy Spirit. It is not of man "that any should boast." Our part in helping one another is to bring forth the Word and the anointing of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Christ Jesus destroys all the work of the enemy--the work the devil has done, and the work he is doing. Jesus repairs, renews, and rebuilds all the damage inflicted by the enemy. Jesus will establish righteousness, peace, and joy in those who seek Him with their whole heart. He will set free those in bondages created by the enemy. He will bring an end to mourning and a beginning to joy and praise.

*1 John 3: 8b: For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy the works of the devil.***

*Isaiah 61: 1-4: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to **preach good tidings** to the poor; He has sent Me to **heal the brokenhearted**, to **proclaim liberty** to the captives, and the **opening of the prison** to those who are bound; to **proclaim the acceptable (favorable) year** of the Lord, and the **day of vengeance** of our God; to **comfort** all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to **give them beauty** for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of **praise** for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called **trees of righteousness**, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified, and they shall **rebuild** the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall **repair** the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations."*

The enemy has inflicted much damage on individuals and, subsequently on the entire planet since Adam released him thousands of years ago in the garden. Primarily, he uses his powers of darkness to affect people and cause them to negatively affect others. If he can prevent someone from knowing and experiencing the love of God, he can devastate their life and cause them to wound many others.

Since Jesus defeated him, the only real power the enemy has is deception.

He seeks to prevent us from knowing and believing the power we have over him in Christ. One of his favorite tricks is to make Christians believe he and his demons are not really around any more. He likes to disguise himself as an angel of light and works under cover as a "religious spirit." This way he can influence Christians away from truth that will expose him. Undetected, he can move them toward a false doctrine that protects him. He can then fan the flames of natural differences to cause painful rejections among the people. Through this pain he can excite the flesh to anger, bitterness, and many negative works.

*2 Corinthians 11: 14-15: And no wonder! **For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.** Therefore it is no great thing if **his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness**, whose end will be according to their works.*

*1 Timothy 4: 1b: ... some will depart from the faith, giving heed to **deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.***

The enemy does not use a vast number of schemes. He doesn't need very many. The ones he uses have been highly perfected over thousands of years of practice and work very effectively on unbelievers and uninformed Christians. His schemes are always designed to **pervert** the truth of God in order to **divert** man from the plan of God.

God's kingdom patterns for life always lead to an abundant life of love, righteousness, peace, and joy. The enemy's perversion of these patterns always produces unlove, evil, pain, affliction, and despair. Christians may be easily deceived and diverted to an alternate plan if they do not have a clear foundational understanding of God's kingdom patterns. The best way to recognize a counterfeit is to thoroughly know the real thing. If the enemy cannot totally pervert, he will attempt to divert by drawing attention to some other less important matter.

The restoration ministry of Jesus always involves two processes. One is the tearing down of the old life-structure, and the other is the building of the new. In order to help us recognize and tear down the work of the enemy, and to help us avoid his schemes, it is important to uncover and expose his work and methods.

To begin rebuilding, we must renew our minds to God's kingdom patterns of abundant life. The world system currently is highly affected by the enemy's deception. Therefore, it is very easy to be trained in the devil's perversions and diversions. One need only grow up in a modern, secular family, watch TV and movies, attend public schools and attend an institutional-type church to be grounded in the perversions and diversions of the enemy.

We must be retrained to recognize what is kingdom of God living and what is not kingdom of God living. Our understanding must be renewed to the Word of God. Kingdom-life patterns must be revealed to us. Also, we need to learn to recognize the enemy's patterns for our lives and the schemes he uses to press us into his perverted ways.

Unfortunately, the institutional church does not often have the power to effectively answer the situation and sometimes fosters the deception by joining with the world system. Churchgoers often respond with hypocritical, legalistic attacks against people while allowing the same or other perversions to operate in their own lives. A Christian under conviction for their own hidden problem may attack others in whom they see the same problem. Such legalistic attacks further wound people and often drive them out for the enemy to further afflict.

Some of my readers at this point are agreeing, "Yeah! I've sure seen that over there or in that particular person." One scheme of the enemy is to divert attention from **our** need to the problem of **others**. As the Spirit of God reveals God's kingdom patterns, the enemy's workings to pervert them will be uncovered. We must unmask ourselves as the Spirit of Jesus uncovers and exposes the enemy. We must agree with God about our own needs and be willing to allow our old life-structures to be cut down and uprooted in order that the new may grow and flourish in its place.

Matthew 3: 10: "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Matthew 15: 13: "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted."

Isaiah 61: 3b-4a: "...that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified, and they shall rebuild the old ruins."

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THE HEART-TREE (#016)

THE LIFE-STRUCTURE OF MAN

Trees are often used in Scripture to symbolize men or the life-structure of a man. In the figurative language of Scripture, the tree, the root, the soil it grows in, and the seed that the tree grew from are all important in understanding God's plan (kingdom pattern) for the individual and exposing the enemy's scheme for causing affliction.

*Isaiah 55: 12: For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the **trees** of the field shall clap their hands.*

*Isaiah 61: 3: To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called **trees of righteousness**, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.*

In the parable of the sower and other scriptures, **the heart of man is referred to as soil.**

Our heart is our spirit and soul.

Our spirit is who we are and relates to the spiritual realm.

Our soul is our mind, will, and emotions and relates to the natural realm through the bodies in which we live.

The heart of man, like soil, will grow whatever is planted in it. The soil does not determine the type of tree that will grow. The seed does. The same soil, that will grow a pecan tree when a pecan is planted in it, will grow a peach tree if a peach seed is planted in it. A thorn tree will grow if the soil is planted with the seed of a thorn tree. Our heart-soil does not in itself determine our tree or life-structure. Rather, the seed that is planted will determine the nature of our tree or life-structure. The fruit of the tree (our actions or deeds) will be determined by the nature of tree (life-structure) that grew from the type of seed planted.

*Matthew 7: 16-20: "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them."*

*Matthew 12: 33-35: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? **For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.** A good man, out of the good treasure of his **heart**, brings forth*

good things, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, brings forth evil things."

In the above passages, the Lord speaks of the **tree** (life-structure) and its **fruit** (deeds) coming forth from the **soil of the heart of man**.

The **"Heart-Tree"** of our life is either good or bad and will bear either good or bad fruit according to the tree. **The seed planted determined the type of tree.**

As we see in Matthew 13:19, **the seed is a word**. A word is more than just letters arranged on a page; it is a **pattern that is alive** and able to grow into a structure of life that bears fruit. It can be a vision, picture, image, an action or a combination or series of these things. **A communication in any form is a word or seed.**

Since there are two kinds of trees and two kinds of fruit, obviously there are two kinds of seeds, good and bad. **Good seeds are good words or living patterns**
Bad seeds are bad words or living patterns.

All words or seeds ultimately have their origin from either the tree of life or the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which produces death. Every word, seed, action, or communication of any form has its source in either God or the devil.

A child planted with inordinate premature, sexual activity will grow a life-structure of sexual confusion and disorder. A child planted with legalistic rigid harshness will grow a life-structure of frustrated perfectionism. A child planted with violent acts will grow a life-structure of fear and aggression. A child planted with unconditional love and peaceful security will grow a healthy, happy life-structure.

The seed of the kingdom of God is a special, good seed that will grow the life and rule of God.

THE ENEMY'S SCHEME

UNGODLY HERITAGE

(OPEN TO BAD SEED)

Our ungodly heritage causes our heart-soil to be born with an openness to bad seed.

The ungodly heritage of Adam has passed down through the generations. We were each conceived and born with a heritage that goes back to Adam. Sin and the curse of death entered through Adam and spread to all men. Through our forefathers, the sin of Adam reaches to each of us.

Romans 5:19: Therefore just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Psalms 51:5: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Though we bear no personal accountability for the sins of our parents and

forefathers, each of us are born under the curse of sin and must at some time become personally accountable for our own sin. However, we are directly affected by the inheritance of the iniquity (tendency to sin) of our forefathers.

*Exodus 20: 5-6: "... visiting the **iniquity of the fathers** on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."*

*Leviticus 26: 39: "And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also **in their fathers' iniquities**; which are with them, they shall waste away."*

*Exodus 34: 7b: "... visiting the **iniquity** of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."*

The sin of Adam, working through our heritage (the iniquity or perversions of our forefathers), serves as a big hammer to drive the wedge of sin into our own heart-soil, causing an opening for bad seed to be planted. Then, in our own experience, the seeds are planted and our life-structure (Heart-Tree) begins to grow. Eventually our lives will bear the fruit of it.

UNGODLY LIFE EXPERIENCE (CLOSED TO GOOD SEED)

Our ungodly experience causes our heart-soil to be unable to grow the kingdom of God seed (the good seed).

*Matthew 13:3-9: Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying; "Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the **wayside**; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on **stony** places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among **thorns**, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on **good ground** and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

THE WAYSIDE SOIL

*Matthew 13: 19: "When anyone hears the **word of the kingdom**, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away **what was sown in his heart**. This is he who received **seed** by the wayside."*

Notice that this scripture refers specifically to the **word of the kingdom**. It does not say the word of "being born again" or some other word from God cannot be received.

The word of the kingdom cannot be received or understood in the hard-pressed soil of our heart. The heavy, wounding footsteps of man and his ox cart's wheels may have pressed down the soil of our heart and made it hard. These wounding experiences and the hard-press of life have damaged our soil and our ability to receive the good seed that could have produced a kingdom life-structure. Because it cannot penetrate the hardened soil, the enemy easily and quickly steals the word of the **kingdom** from us. The wayside heart must be plowed to break up the hardened soil, and then healed by the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit before it can

receive the good seed.

THE STONY SOIL

Matthew 13:20-21: "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles."

The word of the kingdom of God cannot be brought to fruition in a stony heart. The stones represent hardened, firm, previous convictions. If we are so convinced that we already know how things are (what the Bible says, what life is like, what people are like, what we ourselves are like, etc.), then we will not grow the new life-structure to maturity. We will let it go when challenged, because negative, hardened, previous beliefs or convictions will prohibit the word of the kingdom of God from taking deep root in our heart. Rocks of earlier, hardened beliefs or convictions must be either thrown out or smashed before the kingdom life comes to fruition

THE THORNY SOIL

Matthew 13:22: "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful."

The word of the kingdom cannot be brought to fruition in a heart growing thorn bushes of the cares of this life. If we feel we must have anything of this life in addition to, or apart from what God desires for us, we have thorn bushes. We must love God above all else and be fully content with Him and his desired provision for us. The thorn bushes must be uprooted and thrown out before the kingdom life can come to fruition.

GOD'S KINGDOM PATTERN

THE GOOD SOIL

Matthew 13:23: "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces; some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

The word of the kingdom of God will be received and grow to fruition in the good heart-soil. The good soil is the heart that is healed of wounds, has had its stones of hardened, previous convictions thrown out, and the thorn bushes of cares of this life pulled up and discarded. This heart can produce the kingdom of God lifestyle. It will be fruitful in producing the kingdom of God on earth. It will not receive the bad seed but is ready to grow the good seed.

We are told in Scripture to be careful what we hear--what we plant in our soil. It is God's plan for us to receive good seed. If we are filled with the peace of God, our hearts will receive only good seed, which will grow a good tree (life-structure). This will produce good fruit (deeds or actions).

The peace of God guards our hearts from bad seed.

*Philippians 4: 7b-9: ... and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will **guard your hearts** and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things are **noble**, whatever things are **just**, whatever things are **pure**, whatever things are **lovely**, whatever things are of **good report**, if there is any **virtue** and if there is anything **praiseworthy**, **meditate** on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, **these do**, and the **God of peace will be with you**.*

*Proverbs 23: 7a: For as he **thinks in his heart**, so is he.*

We will be formed by the thoughts we think--by the words in any form that we receive into our hearts. Our heart-soil grows whatever we allow to be planted in it, whether good or bad. Whether it is a spoken word or some action carried out against us, if we allow it to be planted in our heart-soil, it will determine our life-structure thereby, determining our feelings, self-image, attitude and eventually, our actions—whether good or bad. We will live in peace or in turmoil and stress, according to what we decide to allow to be planted in our heart-soil.

What are you allowing to be planted in your soil? What are you watching, listening to, and thinking about?

What did you plant in your heart-soil from the time you were born until you were about six years old? Obviously you had no choice at that young age. **Someone else decided what would be planted in your heart-soil at that time.** It is a known fact that most of our life-structure was formed in us as small children. Before we developed the ability to choose, the seeds that would determine the majority of our life-structure were already planted. What kind of seed was planted in our soil from the time we were in our mother's womb until five or six years old?

Unfortunately, not all of us grew up surrounded by the peace of God. Many of us did not have our heart-soil planted with seeds of unconditional love and acceptance. On the contrary, we may have received seeds of a conditional, performance-based kind of love and grew up feeling unaccepted. Or, we may have felt little or no love at all. Anything short of unconditional, affirming love and acceptance becomes a bad seed. If so, then the seeds of unlove and rejection sown into our heart-soil began to grow into our life-structure.

God's kingdom pattern is that we be planted with good seed and grow a good life-structure (a Good Heart-Tree). If, however, this was not so, then Jesus came to uproot our bad life-structure (the Bad Heart-Tree), heal our heart-soil, and replant it with His good seed to grow His good life-structure (the Good Heart-Tree).

God has given us the ability to take the cover off and see the methods or schemes the enemy has used and is using to afflict individuals and cause them to afflict others. We know his plan is to kill, steal, and destroy. Once we see his plot to kill us, steal all we have including our faith and joy, and to destroy the plan and work of God, we can make the necessary adjustments to appropriate the ministry of Jesus to destroy all the schemes of the enemy and establish God's kingdom patterns.

Understanding God's kingdom patterns for individuals, families, businesses, and all aspects of life and planting them in our heart will produce abundant life. Learning to

personally appropriate the ministry of Christ will bring about the uprooting of the old and the planting of the new tree. **Jesus has provided and is providing everything we need to completely destroy the old work of the enemy and establish the new work of God in our life.**

We are absolutely without excuse. The enemy would like to cause us to believe that because it was planted in us, we can do nothing about it. To say, "I can't help it; someone did it to me," is to say, "Jesus is not sufficient to meet my need. His blood, resurrection life, and omnipotent power are not enough to fix me."

If we attempt to avert our responsibility by placing the blame on others ("the ones that did it to me"), then we are deceived. It really doesn't matter who did it; ultimately, it was the enemy who did it. And the Lord Jesus, the Anointed One, has been and is manifest to destroy the work of the enemy. He is no respecter of persons. **His freedom-giving ministry is available to all. His ministry begins with our real repentance, not our phony excuses.** Our escape and defense mechanisms are designed by the enemy and brought forth in our soul to prevent true repentance.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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THE HEART-TREE (Continued) (#017)

GOD'S KINGDOM PATTERN

THE GOOD SEED

The seed that will produce the **good heart-tree** when planted in good heart-soil is **LOVE**. The unconditional God-kind of real love flowing through an **affirming attitude** is received in the heart as **pleasure** or comfort.

The heart perceives love primarily as **ACCEPTANCE** along with **mercy, grace, and forgiveness** for our shortcomings. **We find love, acceptance, mercy, grace, and forgiveness in God through Jesus Christ.**

*John 3:16: For God so **loved** the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*Ephesians 2:4-5: But God, Who is rich in **mercy**, because of His great **love** with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by **grace** you are saved).*

*Ephesians 1:6-7: ...to the praise of the glory of His **grace**; by which He has made us **accepted** in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the **forgiveness** of sins, according to the riches of His **grace**...*

Our hearts must experience the love of Jesus filling our spirits by the Holy Spirit. Our hearts also need to experience the love of Jesus in our souls through the manifest love of Jesus coming through other people. To grow a good life-structure we need to receive the seed of the love and acceptance of Jesus flowing through an affirming attitude from the people in authority over us and from those around us. We never outgrow our need for love.

God's pattern is for the individual to be formed in a godly environment of love and acceptance; not just a Christian home with clean morals and firm discipline, but a family characterized by unconditional godly love. The seed-pattern of the kingdom of God is the real love from God flowing through godly parents, extended family, and community always affirming the worth of the child while tenderly nurturing and training from conception to maturity.

Ephesians 6:4b: Amp. "... but rear them [tenderly] in the training and discipline and the counsel and admonition of the Lord."

THE GOOD ROOT

The seed of love sown in the soil of our heart will begin to grow the foundational ROOT system of our life-structure. The taproot is the reality of the **LOVE OF JESUS** in our heart. The tip of the taproot is **abundant life**. The main root of the love of Jesus, along with its beautiful secondary roots, will fill our heart-soil with the fullness of God. The secondary roots that branch from the main taproot are both in-working and out-working characteristics, such as **peace, approval, devotion, kindness, calmness, blessing, joy, gladness, goodness, satisfaction, hope, cheerfulness, and delight**.

*Ephesians 3:17-19: ...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the **love of Christ** which passes knowledge; that you may be **filled with all the fullness of God**.*

THE ENEMY'S SCHEME

THE BAD SEED

The bad seed is **UNLOVE**. Unlove is perceived in our hearts primarily as **REJECTION**, and is felt in the heart as **PAIN**. Seeds of **rejection, accusation, condemnation, and unforgiveness** flowing through a **judgmental or critical attitude** are the seeds the enemy uses to plant a bad life-structure. Unlove is the absence of the unconditional God-kind of love.

Rejection may come in many forms and from many sources. Usually the rejection that produces the most severe pain comes from those closest to us--from those who should love us. Rejection is often communicated in subtle ways. The child that is severely abused, abandoned, or that suffered the trauma of parental divorce may not be the only child who feels the pain of rejection. If our parents were just too busy with their own situations to really be there for us when we needed them, we experienced rejection, too. Apathy can be the worst kind of unlove.

*Psalms 109: 2-4a, 22-23: For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful have opened against me; they have **spoken against me** with a lying tongue. They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause. In return for my love they are my **accusers**. I am poor and needy and my **heart is wounded** within me. I am gone like a shadow when it lengthens; I am shaken like a locust.*

*Romans 2:1a, Amp.: Therefore you have no excuse of defense or justification, O man, whoever you are who **judges** and **condemns** another.*

*Ephesians 6:4a, Amp.: Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to **anger**; do not exasperate them to **resentment**...*

There is no more **painful seed** which can be planted in our heart than being judged and condemned by someone we love, especially those who have some measure of authority in our lives. We are particularly open to parents, pastors, teachers, coaches, mates, older siblings, and close friends. The enemy knows this and will seek to cause unforgiveness, condemnation and accusations from those who should love us. He wants us to feel the devastating pain of rejection and react to it with

resentment.

THE BAD ROOT

The pain in our heart begins to grow the foundational ROOT structure of our life. The painful seed of rejection begins to produce anger, resentment, and bitterness. Left to its natural course, the seed of rejection will always produce a root of **BITTERNESS**. The tip of the taproot of bitterness is **death**. The secondary roots are both out-working and in-working characteristics. The out-working characteristics are things like **anger, resentment, hatred, wrath, retaliation, rage**, and an attitude of **murder**. The in-working characteristics are things like **grief, sorrow, guilt, remorse, hopelessness, depression, despair**, and an attitude of **suicide**.

Remember, the heart did not want these things. They are the natural result of the seed of unlove planted in the heart soil. The soil will grow whatever is planted.

*Hebrews 12:14-17: Pursue peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any **ROOT OF BITTERNESS springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.***

The Greek word translated “bitterness” also carries the meanings of “piercing, sharp, pungent, and poison.” The life-structure becomes poisoned with bitterness, as the taproot of bitterness with all of its ugly subsidiary or secondary roots grows and entwines to permeate the entire heart-soil.

*Acts 8:21-23: You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for **your heart is not right** in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are **poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.***

THE BAD TRUNK

The root of bitterness will spring up, cause trouble, and defile many. The trunk of our life-tree that springs forth from the root of bitterness is always, without exception—**REBELLION**. Rebellion (**a disobedient attitude**) is the natural outworking of bitterness, which is the natural result of inner pain from rejection. Rebellion is not usually something we plan or even desire for our lives. We didn't want it. It was planted in our heart-soil, often before we were old enough to choose. Feelings of being rejected by parents, teachers, siblings, relatives, and peers plant the seeds that will produce the structure of our life, a trunk of rebellion.

FEAR and **PRIDE** characterize the trunk of rebellion. The rebellion turns into fear as we feel unloved and subconsciously reasons something like this: “The authorities over me, or those around me, do not love me as much as they love themselves. Therefore, they are going to take care of themselves first and not me. And I don't feel God loves me because I'm in rebellion against Him. Therefore, He's not going to take care of me either. No one is going to take care of me, so **I must take care of myself.**” We are now self-focused, **self-centered** and have a **poor self-image**.

Then, we take a look at ourselves and a look at the big mean world and reason something like this, "Wow! I'm not very big and the world is so big. I don't think I can do it. I can't take care of myself." **FEAR, insecurity, inferiority, and anxiety** enter at this point.

Eventually, we may look around and see others successfully taking care of themselves. We reason something like this, "If they can do it, I can too. So I'll take hold of my boot straps, double up my fist, set my jaw and start getting tough." When we begin to succeed at taking care of ourselves, get that good job, new car, etc., we are **PROUD**. Why not? I did it all myself. God didn't do it. The authority over me or those around me didn't do it. I did it." Now we are filled with **PRIDE**, and we become **stubborn, haughty, arrogant, self-willed, and unthankful**.

When we are winning, pride reigns, but when things don't go so well, fear rules. We will flip back and forth between fear and pride depending upon our evaluation of our performance. We have become **performance-oriented**. We find our self-worth only in our performance. Only **perfection**, which we never seem to achieve, will satisfy us.

The central characteristic of our entire life-structure has become **NEED**. It does not matter how much we have; it is not enough. There is always a sense of lack, not being good enough, not doing enough or having enough. This continuous feeling of **need or lack becomes the primary motivational force in our life-structure**.

THE BAD LIMBS

The limbs of the bad heart-tree do not grow from a trunk of well-being and abundance, but rather from a driving sense of intense need--a feeling that "I will not make it if I don't have more." From this strong sense of need, the limbs or branches of the life-structure come forth. The natural product of great need is **a strong desire to have** in order to attempt to satisfy the strong sense of need. This powerful desire to have is **LUST**. We are not talking about a spurious want type of desire. We're talking about what seems to some people to be a life-or-death situation.

We subconsciously reason something like, "I must provide for myself or I might not make it. If I'm going to provide for myself, I must have **money**--money that is mine, that I **control**." **Lust for money and greed** come forth in the life-structure. "If I'm going to get and keep money, I must have **power** and **position**." A **lust for power, control, position and fame** develops into the life-structure.

The greatest need we all have, what we are really searching for, is love—to be able to receive and give real love. But, the person with this life-structure does not even know what real love is. The bad heart-tree has never fully experienced real love, the unconditional God-kind of love. However, this type of individual does know the good feelings of **romance and sex**. So, **lust for romance or sex** comes forth and promises to meet their deep, inner need.

Remember, we did not decide to be this way. It got planted in us a long time ago as painful rejection—unlove.

The major limbs of the bad heart-tree life-structure are **lust for money, lust for power, lust for position, and lust for romance or sex**. On these limbs the fruit of

the life is borne.

THE BAD FRUIT AND SEED

The fruit that will always come forth on these limbs is **BAD DEEDS**. The attitudes and actions will be **selfish** and involve **taking** rather than giving. This type of individual may really wish in his heart that he actually cared about others. He may even convince himself he does care some. But, deep in his inner being, when he really gets honest, he does not care about others like he cares for himself. Some of the attitudes causing his actions and words to offend and wound others are **aggression, competition, striving, high achievement, defensiveness, inconsideration, and hostility**. Wounding others sets up his own rejection from those he offends. When he offends and wounds others, he causes them to reject him. This plants more pain in his heart and starts the cycle all over again.

These offensive and wounding bad deeds are the fruit. Most fruit has a seed inside. Inside this fruit is the **SEED of unlove—rejection**. The seeds produced by this person's life are exactly the same as the seeds that were planted in his own heart-soil. The individual is helplessly unable to control his **judgmental and critical attitude** toward those he should love. **Rejection, accusation, condemnation, and unforgiveness** are sown from the person into the heart-soil of others, especially the wife or husband and children. And thereby the **kingdom of darkness** is reproduced in the hearts of others, producing the same life-structure all over again. In a real and practical way, the sins of the fathers are passed on to the next generation. The situation tends to grow worse to the third and fourth generations. (Exodus 34:7).

THE BAD BIRDS

Certain kinds of birds are attracted to the bad fruit of the Bad Heart-Tree. The birds are BAD SPIRITS. The Bible calls these bad spirits demons. Demon spirits of **darkness, blindness, deception, and delusion** will come with all their filthiness and torment to lodge in the limbs of the bad-heart tree. **These spirits will shut out the light. The truth of God cannot get through to the heart, but lies, deceptions, and delusion will flow readily into it.**

*2 Corinthians 4:3-4a: But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the **god of this age has blinded...***

*1 John 2:11: But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the **darkness has blinded his eyes.***

*2 Thessalonians 1:9b-11: ...according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous **deception** among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong **delusion**, that they should believe the lie.*

This type of individual is now ready to receive occult interest and involvement. He seems powerless against the enticing drawing of the lying promises of the occult to meet the needs of the life-structure. Promises of excitement, power, control, peace of mind, and riches turn into hopeless bondages and addictions that imprison him

and steal all hope and, eventually, his very life.

Anyone deeply involved in occult, witchcraft, or other demonic activities has the bad heart-tree as his life-structure. It is the only way to great deception. Occult activities can range from overt satanic worship and witchcraft to church members who are deceived into practices of spirit-power that look like God. Some have called this Christian witchcraft. The bad heart-tree, mixed with religion, produces false prophets.

Remember, this individual did not plan it this way. He did not want this at all. It was planted in him as rejection, which caused pain that grew into bitterness, and then into rebellion, with fear and pride. Then his need became lust, which produced bad deeds and bad seeds, which invited evil spirits to lock him into bondage and torment, unable to hear God or His truth. In addition, if the enemy can cause the heart to be closed off to godly people as well, this individual is locked into bondage.

THE WALL

This bad tree and its fruit is not pretty. The individual soon learns his behavior is not acceptable and it causes him to be rejected and to suffer more pain again and again. He observes that every person who gets close to him eventually hurts him. He also recognizes that every person that gets close to him is hurt as well. As a result of this, he begins to build a **WALL OF DEFENSE**. This wall is designed to hide what actually is in the heart-tree. It is created to prevent closeness with people and stop the wounds caused by painful rejection. The wall is constructed of things used by the individual to attempt to make him feel better by venting on others.

*Proverbs 18:19: **A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle.***

The person with a wall of defense is saying, "No one is ever going to get close enough to me to hurt me again." He builds a wall as strong and as tall as necessary to keep anyone from seeing what is really in his heart and to keep anyone from ever really getting close enough to hurt him. He usually begins building his wall with **contention** and **contrariness**. Next are **unaffection**, **withdrawal**, and so on. If these characteristics fail to keep everyone away, the wall is built higher with more serious resistance.

Recall that the wall is supposed to hide the pain, bitterness, rebellion, fear, pride, lust, bad fruit, and spiritual darkness of the heart-tree that has grown from the seed of unlove planted in the heart-soil. One problem the person runs into is that the wall itself becomes very ugly. In order to cover its ugliness, one might whitewash the outside of the wall. However, this mask is only temporary, It may last long enough for a person to make it in the presence of others, such as at work or church, etc. Another problem is that the limbs keep growing over the wall. The person will continue adding more bricks to make the wall higher and stronger.

*Acts 23:3: Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you **whitewashed wall!** For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?"*

In the upper portion of the wall of defense, **blame** and **slander** are used to create **separation**. A major tool for creating emotional and eventually physical distance is the abuse of **alcohol** and **drugs**. If these big tools don't create enough distance to keep others away, the individual becomes **abusive, immoral** and **violent**. In painful desperation and frustration, if he is unable to keep others out any other way, he will **murder** them.

Now that the wall is strong enough and high enough to keep people out from the side, and the spirits of darkness are keeping the light of God out from above, the helpless individual has become an island. He cannot give or receive love. The person is now isolated from other people and from God. Feelings of **loneliness** and **hopelessness** overwhelm him. The angry, hostile attitudes that had been focused outwardly on others begin to be focused inwardly on himself. **Self-rejection** now plants its painful seeds in his own heart-soil producing a deadly cycle of **depression** and **self-hate**.

The person now must attempt to build a wall to separate himself from himself. He becomes as two people in one body--one rejecting the other. He is actually **dying for love** and is unable to receive it or give it. Finally, he realizes it won't do any good to just murder the one who rejects him; he's must kill the one that is hurting him from the inside. So, he stacks the last brick on the wall. **Suicide** makes this statement, "You will never touch me now; you will never hurt me again; and I will never hurt me again."

Remember again, this person did not want it to be this way. It just happened. It was planted in him. The work of Satan is complete when he can cause people to reject each other long enough **to grow the seed of unlove to its final maturity—death** and separation from God and His kind of life.

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THE HEART-TREE (Continued) (#018)

DEALING WITH THE BAD TREE

Most people in the world today are at some stage of this life-structure. It is the only life-structure available to those without God; and many Christians are, to some degree, in bondage to the bad heart-tree life-structure. We have not known fully the ministry of Jesus to set the captives free, give sight to the blind, proclaim the opening of the prison, set at liberty the bruised, and heal the brokenhearted.

We have tried to deal with bad actions by demanding that individuals simply stop doing the bad deeds. That is like getting a baseball bat and knocking the fruit off the tree. It may help for a while, but not for long. The tree is still there and will soon produce the same fruit again.

Then we became a bit wiser and decided we had to deal with the lust. Getting rid of the lust is like getting out a pruning saw and cutting off the limbs of the tree. It will help a little longer; but, eventually, the limbs will grow back because the "trunk of need and rebellion" is still standing.

Now, we get out our chain saw and cut down the trunk of the tree. We tell people to stop their rebellion and to control their fear and pride. It takes a little longer this time; but you guessed it. The tree will grow back from the root. Even when we tell them to dig out the root of bitterness by forgiving everyone from the heart, we are leaving them with a damaged heart. The gaping hole and torn soil left after extracting the root is open and fertile for the next seed of rejection that comes along. The seed of rejection will be planted in their heart-soil and will begin the process all over again. Until the soil of the heart is healed, the ministry is not finished. That is why Jesus said, "***I am come to heal the brokenhearted.***"

*Luke 4: 18-22 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to **preach the gospel** to the poor. He has sent Me to **heal the brokenhearted**, to **preach deliverance** to the captives and **recovery of sight** to the blind, to **set at liberty** those who are oppressed, to **preach the acceptable** (favorable) **year** of the Lord" Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "**Today this Scripture is fulfilled** in your hearing."*

*Matthew 3: 10: "And even now the ax is laid **to the root of the trees**. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is **cut down** and thrown into the fire."*

*Matthew 15: 13: But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be **uprooted**."*

*Isaiah 61: 1b: "He has sent me to **heal the brokenhearted**, to **proclaim liberty** to the captives, and the **opening of the prison** to those who are bound ..."*

The ministry of Jesus to heal the broken heart is brought forth today by the Holy Spirit to heal the inner wounds in our spirits and souls. The soul includes the mind, will, and emotions. Jesus will heal the hurting memories in our mind, our shattered emotions, crushed will, and wounded spirit.

We appropriate the ministry of Jesus through prayer. In sincere prayer we begin to turn from the old life-structure and speak forth its cutting down, rooting out and healing of the heart-soil.

The first work of appropriating the ministry of Jesus by the Holy Spirit is recognition of our bad lifestyle and truly repenting. No longer blaming someone else, we must truly repent and turn from our actions.

Ask Jesus to help you remove the entire heart-tree from the roots to the fruit. In faith, speak the end of the life-structure in the name of Jesus.

Command all the powers of darkness to be gone from you in the name of Jesus.

Forgive everyone who may have had a part in planting the old life-structure.

Ask Jesus by the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with His love. Believe when you pray and you shall have it.

*Isaiah 61:3-4: "... to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called **trees of righteousness**, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations."*

We must then replant our heart-soil with the seeds that will produce a kingdom of God life-structure. The good heart-tree will grow as naturally as the bad one and will produce beautiful fruit in your life. All the love and affirmation needed is in the intimate presence of God. Come to Him with empty heart-soil and ask Him to plant His life-structure in your heart-soil.

The seeds of unconditional love, acceptance, mercy, grace, and forgiveness flowing through affirming attitude of God will plant the root system of the love of Jesus with all its beautiful tributary roots filling your heart.

GOD'S KINGDOM PATTERN

THE GOOD TRUNK

Always, without exception, the trunk of the tree that grows upon the root of the love of Jesus is **SUBMISSION**. A walk of **obedience** and **submission to God** and to authorities that He has set in place will naturally flow from hearts filled with the love of Jesus.

Remember that this is not something we can work up by striving within ourselves. It

is planted in us and naturally grows from the seed of love. It is an easy yoke of freedom.

The trunk of our life-structure of submission and obedience is characterized by **FAITH** and **HUMILITY**. We know that we are loved. We know God loves us and that He is able to control those over us and around us so that His love will eventually flow through them as well. Therefore, "since God loves me and those over me and around me love me, all my needs will be met. I don't have to worry about taking care of myself by myself. It is easy for me to have faith, to trust and believe. So, I feel **secure, confident, safe, self-assured**, and **considerate** of others.

I also know that God has supplied my needs, not myself. So, I feel **HUMBLE, thankful, and meek**. This leads to a **gentle, caring, and yielding** attitude toward others. The central characteristic of the good heart-tree life-structure is a sense of **ABUNDANCE**, a feeling of having all we need and more. It doesn't matter how much or how little we have, we feel no sense of lack, **no driving wants** or frustrating needs in our heart.

*Psalm 23:1: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall **not want**.*

*Psalm 37:4: Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the **desires (or wants)** of your heart.*

*Philippians 4:19: And my **God shall supply all your need (or lack)** according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

THE GOOD LIMBS

The limbs of our life-structure grow out of the overflowing abundance of our life. Our desire is no longer to take from others, but to give to others from the overflowing rivers of living water from within. The limbs of our tree on which our life-fruit is to be borne are **Desire to Give, Desire to Serve, Desire to Minister, and Desire to Build Others**.

THE GOOD FRUIT AND THE SEED

The attitudes, words and actions of our life-structure are **GOOD DEEDS** and **GOOD SEEDS**. We are free to do what we want to do according to the desire of our hearts. All we do and say is giving in nature and brings blessing to those around us. Our work becomes fun as we let the love of God flow to others through the things we do.

The seeds we sow in the heart-soil of others around us are exactly the same that were sown into our own heart-soil. **Love, acceptance, mercy, grace, and forgiveness are sown through an affirming attitude. The kingdom of God is reproduced** in the hearts of our wives, husbands, children, and others.

Remember again that the wonderful life-structure of the good heart-tree is not something we can fake. And it is not something we can make happen by trying to do it. No amount of human effort or sacrifice can enable us to have faith, humility, a sense of abundance, desire to serve and give, intimacy with God, or good actions and deeds.

We must receive the seed of the resurrected life of Jesus the Christ. A tree grows from a seed. Natural growth will occur in our heart-soil when the seed is planted and maintained. There must be cleared, quality soil available in which to plant the seed. If another tree occupies the soil, there is no room for the new tree to grow. The new tree must be watered by the Spirit and fed by the Word.

THE GOOD BIRDS

Certain kinds of birds are attracted to the good fruit of the Good Heart-Tree. They are **SPIRITS** of enlightenment. **Truth, wisdom, understanding and revelation** come to dwell in the limbs of our Good Heart-tree. We are open to receive the **light** of God, which flows readily into our lives. We can hear and obey the direction of God for our lives. We are able to have intimate communication with God. His truth is revealed to us from His Word by His Spirit. We can hear and understand spiritual truth with clarity. Deeper reality from heaven is revealed to our open hearts. We have enlightened ability to discern truth from error.

*Isaiah 11:2: "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 of the fear of the Lord."*

*Ephesians 1:17-18a: ... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give to you the **spirit of wisdom and revelation** in the **knowledge** of Him, the eyes of your **understanding being enlightened** ...*

*1 John 5:6b, 4:6b: And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is **truth**. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

NO WALLS

Not only are we open to the heavens and able to intimately relate to God, we also are able to intimately relate to others. We are open and transparent. There is **no need for a wall** of defense. We are **able to give and receive love** from others. Since we are giving and receiving love from others from the side, and relating to God openly from above, our lives are filled with life. There is no opportunity for loneliness, boredom, or depression to overpower and defeat us.

*Ephesians 2:14: For He Himself is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle **wall of division** ...*

*1 Corinthians 13:13: **And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.***

We may suffer persecution and enter into difficult times of darkness. Tests and trials may come, and we may again battle with the enemies of our soul. But, **love** will never fail. **Hope**, though it may grow dim, will never go out. And we will emerge from the battle with stronger **faith**, more filled with the light and life of God, more solidly convinced of His love, more prepared to manifest His glory and rule and reign with Him.

THE DOUBLE HEART TREE

James 1:8 ...he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Have you ever felt that your life, since becoming a Christian, was much like a roller-coaster ride? If you haven't, perhaps you have known someone that was on fire for God for a season and then was lower than dirt for a season. Then, they would get back up to the mountaintop for a while, just to slide back down again into the same old trash—only sometimes worse than before. Unfortunately this is a much too common scenario among Christians. It certainly was a picture of my early years as a Christian.

There is a tendency among some Christians to accept this as normal, It is reality for us to meet challenges and sometimes feel less than living on the mountaintop. But it is not needful for Christians to fall back into the pit or the ways of the pit from which Jesus redeemed them. The enemy loves to use our backsliding to beat us with guilt and to punch holes in our faith. He tells us, "See, your not saved; you're a rotten, stinking sinner, a hypocrite; you can't serve God."

We must be missing something somewhere. The "roller-coaster Christians" may have received Jesus as savior, committed their life to Him as much as they knew how, and followed the instructions from their church as best they could. In other words, they have planted the good seed in their heart and cared for it as best they could. And their good tree has experienced a good measure of growth. So, what is wrong? Why are they so double-minded and unstable?

The double-minded heart-tree is one in which the good heart-tree has found enough soil to begin to grow, but **the bad heart-tree has not been cut down and uprooted.**

These Christians may function in one tree for a period of time and then suddenly switch over to the other lifestyle. They may switch to the good tree on Sunday and back to the bad tree on Monday. Or they may live in the good tree Sunday through Friday and switch to the other on Saturday night. They will live **all the way**, one way or the other depending on which tree they are functioning in. This is not a blended mental condition. It is a sudden change from one set of life patterns to the other, much like changing channels on a TV set.

Sometimes they may be in the good tree for six months, a year, or longer and then suddenly shift back to the old structure and surprising everyone around them, including themselves. Some event or situation may trigger a seemingly automatic shift. The individual may not have made a conscious decision to change. It just happened before they realized what was going on. When they are in one tree, it is like the other one never existed. They may wonder, "How in the world could I have thought that way?" How could I have ever thought all that wild stuff was fun?" Or "How could I have thought all that church stuff was so great?" They are unstable in all their ways and tossed about.

The answer is to get the bad heart-tree forever cut down, rooted out, and the soil healed in order that the good tree can take over the whole heart and flourish. When the old life-structure is gone, there is great freedom to walk continuously in the good heart-tree life-structure.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

HEAVENLY FAMILY PATTERN (#019)

FROM REPLICA TO REALITY

Christ Jesus came to restore the reality of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Since the fall of Adam there had only been a facsimile or picture of the kingdom of God in an institutional structure of patterns to preserve a type of the future kingdom. In the fullness of time, Jesus came bringing with Him the potential restoration of the kingdom to replace the Old Testament order that had foreshadowed it.

A great tragedy occurred shortly after the first few centuries. The work of Jesus and the disciples to restore the reality of the kingdom of God to the world was perverted. The church was deceived into returning to the religious institutional shadow of the past and mixing it with the work of Jesus and the disciples. The original, pure heavenly pattern Jesus brought was perverted and the reality of the heavenly kingdom on earth was altered.

In more recent times, kingdom minded people have understood the governance of the world was to be patterned after the government of Heaven. During the last several centuries since reformation began, there has been an effort to pattern the church after Heaven's government. This attempt to replicate the heavenly government on earth has been a step in the process but is not the final design of God.

God does not desire to only replicate the government of heaven on earth. He fully intends that the earth be governed with the government from heaven. This is to be direct governance of the church and the world from heaven on earth. The kingdoms of this world will not become like the kingdom of our God. They shall become the kingdom of our God.

Holy Spirit led reformation leading to God's original patterns of governance on earth has begun. It is yet in the early stages. However, this is a major step toward the reality of the kingdom of God from heaven ruling and reigning on earth.

THE HEAVENLY GOVERNMENT

The government in heaven is entwined with the kingdom government of earth. The government of earth cannot be separated from the government of heaven in God's pattern.

The government of heaven is a FAMILY RELATIONAL structure. God chose to define Himself to man in terms of family relationships. The great SPIRIT GOD who is beyond description and "omni-everything" chose to be FATHER. In Scripture, heavenly relationships are spoken of in terms of family. FATHER has one first-born

SON, who was with the Father from the beginning. The FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT are all ONE GOD in heaven. If it were possible for you to spiritually stand in the fire of the heart of God, the three would be there. There would be no distinction; the three are truly ONE GOD. The holy angels relate in the heavenly household as God's holy servants or messengers.

What is missing in this picture? **The WIFE of God and many more Sons!** Wow! This is getting huge! Are we about to discover why God spoke the earth into being, made mankind in HIS OWN IMAGE, and breathed HIS BREATH into man? Is it not God's purpose that the earth be an extension of heaven filled with many Sons among whom FATHER DWELLS and from whom His beautiful BRIDE comes forth and becomes the WIFE of God?

The government of God on earth is the government of heaven and earth. In this sense, the heaven on earth is a direct intimate part of the government in heaven. Likewise, the government in heaven is a direct and intimate part of the government on earth. The Bride or Wife/Mother and Sons on earth are an intricate and intimate part of the family of God. *(There is no gender distinction here; all can be Bride and all can be Sons.)*

Since most all church and world institutions are currently NOT functioning in real kingdom government, coming into kingdom living is a great change. At best they function as replicas as men seek to represent God on earth. **In the kingdom reality we do not represent God but become a part of the family of God.** We intimately relate in the family and flow the actual work and ways of God into the world by the Holy Spirit.

This is a major shift from the replica or foreshadowing of the government of God that we have lived in to this day. This is a major breakthrough in becoming what God desires us to become and ruling and reigning with Him on earth now. It is God ruling through His heavenly family pattern of government in the world.

With only a facsimile of the kingdom of God, we have not been able to bring down the government of the enemy. He continues to have a great influence on the governments of religion, business, education, entertainment, and nations of the world. However, the enemy kingdom is not a facsimile but the direct work of evil spirits. This has led to the church's failure to reclaim the world for God. As the transition from replica to reality takes place, the kingdoms ruled by the enemy will begin to fall under the superior strength and power of the true kingdom of heaven.

HEAVEN'S FAMILY PATTERNS

As we continue to move into actually living the kingdom lifestyle, the patterns that govern our lives must become those that govern heaven. This means major adjustments in how believers live in the world. We are not just talking about the adjustment from the worldly, evil patterns of society; we are talking about adjustments regarding believers seeing, understanding and walking in the principles of heaven-style living on earth by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The first principle is that there is only one God and one Head of all. God is Head of all things. There is one authority in heaven, the authority of the Father. The throne of God is the absolute rule of all. The kingdom of God on earth is not separate from the kingdom in heaven. The throne of God is the seat of all governments at all

levels in the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. There is no replicated authority.

Secondly, there is no distance and therefore no need for any form of delegated authority. God does not delegate His authority as King of all. Our heavenly Father, through Christ by the Holy Spirit, is potentially available directly to every person on earth at all times. God's authority flows through others but it always remains His authority. All authority in heaven and on earth is given to the Son.

Through the Holy Spirit, the Son and the Father can indwell mature Sons in the many-membered Body of Christ on earth. Great authority flows through the Body; but it always remains God's authority. The holy angels are sent with specific authority for specific tasks; however, it is always the authority of God. It is not delegated or given over to them.

The sent servants on earth flow in gifts and authority. The gifts are like tools and may remain as part of the person or may come and go as God wills. However, the authority is never part of the person. It only flows through the person. No one is given delegated authority from God. The gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd and teacher are tools for service--not "offices of authority." God's authority can flow through all human beings including those who carry these gifts; but again, it remains only God's authority.

In the beginning, man was given dominion on earth and the ability to choose to obey or to disobey. But God did not give man the authority to disobey. Disobedience is rebellion to God and obedience to the enemy. Man's disobedience to God (sin) submits to the enemy as an authority and releases the enemy to have a measure of authority in the world. In disobeying God, man seizes authority he was not given. He makes himself an authority apart from God. Functioning as an authority apart from God is the original sin of Adam.

Thirdly, God and everything in Heaven is completely holy. The kingdom of God in heaven and on earth is altogether holy. Nothing that defiles is allowed to enter the kingdom of God. Every member of the family of God must be completely holy just as He is holy (Rev 21:27).

This is very different from the cheap version of what we have called the "kingdom of God". Yet this is the reality of God and His kingdom. Most who think they have entered the kingdom of God have only begun a journey of complete cleansing and total death to sin as they become fully alive unto God (Rom 6:11). The kingdom of God cannot rule on earth without a holy people flowing the authority of God to govern the earth.

Fourthly, God is love and His kingdom is established and sustained by love. The love of God is the power that changes the hearts of men and cleanses the earth. Love is the predominant principle and law of the kingdom of God in heaven and on earth. Love permeates heaven and the kingdom on earth. Nothing in the kingdom works without love. Without love there would be no faith, no hope, no redemption, no mercy, no grace, and no life. Love is the glue that holds the kingdom together and is the gold standard of obedience.

The heavenly family is connected by love. The Father loves the Son and the Father's love reaches toward all mankind. The Son loves us and gave Himself for us at the

cross. The Father so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

We are probably more accustomed to thinking of the love relationship with God in the sense of "agapao" love. Scripture speaks of the "agapao" love in the family (*social, moral, ready-to-serve kind of love*). It also speaks of "phileo" love in the family (*deep, tender affection, cherishing above all else, characterized by consistency*).

1 Cor 16:22: If anyone does not love (phileo) the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed....

The heavenly family pattern includes social love and a deep, tender affection flowing from the Heavenly Father and the Son Who becomes the Bridegroom and Husband of the Bride/Wife. The same love also flows to the children. **The heavenly family pattern is relationship through love including tender affection.** Apparently, according to the above verse there is a curse attached to not having the "phileo" kind of love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The kingdom of heaven pattern is the Bride/Wife (Bride of Christ) loving her Husband (Jesus) with deep, tender affection to the point of complete submission with worship and adoration. The Husband (Jesus) loves His Wife (Bride of Christ) to the point of giving Himself for her and caring for her with deep and tender affection. The work of the Husband (Jesus) is not complete without the Wife (Bride of Christ).

THE KINGDOM ORDERS AND PROVIDES

The spiritual government from heaven is the absolute, supreme, above all else, authority that provides all life and establishes all order in heaven and on earth. Earthly institutions of life and order or supposed to flow the design and substance of the heavenly spiritual government into all natural life. The heavenly family pattern should be visible in the earthly family institution, business institutions and all governmental institutions.

All aspects of spiritual and practical needs of mankind and the planet are provided for through the heavenly family patterns of government both in heaven and on earth. The Wife of God does the business of the kingdom on earth and brings great honor to her Husband. Proverbs 31:10-31 paints a picture of the government of God carried out by the pure and holy Wife of God. The Lord safely trusts His heart to her and there is no lack of the work of the Lord being done. She never does harm or brings reproach to the Lord. She is industrious in business. She is strong and powerful in the Lord. She provides for the poor and needy of the world. The Lord is known through her and governs the affairs of the world. She is honored and will rejoice in times to come. She speaks wisdom and kindness into the world. She is diligent and not idle. She is blessed and praised by her children. There will be much fruit of her labor, which will not be lost. God's Wife's works will praise her and bring glory to God.

Proverbs 31:10-31

"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband safely trusts her, So he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.
She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands.
She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar.

She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.
She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard.
She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms.
She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night.
She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle.
She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet.
She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.
She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants.
Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come.
She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness.
She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:
"Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all."
Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates."

The government of God comes from the spiritual but is practical and real. Every aspect of life in the world is dealt with through the provision and work of the Father, the Son, and the Bride/Wife by the Holy Spirit. The heavenly kingdom family pattern governs the natural family, business, and political governments. It is God's only plan for governing of all matters spiritual and natural, in the kingdom of God.

PATTERNS OF LIFE

New Jerusalem is the great pattern-city of God. The patterns of life are coming down from God to form and shape the Bride of Christ. The other great pattern-city, Babylon, has imposed its patterns of rule upon the earth. The kingdoms of this earth will become the kingdom of our God, as God's people fall in love with Him and become one with the Lord. Then, New Jerusalem patterns of life will be planted into the hearts of men and then brought forth into the world.

The book of Genesis (the book of beginnings) is filled with patterns of New Jerusalem life. The Garden of Eden with its God-given patterns of life and ruling are New Jerusalem patterns of kingdom order.

God's rule on earth is governed after the pattern of the Heavenly family.

God made man in the image of God and breathed the life of God into man.
Jesus is the image of God and the Spirit of life is within Him.

Genesis 1:26,28, Amp: God said, "Let Us (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the (tame) beasts, and over all of the earth, and over every thing that creeps upon the earth." And God blessed them, and said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it (with all its vast resources); and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the earth."

Adam was given dominion on earth. (Notice that Adam was not given dominion over other people.)

All authority in heaven and on earth is given to Christ Jesus.

Mat 28: 18: And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Adam was created and communed with God before having a wife.
Jesus was with the Father from the beginning and also had no wife.

God formed a wife for Adam from Adam's body.
God is forming a wife for Christ Jesus from His Body.

God instructed man to leave his original state and be joined to and cleave to his wife.
Christ Jesus left His original state in heaven to be joined to and cleave to His Bride/Wife.

The man and his wife are to be open, transparent and intimate with one another.
Christ Jesus and His Bride/Wife are to be open, transparent and intimate with one another.

The man and his wife are to become one flesh (one with one another).
Christ Jesus and His Bride/Wife are to become one.

*Genesis 2: 18-25, Amp: Now the Lord God said, "It is not good (sufficient, satisfactory) that the man **should be alone; I will make him a helper meet (suitable, adapted, completing)** for him." And out of the ground the Lord God formed every (wild) beast and living creature of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them, and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was its name. And Adam gave names to all livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every (wild) beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper meet (suitable, adapted, completing) for him.*

*And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept He took **one of his ribs - a part of his side** - and closed up the (place with) flesh instead of it; and the rib or part of his side which the Lord had taken from the man, **He built up and made into a woman** and brought her to the man. Then Adam said, "This (creature) is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of a man."*

*Therefore a man shall **leave** his father and his mother and shall become united and **cleave** to his wife, and **they shall become one flesh**. And the man and his wife were both **naked**, and were **not embarrassed or ashamed** in each other's presence.*

The husband is to deeply and tenderly love his wife.
Jesus loves the church (Bride/Wife) and gave himself for her.

The wife is to be subject, submit, and adapt to her husband.
The Bride/Wife of Christ is to be subject to, submit to and adapt to Christ Jesus.

The husband is the head of the wife.
Christ Jesus is the head of the church (Bride/Wife).

*Ephesians 5:22-24, Amp: **Wives, be subject - be submissive and adapt yourselves to your own husbands as a service to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church, Himself the Savior of (His) body. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands.***

The wife is instructed to see that she greatly respects and admires her husband. The Bride/Wife of Christ has this same respect, reverence and worship for her Husband.

*Ephesians 5:33: However, let each man of you (without exception) love his wife as (being in a sense) his very own self; and let the wife see that she **respects and reverences her husband - that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly.***

God's patterns always work. Nothing else will produce the kingdom life we all desire. **Our only choices are to adjust to God's pattern or try to adjust God's pattern to us.** I think we know which choice will work and which one will not. We can always find the love and grace in God to fulfill our part.

Please note there is a distinction between "man and woman" and "husband and wife." Man and woman are the same being with no distinction in the spiritual realm. Husband and wife are places of service and, as we have seen, are without gender in the heavenly family pattern. Marriage of man and woman is an earthly replica made from the heavenly family pattern. It is only a type or shadow of the Heavenly Family.

In the spiritual realm there is no male or female, Jew or Gentile, bond or free.

*Gal 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, **there is neither male nor female:** for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

The heavenly family patterns take precedence over all earthly replicas or types. It is the real from which all life is to be patterned. Earthly replicas are not extended into heaven.

Because people have such great involvement in marriage in this life, it is mistakenly assumed by many that marriage continues in the spiritual realms of heaven. Jesus made this clear to the Sadducees when they brought Him a challenging question regarding whose wife a woman would be in heaven when she had had more than one husband in this life. Please do not be greatly concerned about missing "being married" in heaven. Experiencing the fullness of your heavenly marriage to your husband, Jesus, for one moment will wipe away all of your concern.

Mark 12:24-25: Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."

In spiritual matters there is no male and female. The more completely we live in the Spirit, the more we experience no male/female difference. The more we live in the

earthly realm, the greater we envision male/female differences. There are differences in our earthly experience but not in our spiritual position or functions.

When God took a part of Adam to build up Eve, it seems obvious that He removed much of the emotion from Adam and placed it into Eve and left most of the ego in Adam. This makes male or female more suitable for certain functions in life. This is particularly evident in the rearing of children.

CHILDREN IN THE HEAVENLY FAMILY PATTERN

Natural children possess all the potential of adults. They have gifts, personal qualities and attributes, but they are immature and undeveloped. Years will be required for them to develop natural maturity in order to use their innate abilities. Though some may mature more rapidly in an area than others, to some degree they are all tied to time to produce maturity.

Spiritually, maturity is not as directly tied to time. A child may possess powerful gifts and reach maturity to use them in a short period of time. On the other hand, some fully mature adults may not have developed spiritually at all.

The parents have a major part in the development of children.

In the heavenly family pattern for natural children, the husband/father (like Jesus) and the wife/mother are both corporately involved in the development of their children. The mother is equipped with all the tenderness and attributes needed to nurture the babies and help them develop to maturity. The father/husband has strength and all the power of heaven to provide protection and security for the fledgling child. He also has wisdom and knowledge to train the children.

The children feel extremely secure under the care and protection of their strong, loving father and tender, loving mother. The father's strength instills feelings of safety in a child. His loving firmness gives them great assurance that firm boundaries exist for their protection. Only the special strength and love of their father can provide the security of discipline and protection they need. Small children are very sensitive to their mother's feelings and attitudes. Because she feels safe with her Husband, the children feel safe.

Boundaries, rules, discipline and laws are part of the training and development of the immature. The children's primary response is to **obey** their parents.

*Ephesians 6: 1-3: Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord (as His representatives), for this is just and right. Honor (esteem and value as precious) your father and your mother; this is the first commandment with a promise: that all may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.*

God's pattern is for the children to be **obedient** and **honor** their parents. Children growing up in the heavenly family pattern easily come to know God. They see Him in their parents. They have a clear view of God's love in the love their father has for their mother. They are trained to reflect God's love as they see their mother respect and praise her Husband, their father. They understand God's love and know how to respond to it with loving respect and submission.

I think we can all see that the godly natural family mirrors the heavenly family. The heavenly family pattern translates into the earthly reality of lives and families. We are moving toward the reality of the rule of God through Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit in His people on earth as it is in heaven.

The Heavenly Family Pattern is the same for all types of corporate relationships including all kingdom business and governance.

BUSINESS IN THE HEAVENLY FAMILY PATTERN

God, through Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit is to be the **HEAD** of all businesses and governments. Some of us have begun to accept the reality that Jesus is the head of the church; but it might be a big step to realize that, in the kingdom of God, Jesus is also the head of each person and all businesses, schools, governments at all levels, and any other corporate work or structure in the world. In the kingdom of God there is nothing that is not under the headship of Christ.

God will flow His authority through mature Sons to carry out management functions. However, He will not delegate His authority. The King is the rightful owner of all the assets of the kingdom. God's empowerment and direction comes with the call and opportunity to serve in managing a portion of the kingdom. All things are for Him and through Him and nothing in the kingdom is done without Him. Our love relationship and intimate oneness with God provides the happiest, most productive life possible. As the Bride/Wife of God we are overjoyed beyond measure in the glory of our Husband/Father/King.

We saw earlier in the discussion on Proverbs 31 how the Wife serves her husband by meeting the needs of people and the world around her. **The purpose of business and all other activity in the kingdom is to glorify God by providing for the needs of people and the world around us.** All this is done according to His direction and from a motivation of pure love.

Every part of the heavenly family pattern rules in all forms of business. Employment is as permanent as marriage. Children (newcomers or immature) are loved and trained the same as in the heavenly pattern. Everyone looks to Jesus as Head and follows His leadership flowing through the Holy Spirit in those serving as father/husband, wife/mother and children. Everyone submits to one another and to the other person's place of service in the kingdom order (family). The focus is always serving by meeting needs and never is the focus on gaining personal wealth to consume upon our lusts or to meet only our needs.

God never intended that business and other "secular" activities become competitive means of personal fulfillment of greedy motives. Competition, greed and other such things are patterned from Babylon and cannot exist in the kingdom of God.

Secular and godly are not opposites. In the past, there has been an inaccurate assumption that there was a division between secular and godly. The kingdom of God encompasses all life. The proper distinction or division is between godly and profane. The world is not inherently evil and is being redeemed and returned to the kingdom of God.

The heavenly family patterns of God's government for families, businesses, churches, and every aspect of human life are New Jerusalem patterns coming down

now from God to form and shape the Bride of Christ. The enemy's patterns that have ruled in the world are harlot patterns from "Mystery Babylon."

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

HARLOTRY OF BABYLON (#020)

There are two great, ruling cities from which mankind can receive patterns for life. We have previously written regarding the great ruling city of God, New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ City. The other great ruling city is Babylon, the Harlot of the devil, which has planted its harlot patterns throughout the current world system. Babylon's patterns have produced great riches for some. She is extremely enticing and beautifully clothed in wealth. Yet, inside, she is full of filth and abominations, a habitation of demons.

Babylon must fall. This great religious and political system with all its patterns of life is judged of God and is coming down. Before the patterns of New Jerusalem can rule, the patterns of Babylon must be dissolved. The people seeking to enter the city-of-God lifestyle must have the Babylonian patterns and ways broken, removed from their lives, and replaced with New Jerusalem patterns. The Babylonian system has been deadly to the saints of God. Many have fallen and many are in captivity to Babylonian ways. God's people are warned to come out of Babylon lest they share in her sin and receive of her plagues.

*Revelation 17:1-6: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the **great harlot** who sits on **many waters**, with whom **the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.**" So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. **The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: "MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."** And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.*

*Revelation 17:15,18: And he said to me, "**The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.**" And the woman whom you saw is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.*

*Revelation 18:2-4: And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become **a habitation of demons, a prison** for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and **the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.**" And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "**Come out of her, my people lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.**"*

What a great contrast between the harlot city of Babylon described in the book of Revelation (chapters seventeen to nineteen) and the beautiful Bride-City of God, New Jerusalem, described in Revelation (chapters twenty-one and twenty-two). The beautiful Bride of Christ lifestyle is filled with the glory of God abiding with man and man living in God's very presence partaking of a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. Tears are wiped away and curses broken. Men and women are thankfully serving God and joyfully praising Him.

Just as there is a natural Jerusalem and now a spiritual New Jerusalem coming forth, there was a natural Babylon that was destroyed and now a Mystery Babylon that is being destroyed. Many patterns that began thousands of years ago in old Babylon are traceable throughout ancient history and up to the present time. Ancient Babylon was the first great-walled city after the flood. Noah's great grandson, Nimrod, built it. Noah begot Ham; Ham begot Cush; and Cush begot Nimrod.

Babylon became the birthplace of idolatry that spread throughout the ancient world and was passed to empires and civilizations throughout history. Nimrod and his wife, Semiramis, were the first people to be worshipped as gods. Although different names were used in various cultures, they were similarly worshipped in much of the world, and can still be easily recognized in many religions today. These patterns were subversively planted into the Christian religion. Churches today are still affected by them. This nation (the good old U.S.A.) and much of the world are primarily ruled by the patterns of ancient Babylon. The patterns found in Nimrod and Semiramis of ancient Babylon are very similar to the dynamics of worldly families, businesses, churches, and political governments of today.

Genesis 10:8-12a: Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen.

The word "**before**" in the statement "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord" could be translated "**against**". Nimrod was a mighty man "against" the Lord. By some means, he and Semiramis tapped into the darkness of mystical and occult powers. A departure from the patriarchal faith had occurred. It is represented by some profane history that Cush had become a ringleader of apostasy. Nimrod added mystical, demonic powers and knowledge to his natural strength and became a powerful force on the earth, conquering all those around him.

Nimrod was the first to wage war upon his neighbors, the first to train troops with exercise and hardship, and the first to build towers and walled cities for battle. Nimrod exercised strong control over men. They were enticed with unbridled self-gratification. Everywhere Nimrod went there were extravagant parties with orgies, dancing girls, music, games, and anything that brought self-gratification. Nimrod also controlled others by locking up the mysteries of science and sorcery that he had discovered and releasing them to men only when they were under his control. He used confession of sins and faults to control. When he had enough information on others and they were awestruck by his great display of magic, he could easily control them.

Nimrod was **suddenly cut off** in the midst of his glorious career. Mystery surrounds his disappearance, but it is believed he met with a violent **death** while on one of his expeditions. Semiramis, whose **feminine beauty** hid her **immoral, manipulative, deceitful** self, had **usurped** her husband's attributes before his death. At his death, she fully **took over** her husband's place.

Semiramis, in her **licentious ways**, gave birth to a son after Nimrod was gone. She told people that Nimrod had reappeared in the person of a posthumous son. She held the son up as God and the people worshipped him. They worshipped her as the mother of God. Eventually, she became the predominant goddess overshadowing the son. Thus, through **deception** and **manipulation** she **took over** the assets and attributes of Nimrod and continued her lavish lifestyle.

Semiramis was seen as both the mother and wife of her husband. Nimrod was seen as the husband and the son of his wife. She was revered as the "Mother of God". The image of the "Mother of God" with the child in her arms spread throughout the idolatrous world. Semiramis is said to have finished the wall of Babylon and thus became the goddess of fortresses and towers. The "Diana of the Ephesians" mentioned in the New Testament with her crown of towers is identified with Semiramis.

Babylon became known as a great center of extravagant wealth and revelry, a monument of glamour to the accomplishments of man, a place of harlotry and sorcery, a place of great wizardry, great human knowledge and discovery, and a place of competition and contention. However, its primary characteristic was spiritual harlotry.

Spiritual harlotry is seeking to fulfill our own needs and desires apart from God. God is our provider and desires to meet our needs in every area of life. If we look to anything or anyone else to meet our needs, we are looking to another god and are involved in spiritual harlotry. Harlotry and idolatry are very closely related. Harlotry is looking to **an idol (another god) for what our Heavenly Father should provide for us.** **Spiritual harlotry is selling our purity to meet our needs.** It is **self-seeking** and **self-serving**.

It is easy to see how the bad heart-tree is a harlot tree. Spiritual harlotry is seeking to meet the needs of our life-structure on our own, instead of trusting God to take care of us. The good heart-tree is a bride tree, in which we are able to trust God to meet all of our needs and satisfy our wants.

Babylon is a harlot system, a means of meeting human needs and selfish wants apart from God. Babylon is ruled by a spirit of **harlotry** and is characterized by **competition, immorality, and sorcery.**

HARLOTRY IS SELF-SEEKING AND SELF-SERVING:

It is seeking to meet my own needs and desires apart from God.

COMPETITION IS SEEKING POSITION OR CONTROL:

Some characteristics are: *Contention, Strife, Thieving (taking), Lying, Deceit, Manipulation, Seduction, Control, Dominance, War (fighting), Overlord, Tyrant, Backbiting, Murder, Greed, and Covetousness.*

IMMORALITY IS SEEKING PLEASURE OR ENTERTAINMENT:

Some characteristics are: *Lust, Fantasy Lust, Fornication, Sexual Perversion, Unclean, Overeating, Overplaying, Overworking, Over-resting, and Reveling (partying)*.

SORCERY IS SEEKING POWER OR DIRECTION:

Some characteristics are: *Occult, Witchcraft, Hypnosis, Mind Control, Mind Power, Humanism, Intellectualism, Astrology, Psychics, and New-Age Junk*.

Much of the world has taken giant steps into Babylonian harlotry in recent decades. Games and "playing" have become a major part of the western world. Gambling lotteries and casinos have spread widely across the land. Sexual perversion and recreational immorality are accepted as normal behavior. Psychics are now openly viewed by many as a valid source of direction for their lives. Competition has intensified as people struggle for control in families, businesses, governments, tribes, and nations. Computer and video games, gambling, spectator sports, recreational drugs and alcohol, entertainment, and other recreational industries probably already represent the largest segment of production in the western world. **Are we seeking from another god what our true God desires to supply?**

WORLD WAR

Many skirmishes and wars continue to be fought within the Babylonian world system. Men and nations compete for the assets of the world to gratify themselves. There is no end to the struggles for positions of control and possessions in the Babylonian jungles of social structure.

However, the greatest war of all time is the all out win or die worldwide war between Babylon and New Jerusalem (the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light). The war is between the harlot and the Bride way of life ruling the world. Christ Jesus has already won this war and has provided victory over the evil Babylonian kingdom of darkness. The full manifestation of this victory waits for the hearts of mankind to align with Christ Jesus. This involves human beings turning from their harlot lifestyles and becoming the righteousness of God in Christ. The pure, holy, glorious Bride of Christ is the fulfillment of the victory Christ Jesus purchased with His own blood.

Therefore, the war is now within the minds and hearts of mankind, especially those who are called by His name. The god of Babylon strives with much success to limit the faith of the people of God. His greatest tool is spiritual blindness to kingdom of God reality. When God's people cannot see and cannot hear Him clearly, false concepts can be planted that prevent true faith from developing. What man believes in his heart determines the release of the rule of the kingdom of darkness or the kingdom of light.

The war is about faith to believe that the kingdom of God is now available on the earth. The enemy has destroyed the faith of most religious people. They simply do not believe that the kingdom of God that Christ came to purchase can manifest now. The enemy has perverted the word of God and caused most people to believe the planet is to be destroyed and not redeemed. The enemy wants you to have no faith for the kingdom of God now and no hope for the planet to become restored.

This blindness and loss of faith in the kingdom of God is not new. Works of Babylon were firmly implanted in the church before the fourth century. By the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries, when the English Bible was translated, there was almost no revelation of the kingdom of God on earth. This present life and world were seen as hopelessly evil and lost. The planet would have to be destroyed, a new planet created, and Jesus bodily returned for there to be any of God's kingdom on earth.

This led to what I consider to be the most grievous of translation errors in our English Bible. In 2nd Peter the translators deviated from their own translation rules to cause the word to say the "elements" of the earth will be burned up in judgment. Going back to the original language, it is absolutely obvious that without any doubt Peter was speaking of the rudimental elements of evil that would be completely destroyed.

The word translated "**elements**" is "**stoicheion**" (*stoy-khi'-on*), which means something orderly in arrangement, a basal, fundamental, initial serial, and constituent. In other words, "stoicheion" means the basic, foundational, principles of an order. In this passage it specifically refers to the foundations of the evil order affecting earth, not the physical elements of the planet.

This is the only time this word is interpreted to mean physical elements in the Bible.

"Stoicheion" is used seven times in the New Testament; in every case it refers to basic principles or rudiments, either of the doctrines and oracles of God or of the evil world order. In no other place is it interpreted as referring to the physical elements.

(For a detailed study of this passage see Chapter 7 of the book The Seventh Millennium.)

God is looking for a kingdom people.

God is calling forth a people that will break through the Babylonian darkness, and renounce their harlot lifestyles, and renew their minds to the mind of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God waits for God's people to change their mind-set from seeking life and pleasure from other gods to a pure love relationship with Christ Jesus our Lord and King.

Will we become the Bride or continue in our harlot ways? The world waits to see the reality of the New Jerusalem lifestyle and the love and power of the real kingdom of God. Multitudes will come to the real thing; however, multitudes will continue to seek other gods until they see something more real than what the church has produced in past centuries.

In prayer renounce the Babylonian ways in your own life and rebuke the enemy in the name of Jesus. Ask Father to fill your heart with the life and concepts of the New Jerusalem lifestyle.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE DIVIDED-HEART TREE (#021)

The enemy first must capture the hearts and minds of people; then, he can attack and pervert the heavenly family pattern of governance at all levels and replace it with Babylonian patterns.

Through the methods described in the Bad-Heart Tree, the ability to function in the heavenly family pattern is stolen from natural families. Social order and all levels of governance in much of the world have become patterned after Babylon. The need and greed of the self-centered individual perverts the love of the husband for the wife and creates an abusive relationship. The respect for the husband from the wife is turned into competition and disrespect. The honor and obedience of the children becomes rebellious dishonor and disobedience. Babylonian chaos replaces kingdom of God order.

Jesus came to restore the hearts and minds of man to the heavenly family pattern. In Christ, man becomes a new creation and old things pass away. In Christ, the potential is there for husbands to love their wives, wives to respect their husbands, and children to honor and obey their parents. **Remember, this pattern is for the family, business, and all forms of governance in the kingdom of God.** When God's people seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first and above all else, the heavenly family pattern rules all areas of their lives.

The Divided-Heart Tree

There is another heart tree that is different from those we have previously considered. It is not the Good-Heart Tree, the purified-bride heart tree. Nor is it the Bad-Heart Tree, the impure-harlot heart tree. It is not the double-minded heart tree, which operates all the way, one way or the other at any given time.

The Divided-Heart Tree is a hybrid, impure-wife heart tree. It is the **adulteress** heart-tree. This person is married to Jesus. One side of his heart is producing good fruit to Jesus. But, because he is not completely healed, one side of his heart is still affected by the harlotry of Babylon. It is like two streams coming together, one muddy and one pure. It is like a wife riding in the front seat of the car with her husband while reaching back in the back seat to hold hands with her old lover.

Spiritual adultery is both GOD-SEEKING and SELF-SEEKING at the same time. It is a mixture of both GOD-SERVING and SELF-SERVING at the same time.

*Psalm 12:2: They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a **double (divided) heart they speak.***

*Hosea 10:2: Their **heart is divided**; now they are held guilty. He will break down their altars; He will ruin their sacred pillars.*

*2 Chronicles 25:2: And **he did what was right** in the sight of the Lord, **but not with a loyal heart**.*

*James 3:10-14: Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, **these things ought not to be so**. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh.*

Adultery, both spiritual and natural, is one of the most hideous sins of man. Perhaps no other sin brings as much loss and destruction in life. Adultery in the natural realm can cost a person the intimacy of a pure marriage relationship. Adultery in the spiritual realm will cost the intimacy of a pure relationship with God. Adultery in the natural can cost all a man possesses--all his wealth, every good thing he has accomplished in his life, and perhaps even his very life. Spiritual adultery can wreck a person's spiritual life in the same way.

Spiritual adultery in God's called out people is a horrible thing and never goes unnoticed by God. The adulteress, unlike the harlot, sincerely loves, respects, and honors her husband (Jesus) with part of her heart. She really knows Him and obeys Him with part of her heart. But, she only **pretends obedience** with the rest of her heart. She is still in bondage to some Babylonian harlot ways. While genuinely seeking to serve God, at the same time she is seeking to serve herself and get the position, money, security, fame, or whatever she needs or wants.

The man of God with an adulterated heart will often be among the most highly esteemed within the church. **He has double motivation - both a sincere desire to serve God and a desire to accomplish something for himself at the same time.** Consequently, he will be among the most zealous, the first to arrive, the last to leave, eager to volunteer, the best at keeping the rules, always willing to help, and is generally very busy. This makes him the most likely to be promoted or ordained in the institutional church or business. Whatever he does will usually grow rapidly; and, suddenly, at some point, it comes crashing down. Spiritual wisdom and discernment are necessary to distinguish between the truly dedicated, totally sold out, dynamic servant of God filled with vision and compassion of the Spirit, from the double motivated, divided heart adulteress.

Some Christians may become very confused when they see only one side of the divided heart person. They observe the godly side and are rightly convinced that this is a man that sincerely desires to serve God. He truly loves God with one side of his heart and life and some good fruit is evident. However, if and when they are exposed to the **other side** of this person, they may be quite shocked, disappointed, and confused. Much failure may result, and much damage may occur to the Christians. Adulterated men of God bring a curse on the people.

*Jeremiah 23:14: "Also I have seen a horrible thing in the **prophets of Jerusalem: they commit adultery and walk in lies**; they also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns back from his wickedness. All of them are like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah."*

*Jeremiah 23: 10: For the land is full of **adulterers**; for because of a **curse**, the land mourns. The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up. Their course of life is evil, and their might is not right.*

We all have been greatly affected by and trained in Babylonian ways.

Studying old Babylon and old Jerusalem in the Old Testament provides clear insight into Mystery Babylon and New Jerusalem of today. Most of the world, the church, and each of us individually have been or are now ruled by the patterns of Babylon. In a very real sense, the church and world have been taken captive to Babylon. We've all been held captive in Babylon for a long season. We have had to be trained in the ways of Babylon in order to survive while there. We had to learn to live and prosper in Babylon while we were captive there. Now, God is saying, **"Your captivity is over; come out of Babylon, my people; come into New Jerusalem."** **It is time now for God's people to fully lay aside the ways of life in Babylon and walk in God's kingdom ways only.**

*Jeremiah 29: 4-15, 28: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were **carried away captive**, whom I have caused to be carried away **from Jerusalem to Babylon**: "Build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters - that you may be increased there, and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace."*

For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are in your midst deceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them," says the Lord.

*For thus says the Lord: "After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," says the Lord, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will **seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart**. I will be found by you," says the Lord, "and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you," says the Lord, "and I will bring you to the place from which I caused you to be carried away captive."*

"Because you have said, 'The Lord has raised up prophets for us in Babylon. For He has sent to us in Babylon, saying, "This captivity is long; build houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens and eat their fruit"'. "

*Jeremiah 51: 44-45, 49-5: "I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring out of his mouth what he has swallowed; and the nations shall not stream to him anymore. Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall. **My people, go out of the midst of her!** And let everyone deliver himself from the fierce anger of the Lord. As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall. You who have escaped the sword, get away! **Do not stand still! Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come to your mind.**"*

It is time for us to be set free from Babylonian ways that have become ingrained in our lives. Much of the Babylonian thinking has become so much a part of us that it may be difficult to realize we need to be changed. In Babylon, it was commendable to strive to get fame and fortune. Striving to get more and be better than others was normal, good behavior. Getting the most you could get for the least you could get by with giving, was considered good business. If the other guy got the short end of the deal, so what? That was "good horse trading". After all, if you did not outsmart him and "get him first," he would get you. We have been infiltrated with this kind of thinking.

But in New Jerusalem, competition has no place in the church or in business. In New Jerusalem, we serve God by serving mankind. A job or business is something we do **to serve**, not something we do **to get**. A ministry is no different. It is something we do **to serve**. Not what we do to get something we need, such as money or position or a sense of well being.

If we stop to really consider why we do what we do, we might find that our motives are mixed with self-seeking, along with our desires to be God-serving. If we examine our methods of relating within our family, business, or church, we may find some practices of Babylon.

God said we would find Him and be delivered from our captivity of Babylonian ways when we seek Him with our **whole hearts**. We have paid a very great price for our adulterated ways. Our divided hearts have caused us broken lives and broken families. They have split up churches, wrecked relationships, and turned many against the church. Babylonian ways are destroying our nations. The sick and needy are left to suffer and die for lack of power to effectively minister to their needs. The lost wander on in darkness because we are too busy seeking to meet our own needs to effectively minister to their needs.

Proverbs 5:14: I was on the verge of total ruin, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

Proverbs 6:26, 32-33: For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so, destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away.

Proverbs 7:23, 17-18: I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love. Till an arrow struck his liver, as a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would take his life.

We must give up seeking our own profit (self-seeking).

Only as the Bride is completely faithful to her Husband can the kingdom of God lifestyle rule our lives, our local churches, our businesses, our nation, and eventually the planet. Our mixture of self-serving and God-serving will never bring forth the kingdom in our lives. We will continue to strive and fail after a season of apparent success. People will continue to needlessly suffer for lack of purified, powerful ministry. Only a pure hearted motivation to serve God, no matter what happens to us will do. Whether we are personally blessed, accepted to a place of leadership, or rejected and stoned by those we serve, we must give our whole heart, our whole life

to our Husband Jesus. We must stop trying to defend and profit ourselves while at the same time endeavoring to serve God. First, above all else, we must seek the kingdom of God with our whole heart.

It is time for all of us to come out of Babylon. It is time for us to be released from the spirit of harlotry and all that works with it that has caused us to be spiritual adulterers (**self-seeking** and **God-seeking**). The price we are paying for of our adultery is too great.

*1 Corinthians 10:33: ...just as I also please all men in all things, **not seeking my own profit**, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*

*Luke 12:29-33: "And **do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink**, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. **But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.** Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys."*

*Hebrews 13:4-5: Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and **adulterers** God will judge. Let your conduct be without **covetousness**, and be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

We must serve only God--no longer serving God mostly and ourselves a little, no longer living according to the old ways. God is our source. He will provide all we need as we seek to serve Him only and follow His guidance.

*Matthew 4:10: Then Jesus said to him, "**Away with you, Satan!** For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and **Him only you shall serve.**'"*

We are an adulterous generation. We are trying to serve Almighty God with our self-seeking, Babylonian, harlot ways mingled with the purity and power of Holy God. And then we wonder why so little is accomplished. Why so many are wounded and destroyed within their church and family, the very places where they should be built up and protected. The God-seeking side of our heart begins a good work and draws people to trust us; then, our self-seeking side causes painful devastation and mistrust. Eventually, failure will occur and whatever has been gained will be lost.

Then, we seek miracles from God to bail us out of the corruption we have created with our adultery. We pray for miracles to get us out of debt. God did not get us into debt and He probably isn't going to bail us out if we do not change our self-serving ways. **We do not clearly hear the voice of God because we do not want to change.** So we search for a miraculous sign to help us.

Matthew 12:39a Amp: "... An evil and adulterous generation [that is, a generation morally unfaithful to God] seeks or demands a sign..."

Matthew 16:3-4,6: "... Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."

We become like the Pharisee who makes a great show of "being a Christian." Yet our own hearts are mixed with uncleanness. This always causes us, like the Pharisee, to become legally minded as we attempt to justify our self-seeking sin with legal loopholes and focus on the lawbreaking of others. Or, since we are not now experiencing the abundant, spiritual resurrection life of Christ ourselves, we deny that others are experiencing it. Thus, we are like the Sadducees denying resurrection life now as we deny spiritual gifts and experiences. Because we are not experiencing them, we believe others are not as well.

We tend to look at those experiencing the resurrection life of God and judge them from our own heart. They are outspoken and dynamic as they boldly bring forth the Word of God, and we assume they have the same mixed motivations we have and that they are intent on making a name or place for themselves. Consequently, we resist and come against God's purified people thinking they are extreme self-seekers. Our rejecting those that are experiencing God leads to our dismissing the Word coming through them, which robs us of God's provision.

We must stop looking at others and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal what is really in our own hearts. Friends, it is not them we must be concerned about. It is us. Am I a minister in part because I need and like the attention and applause of others? Is a position of authority something I need to make me feel better? Am I a Christian to some degree because it is acceptable in the circles I move in? Am I a Christian businessman in part because I desire to meet the wants and needs of my family and those in my own heart? Am I doing what I do for a paycheck? Am I concerned about the amount of the paycheck? Or am I concerned about what the work I am doing does to serve God by serving mankind?

Am I more drawn to minister to the pretty girls, (or handsome guys for the ladies) than to those unattractive needy folks? Is it easier for me to hear the call to minister in Hawaii than Africa? Am I willing to go out of my way to see that the wealthy man is taken care of and minister to him ahead of the poor man? Do I get up and go to work in the morning to get a paycheck to take care of my family and myself? Or do I go to work to serve God with what I do and trust Him to provide for me and my family? Will I leave a field because there is little acceptance but great need, to go to one where they believe like I do and like me better?

Hypocrites! Do we think the preacher should not serve for money but think that we should serve (work) for money? The truth is, when we serve or work for money, we are in harlotry. When we truly serve God with a pure heart, no matter what the pay, we will be abundantly supplied. But, if we serve (do what we do) for money or anything else, we have another god and are serving it. God is not just concerned with what we do, but **why we do it**. Two men might work side-by-side one working to get money and the other working to serve God by what the job does for mankind. One has pure motivation. The other is a harlot selling him or her self for money. The one serving God will continue to serve as long as he can, even if the paychecks stop. The harlot will usually stop the moment the paychecks stop.

*2 Chronicles 25:2: And **he did what was right** in the sight of the Lord, **but not with a loyal heart.***

As we each begin to search our own heart as to why I really do what I do, we all need to recognize that we usually have two reasons for doing anything--one that sounds good to us and to others and one that is true. We must look deeper into our hearts beyond our reasons that sound good and get to the real truth of our heart motivations.

Jesus will forgive our adultery. We are not stuck in bondage to Babylonian ways. **Repentance is the key.** It is agreeing with God about our sin and turning from it. Jesus has also provided for our deliverance from the spirit of harlotry, which attacks our life. We must repent and allow Jesus to set us free. Then, we must work toward renewing our mind to the New-Jerusalem ways of life.

*John 8: 3-4, 10-12: Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was **caught in adultery**, in the very act.*

*When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "**Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more**." Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

*John 1: 12-17, 29b: But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become **children of God**, even to those who believe in His name: who were **born**, not of blood, **nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God**. And **the Word became 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. John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, '**He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.**'" **And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace**. For the law was given through Moses, but **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ ...***

Behold! The Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!

*Matthew 18: 9: "And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire (Gehenna)." Luke 13: 3: **...but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.***

Luke 12:31: But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

We must not continue to deceive ourselves about the reality of our mixed inner motives. The cost for our mixed inner motives is the lack of the kingdom of God lifestyle and its attributes. The benefits and blessings we desire will only be added to us when we no longer desire anything above the kingdom of God. When we turn from our mixed inner motives and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, the other things, which we will no longer need to be satisfied, will be added to us.

Often people are astonished at the peace and joy they find in the presence of God as they give up their lives to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness with their whole heart. Whatever loss they feel, as a result of laying down their life is dissolved

in the beautiful presence of God. Things they had striven so hard for in the past are of little significance. Only intimately experiencing God's presence really matters.

Understanding the Good-Heart Tree and the New Jerusalem Family Pattern begins to enable us to see normal kingdom of God living. As we contrast kingdom of God living with our current lifestyle, we can recognize that the life we have been living is, at best, a mixture. Knowing we are missing the mark of the kingdom of God lifestyle leads us first to true repentance, which is a decision to stop going the way we have been going and to turn around to pursue another way.

It may be disturbing, even traumatic to realize that much of our life has been far off the mark. In my own experience, it was like a death to realize that most of my life, even as a Christian, was far from the kingdom-of-God life. My motives, though acceptable in the church, were mixed with Babylonian desires. Turning from much of what I believed and stood for was like dying. The thing that made it worthwhile is knowing there really is a wonderful, totally fulfilling, kingdom of God life **now** that is worth dying for. There is resurrection life now after the pain of death.

We may have until now been convinced that our motives were pure when, in reality, they may yet be mingled with self-seeking desires. We may be like the young man who really thought his reason for choosing a certain Bible college was to prepare for a certain ministry in order to serve God. The fact that the young lady of his dreams had previously chosen the same school and type of ministry was only a bonus and perhaps a confirmation from God.

However, when the young lady fell in love with and married someone else, the young man no longer wanted to go to school, nor to serve God. His secret, self-seeking desire was painfully revealed to him.

If we will now ask God to reveal our secret, self-seeking desires that may be hidden from us, and give them up now, we will avoid the future disappointments and heartaches they will eventually cause.

It is now time to step off the treadmill of our busy life, quiet our self, and be still before God. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the mixture of our motives. We will not know or experience the wonderful, at hand kingdom of God lifestyle until after we identify the self-seeking desires mixed with our God-seeking motives, repent of them, and put them to death.

Before reading on, please stop and search your heart. Ask God to reveal all self-seeking desires mixed with your God-seeking desires and repent.

"REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND."

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BEYOND REPENTANCE (#022)

Beyond the decision of repentance is the reality of actually dealing with the life-structures we have built through the years. There must come a total destruction of the old and God's rebuilding of the new structure. God has provided our place of repentance in Jesus. He has also provided all that we will need to destroy the old and rebuild the new in Christ. His provision is not lacking in any area.

Much of the devastating disorders we have faced and are facing are no more than the burning of the old way. In Isaiah 61:3, God did not promise that there would be no fire; but He promised to give us **beauty for ashes**. One thing is certain; if you have ashes, you have had a fire. We cannot build anything back from ashes. If the structure had been blown down by a storm, we might have been able to have gathered up some fragments and rebuilt something of the ruins. But when a fire has totally destroyed the building, man cannot rebuild from the pieces. If your life seems to be ablaze and is being destroyed, take hope. God will truly give you beauty for the ashes, if you continue to move toward the kingdom of God life.

Seeing the New Jerusalem, kingdom of God life motivates us to turn and persist until the goal is achieved. Seeing the enemy's schemes in the Bad-Heart Tree and the Babylonian Family Pattern begins to give us understanding of the enemy's position, strength, and methods. Beyond repentance, there is a war to be fought and won. **Before we turned and started moving, we were not meeting the enemy head on. We unknowingly were going the same way. Now that the turn around is made, we will meet the enemy head on and overcome him in the strength of our Lord, the Victorious One.**

Every army commander knows that an army must be motivated to fight. They must see something significant enough to be achieved to risk losing their lives. If the enemy can continue to prevent God's people from seeing the kingdom of God **now**, he can be successful in preventing them from standing up and fighting. If he can keep Christians focusing all their hopes in heaven someday, he will keep them from fighting **now**.

An alien force occupying a land would like for the occupied people to believe that their life is good enough as is and that it would not be worthwhile to attempt to drive the aliens from the land. The occupying government desires the people to believe the aliens own the land and that they are too strong for the people to resist. The people growing up in this bondage may come to think of their life as normal. They depend on their captors for food and well being. They take the hard labor, abuse, and lack of freedom as normal for them. Until they begin to see what freedom is and how good life really can be, they have no will or motivation to fight. However, once freedom is tasted (once we taste the joy and peace of the kingdom of God lifestyle), nothing else will do. It is well worth fighting for.

After the long Egyptian captivity, the children of Israel had lost the will to resist and accepted their lives as slaves of the Egyptians. When the Egyptians greatly increased the abuse and hard labor, the enslaved nation was ready to accept deliverance. But, not long after leaving Egypt, when they began to face the hardships of the journey, they wished they were back in bondage where they at least were assured spicy food to eat. When it was time to enter the promised land of God's provision, they would not fight to drive the aliens from the land. They chose, instead, to continue in the wilderness. Only after all the "slave-minded" people had died did their children enter into the promised land of God's provision. **God gives the victory, but we must fight the war.**

Once the will and motivation to fight is there, the next step is to learn how to defeat the enemy. A good general wants to know his enemy as well as he knows his own army. Where are the enemy positions? What is his strength? What weapons does he possess? How does he fight? What are his battle strategies? Where are his weaknesses? Then how can the strength of my army be best applied to rout the enemy, defeat him, and retake the land?

Considering the enemy's schemes in the Bad-Heart Tree, the Babylonian Family Pattern, and other schemes enables us to know just where the enemy is and to set our weapon sights to make direct hits on his positions. Knowing these schemes and strategies allows us to know what the enemy will probably do next and to be prepared to resist his attacks. **The kingdom of heaven does suffer violence and the violent do take it by force.**

This is not a war of the flesh; it is a spiritual warfare against spirit powers, which affect our natural lives. The Word of God not only gives us instructions for fighting, but it also is our weapon. Christ Jesus is our strength. Only in His name do we have power to overcome the alien army.

Spiritual warfare is fought with **faith in God and His Word**, hearing and believing the Word of God by the Spirit of God, praying the fulfillment of the Word of God, speaking the Word of God by the Spirit of God, proclaiming what God has said by the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ Jesus, walking in the Spirit and not in the lust of the flesh, believing what God says above any other word, standing in the Spirit and Word of God, speaking the truth of the Word in love at all times, using the authority of Christ flowing through love by the Holy Spirit within us to rule and reign with Christ, and doing the will of God by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

*Ephesians 6: 12: For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness** of this age, against **spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places**.*

*Ephesians 6: 17b-18a: ...and the **sword** of the Spirit which is **the word of God**; **praying always** with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit**...*

APPROPRIATING GOD'S PROVISION (THE MINISTRY OF JESUS)

Just because God has provided all we need to walk in kingdom of God freedom does not mean we automatically have those provisions manifest in our lives. We have a part to fulfill. The enemy does not want us to know how to receive the provisions of

God. **Our battle is for faith--knowing and believing the words of God.** The ministry of Jesus, the Anointed One, provides complete salvation including redemption of our spirit, soul and body. The ministry of Jesus is for the healing of our broken spirit, mind, will, and emotions; deliverance from spiritual captivity; recovery of spiritual sight to the spiritually blind; liberty from downtrodden bondage of wounding oppression; and the favor or spiritual prosperity of God, **if we have faith.** The provisions of God are activated in our own life when we believe in our heart and confess with our mouth.

*Luke 4: 18-19: (And Jesus said), The **Spirit** of the Lord is upon Me, Because **He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (bruised), to preach the acceptable (favorable) year of the Lord.**"*

*Romans 10:8-10: But what does it say? "The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you **confess with your mouth** the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation."*

We know Christ Jesus has provided salvation for all men, yet we also are aware that not all are saved. What makes the difference? God's provision is for all. Why are some receiving the provision and some are not? Only those who **believe in their heart** and **confess with their mouth** are saved. He has provided kingdom of God freedom for all believers to walk in now. However, not all believers are walking in kingdom freedom now. The provision of Christ must be appropriated into the individual's life by believing in the heart and speaking with the mouth.

Every ministry of Jesus must be appropriated in a similar manner. It is the way of the universal laws of God. The spiritual realm is accessed and activated by believing in the heart, praying in the Spirit, and speaking with the mouth. If we are to be changed, we must hear the Word of God by the Spirit of God, believe in our heart, and begin to pray and speak the will of God.

Those of us who have been around in the world for a lot of years would probably testify that according to our personal observation, most people in the world never really change. They may experience some changes in status, education, location, etc., but the basic life-structure generally remains the same, regardless of what happens. If they were stinkers when young, they were still stinkers when they got old. If they have a bad-heart tree, it may get worse and the wall get bigger; but it will not really be changed apart from a spiritual work of the ministry of Jesus.

Jesus is the "life-changer". The ministry of Jesus, the Anointed One, by the Holy Spirit can make deep, permanent, inner changes in the person's life-structure. Jesus will, without discrimination, change anyone who will meet the necessary conditions of believing in the heart and confessing with the mouth the resurrected Christ.

The bad-heart tree can be completely dealt with and the good-heart tree grown in the healed soil of the heart. Babylonian patterns and demonic attacks can be completely dealt with by appropriating the ministry of Jesus, the Anointed One. However, some people may require specific help to push back the darkness of the enemy while their faith is developing. Agreement in prayer with a righteous man or

woman can be powerful in routing the enemy and getting the light of God into the heart.

*James 5: 16: **Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.***

True repentance for one's part in the bad-heart tree and lack of living in the kingdom lifestyle must be the attitude of the heart. The Holy Spirit must reveal sin to a person. If we try to do the Holy Spirit's work for Him by attempting to point out and convince a person of his sin, we've made ourselves like a god.

"Pray for one another"

Intercessory prayer may be required to release the anointing of Christ to break through the canopy of spiritual blindness, deception, and delusion of the enemy before the light of God can enter to expose sin. Once the enemy is pushed back and the light enters by the hearing of the Word by the Spirit, the person can and must decide to repent of exposed sin and not continue to justify or defend it. He must agree with God that sin is sin and be willing to turn from it toward **Jesus as Lord**.

Seeking to make Jesus Lord of our lives in a practical and real way means receiving Him as King, the sovereign Master of our total being and every aspect of our lives. It means becoming His servant, carrying out His instruction, and ordering our lives by His righteous ways. It is truly seeking the kingdom of God. *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you."*

The powerful ministry of Jesus the Anointed One by the Holy Spirit, **appropriated by faith** and **executed by prayer**, can tear down the old life-structure and create a new heart. The work of enemy spirits and negative character qualities can be eliminated and the true victory of overcoming can be established in the life. The kingdom of God is **righteousness, peace, and joy** in the Holy Spirit.

The objective of confessing our trespasses to one another and praying for one another is to get the person to Jesus to be fully healed and delivered by the power of God. The one praying for another person, though important to the process, becomes very secondary as the person being prayed for focuses on Jesus the savior, healer, and deliverer, and not on the person praying. The person being prayed for must develop his own faith in Jesus. In the final analysis, only the person's own faith can keep him in freedom to walk in the kingdom of God lifestyle. However, when the person in need is too weak in faith to walk on his own to Jesus, the faith of another can be employed to bring the person to Christ Jesus.

The story in Mark chapter two, of a man carried by others to Jesus can help to kindle or renew hope in the person who feels hopeless because he does not yet have faith to make it to Jesus for his freedom on his own. Jesus did not just look at the faith of the man on the cot. He was perhaps too weak, too far gone to have much faith. But Jesus saw the faith of those letting him down through the roof, as well as the lame man's faith.

*Mark 2: 5-12: When Jesus saw **their faith**, He **said** to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 'why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but*

God alone?" And immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to **say** to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven you, or to **say**, arise, take up your bed and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"— He said to the paralytic, "**I say to you**, arise, take up your bed, and go your way to your house." And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

What we **say** in faith, in accordance with the Word of God, particularly with two in agreement, has great impact in the spiritual realm to bring forth the will of God into the natural realm. Principalities and powers of darkness in the spiritual realm must respond to what we believe and say when we speak in the name of Jesus. The conditions and character qualities of our own heart will also respond to the Word of God as we speak to ourselves in the name of Jesus, the Anointed One.

Mark 11:23-24: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever **says to this mountain**, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but **believes** that those things he **says** will come to pass, he will have whatever he **says**. Therefore I say to you, whatever things **you ask** when you **pray**, **believe** that you receive them, and **you will have them**."

Matthew 17:20: So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have **faith** as a mustard **seed**, **you will say to this mountain**, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

Matthew 18:16b: "... by the **mouth of two or three** witnesses every word may be established."

Proverbs 18:21: **Death and life are in the power of the tongue**, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Matthew 8:8: The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only **speak a word**, and my servant will be healed."

Matthew 8:16: When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And **He cast out the spirits with a word**, and healed all who were sick.

Matthew 18:18-20: "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever **you bind** on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever **you loose** on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again **I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven**. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

The Scripture says that we are to "bind on earth" and that things are changed in the spiritual realm when we do. What is binding and loosing? How do we bind or loose according to the word of God? Binding and loosing might be compared respectively to either tying up a subject with ropes or cutting the ropes and letting that subject go free. We bind or loose with our words. As we ask (speak) in agreement on earth, the power of God in the spiritual realm is activated to restrain or to set free. What we say and pray has a restraining or a releasing effect in the spiritual realm. It is as

if our words are the ropes that go out from our mouth and wrap around something to bind it and stop its activity. Conversely, our words are the power that cuts the ropes off the subject and allows it to become active.

When we pray for a person in severe need, we may need to bind the powers of darkness that are keeping the light out. Until their power and work is stopped, the person's spiritual sight is impaired. Binding is the releasing of spiritual power by prayer that can temporarily stop the enemy's activity. We may also need to loose spiritual enlightenment, so the Word can flow into the person's heart leading to repentance, cleansing, and strengthening. When the works of the spirits are bound, the Word of God can and must then be built into the life. Then, Jesus can and must truly become Lord of the life. It is always important to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in effective prayer ministry. The Holy Spirit can lead an individual or a group in this prayer ministry.

Having a spiritually mature person to pray in agreement is one of the most powerful and preferred ways to appropriate the ministry of Jesus by the Holy Spirit to bind and loose. However, one may effectively speak in the name of Jesus to bind the powers of darkness that are blinding his own heart and speak forth spiritual enlightenment flowing into his own heart.

Once the works of the spirits of spiritual blindness, darkness, deception, and delusion are temporarily bound, the person will be able to hear the truth without hindrance. Then the individual must make a decision to receive the word of truth or to reject it. Until the spirits of darkness have been stopped the person may not be able to hear the word of kingdom truth in his heart; and, therefore is not free to make a decision.

One of Jesus' primary instructions to us is to pray. In the model prayer found in (Matthew 6:10-15), He showed us how to pray and taught us to forgive others. According to these Scriptures, forgiving is an important factor in seeking the kingdom of God. Unforgiveness can be a serious hindrance to the kingdom of God coming on earth in our lives. One of the most important aspects of being restored by Christ to the kingdom of God lifestyle is forgiving.

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FORGIVENESS & BEYOND (#023)

Our source of forgiveness is Jesus. If He had not forgiven us, we would not have the potential to forgive. We have the potential to forgive any and all wrongs no matter how severe or how terrible. We must, for our own good, choose from the heart to forgive. **It is a choice, an act of the will, which we can choose over our feelings.** Forgiving is a decision. We make the decision to forgive or not to forgive. Making no decision is actually a decision to remain in unforgiveness.

Choosing to forgive does not mean that we agree with what has been done. We are not saying that what happened was right. Rather, we are releasing the judgment of the situation to God. We must pray for the blessing of the person involved. Until we can do this, we have not fully forgiven the person. We are not forgiving the person for their sake as much as for our own sake. We are the ones who receive the torment, sickness, and stress that result from our unforgiveness.

Not only must we forgive every person, but we must also forgive ourselves for anything that we have done to hurt others or ourselves. We must also forgive God for anytime that we feel that He let us down. We also may need to forgive organizations or institutions, as we would a person. The tormentors do not care who or what the unforgiveness is against because any unforgiveness gives them the license to do their deadly, painful work.

Matthew 18: 21-35: Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

*"Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' **And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to***

you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

*Matthew 6: 9-15: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."***

*Mark 11:22-26: So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea', and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, **believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."***

The torment promised to those who do not forgive does not just refer to hell someday. The word "Torturers" in the Greek means, "jailers who inflict pain." If we choose not to forgive, we give the enemy legal right to hold us in painful bondage now, in this life.

We may not feel like forgiving. On the contrary, our flesh may be screaming for vengeance. In the heat of the situation, everything in us may desire to do great harm to the offender. Our natural, fleshly drive to destroy the offending person is there for our protection in the natural world. If an offender is attempting to rape or murder my child, I will stop at nothing to prevent that from happening. The fatherly rage that would cause me to do great harm to the offender to stop or prevent the attack is natural. The problem develops after the offense is committed and my rage can do nothing to stop or prevent it. That natural desire now becomes a desire to become like God and do His work by taking vengeance on the offender.

*Hebrews 10: 30-31: For we know Him Who said, "**Vengeance is Mine: I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people."** It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

We must get out of the way and allow God to be God. We must make the decision to forgive no matter what. In the past, I personally have felt angry rage in my heart; yet, I made the decision to forgive regardless of my feelings. A wonderful thing often happens. As we begin to make the decision to forgive, and begin to pray, strong feelings of love and forgiveness may begin to flow into our heart. The decision comes first and the feelings may come later as the love of God flows.

God wants to convert the **pain** of the offense into love--that wonderful, peaceful "love-flow" of God Himself moving upon our heart. The more painful the offense, the sweeter the love will be that results from the act of forgiveness. Personally, I am not sure we can ever really know the overwhelming, pure, sweet love of God apart from experiencing deep pain and the beautiful love that forgiving produces.

If, however, a person chooses to hold on to the anger and resentment caused by the pain, deep bitterness will be rooted in his or her heart and will poison the soul and body. Many diseases that seem to have no medical cause are the result of bitterness in the soul. Much depression and severe mental illness also may have roots in the bitterness of unforgiveness.

The choice is ours. Because Jesus forgave us while we were yet sinners, we have the potential, by His power, to forgive. Are you ready to be set free from the torment of unforgiveness and forgive no matter what? Jesus said, *"Whenever you stand **praying**, if you have anything against anyone, **forgive him**".* When you are ready to make the decision to forgive, pray something like the following prayer from your heart.

I repent of all unforgiveness in my life. In the name of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, as an act of my will, I choose to forgive from my heart anyone and everyone who has ever hurt me or harmed me in any way, in my entire life. I specifically choose to forgive _____, _____, and _____.

I release them in Jesus' name. I say it is all right if they never make it right. I hold nothing against them, and, in the name of Jesus, I ask You, Father, to bless them, to meet their needs in all areas of their lives.

Father, I forgive myself for all I have done to hurt or harm myself and others; and, Father, I forgive You for any time I felt that You let me down. I say that You are good, God, and I trust You with my life. Father, I thank You that I am forgiven and that I have forgiven.

In the name of Jesus, I command all powers of darkness, you may never again use any of this unforgiveness to bring torment or stress of any form into my life.

Father, I thank You that I have forgiven and that I am forgiven. Thank You Father, in the name of Jesus.

Forgiving and releasing the offender is a tremendous step and may begin emotional healing. However, strong memories are not necessarily automatically healed when we forgive. Until healing of the memory, by Jesus the Anointed One, is appropriated in our heart, the painful memory may still be there, and recalling it may cause unforgiveness to return. One may find he is forgiving the same situation again and again.

HEALING THE HEART BEYOND FORGIVING

Forgiving from the heart and releasing everyone who has ever harmed us can remove the root of bitterness from our heart. Yet, the heart must be healed to prevent the bitterness from returning. Remember, when we speak of the heart, we are referring to the inner man, our spirit (the part that relates to God) and our soul (mind, will, and emotions).

Painful experiences of our lives are locked into the permanent memory section of our minds. Painful memories, whether conscious or subconscious, have affected our spirit and may have wounded it. These painful memories may also have crushed our will and shattered our emotions. **These negative, painful experiences stored in our heart cause us to see and understand life according to our experiences.** They

serve to control us by affecting our behavior. We are bound into negative patterns by the stored pains of the past. These detrimental patterns must be changed for us to walk in kingdom freedom.

The ministry of Christ Jesus includes healing the brokenhearted. God has provided all that we need in Jesus to heal our wounded spirit and soul. We need only to appropriate the ministry of Jesus to heal our broken heart and to be set free from the bondage of our wounds. When negative experiences stored in our memory are healed, they will no longer cause bitterness to return.

*Psalm 25: 17-19: The troubles of my **heart** have enlarged; Oh, bring me out of my distresses! Look on my **affliction** and my **pain**, and forgive all my sins. Consider my **enemies**, for they are many; and they **hate me with cruel hatred**.*

*Psalm 147: 9-3: The Lord builds up Jerusalem; He gathers together the outcasts of Israel. **He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds**.*

*Isaiah 61: 1-4: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me **to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound**; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations."*

*Luke 4: 18-1 9a: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me **to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (bruised)**, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

Imagine that our heart, as God made us, was like a brand new, shiny car. Let's further suppose a big, strong man with a big sledgehammer walks up to the car and smashes the hood, leaving a huge, ugly dent. Satan is like that strong man, working through people to inflict painful damage. The big, ugly dent will not go away with time. The old saying, "Time heals all wounds," is a lie. Until something is done to repair that dent, it will remain stored within us marring and disfiguring our spirit and our life.

Next, the heavy hammer smashes the windshield and windows. The car windows are like our emotions; the blows of stressful experiences shatter them. Finally, the big hammer begins to repeatedly smash into the motor, until that which makes the car go is destroyed; just like the repeated blows of negative wounding experiences crush our will. Our inner man becomes a battered and shattered wreck with no power or motivation to drive down the road of life.

Our outer man may look strong, intelligent, and handsome; but our wrecked inner man causes us to have a very poor self-image, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and great difficulty having full faith in God. We would rather withdraw to a dark garage than get out on the busy streets of life. We fear others

may see our shameful condition. If we do venture out of the garage, we must find some way to **cover** our dents and broken parts. We must also **defend** ourselves against any more painful blows; therefore, we often defend ourselves by **attacking** others.

Jesus the Anointed One is the Healer that can knock out the dents and repair all damage making our heart brand new again. Like a bright, shiny, new car with new windows and a powerful new motor, we are ready for Jesus to get into the driver's seat and steer us out into the beautiful highways of life.

Not only can our past wounds cause us to have a **poor self-image, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation**, they can also cause **unreasonable fear** that cripples us. This irrational fear causes us to avoid relationships and life situations that God desires for us. Fear can cause us to act and react in such a way that we may miss entering into some of the good things God desires for us.

Our actions and reactions are affected by our stored, painful memories. **We may often think we are reacting to circumstances, but we may actually be reacting from an attitude created by our past hurting memories.**

Let me illustrate this with a story about a little, black dog. A man walked out to his mailbox beside the road. As he reached in to get his mail, a little, black dog painfully bit him. He ran limping to the house, treated his wounds, and went to the doctor for further treatment. The episode was painful and costly. The next day he was afraid to go to the mailbox. But, after looking very carefully, he decided no dog was around. He limped to the mailbox, nervously looking all around. As he opened the mailbox and looked in to get his mail, suddenly, the little black dog seemed to come from nowhere and bit him again, even more viciously than before.

The man screamed out in pain and fear. He began running limping and screaming toward his house. In his haste, he tripped and fell headlong onto the rough driveway, injuring his knees and hands. The mail was scattered and left as the man scrambled to his feet again and continued his hysterical run to his house limping and bleeding.

This poor guy is never going to the mailbox again no matter what. He now has a great fear of little black dogs and mailboxes. He absolutely refused to go to the mailbox again and devised all kinds of schemes to keep from going. He did not want his family to know how badly he feared going to the mailbox. He made all kinds of unreasonable excuses for not going. (If we find ourselves searching for a reason not to do something, we may have some dog-bite memories that need to be healed.)

Well, after many months of not going to the mailbox, there came a time when he really needed to go. He was quite sure the check that he was waiting for was in the box, and he needed to get it in the bank. He had gained confidence as he had observed others safely getting their mail; so, he decided to try it. He carried a gun, a big stick and a mace protection device. And, just in case all else might fail, he wore heavy, tall leather boots and two pairs of heavy pants. (Do some of us ever walk around emotionally "armed and ready" to defend ourselves like this man?)

He watched anxiously as he nervously got his mail from the box and rapidly walked home. He breathed a big sigh of relief as he stepped safely into his house and leaned back against the door to catch his breath. The successful trip gave him confidence to

start going daily to the mailbox again. As months passed, he became less fearful and more confident with each successful journey.

One day, several months later, as the man was getting his mail, a very friendly, little black puppy came toward the man. The puppy was happily bouncing along, wagging his tail, hoping to make a new friend and maybe get a few loving pats.

When the man saw the friendly little puppy, he screamed, kicked the puppy as hard as he could, and ran in terror toward his house.

This man was not reacting to the reality of the situation, but was reacting from past wounds stored in his memory. Hurting memories caused him to be unable to receive affection from the puppy or to be able to give affection. He hurt the little puppy, and may have planted seeds in the puppy that someday could cause it to bite him, just as he feared.

THE PROCESS OF HEALING

Healing does not automatically and completely take place when we receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. However, the potential for healing and the process of healing does begin at this point. Healing may continue to occur gradually.

The ministry of Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, flowing through other people, can bring healing to the heart as **unconditional love, acceptance, mercy, grace, and forgiveness** are supplied. However, if something other than these attitudes exist within the people involved, more wounding can occur as we begin to let down our defenses and open ourselves to others.

Healing the heart must occur in an atmosphere of acceptance that is free of any form of condemnation and hostility. We cannot have the proper attitude toward those in need of healing if we are not healed ourselves. **Only healed people can help heal people. Hurting people always hurt people.**

Appropriating the ministry of Jesus to heal the brokenhearted is one of the most potent experiences in preparation to more fully entering the kingdom of God lifestyle. It is very valuable to kingdom living, but so often misunderstood. As with every ministry of Christ provided by God, our part is to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth. The resurrected Christ is within us to fulfill the Word of God. Healing our wounded heart is a provision of the Word of God. We have only to ask in prayer, believing in the heart and confessing with the mouth, and it is done.

For some of us with severe experiences in our past it may be helpful to pray specifically for healing of our wounded hearts. It may also be very helpful to pray with another godly person.

*James 5: 16: **Confess your trespasses (faults) to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed ...***

If we can recognize areas of painful memories in our heart, God wants to heal them. We can **release the memories to God for healing**. Holding on to a negative past can hinder a godly future. Attaining the resurrection life of Christ involves forgetting those things, which are behind and reaching forward to those things, which are ahead (Philippians 3: 11-14). By **an act of our will, we must choose to stop**

relating to stress from past memories. Although it is our decision, it is Christ who does the work.

It is important to ask God for His provision. James 4:2 KJV, says, *“Ye have not because ye ask not”*. Asking specifically is an important principle of prayer. If we ask God to heal our hurting memories now, and believe in our heart that we have what we ask, it is done. We must confess with our mouth it is done and thank Him for healing the memory now (Mark 11:23). **We must not continue to meditate the memory and pray for God to heal us someday.** We are not asking for Jesus to provide healing for us. It is already fully provided. We are coming into agreement with what Jesus has provided and appropriating it into our lives.

Come into the presence of God. Pray and worship Him until the anointing of the Holy Spirit is present and with you. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring into your mind the hurting memories to be healed. Some memories may be very obvious to you and others you may have buried. Do not take lightly any memory the Holy Spirit brings to your mind. When you recognize negative memories, pray something like the following prayer from the heart.

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I release to You for healing all the wounded, hurting, or negative memories of my entire life, whether conscious or subconscious, from my conception through my birth, the first few years of my life, my childhood, all my adult life, and to this present moment. I specifically release to You for healing the memory of _____, _____, _____, and _____ ----

I release all these memories to You. Heal me now. Give me release of all the stress. I choose by an act of my will never again to receive stress from these memories. Thank You for healing me. I say that I am healed of all these memories, in Jesus' name. Thank You, Father, for healing me.

I command all powers of darkness, in the name of Jesus, you may never again use any of these memories to bring stress into my life or affect my life in any negative way, in Jesus' name.

Continue to repeat this process as long as the Holy Spirit directs and memories are coming forth. All memories do not have to be healed in one season. Many memories may come forth in rapid order, or there may be one at a time. No memory that the Father brings up should be treated as insignificant. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring forth the memories that are to be healed at this time.

We must daily walk in the process of repentance, forgiveness, and healing--repentance for every adulterated motive, as we recognize them, forgiveness for every offense as they occur, and healing for every painful experience. If we are wounded during the course of the day, we can be completely healed before bedtime.

Personally, I found in the early years of my walking in this that some severe situations took me a few days to fully appropriate the ministry of Jesus to heal. This was my own shortcoming. I think my soul sometimes wanted to be angry for a while and got in the way of forgiveness and healing. Subconsciously, I may have been thinking something like, “Don't heal me right now, God. I'm not through being angry

yet." It is truly wonderful to begin each day with a clean slate. The kingdom of God is righteousness, **peace**, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Having a healed heart that is free of need-driven desires and fears prepares us to continue to seek the kingdom of God. A pure and unadulterated heart will seek only to serve God with the knowledge of the powerful mysteries of the kingdom. Being aligned with God and His universal laws opens the eyes of our understanding that the spirit of wisdom and revelation may enlighten us to know the exceeding greatness of His mighty power (Ephesians 1:17-19).

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

UNIVERSAL LAWS (#024)

GOD HAS ESTABLISHED UNCHANGING LAWS THAT GOVERN ALL OF HIS CREATION.

THE EFFECTS OF THESE LAWS ARE PREDICTABLE, DO NOT VARY, AND ARE THE SAME FOR EVERYONE.

ONLY GOD WHO MADE THE UNIVERSAL LAWS CAN CHANGE OR OVERRULE THEM.

Alignment with God's Universal Laws causes an easy flow of successful life as we flow with the order and empowerment of God.

Misalignment with God's Universal Laws causes a stressful, difficult fight as one attempts to succeed while hindered by much disorder and destruction apart from the flow of God.

Moving in the same direction as the flow of God's universal design produces good life. Moving across or against the lines of God's flow brings great disorder as strong forces of God's universal laws attempt to realign us with the direction of His flow of life.

Men study the effects of the universal laws and refer to them as laws of **science** or **nature**. Laws less understood by man, and not definable as science or nature may be referred to as mysteries or **mystery laws**.

Secular education is the study of the effects of the universal laws. We call these studies physics, biology, botany, chemistry, psychology, etc. Men combine and arrange this knowledge into logical systems of study to accomplish specific goals or works. These systems of study may be called engineering, agriculture, medicine, electronics, etc.

If we are to succeed in life and walk in the kingdom of God lifestyle, we must with the universal laws of God. Our every endeavor must be aligned with and in accord with these laws of creation or it will result in failure. Being aligned with universal laws and in accord with God's plan assures good success in our life experience.

Natural man seeks to achieve success by using his intellect to devise systems for working with the universal laws of God. To the degree that he is able to understand and align with these universal laws, he succeeds. However, because natural man's understanding of the universal laws is always incomplete, especially the "mystery" laws, he never totally succeeds and is always searching.

The effects of universal laws are obvious; but, the laws, themselves, are spirit and cannot be seen. They originate in God, Who is Spirit, and emanate from Him as spiritual energy. In John 3:8, Jesus compares spiritual things to wind. You can hear and see its effects, but you cannot see the wind or tell where it comes from or where it goes. **All true science researched to its deepest origin disappears into the spiritual and can be investigated no further by natural means.** It becomes a mystery and can only be understood only by spiritual revelation from God. Things that appear supernatural may be very natural according to the mystery or spiritual laws.

An example of one of these mysteries is the seed. How the living pattern of an oak tree, with all its limbs, life systems, bark and leaf definitions and majestic shape, is stored up in the simple light-brown matter of an acorn, is more than intellect can fathom. Another example is found in the basic function of cell multiplication. A biology textbook might say something like, "The cells decide to divide and do so," which simply means, "we don't have the foggiest idea why cells divide and multiply". Let's look at the atom as another example. Energy somehow changes form and becomes matter. How does energy get changed into electrons, protons, and neutrons? Where did the energy come from and who gave the command for it to change its form?

Universal laws were spoken forth by and continue to emanate from the Spirit, Almighty God. All creation came into being and continues to exist by the intelligent design and released power of the one Spirit, triune God.

*Hebrews 11:3: By faith we understand that **the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.***

*Colossians 1:16-19: For **by Him (Jesus) all things were created** that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him.** And He is before all things, and **in Him all things consist.** And He is the head of the body, the church, Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.*

*Hebrews 1:2-3: ...has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, **through Whom also He made the worlds;** Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power...***

Jesus fully understands the universal laws, including the mystery laws, and has complete power over them. We have potential access to Jesus, His understanding and power through the Holy Spirit. As Jesus lives in us and we are led by His Spirit, we can live as Christ lives in the world. Jesus demonstrated His authority over universal law as He raised the dead, healed the deformed, the sick and the blind with

a word or a touch. How many laws of science and nature bowed to the Master as He walked on the churning sea, or with a word quieted the raging storm?

Jesus demonstrated His understanding of all things as He spoke forth fathomless, kingdom wisdom and the unraveling of mysteries in simple stories about ordinary things. The riches and the depths of wisdom are yet being revealed from these simple parables. Unlocking this wisdom and applying it in our lives can be very productive.

God, unlike natural man, has perfect understanding of all His universal laws. In Christ we have the potential to hear and obey the Spirit of God. Walking in the Spirit produces a life fully in alignment with the universal laws.

Universal laws are universal scientific realities of creation. For our understanding, they must be distinguished from the directive, instructional, behavioral laws given to man by the written or spoken Word of God. The instructional rules or laws are given to help us align with the universal laws of creation.

Rules or Instructional Law

If obeyed the instructional law will cause people to be aligned with His universal laws of creation, even if they don't understand about the universal laws. Specific rules are for people who may not understand the greater principles of the universal laws. In the Old Testament, rules or **instructional laws** were given, which, if obeyed, caused the people to live more successfully.

For example, the Old Testament people of God were told not to eat the fat of the meat. They knew nothing of cholesterol or any of the other potential health hazards of eating fat. However, if they obeyed the instruction, they prospered. They were also told to rest the land every seventh year, which allowed it to replenish itself. Again, they may not have understood fully about fertilizers, etc. But, if they adhered to the instructional law, they were more prosperous. They were also instructed not to closely intermarry. They did not understand genetics, but God did.

*Joshua 1:7: "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to **do according to all the law** which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, **that you may prosper** wherever you go."*

The instructions from God are not for the purpose of limiting His children's fun or to prevent us from gaining wealth. On the contrary, His rules are keys for our success in life. They will bring us into alignment with the universal laws and enable us to really enjoy life. A life of obedience to God is a very exciting and prosperous adventure and is characterized by inner peace, real joy, and the fruits of righteousness.

In the New Testament, Jesus explains the instructions more clearly. He gives more in-depth understanding of the intent of the rules. He teaches principles which, if understood and obeyed, will bring us to real success and prosperity in all areas of life. He speaks of purity and righteousness that exceeds rule keeping, and flows naturally from a power source of inner love for God and man. He speaks clearly of a self-sacrificing lifestyle and a deeper level of commitment, which leads to abundant life. He also speaks clearly specifically commanding us to love one another, love our

enemies and love God with all our heart. However, He also speaks plainly of the hatred of the world coming against us. He speaks these things plainly and directly.

Yet, the deep and great mysteries regarding the rule and dominion of earth are spoken figuratively and in parables that can only be received by spiritual revelation. The great understanding of how to flow and work with God's universal laws, some of the most valuable instructions of the kingdom of God are veiled in symbolic language and appear as foolishness to the natural man.

By the gifts and leadership of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual man can receive the revelation of Christ Jesus and His kingdom principles, which will align him with universal laws and produce good success in his life.

*Ephesians 1:17-19:that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you **the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the workings of His mighty power.***

Receiving Jesus' revelation of the kingdom of God can bring us practical keys of spiritual wisdom. These keys and principles can help us determine every situation in such a way that it will bring us into alignment with universal law that leads to an abundant, victorious, overcoming life. Few men, if any, have fully tapped into the revelation of kingdom living. However, all who have come close discover that all things are becoming possible to them and that victory is their normal way of life. They also become aware that they are misunderstood and misjudged by those who are not yet hearing and applying kingdom wisdom.

We are about to attempt to reach into and touch the ancient wisdom of God, the deeper, hidden mysteries of the kingdom of God. It is the knowledge of this wisdom that makes the difference between the extraordinary and the ordinary. Probably most of us have wondered at some time why some men achieve greater levels of accomplishment than we can even think while others, with equal or perhaps even greater natural ability, struggle desperately for very meager achievements. **Not everyone will hear the kingdom wisdom that can transform their lives from the ordinary to the extraordinary and can bring them to levels of life they have not even dreamed of.**

"He, who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
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THE GREATEST MYSTERY (#025)

There are great understandings from the Word of God. There is wisdom far beyond man's ability to comprehend, thoughts that are much too great for our minds to think. There are mysteries too deep for our mentality to embrace, and revelations too high to fit into words. Yet, the Spirit of God relates to man's spirit things hard to be understood and even harder to be spoken. Sometimes they are more **felt** in the depth of our inner being than understood by our mind. They are spiritual things communicated from the Spirit to the spirit in spiritual ways, comparing spiritual things to spiritual things.

There are deep, hidden mysteries of the wisdom of God that are only revealed through His Spirit.

*1 Corinthians 2:6-10,12-13: However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the **wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom** which God ordained before the ages of glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

*But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.** For the Spirit searches all things, yes, **the deep things of God.***

*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, **comparing spiritual things with spiritual.***

Sometimes the best we can do to communicate spiritual things in natural language is to speak of a parallel natural thing. Jesus taught the greatest concept of the Bible, the kingdom of God, from heaven, on earth, with many parables of natural things. The kingdom is the preeminent teaching in the Word of God. All other teachings and understandings in the Bible relate to and are in some way a part of the great concept of the kingdom of God / kingdom of heaven.

Within the kingdom there is one greatest of all kingdom principles, one greatest spiritual mystery law, one greatest of all kingdom concepts that saturates the entire kingdom and every other principle or law of the kingdom. It is the force that draws and holds the kingdom together, the glue that bonds the kingdom into unity. It is the motivation for every work in the kingdom. It is the power that causes all other kingdom principles to work. It is the root of righteousness, obedience, peace, and joy, the reason for the cross, the resurrection, and Pentecost. It causes purity, purpose, production, prosperity, contentment, and faithfulness. It causes men

to become faithful servants and stewards. It can change a harlot or adulteress into a purified bride. It is the source of grace, mercy and forgiveness.

This greatest thing in the kingdom can easily be named, but cannot, with man's words, be easily explained. It must be experienced and felt Spirit-to-spirit. The most passionate, intense, and pleasurable natural experience cannot equal it. We can see and say what it does. But what it is or why it is, goes beyond human natural understanding.

The greatest mystery law, principle, concept, understanding of the kingdom, the predominate force and most significant factor in the kingdom of God is THE LOVE OF GOD.

Without the love of God, there would be no salvation for mankind. Jesus would not have come to earth. There would be no cross, no resurrection, no indwelling Holy Spirit, no righteousness, no peace nor joy on earth, no forgiveness, no deliverance, no healing of the heart, no real reason for living, no relationship between man and the living God, and no drawing force establishing God's kingdom on earth. Apart from the love of God, there is no kingdom of God from heaven on earth. Yet, who can describe what the love of God is?

John 3: 16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

*Matthew 22: 36-40: "Teacher, which is the **great commandment** in the law?" Jesus said to him, "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.** This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: **You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

The number of those who really know the love of God in a personal, intimate experience is increasing. Many may be heard to voice a desire to know God and to know Him better. To know God is to know love. **God is love.** The spiritual union and intimacy of knowing (experiencing) the love of God is the greatest fulfillment in life. Earthly accomplishments and human desires all fade into the distance. Life's highest highs pale in the rapture of experiencing God's love. There is nothing one would not do, nothing one would not give, to please Him. The only fear is the fear of disappointing Him. The heart's greatest desire is to hear His voice, to do His bidding, and to be pleasing in His sight.

The intense love between a man and a woman is a natural parallel to the love of God. In the Bible, the Song of Solomon is an expression of spiritual love in natural terms. Anyone who has truly been in love with someone knows to some degree the feelings of loving God. A man in love will do anything to be with the woman he loves. When they are apart, a deep aching and longing fills his chest. Only embracing her and pressing her against his chest will stop the ache and fill the longing. Her every characteristic, even her flaws, seem intensely beautiful and desirable to him. He will look deep into her eyes and say, "I will change the whole world for you. I will climb the highest mountain, defeat the fiercest enemy for you." They kiss and she melts in his arms and replies, "I am yours forever. I will serve you with my whole heart; only, please, never leave me nor forsake me." He promises, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

The world may have difficulty understanding why one in love with God will leave the activities and things of the world to be with Jesus. Religious people, with their rules and strife, may demand for the person in love with Jesus to be more involved with their religious activity. They may never understand why their ceremonies mean so little to the one who is personally experiencing the loving presence of God.

The love of God is **love from God** and **love for God**. The love of God flows toward us from God through Jesus. The Holy Spirit in us produces love from within us that flows toward God through Jesus and we feel intense love from Jesus, and we feel intense love for Jesus. We are passionately and desperately in love with Jesus.

LOVE PURIFIES

Jesus' love motivates us to purity. Our desires are to be, to have, and to do according to His will. No other needs can drive us. He is all we need. His will and ways are always righteous obedience to the Father.

This greatest mystery of love can change harlotry to purity. The love of Jesus can change a rebellious, adulterous bride into a faithful, purified bride without spot or blemish. Jesus, by the love relationship, becomes one flesh with His bride and is manifest in her so that His life becomes flesh on the earth. As His presence appears within us and is revealed through us, we become as He is; we are purified.

*Ephesians 5:25-27,29-32: Husbands, **love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.***

*For no one ever hated **his own flesh**, but nourishes and cherishes it, **just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body**, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and **the two shall become one flesh**. This is a **great mystery**, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

*1 John 4:7-9: Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **He who does not love does not know God, for God is love**. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.*

*1 John 4:12b-13, 16,19: If **we love one another**, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. **God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him**. We love Him because He first loved us.*

Paramount Transformational Power

There is no power greater than the power of love. Nothing else can transform the world. No other power or force can overpower love. Nothing can neutralize the inherent power flowing within love. Every work of evil in man can be neutralized by love. Nothing can conquer love and there is nothing that love cannot conquer.

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him. Every aspect of man's life in the world can be transformed by love. Every burdensome weight and stressful oppression of man can be fully relieved by love. In a very practical and real way, the love of God in a person will transform his or her life. The love of God in a large number of people will transform areas of the world. The love of God in all people will transform the entire world. In a real and practical way, the world can be transformed into the kingdom of God.

It is impossible to abide in God and His love and not be a transforming agent in the world.

Unlove is the absence of God and His love. Life in the fallen world is based in unlove. Every aspect of natural man's life in the fallen world is guided by the ways of unlove.

Mankind is designed to abide in God and His love, and God in him. Great emptiness characterizes the lives of people whose inherent need for God's love is unfulfilled. The neediness in mankind can never be fulfilled without love. The desperate need for more and more of something to fill the emptiness leads to competition, greed, strife, fear, pride, and every negative, stressful, destructive force known to man. The entire world becomes filled with strife. War is everywhere and every person competes against others. All of the problems of the world stem from this basic lack in mankind.

Husbands and wives fight and divorce. Employees strive against and deceive employers. Employers exploit employees. People climb over one another in a competitive effort to attain a higher position. Customers strive with merchants and merchandisers take advantage of customers. Law enforcement fights with criminals in an attempt to enforce thousands of laws enacted in an attempt to control the deceit and violence of the people. The whole world becomes a battlefield. Everything in business and all of life revolves around trying to get more while giving the least possible to get it. Even the highest of charitable human motives are mixed with hypocritical values of "What's in it for me?" All this and much more exist because of the lack of love abiding in mankind.

Do you see how God's love in man can alleviate all need and stop all strife of the world? No more wars, no more crime and, eventually, no more sickness, no more disease. Some would say, "Yes, but it is not possible for man to love and live this way," and they would almost be right. Until Jesus came, man had failed to abide with God in His love. Christ Jesus did what others did not do and lived as one with God in the Holy Spirit. The GOOD NEWS is that Christ Jesus can now live in people by the Holy Spirit. Thus, the potential now exists for all to have Christ's life abiding within. Through Christ all can now abide in God and His love. We can now bring the paramount, transforming power of God's love into practical reality in the world through Christ in us by the Holy Spirit. Christ in His people can destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8: For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

The greatest mystery of the kingdom of God is the transformational power of love. The world has already been greatly changed by the love of God expressed in the cross of Christ Jesus. No other person in all of our world's history has had as great a transformational effect as Christ Jesus. Now, the LIFE OF JESUS is set to

transform every area of life in the world. Through Christ Jesus living in them individuals are transformed. **By LOVE, individuals filled with Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit, can transform families, businesses, schools, media, cities, nations and the world.**

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BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION (#026)

Business is a primary foundational part of the kingdom of God. The foundational principles of Babylonian-style business are opposite to the New Jerusalem kingdom of God business principles. All productive enterprise in the world can be qualified as either business or ministry. Almost every mature adult is involved in business. Some may own businesses, others work at jobs in businesses, others do the business of managing a household or family and everyone manages the business of his own personal life.

In the kingdom of God, both ministry and business have exactly the same basic foundational purpose. What we each do with our lives involves business/ministry. Before we consider how kingdom business is to be done we must consider God's purpose for our involvement in business or ministry. **In the kingdom, the primary purpose of business or ministry is to serve God by providing for the needs of mankind and the world around us.**

Kingdom business or ministry is caring for God's people and managing the resources of His earth.

God's love is the primary motivational force of all kingdom business and ministry. Through love, people serve one another.

The love of God will cause us to lay down our lives for our brothers. We will **seek to provide** for our brothers' needs. Jesus' love coming forth in us will cause us to **serve one another**. We become humble servants and not proud rulers. We keep His commandments to love God and love one another.

*Galatians 5:13-14: For you brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but **through love - serve one another**. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

In the kingdom both ministry and business exist for the primary purpose of meeting needs. The only distinction between ministry and business is the type of needs met.

Ministry generally seeks to meet spiritual needs of people. Business is focused mostly on meeting physical needs. However, there is much overlap and both may meet mental and emotional needs. All areas of kingdom enterprise are important to God.

The desire to serve stemming from love is the foundation of kingdom enterprise. We serve Jesus as we serve mankind by providing for peoples' needs. We are able to do a good job of providing because love has ordered our lives. Love brings unity and

cooperation that enables greater production. **We are to do good to all people but especially to the people of God.**

Gal 6:10: Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, the only factor considered by the Lord when dividing the sheep from the goats was whether an individual had provided for the needs of the brethren. Those, who had provided for the needs of the brethren, were told to "come inherit the kingdom" (*Matthew 25:31-46*).

No one can provide food for the hungry or clothes for the naked unless they first acquire food and clothing. We cannot supply what we do not have. Someone must grow, transport and process food; one must obtain fiber, process it into cloth, and then sew it into clothing. Or, one must, through production of some sort, obtain money to pay others for food and clothing. Obviously, the sheep in the above parable were involved in industry--the production and distribution of goods and services.

The kingdom principle Jesus is teaching here is greater than just giving away some of our surplus to the needy. The principle is that, because of the love of God, we desire to serve and because of the gifts and power of God working with us, our lives become productive. We become highly productive in business activities of manufacturing, farming, building, education, transportation, processing and a myriad of other enterprises providing for the needs of people. This concept is hard for most people living in heavily populated areas to grasp. In the modern setting the importance of what our production does for others is sometimes lost because of a disconnect of seeing the end use of what we do and how needs are met by our labors.

For a moment, imagine life in a small, godly, frontier village that has no access to outside provisions. The people of the village would all know one another and care about the well being and the needs of each other. The different people would develop their God-given gifts into various skills to help supply the needs of the people of the village. Someone might be adept at growing certain needed food or animal feed items. Someone else might become good at raising and providing poultry products and others beef or pork products. Someone else might be a dairyman and provide milk products to their neighbors. Someone else may be good at cabin building and woodworking, and another at blacksmithing and so on. When a need in the village arises, someone will seek to meet that need for the people. Working together, they will provide for one another and will be happy to trade the produce of their skills and labor for the produce of others to meet their needs and the needs of the others in the village.

In this small village no one tries to get rich at the expense of others and no one seeks to hinder or harm another. Loving concern for one another causes industrious activity (business) producing goods and services to meet needs. The love of God brings order and cooperation. Now, expand the view in your mind from the small village to nations and then the world and God's plan for business in the kingdom begins to come into view.

The more our love leads us to provide for the needs of mankind, the more we will reap. The law of sowing and reaping never fails. The more we provide, the more we

will receive. Our needs will be provided for and we will have more to use to provide for the needs of the brethren and the world. As we grow in the business of producing and providing for the brethren, more people are required to help with the enterprise. This means productive employment for more people. Jobs are created and people join together to work in the enterprise of providing for peoples' needs. All this comes from the root of love that causes a desire to provide for the needs of people and the planet.

The sheep that serve by meeting the needs of the brethren inherit the kingdom of God quality of life (true prosperity). The goats that do not serve by meeting the needs of the brethren have only continuous punishment (real poverty).

The thing that divides the sheep from the goats is the love and life of Christ Jesus in the sheep. The sheep inherited the kingdom of God because they produced. They became productive kingdom servants/rulers as they met the needs of the brethren. **Love motivated them** to cooperate with and serve the brethren. The goats were motivated by unlove to use what they had only for themselves. The goats do not enter the kingdom. They are separated from God's heavenly blessings in this life.

Life is the presence of God and serving His purposes. The kingdom of God lifestyle is abundant life, eternal life, now and forever. Death is separation from God and His purposes.

The Babylonian system has perverted the purpose of business in the minds of most people, including Christians. The perverted purpose of business has also infested ministry. Love is not involved in business in the Babylonian-patterned world. Unlove is assumed in all business transactions in the Babylonian world system. Need and greed are the primary motivational forces behind business and work.

The primary purposes of business in Babylon is to meet personal needs and gain personal wealth. People in the Babylonian system work at a job to get money and normally give little or no thought to what the job they are working at does to serve God by meeting the needs of mankind and the world. Generally, work is a tiresome dread for them because they are doing something that they don't want to do but must do to get their paycheck. They have become as harlots--selling themselves to provide for their needs and wants. For the most part, this is considered normal in Babylonian-style business.

Christians caught in this system may believe it is God's design for them to work at their jobs to get money and that church and church-related things represent their only opportunities to serve God. They also may believe that paying a tithe, plus some offerings, from the produce of their labors satisfies God and makes it all acceptable. Being a good slave and obeying your master is commendable and about the best that can be done in Babylonian captivity. Even in captivity, being a good servant can lead to ruling. God can bless those who remain faithful to Him even in captivity. However, we all need to know that **in the kingdom work and business are a vital part of serving God.**

God is not leaving His people captive in Babylon. God is delivering us into His marvelous, heavenly kingdom of light and love. We are learning the ways of New Jerusalem in every facet of our lives, including our families and businesses.

The greater principles of kingdom life and business found in the Bible are becoming more ingrained in the hearts of God's people as we continue to move toward the kingdom of God life on earth.

Money and wealth are viewed and managed in a very different manner in the heavenly kingdom lifestyle than in Babylon.

In Babylon, money was diligently sought after to meet needs and then to fulfill desires for more material things and social status. Whether through working at a job or owning a business, the people sought to accumulate money and the things it would buy. **Seeking money or seeking to meet our own needs was never God's perfect design.**

Jesus brought forth much teaching on kingdom order because it had been lost through the ages of Babylonian-style rule. Seeking to meet our own needs and to get more stuff created a greater stress on people that God ever intended for mankind to experience. In seeking money we become the servant of money. Jesus clearly spoke God's instruction as He explained the kingdom way. In God's order, we seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and things are added to us.

*Mat 6:24,32-33: **No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.***

The concept of seeking the kingdom and God's righteousness has been very misunderstood and misapplied by most Christians. Seeking the kingdom first has been viewed largely as doing religious church-type things, which were considered holy. "Secular" type things, such as work and business were considered unholy. In the Babylonian system a false distinction has been made between holy and secular. **Secular is not the opposite of holy. Profane is the opposite of holy. Both business and church things can be holy or they can both be profane.**

The kingdom of God includes all of life and all is to be holy (set apart to God). Seeking the kingdom means seeking God's rule for all of life. And seeking His righteousness means seeking His purposes and order in all things. Righteousness is His right way of being and doing. It is being in perfect alignment with His instruction and desire. If we seek first the kingdom and righteousness, then "all these things" will be added because we will become productive and useful servants in meeting the needs of mankind and the world around us. This is not a magic or supernatural thing. It is a basic reality of natural kingdom life. Our treasure really is where our heart is.

There is contentment and excitement in serving God with our whole lives and doing things His way. Whatever our service or work happens to be, it is rewarding and easy to do with our whole hearts. Not at all like the burdensome, worrisome striving of seeking money. What we chased after and could never have enough of comes to us when we stop seeking it and start seeking the real kingdom of God and His righteous way of doing and being.

We know the Lord is our source and strength. Love motivates us to serve more, but it also causes us to be content with what we have. **Our contentment does not rest in what we have, but in Who we have.**

*Philippians 4:11: Not that I speak in regard to need, for **I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.***

*Hebrews 13:5: Let your conduct be without covetousness, and **be content with such things as you have.** For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

Covetousness and self-seeking is the desire for and reaching for more than I already have. Materialism is one of the most common idols in the Babylonian system. It is important to understand that wealth and material things are not inherently evil. Money is not the root of evil. The **love of money** is the root of evil. Having wealth is not evil. Receiving profit is not evil. **However, it is wrong to seek wealth or money** rather than seeking the kingdom of God and trusting Him to meet our needs.

*Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be **added** to you."*

*1 Timothy 6:5-8: ...useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself. 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 clothing, with these we shall be content.***

Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain.

Godliness (God-seeking, God-serving) is righteous obedience to God, which aligns us with His universal laws and purposes. **Contentment** is not desiring more than I already have.

Those who seek after money can never keep or enjoy wealth.

*1 Timothy 6:9-11: But those **who desire to be rich** fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*

*James 5:1-3: Come now, you **rich**, weep and howl for your **miseries** that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are **moth-eaten.** Your gold and silver are **corroded**, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.*

Who are the rich people that these miseries are coming upon?

"Rich" is a relative term. A brother in one of the developing nations would consider many of you reading this rich. If you ask a man with one million dollars, "Are you rich?" He would probably say, "No, I'm not rich at all," and would point toward the

man with more and say, "He's rich." **A rich person is one who owns any amount of wealth that is not given over to God's control for His use.**

Garments that are being worn do not become moth-eaten; gold and silver coins that are being used do not corrode. Riches that are being used to meet the needs of mankind will not destroy the one who possesses them. If our lives are wholly given over to God's control, all of our possessions will be His and will be used in His kingdom. In a very real sense, no matter how much God has placed in our possession, we have no riches. **They all belong one hundred percent to God.**

We do not seek wealth. We become wealthy while seeking to serve. We do not hold back any part for ourselves. However, because of our obedience, He will give us a portion as our own to enjoy. He will give us the power to eat of it and to rejoice. **We must seek His direction for His goods at all times.** We must not take it upon ourselves to keep some of His wealth for ourselves.

*Luke 18:24b: "How hard it is for those who **have riches** to enter the kingdom of God."*

*Ecclesiastes 5:10,13: He who loves silver **will not be satisfied** with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity. There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: **Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.***

Only the God-seeking, God-serving person can enjoy wealth.

Proverbs 10:22: The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

Ecclesiastes 5:19: As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor- this is the gift of God.

*1 Timothy 6:17: Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to **enjoy.***

God desires for His people to possess and manage His earth with all its abundance for Him.

We must be managers of God's goods and not owners.

God gives a portion of His creation into our hands to manage for Him. We grow in wealth as we do a good job of managing what He has given us to manage. God adds more to us as we become faithful and wise managers of the portion He has placed in our hands. If we do not manage it well, it will be removed from us and given to one who will manage it in accordance with God's heavenly kingdom wisdom and instruction.

*Luke 19:12-13,16-20,22a, 24-26: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, '**Do business** till I come.'*

*"Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a **very little**, have **authority over ten cities**.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'*

*"And another came, saying 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.' And the master said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you **wicked servant**.' And he said to those who stood by 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas'. But they said to him, ' Master, he has ten minas.'*

"For I say to you, that to everyone who has more will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

*Matthew 25: 14-15, 19-21, 24a, 25-26a, 28, 30: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own **servants** and delivered **his goods** to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

*"After a **long time** the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; **you were faithful over a few things**, I will make you **ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.**'*

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, '...and I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant...' Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ...And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

We are given the Master's money to do business with until He calls for it. If we manage His money in alignment with kingdom principles, we will have a good report at our accounting time. The most profitable way to do business is according to God's instruction and in accordance with His kingdom principles.

There are many principles to be considered and there are always balancing principles in God's kingdom. We must seek God's direction by the Holy Spirit. **Principles are like "road signs" to assist our hearing and provide valuable understanding. But we must hear God's direction.**

One of the major principles is to **use money to do good**. If we **put money to work creating activity** (commerce, industry, etc.), **which will put people to work meeting each other's needs**, then we are headed in the direction of kingdom prosperity. We will do more long-term good by this type of investing, than we would have done by giving away all the money to meet an immediate need.

What we do with the money we have is more important than how much money we receive. How we use what we have today determines what we will have tomorrow. Many of us have not understood that God gave us money to use to do business. We erroneously thought it was all for us to use for our own desires and needs. We have thrown away our financial future by increasing our lifestyle just

because we had more money. We have used money to make us feel better. Babylon's business pattern is to "get all you can, and can all you get".

Do not serve money, but serve God with money. Do not hide it or consume it. Do not give it away if God has not said to. **Use it to do kingdom business that meets needs.** Seek God's direction and further understanding of His principles about how and where to do business.

If we diligently use all God has given us to serve Him by doing business, we will be given more. It will be **added** to us. All that we possess should be available to be used to meet the needs of mankind, and especially those of the household of faith.

Man has three basic areas of need: those that relate to his spirit, those that relate to his soul (mind, will, and emotions), and those that relate to his body. Anything that God leads us to do with the resources He has given us to meet needs in any of these three areas is **doing business**. Whether it is preaching the Word, growing potatoes, or teaching physics, if it meets the needs of the brethren, it is doing business in the kingdom of God.

Ask God, How does what I do meet the needs of mankind? And what can I do better to add more value to mankind?

Start with what you have. A warm smile and an encouraging word can meet a need in a person's soul. A prayer and a thought from the Word can meet needs of the spirit of a person. Doing that **extra** amount on the job with a good attitude can meet someone's needs. Cooperating with the boss and speaking a good word about him can meet more needs than complaining and giving a bad report. Consider what you have, what is in your hand, what gifts and talents you have. Then, ask God how they may be used to meet the needs of others.

Would investing that extra \$25 in someone's kingdom business or ministry help meet their need for capital so they could meet more needs? Could contributing your talents and abilities to help a ministry or kingdom business meet needs? Could improving your own skills enable you to meet more needs?

In Babylon, people go to school to get more education so that they can get more money, so that they can have more power and more things they want. **In the kingdom, we sharpen our tools by getting more education and training so that we can meet more and greater needs of others.** The more skilled we are, the more we can do. The more we do, the more we will be blessed in return. The more we are blessed, the more we have to use. Love causes us to make the best we can of ourselves and of what we have.

Two dimensions of meeting needs

There is more than one dimension in meeting needs. There is both **quantity** and **quality**. You can meet a little need for a lot of people, or you can meet a great need for a few people. Manufacturing chewing gum can put a good taste in millions of people's mouths; doing brain surgery can greatly impact a few people. The total amount of value added to mankind could be the same in either case. **So, if you can't do something big, do a whole lot of the little things that you can do,** while at the same seeking to improve your skills so that you can do more.

Loving-kindness In Kingdom Business

Loving-kindness in kingdom business replaces pretended affection and pandering in Babylonian business operation. In **Babylon**, most customers expect to receive an offer of help or service by a businessperson. Underlying their question, "Can I help you?" is their real thought of, "Can I get some of your money?" Customers do not expect a businessperson to really care about them beyond what they can get from them. Once people learn that in the **kingdom**, the businessperson really cares about them, and not just about their money, they develop a whole new attitude. If they know that you really care, they will trust you with their business. Whether we are supplying a spiritual need or a physical need, love will cause us to really care about others' needs and well being. Loving-kindness cannot be faked in the kingdom of God. A phony will be spotted.

Love cares about fellow workers, including the boss. Love causes employees to feel a great sense of security and loyalty because they care about one another and know the boss cares about them and has their interest in mind. Love cares about the quality of product or service being provided. Love is the key to increased productivity, quality and efficiency.

The essence of God's love permeates every aspect of kingdom-life. The thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians draws a picture of what love is. It teaches that, no matter how great our gifts or works are, they are meaningless without love. Love makes it happen and keeps it in order in the kingdom.

Love is the greatest mystery in the world. There is no other force or power in the world as great as love. Love will cause us to give up our very lives. Only after love motivates us to die to our self-focused life, can we know resurrection life. Just as Jesus gave up His life for others and was resurrected to a far greater life, we will experience a far greater life now on earth as love motivates us to selflessly serve. The Babylonian-style world cannot comprehend the value of the love of God. It is a mystery to the people of Babylon.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE SECOND GREATEST MYSTERY (#027)

Can I really be transformed into a pure and holy kingdom builder? Can I really be a part of bringing forth the kingdom of God to actually change the world? Do I really have a part in this or is God going to do it all without any human involvement while I continue to battle personal needs?

The second greatest mystery of the kingdom is only overshadowed by the first greatest mystery, which is LOVE. The first greatest mystery is the source of the power that causes the kingdom to exist, to be ordered, and to be held together. The second greatest mystery is the means by which the kingdom from heaven is implemented to function and grow into the earth.

If we receive the revelation of this second greatest mystery, we will have the ability to bring forth the fruit (production) of the kingdom of God in our lives and into the world. All things will be possible. We are about to uncover the practical, spiritual kingdom principle that is the spiritual mechanism to bring forth the will and plan of God into our lives and into the world. This principle is man's part in establishing the kingdom of God from heaven on earth.

For a number of years, I lived a "back to nature" type of lifestyle. I lived in a log cabin, grew vegetables and fruits, and raised chickens, cattle, and hogs for food. I would go out to the garden and gather sweet corn, onions, tomatoes, green beans and dig some potatoes and gather other tasty vegetables. Earlier in the spring I had planted the seeds for these vegetables in the soil of my garden. Before planting the seed, I spread manure on the soil and tilled it. I planted the different kinds of seeds where I wanted them to grow. **I chose the seeds and planted them, but I did not grow them. The soil grew them.** (Here is the mystery.) I cannot explain how the seed became a growing, producing plant; nor can I explain how the soil grew them. But, I could go into the garden at harvest time and gather the fruit.

Jesus said the kingdom of God is like my garden. He said the heart of man is the soil that can "grow" the kingdom of God seed. Previously, from the parable of the sower, we have seen the heart-soils that could not grow the kingdom seed to fruition--the hard-pressed wayside soil of the wounded and hardened heart, the stony soil of our fixed preconceived convictions, and the thorny soil of caring for the things of this life. Hopefully, we have each dealt with these conditions in our own lives. Now, we must receive the greater hidden light--**the revelation of the production of the kingdom of God now on earth through the good heart-soil.** This is a very important principle and is the intended focus of this key parable. Understanding this parable is fundamental to understanding all kingdom parables.

Mark 4: 13: And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

Matthew 13: 8-13, 16-18, 23: "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear let him hear!"

*And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "**Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.***

*But **blessed** are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. Therefore hear the parable of the sower: **(When anyone hears the word of the kingdom...) But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word (of the kingdom) and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.***"

*Mark 4:20: "**But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold some sixty, and some a hundred.***"

The above verses that you just read contain one of the greatest hidden mysteries of all life. This great secret is meant to come to light. All hidden mysteries in the Word are to be revealed. Please give great heed to your hearing at this point. Please do not regard these scriptures lightly. Pray for revelation and meditate these verses. Wait upon God, and do not let the powerful truths get by you.

You must have an ear to hear. Not everyone will hear the great mystery hidden in these parables. Only the good soil, the emptied, healed, purified, humble heart will clearly hear it.

Many great men of God from the past have sought to know and hear these mysteries and could not. The time is now for those who are pure in heart to hear. If there are yet needs and impurities remaining in your heart, the great impact of this revelation will not appear to you. If, however, your once-hardened heart-soil is healed, freed from rocks and thorn bushes, you may hear and continue to hold onto the powerful understanding of the production of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Nothing will be impossible to you.

*Mark 4:21-25: And He said to them, "Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? For there is nothing **hidden** which will not be **revealed** nor has anything been **kept secret** but that it should **come to light**. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."*

*And He said to them, "**Take heed what you hear.** With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear more will be given. For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."*

The mystery is revealed only to those who are entering the kingdom.

Luke 8: 16-18: "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that **those who enter may see the light**. For nothing is **secret** that will not be **revealed**, nor anything **hidden** that will not be known and come to **light**. Therefore **take heed how you hear**. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

Prophets and angels desired to hear the great mystery of the kingdom in this parable. **If** you are purifying your heart by the revelation (manifestation) of Jesus Christ within you, through the Holy Spirit, **to the sincere love** of the brethren and are receiving the incorruptible **seed**, the **Word** (rhema) of God, you may hear and understand this great mystery.

Peter 1: 10, 12, 13b, 20b: Of this salvation (deliverance) the **prophets have inquired and searched diligently**, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ... To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven things which **angels desired to look into**.

"...rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the **revelation** (or manifestation) of Jesus Christ... **manifest** (or revealed) in these last times for you. ("**Christ IN YOU the hope of glory**." Col. 1:27) ("...when He comes (or appears), in that day, to be glorified **IN His saints**..." 2 Thessalonians. 1-10a).

Jesus is the Word of God and the Truth. He is the Seed of God, sown in our heart-soil, producing the life of Christ Jesus in us, ruling and reigning with us now.

1 Peter 1: 22-23: Since you have **purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in the sincere love of the brethren**, love one another fervently with a **pure heart**, having been born again, not of corruptible **seed** but incorruptible, through the **word** of God which lives and abides forever.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the express image of the Father sent out from God. He was the original mind of creation. It was through Jesus that all creation was made and by Him all creation continues to exist. Jesus, Who is in His saints, has authority over all creation.

John 1: 1-4, 10: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made**. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. He was in the world, and the world was made **through Him**, and the world did not know Him.

Colossians 1: 16-17: **For by Him (Jesus) all things were created** that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist**.

Jesus became the seed, the Word from God, sown into the hearts of men and is reproducing His life in the lives of His people through the Holy Spirit. **Jesus, living**

in us now, will produce the plan and rule of God on earth. Jesus in us has all authority over creation. Jesus, planted in the soil of the heart of man, can grow into the abundant, fulfilling, powerful, and peaceful kingdom of God life. Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, can enrich our heart-soil with the supernatural, spiritual nutrition of **the powers of creation.**

The heart soil of man under Jesus' control is the creation center for God on Earth. God can bring forth anything He desires on Planet Earth through the Jesus-filled child of God. He need only plant the seed of His desire into the yielded, cleansed, and prepared heart of a man or woman, and the natural growth processes will of themselves grow His plan into the earth.

A seed is a living pattern that grows. Only in recent decades have scientists begun to learn about genetics. It is known that every living organism has something called DNA or genetic coding, an extremely complex series of chemical coding that completely describes and determines the organism. Millions of different genes in different arrangements determine what the organism is, what it will look like, the coloring, potential size, intelligence-level potential, and every characteristic for each individual. A complete living pecan tree is within each pecan. Somehow in the meat of the pecan, which we may choose to crack and eat, is the whole living pecan tree with all its characteristics coded genetically within the seed.

As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. **A word from God is a spiritually, genetically coded seed. It is living and completely defined within the seed or word.** As the life within a natural seed is dormant until the seed is planted in the soil, so also a word from God to us is dormant until planted in the soil of our heart. A word from God is a seed (a living pattern that grows). God furnishes the seed; that's His part. Man's part is to plant the seed in good soil. **The seed is a word. A word is a vision, picture, thought or an idea for changing creation to conform to God's desire.** A seed is a living design from God for changing the earth and things on the earth.

God speaks (sows) His word into the heart of man through the receiver in man's heart (the ear to hear). Thus, a word (seed) from the spiritual realm is received into the physical realm. If believed (received and planted) into the heart-soil of man, it can sprout and grow into the physical realm.

THE EARTH EGG

In addition to growing a garden, I also raised chickens. I would gather eggs and select some to put in the incubator. The others were taken to the house and put in the refrigerator to be eaten. When I cracked the eggs to put them in a cake or perhaps to scramble some for breakfast, a shapeless glob of clear matter with a round yellow part in the center would fall out. The glob had no form and, apparently, no life in it. If, however, that same egg had received a seed from a male chicken and had been placed in my incubator or brooded over by the female chicken, it would have taken on form and identity and become a living, breathing, baby chick, with all kinds of intricate systems for life. It would have eyes to see, a little beak to peck with, dainty feet to walk with, tiny toe nails to scratch with, and even a built in peep-peep.

The chick will grow to be like his father who supplied the seed and his mother who supplied the egg. (*Male and female he created them*). The egg is a mass of raw

material waiting for a seed to define it. If the seed came from a large, black rooster, the genetic coding would probably cause the egg to turn into a little, black chick, which would grow into a large black chicken. If the rooster had been a small, red one, the chick would probably become a small, red chicken. The earth and all it contains are like the egg. Without a defining word from God, it is a formless glob. When God speaks a word, a multitude of spiritual, genetic coding is released to bring form and order to the glob of creation. The male part of creation is God's part (the genetically-coded, spiritual seed); the female (wife) part is our part (the good soil).

The earth was without form and void. It was like an egg. The raw material was there; but it had no specific shape or form and no identification. An egg is just a mass of runny, white stuff and a glob of yellow matter. You may have had one this morning for breakfast splattered out and then fried or scrambled. The earth, like an egg, was brooded over by the Holy Spirit then **GOD SAID**. The word of God (the seed) came, and the earth took on form and intricate systems of life. Multitudes of spiritual, genetic coding came forth as God spoke forth creation.

*Genesis 1:2-3,6,9,11,14,20,24: **The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering (or brooding) over the face of the waters. Then GOD SAID, "Let there be light", and there was light. Then GOD SAID, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." Then GOD SAID, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear." ...Then GOD SAID, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth." ... Then GOD SAID, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night." ... Then GOD SAID, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind."***

Are you hearing the mystery?

What is planted in the hearts of people is what will come forth in their lives and the world. This is what determines what our lives become in our lifetime. This is why one person may be able to overcome extreme obstacles and achieve great and noble accomplishments. While another man with equal or greater potential cannot seem to accomplish anything of significance in the kingdom. Regardless of how hard he tries, he is unable to overcome and unable to be powerfully used in the kingdom of God.

The answer is not more intelligence, better education, better breaks, noble birth, mere chance, harder work, devious scheming, fate, or any other natural circumstance. Who we are by birth, where we came from, and what breaks we get are not the primary factors that will determine our production in the kingdom. The answer will be found in the revelation of the mystery of the natural growth of a thought (idea, word) in the heart. **It is what we hear. What we really listen to and believe will shape our life and affect the world around us.** The thoughts (words) that we receive and allow to remain in our hearts will create who we are and what we do, which will determine our ability to overcome and fulfill our God-given destiny in life.

We do not have to know how it works. We do not have to know how it will be done. But, we must listen to, hear and believe what God is saying. Then

the goal He has for our life will grow into being. *"...for it is God Who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13).

Who can know how a glob of clear matter in an egg can become a living, breathing being with instincts, intelligence, and personality that can hear, feel, smell, taste, and see? Consider all the tiny organs, nerves, blood vessels, etc., that must be perfectly formed to sustain life. By some miraculous process, the DNA of the seed defines all these things and in only 21 days of brooding, the transformation is complete. How does the tiny heart begin pumping? What turns it on or starts it up? If you will tell me exactly how all of this happens, I will tell you how a word planted in the heart of man can transform the things of earth.

When we speak of a word, obviously we are not just talking about letters arranged together on a page. **A word is a thought, an idea, a vision, or picture.** A vision or dream may contain a series of pictures with many thoughts and feelings. When God spoke all growing and living things into being, He had to express an immeasurable amount of minute details. Everything was defined in what He said--the spiritual DNA or genetic coding emanating from Him. A word, thought, idea, or vision is a seed. It has the power to define life and grow into the natural world. A word is alive and potentially very powerful if received into the heart. The seed must be planted in the soil or in the egg. The Bible calls this process of receiving and planting **"faith"**.

After God completed the work of creation and placed all the universal laws that govern it in place, He created man in His image and gave man dominion on earth. Man has the supernatural creative potential to grow whatever seed is planted in his heart-soil into being in the world.

Every work or accomplishment of man begins with a thought, an idea. Every great building in our vast cities of today began with a thought. Every great church, ministry, business, or any other work of man was, at one time, a seed or word. Without a doubt, every invention, scientific discovery, or work of art began as a thought, an idea - a word. When the seed (vision/word/thought) that is planted is from God, the result will be God's plan growing into the world and the kingdom of God being established in the world. If the seed is from another source, another kingdom will grow into the world.

Jesus, the greatest miracle worker, once said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do." Where and how did He see the Father doing things? The Father is Spirit. Jesus was in a natural body. He saw by the Spirit within Him. He heard and saw words, visions, and ideas from the Father by the Spirit.

The second greatest mystery/principle is receiving the seed from God and growing it into our lives and then into the world through the creative power of our heart-soil.

The second greatest mystery/principle is **FAITH**.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

NATURAL SUPERNATURAL GROWTH (#028)

In the kingdom we cannot build a life, a business or a ministry. We cannot build the kingdom of God. **Everything of the kingdom of God must grow from a seed from God through a supernatural natural growth process.** We must receive good seed in good soil and let the earth grow it. Indeed, this is a great mystery.

We will become what we hear and believe in our hearts. "As you believe, so be it unto you." "Your faith has made you well." "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." "With God all things are possible." "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

Again, natural things are often pictures that can be used to show us spiritual things. Consider the natural growth process of a stalk of wheat that begins with a dormant seed. The seed placed in good soil sprouts and soon grows roots below ground and a small green blade breaks through above ground. The green blade grows and becomes a stalk. Then, a head begins to form on top. Next, the grain begins to grow in the head. The mature seeds in the head are seeds like the one that was planted. The seeds left alone will dry and eventually fall upon the ground and begin the process over again except there are a multiplied number of seeds.

A **seed** (word, thought, vision) planted in our heart-soil becomes a **belief** as it sprouts. The belief becomes a **conviction** as it grows a blade. A conviction becomes our **attitude** as it grows a head. Our attitudes become our **actions** as the full grain in the head becomes seeds (words & actions) sown into the world to sprout and grow into the natural world.

This is the supernatural natural process of bringing the desires and plans of God from heaven into the natural world. By this process, spiritual seed/word/vision from heaven becomes natural reality in the world. Through this growth process the world can be changed to become as it is in heaven.

*Mark 4:26-32: And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. **For the earth yields crops by itself:** first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."*

And He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade."

*1 Corinthians 3:6: I planted, Apollos watered, but **God gave the increase.***

Psalm 127: 1-2: Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.

The heart of man is God's spiritual/natural interface. Spirit God and physical earth meet in the heart of man. Two realms meet heaven and earth connect in the heart of man.

The pure heart of man is like a fruitful garden. It receives spiritual seed from God and grows it into the natural world. (*The earth yields crops by itself.*)

The soil must be moistened and protected by the life giving brooding of the Holy Spirit.

The pure heart of man is God's production center on earth that fills the world with God's plan and rule. Only the pure heart of man is the wife of God capable of intimately relating to Him, receiving seed from Him and giving birth to God's plan and rule into the earth. If we love God and intimately relate to Him, we will receive His seed and become pregnant with God's plan. If, however, we love another god, its seeds will be planted in us.

Things in the world are changed through the process of the seed and natural growth. We cannot change our character and actions by trying hard. Trying to stop doing something we want to do, or trying to start doing something we do not want to do will not make permanent changes. **We must change what we hear, what we think and what we believe.** We must receive new seed that will grow and change who we are and what we want to do.

Luke 8: 15: But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience (endurance).

Patience is required to reap a harvest. There is a space of time between the planting and the production. Our part is to patiently wait for the harvest and to care for the soil and the growing seedling or plant. **There is nothing we can do to make the seed have life. God puts the life into the seed, and He causes it to sprout and grow.** We can and must, however, provide the proper atmosphere, nutrients and care for the seed to grow to fruition.

This means holding on to the idea or vision even when we cannot see anything with our natural eye that indicates the idea is growing. The larger the idea or vision the longer the gestation period. A large work like a large animal or plant takes a much longer time. A chicken is birthed in only three weeks and is fully-grown in about twelve weeks. A human baby is birthed in nine months and takes about twenty years to be reach maturity. You can grow a radish in the garden in a few weeks; an oak tree will take many years. The vision may be lost if we abandon it. Many worthy works planted by God in the hearts of men have failed to come to fruition because they were prematurely abandoned. If a brood hen sitting on eggs leaves the nest even one day too soon, all the chicks in the eggs will be lost.

The seed planted in the soil dies and is reborn a living plant. This eliminates any potential of human effort adulterating the pure supernatural natural growth process. The temptation is to abandon God's plan during the time of the death and rebirth transformation.

John 12:24: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain."

Just as a natural gardener works to care for the soil keeping it loosened so that it does not become too hard for the seed to grow, we must keep our heart-soil tender by forgiving and receiving healing for all offenses that can press down and harden our heart. The soil must be kept moist and the temperature in the proper range by the presence of the Holy Spirit. We must keep the weeds of useless words (bad seeds) out of our soil. Useless, negative words or thoughts will grow weeds that rob nutrients from the good seed and prevent them from growing properly.

We must not only allow time for growth, we must also allow space. Seeds that are going to produce a large plant will require more space in the soil of our heart. Planting too many seeds in too small a space will cause them to grow improperly and bear little or no fruit. After the plants are up and growing, it may be necessary to remove some of them in order that there will be adequate space for growth. With some plants, it will be necessary to prune or trim the limbs to provide space on the plant for good fruit to grow.

Keeping the weeds out means taking every thought captive. We must remove the thoughts that would hinder the growth of the growing vision. Negative thoughts of doubt, worry, and fear will choke the vision. The enemy of the vision will always attempt to plant the seed that "you cannot do it", or "you are just not capable enough to do whatever God has said." He is exactly right. We cannot do it. We are not supposed to be able to do it. God does it! We must hear, believe, and obey what God tells us to do next. **The earth brings forth the crop by itself.**

Thinning the plants means that we may need to lay down some really good ideas in order to concentrate on the more important vision. Our heart-soil just is not big enough and enriched enough to bring forth all the good ideas in the world at one time. If there are too many ideas or visions in one heart, none of them will grow well.

Trimming and pruning branches means cutting off excessive or wild growth of the vision. Too many branches on a fruit tree may cause the fruit to be small and may cause disease because sunlight cannot enter. Branches that are too long or improperly shaped may break when the fruit nears maturity. We may need to limit parts of the idea or vision as it grows.

We are the manager of our garden. What we choose to hear and believe, what and how we think, are the seeds that will produce our life and affect change in the world. Bad thinking always produces bad life. Quality thinking always produces quality life. The difference between the man who tries hard but always accomplishes little in the kingdom and the man who is of much valuable service is what each hears and believes. In other words, how they manage their gardens.

All the seemingly unrelated negative events that consistently happen to the unproductive man are the product of bad seeds growing to fruition. All the seemingly unrelated doors of opportunity and blessings that consistently come to the productive man are the results of good seeds. **Nothing happens until somebody believes something.**

Remember “the earth yields crops by itself.” We cannot make growth, but we must care for the soil, thin and trim the plants, protect the seedling from a hostile environment and predators, pull the weeds, shoo off the birds, and above all, keep the soil moist with the presence of the Holy Spirit through prayer. Communing with God in prayer and meditating the word (thought, vision, seed) in the Holy Spirit is the process by which the natural growth and eventual harvest will come.

Prayer and meditation is speaking to and hearing God. Speaking to and hearing God does not only involve audible words. **Communing with God also involves speaking and hearing by pictures and feelings. It is seeing and feeling what God is saying as well as praying visions and feelings to Him.**

Prayer and meditation is experiencing in the spiritual realm what God desires to bring into the natural realm.

To intimately commune with God, one must come to a place of inner quiet where the thoughts and distractions of the world can be silenced. Close your eyes, quiet your soul, and seek to enter into the presence of the Father. Ask God what He wants to do with your life and wait quietly before Him. When you have a clear word, a vision from God, meditate it in your spiritual mind. Look at it. Understand it. Get to know it. See it happening. Feel how it feels. Then pray the vision back to God. With the vision in your spirit, go to Him and ask Him to give you the vision He has shown you. Daily continue praying this way. You will find that the vision will change some. It will become more detailed with a little more of this and a little less of that as God continues to clarify the vision in you.

You are now pregnant with the word from God. The vision is now alive within you. Allow yourself to become excited as you feel the first movements of the living vision within you. Original creation is beginning to be reshaped as the vision in the spiritual realm begins to impact the physical realm. All over the world things may begin to move or adjust in order to set the stage to bring about the vision that God has placed in your heart as a seed.

Next, begin to speak the vision out loud into the earth. Share it with those who can hear. Let your passion for the vision come forth as you speak it to others as God directs. You may need to begin writing it down or sketching it out on paper. Don't be alarmed if the vision is a thousand times greater than you think possible. Remember it is God's baby; He will bring it to birth.

Be faithful to pray the vision and be ready to take whatever next step the Lord shows you. Wait and watch for the opportunities and circumstances that in time will appear before you to birth the vision.

GOD'S PRODUCTION

Man is made in the image of God to have dominion in the earth. God blessed man to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it and to have dominion. It is

God's desire that the earth be ruled according to His heavenly plan and pattern. **Man has the potential to grow the seed of God, or the seed of the enemy. Only man has the God-given position to rule in the earth. Only man has the potent heart-soil that is the interface between the spiritual realm and the natural realm.**

Genesis 1:27-28: So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

After our hearts are seeded with the plan of God, we then become seeds sown into the world to bear fruit--to bring forth the plan of God on earth.

We are at the end of this age. The good news of the kingdom is being preached; the rule of God is coming forth on earth; and pure hearted sons of God are bringing forth the plan of God on our planet now. The sons of the wicked are being removed from the kingdom of God and cast into fire. They will repent and be purified or continue in the fiery judgment of God. Then, the pure hearted sons of God, bearing His plan, will shine forth on Planet Earth.

Matthew 13:24-30, 37-43: Another parable He put forth to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

"He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares, you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

He (Jesus) answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

"Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

The first soil is the heart of man in which the seed of God's plan is sown. **The second soil is the field of the world into which we are sown to produce God's plan, which was sown into our heart.** The field of the world is also sown with those who have had their hearts sown with a different, conflicting unfruitful seed.

We are to keep the tares (weeds) from growing in our heart-soil. However, the scene has changed in this parable. We are no longer looking at the soil of our heart but at the soil of the world. God, by his angels, will remove the tares from the world. They are allowed to grow together for a season. The tare is a plant in the kingdom that does not produce good fruit.

Thank God for the purifying fire we are coming through. Our hearts are being cleansed and healed to become good soil that will receive good seed and become fruitful producers in the kingdom of God.

We cannot change our lives by changing our actions. We must clear the land of our heart and plant the word (plan) of God. We must change what we hear and what we think. This will change our attitudes and actions, which will change our lives and destiny.

In the kingdom, we are not controlled by our circumstances. Christ living within us by the Holy Spirit is in control.

Jesus experienced the fullness of creative power from heaven flowing through Him. Few people if any since then, have fully experienced the creative power of the kingdom of heaven flowing through their lives into the world. Those who have come close have produced significant accomplishments with God.

Someone once said, "The man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument." My own experience parallels that of every other man who has heard and employed this mystery. It is not possible to share with you the miraculous, overcoming experiences of my 75+ years of which over 55 years were spent seeking to serve the Lord. They would become other books of many pages. In this work, I have sought to provide the reader with the foundational core of truth and wisdom resulting from my experiencing God and His word. For illustration's sake, let us take a brief peek at a small window of experience. By no means will we set the stage or give the background or complete story. We will only take a window peek for illustration.

In the late 1960s, after beginning to hear the mystery of "as you believe, so be it unto you," I began to prosper and to be used in giving. Through a series of changes, I had left my first miraculously prosperous job experience to manage a very small, industrial instrument sales company. Everything about the small company was minimal and poor. There were two employees. One was a middle-aged, Native American lady who wore the same pillow-tick, sack dress most everyday, ate a whole onion for lunch each day, and had a teenage son who slept in a coffin. The other employee was a young, alcoholic man who had the top of his left ear bitten off in a bar fight. The previous owner/manager smoked cigars and spit on the floor. Total sales for the first month were about \$11,000 at about 20% gross profit. That is about \$2,200 before wages and overhead, which left nothing for me.

There was no doubt, however, that God had put me there for a purpose. At this season, my life was to be dedicated to giving money for the work of God in the world. God made it clear to me that this was what He desired to do with this business endeavor. As I prayed, God began to give me visions of how the place and the business could be cleaned up and rearranged. I would see the changes in my heart by the spirit. Later, I could see that what I had seen in the spirit, had come to pass and was functioning in the business.

I would ask God, "What do You want to do in sales this year?" I was usually shocked as He revealed to me an amount that seemed, to my mind, far too great for the business to accomplish. Yet, I had come to believe that God could do what He said. Therefore, I would take a piece of paper and draw a graph representing the increase God had said. At this point, I had no idea how this tremendous increase could occur. As I prayed, I would take that line on the graph to God and ask Him to give me that. I would meditate before Him the vision of that increase coming to pass. I let myself feel what it was like to actually experience the increase happening.

After only a few months, the Lord gave me the little company. I purchased it on time payments without any money. Suddenly, for the first time, I found myself totally responsible for a business and God began to reveal the vast unlimited potential of the situation. The whole world was a potential marketplace. All the products of the world were potential goods to be marketed. There was no one over me to say it could not be done. **The only limitation was what God said, and what I believed.**

I am convinced that most men have never really touched the potential of their lives. Most of us experience only the smallest fraction of what God would like to do with us. We have been so planted and trained with the limitations of natural thinking and dependency upon our natural selves that we have rarely touched the vast, unlimited, spiritual realm of ruling and reigning with God. **God will do anything in and with our lives that He says and we believe.**

As I continued to pray and meditate the vision before Him, God would give me creative ideas and specific instructions for the next step. One example of these ideas was the printing of a catalog. No distributor of industrial temperature and pressure instruments had ever printed their own catalog. All the distributors used the manufacturers' printed material. We printed our own stock catalog, listing and describing all of the particular items that we carried in local inventory. We did all the photography, typesetting, and layout ourselves in our small office. It was a new experience; none of us had any experience in such procedures. There were some, who worked on the little, blue catalog, that were so proud of it that they did not want to give them away to customers! The idea worked and grew. The next catalog was the size of a telephone book and brought together a product mix that could not be had anywhere else.

Soon the Lord directed other divisions of the corporation and expansion into branch operations over the southwest United States market area that we served. We were among the first in our field to use toll-free, long distance (800) telephone service for incoming sales calls across the nation. In only three years, God's little company had become a multi-million dollar corporation. We sought to employ only maturing Christians. Some actually got saved in the employment interview and went on to spend much of their working life serving the Lord in the company. Not only were significant amounts of money flowing through me personally into the work of God; but also, many of the employees regularly gave to churches and other ministries. Many were very thankful to have a place to work where Christian values and morals were the norm.

I was never qualified to do this work. I had only a high school and some Bible college education. My work experience had been mostly in route sales, selling milk or bread on a commission basis. I had worked exceptionally hard to earn commissions to

provide for my five children. There was nothing in my background that said I could do this thing. But God said it and I believed it.

It takes courage to hear God and obey what He says. I can recall occasions when God would tell me something to do. Sometimes it did not seem to make much sense according to the facts, as we knew them at the time. It was even more difficult for some of my business associates to accept some of the actions. Later, some of them came to me and said something like, "How did you know these things were going to happen?" The seemingly unreasonable actions we had taken earlier all made perfect sense as new developments occurred; and, we were sitting in exactly the right place at the right time to benefit. I would simply reply, "I didn't know. I was just obeying God."

Everything God does in the kingdom begins as a seed planted in the heart of man and grows into the world through the natural supernatural growth process. The work of the kingdom of God on earth can be hindered by unbelief and doubt. The work of the kingdom cannot be stopped if the seed of God is planted in an obedient heart of faith and trust in God.

Intimately relating to God and faithfully serving Him in the world allows us to see and hear His plan in heaven by the Spirit and plants it in our hearts. The God-given enthusiasm for the plan causes us to begin to speak it forth into the world; and, eventually to see it come forth into the natural world by supernatural natural growth. This is the creative process of God that will bring forth the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

UNIVERSAL RECIPROCITY (#029)

Universal reciprocity can be viewed as **The Universal Bank in Heaven**. It is the only completely secure bank. All other banks can fail, but our deposits are secure in God's bank. Just as a natural bank is a place where we deposit our money or treasures until we call for them, so the bank of heaven is a depository for our treasures until we call for them. The enemy would like for us to believe that we cannot make withdrawals from the bank of heaven now, that we must wait until we die and go to heaven to have any use of our account in heaven. That same enemy desires that we believe everything about heaven pertains to only the future, and not now. This would be like a bank forbidding us the use of our checking account. **Yes, we are to lay up treasures in heaven, not on earth. But where does Scripture say that we must die and go to heaven to before we can access them?**

We are being used of God in the business of ruling and reigning on earth with Him. We are God's earthly managers bringing forth His will on earth as it is in heaven. God's universal laws govern the working arrangement between God and His earthly managers (mankind). As good managers of God's assets we are instructed to lay up treasures in heaven by faithfully and obediently managing our lives and all He has put into our hands. We are clearly instructed not to gather treasures on earth for ourselves.

*Matthew 6: 19-20: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal."*

Meeting needs of mankind and the world around us makes a deposit in our account in the universal bank in heaven. We are God's possession and all that is in our hands belongs to Him. Our personal accounts in heaven are His riches reserved for us. When we have need, God supplies all our need according to His riches in glory.

*Philippians 4: 17: Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the **fruit that abounds to your account**.*

*Matthew 19: 21: Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**; and come, follow Me."*

*1 Peter 1: 4: ...to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, **reserved in heaven** for you.*

*Phil 4: 19: **And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.***

SOWING AND REAPING

One of the major banking laws governing business activities of the “Universal Bank in Heaven” is the **universal law of sowing and reaping**. In the realm of physics, this law may be expressed as the law of cause and effect. Isaac Newton said, “For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.” In the realm of finance, one might refer to it as the law of investment and return. A preacher might express it as giving and receiving. The farmer would speak of planting and harvesting. In any case, the law always involves a costly sowing process. We must take what we have and plant it. We may desire to consume it, but we know there will be no harvest if we do not plant.

*Psalm 126:5-6: Those who **sow in tears shall reap in joy**. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

*Galatians 6:7-10: Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for **whatever a man sows, that he will also reap**. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season **we shall reap if we do not lose heart**. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us **do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith**.*

We will reap what we sow, if we do not lose heart. We must patiently wait and remain until harvest time. All sowing requires a period of natural growth before harvest. If we, for any reason, lose heart and leave or quit before the harvest time, we will miss the harvest. It may be wasted or another may gather the harvest we planted. Man does not decide when it is harvest time; the crop does. We must be available and ready to put in the sickle immediately when the harvest time comes.

No one can reap until someone has sown. To look for a harvest without sowing means that we are looking to receive from what someone else has sown. This is like borrowing and must be paid back. The account books will be balanced. To continue to borrow (seeking to reap without sowing) will put us further and further in debt and into the bondage of lack. It's much the same as if we continued to borrow money from a natural bank, but made no payments. We are given an original inheritance in our account but if we never use it to do good, we make no deposits. Our inheritance will soon be gone and we will have nothing in the universal bank to draw upon.

We are to sow (doing good) to all, but especially to those of the household of faith. The more we can do to really meet the needs of God's people and all mankind, the more we will reap. Helping to provide food for people by farming, processing, or distributing, is sowing. Using what we have to manufacture and distribute or otherwise provide clothing, clean water, adequate housing, transportation, medical services, and so on are forms of meeting needs. Mankind's greatest need is to be rightly related to God. Preaching and teaching the Word of God, bringing forth the ministry of Jesus by the Holy Spirit to save, heal and deliver is a major area of meeting human needs. The more we do to establish systems or provide resources to accomplish these things, the more we will reap.

*2 Corinthians 9:6-12: But this I say: “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he **who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully**. So let each one give as*

he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an **abundance for every good work**. As it is written: 'He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness remains forever.'" Now may He who supplies **seed** to the sower, and **bread** for food, **supply and multiply** the seed you have sown and **increase** the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God.

Hebrews 6: 10: For God is not unjust to forget your **work and labor of love** which you have shown toward His name, in that you have **ministered to the saints, and do minister**.

Becoming Better Managers

Who can meet more needs for mankind, the skilled or the unskilled, the diligent or the slothful, those with Godly wisdom or the unwise, the one who cares for others or the one who cares only for himself, the one who receives wise counsel or the one who listens only to himself, the one who labors or the one who talks idly? **The one who meets more needs is making more deposits and subsequently will reap more from the Universal Bank in Heaven.**

It is not necessary that men know the good we do. The return does not depend on men. It depends on God and His accounting and reward system in Heaven. We will be rewarded openly for using that which we have to meet the needs of others in secret. Prayer and fasting makes a deposit in the Bank of Heaven. Anything that meets human need, especially the needs of the brethren, makes a deposit.

*Matthew 6: 1-4, 6, 17-18: "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in Heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a **charitable deed**, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your **Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.**" "But you when you **pray**, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your **Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**" "But you, when you **fast**, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your **Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**"*

Giving to a person or an organization **that is meeting human needs** makes a deposit. Investing in a company **that is meeting human needs** makes a deposit.

The amount of return is based on the net value produced. It costs something to maintain our life and any system of endeavor. The net product is what is left of the value we added after subtracting the value that we consumed or used.

There is positive and negative sowing. If we do good to one person but take away from another, the value we added to mankind is lessened by the amount of

negative we sowed. If we go out to help the world but offend our own children, we may take away as much or more than we deposited. The net value added to mankind is our deposit in the Bank of Heaven. If we have not been giving to God by adding value to mankind but have been consuming all God has placed into our hands, we have been robbing God - robbing the bank of heaven.

*Malachi 3:8-9: "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' "In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, **for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.**"*

Jesus said that when we give to the brethren, we give to Him. We give to God by giving to others. **Our gift to an organization is a gift to God only if the organization is meeting people's needs.**

Malachi is a transitional book. It is the last book of the Old Testament and in part speaks into the New Testament. The tithe was God's instruction in the old covenant law that does not transcend into the kingdom. In the new covenant we, and all that we have in our hands are God's. We are to administer it according to His instruction. In the time of the old covenant, they did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide and empower their lives. Basic laws and rules and the words of the prophets were the Israelites primary forms of direction. There was no potential for them to all become priests and kings as in the new covenant. Rather, God appointed some to be priests and sent prophets to anoint some as kings.

In the kingdom our lives are about giving and serving God by serving His people. We are to be hearing and obeying God's desire and direction as to how and where we give or serve. In so doing, our treasures are stored in heaven to be drawn upon as needed to provide for meeting more needs in obedience to God's direction through the Holy Spirit.

There is no room in the kingdom for greed and covetous practices such as have perverted the ways of people, including many Christians, in past centuries. Failure and depletion of available provision comes from the disobedience of keeping back for ourselves what God has given us to invest in meeting needs, which is the business of kingdom management.

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE THIRD GREATEST MYSTERY (#030)

Everything God is doing, has ever done, or ever will do, is good. God never has done anything bad and never will do anything bad. Because God is good, there is hope. **Hope is the essence of believing in God's goodness;** it is the light for the future and the beginning of joy.

If, for any reason, we think we have seen God do something bad, we are wrong. Our perspective is not in order. Our goals are not God's goals. Our purpose is not God's purpose. All things that God does are good and work together for good to those who are in line with His purposes.

*Romans 8:28: And we know that all things work together for **good** to those who love God, to those who are the called **according to His purpose**.*

Our extremely limited view from our human position in life can give us a false perspective of good and bad. If we understood the full scope of God's plan and the eternal perspective of a given situation or circumstance, what may appear to our limited understanding as a very bad situation could be seen as good.

As an example, the Bible records many incidents of entire nations of people, including women and children, being destroyed by God or at His direction. From our natural, human perspective, we may view this as a very bad act of God. However, if we understood the full impact that sparing these nations would have upon the plan of God and His people in the future, we would see the love and goodness of God in the act. The continued multiplication of an evil tribe could have had a devastating effect upon millions in the future. Only God could know how sparing them would have a future tragic impact upon the world.

One error often made by modern day Christians is to ascribe to the devil every act that appears bad to them, and to accept every work that appears good to them as from God. To blame the devil for every act that we consider to be bad is foolishness. To do so, one must esteem the devil equal with God. The devil can do nothing to mankind that is not allowed by God. Everything God does is good. It is man that releases evil and judgment by his sin. God would not be good if He did not judge sin.

Only God can see the astronomical myriad of all events, their impact upon mankind and His entire plan for the world. In the full scope of considering all things now, in the future and eternity, only God can accurately determine what is good and what is bad.

*Job 2:10: But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. **Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?"** In all this Job did not sin with his lips.*

*2 Corinthians 1:18-20: But as God is faithful, our word to you was not "Yes" and "No". For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us - by me, Silvanus, and Timothy-was **not "Yes and No"**, but in Him was **"Yes"**. **For all the promises of God in Him are "Yes"**, and in Him **"Amen"**, to the glory of God through us.*

God is only positive. There is nothing negative in Him at all. If God did not provide judgment or chastening for man's evil actions, but instead rewarded man with health, prosperity, and good fortune for his evil deeds, He would not be a good God. Everything God does is positive in that it all moves toward His ultimate plan. All systems of creation are designed by God to arrive at the ultimate goal He has in mind, which involves peace on earth and good will toward men in the kingdom of God on earth from heaven.

Man is given dominion on the earth, but he will not prosper in his journey until he moves into the plan of God. Hence, even the lack of prospering is good, because it brings the out-of-order person or tribe toward order with God's plan.

God has only good in mind for mankind. God's plan is the beautiful, New Jerusalem lifestyle of peace and glory. God has no negative plan for man. His ideas are 100% perfect for man. He planned neither sickness nor disorder of any kind for man.

It is man who decides to come up with another plan. Man decides to disobey God and eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which is seeking to know what is good and bad from his perspective. Rather than obediently partaking only of the tree of life, which is seeking to hear from God, from His perspective. Man's alternate plans are not good for man and lead to God's chastening to bring man back to God's plan. The results of man seeking his own plan rather than God's are built into God's system of universal law and lead toward death, which is separation from God and His benefits. Even God's chastening is positive and gives us hope of attaining God's plan.

Ezekiel 18:20a: "The soul who sins shall die."

*Romans 6:23: **For the wages of sin is death**, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Hebrews 12 5b-6: My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord; nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

*1 Corinthians 11:31-32: For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, **we are chastened by the Lord**, that we may not be condemned with the world.*

Hebrews 12:11: Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

God is able to deliver the righteous and protect them from the judgment of the unrighteous, as He did with Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah. But even Lot was affected

by the evil of the land. He endured serious vexation and torment of soul because of the corporate living apart from God's plan.

*2 Peter 2:4-10: For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and **turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed with the filthy conduct of the wicked (for the righteous man, dwelling among them, vexed [tormented] his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds) - then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of glories (dignitaries).***

Although the righteous are delivered, they may yet endure oppression because of the evil around them. Collectively, man is tied together in families, communities, nations, and the world. Each individual will bear, to some degree, responsibility for the life decisions of the whole. Everyone in the U.S.A. will be affected by the cost of major diseases such as AIDS and the high cost of immorality. Although the disease of AIDS was birthed in sexual perversion, less guilty persons may contract the disease and suffer, simply because we are tied together. We are foremost affected by our own life decisions; secondly, we are greatly affected by our family; and, decreasingly, less affected by our community, nation, and world. The whole world is in some way affected by every person's decision not to live according to God's plan.

Conversely, the entire world is in some way affected by our decision to live according to God's plan. We first have the most effect upon our own life; secondly, we have a great effect upon our family; and decreasingly, have less effect upon our community, nation, and the world. But, we do have an effect on every person in the world.

The violent destruction of all the people including the little girls and boys in Sodom and Gomorrah may seem to us like a very bad act of God. Yet, it was good and not bad in the full scope of the world, mankind, and eternity. God was responsible for the actual act of raining fire and brimstone, not the devil. Man caused it to happen by accepting the devil's alternate plan and leaving God's plan. **The bad part was man leaving God's plan.** God, however, was good in destroying those who did. We cannot know the future death and devastation that could have been caused to the people of God by not destroying these cities and allowing them to remain and multiply. If God had rewarded them with prosperity, posterity, and longevity, He would not be a good God.

*Rom 6:23: **For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Psalm 106: 1: Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For his mercy endures forever.

God is good and His mercies endure forever. The mercy of God is available to all. His chastening will cause us to turn to His mercy. His grace can then empower us from within to live in His pattern and plan. Then, we can participate in His beautiful

holiness and peace. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Thank you, God, for your goodness! And thank you, God, for loving us enough to cause us to change! Thank you for our great hope for the future and our great joy for today!

Happiness is in God.

Even the darkest night can be endured with hope. **Because God is good, hope continues** until morning. Hope gives peace in the dark night and joy in the bright morning.

Psalm 30:5b: Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

Psalm 34: 19: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but God delivers him out of them all.

If God were not good, hope would not exist in the darkness of trials and difficulties. Rejection, persecution, and affliction would overwhelm and defeat even the righteous in the dark night.

Happiness is a pleasurable state of mind. The world seeks to produce happiness through an arrangement of external circumstances to stimulate pleasurable feelings and emotions. Real happiness comes from within from God, Who is real happiness.

To seek to be happy apart from love, faith, and hope is futile. The one who knows God's love personally is not at all dependent upon circumstances for peace and joy. Rather than being overcome by circumstances, he will impact and overcome the circumstances with his inner peace and joy.

Praise is the embodiment and expression of love, faith, hope, peace and joy. As we praise God, we reflect and express positive, affirming, gratifying love and life to God. As we praise His children, our brothers and sisters, we praise God Himself and flow life and edification to the person.

Matthew 25:40: "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"

God inhabits His praises. God is in praise. Praise comes from God within our heart as He produces love, faith, hope, peace, and joy. Where there is no reality of God within, there is no real praise. There is nothing negative in God. There is nothing negative in praise. And there is no praise in negativity or criticism. **WE CANNOT PRAISE GOD AND CRITICIZE HIS CHILDREN!** Criticism and negativity destroys hope. It is not ever of God and will always defer hope, which leads to sickness and death, not well being and life.

Proverbs 13:12a: Hope deferred makes the heart sick.

Proverbs 17:29a: A merry heart does good, like a medicine.

The positive force of praise cannot be faked. It must come from a pure, sincere heart in which love, faith, and hope has done its work. One may speak and act words

of praise with a negative, critical heart; but the words will come out only as phony, cheap flattery. The words will still carry the sting of death and will not edify. It is futile for a person or group to seek to enter into high praises to God without first experiencing true repentance, cleansing, and healing.

There is nothing on earth more beautiful, gratifying, and fulfilling than to enter into true praise and worship with an assembly of pure-hearted children of God. God does inhabit His praises.

The Three Greatest Mysteries of The Kingdom of God

*1 Corinthians 13: 13: And now abide **faith, hope, love**, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

LOVE, the greatest mystery, produces **righteousness**.

FAITH, the second greatest mystery, produces **power**.

HOPE, the third greatest mystery, produces **peace, joy, and PRAISE**.

Psalm 150: Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary. Praise Him in His mighty firmament (expanse of heaven)! Praise Him for His mighty acts. Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance. Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals. Praise Him with high sounding cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Happiness is praising and worshipping God with our whole heart, our whole life, in all we do or say every hour of every day.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Living The Kingdom of God Lifestyle
Journey From Religion to Relationship

Growing in the gospel of the kingdom

CONCLUSION OF PARTS 1 thru 3 (#031)

If the Spirit of God has worked in your life as you experienced these Kingdom Growth Guides, as He worked in my life during the 75+ years of experiencing living preparation and writing them, then you are being formed into His jewel.

*Malachi 3: 17-18: "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "on the day that I make them **My jewels**. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. **Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked**, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him."*

Your heart has been further purified; your motives are more pure and more holy. You will find a new level of real discernment, an ability to discern between the righteous and the wicked. Follow that discernment. Keep moving toward the light. Do not look to the right or to the left, but follow that pure discernment within you. Do not compromise and you will not lose your increased, spiritual sensitivity.

Continue to seek further purification of your inner motives. Continue in forgiveness and healing within your heart. Continue to grow in faith and love. Live continuously in thanksgiving and praise. Let your life be a living sacrifice to God by giving up whatever is necessary to remain continuously in intimacy with Him. Seek Him in prayer, meditation, and hear His voice. Feed on the spoken and written word of God; ask God to reveal it to your heart and wait on Him. Continue with those of like precious faith and do not become unequally yoked.

Above all, be careful how you judge. You will now be able to discern between those who serve only God and those who partially serve Him. Love one another with a pure heart. **Do not critically judge** those who are not yet purified. Make life changes quickly as God directs. When God desires for you to make changes, He will tell you. You must not partake of the tree of knowledge by reasoning it out for yourself.

Seek to build the principles you have learned into your life. It's not just what we know that brings godly living; it's what we do with it that really counts. When we are living the things God has shown us, He will show us more. Review and meditate the truths and principles you have received in this work. You may find as much or more the second and third time you review this material. Your heart may be more receptive than the first time you experienced it.

Let the love of Jesus rise up within you greatly to love those who persecute you. Buffeting will come to you because of the revelation you have received. The greater the revelation is, the greater the buffeting will be. **(R = B)**. The messengers of Satan will come to test you and, if possible, to steal the revelation. However, **it will only serve to increase your love and strengthen your faith.**

*2 Corinthians 12: 7: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the **abundance of the revelation**....a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.*

Every kick on the shin, every rejection, every time your pure motives are misunderstood, there is another opportunity for the love of Jesus to manifest within you and flow out as the joy of the Lord fills your heart and life. Let that love flow to everyone around you. The flow of love will cause an unreasonable joy and peace to fill your life. Your health and happiness will be improved by the abundance of peace.

*Matthew 5: 44: "But I say unto you **love your enemies**, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."*

You have not yet arrived, but are on a marvelous adventurous journey. You are a part of the generation actually experiencing the kingdom of heaven on Planet Earth. You will see marvelous and severe events take place as the will of God from Heaven comes forth on Earth.

One of the results of increased purification in the heart is an increase in spiritual insight and discernment of the times. You will be able to see in more spiritual depth; able to understand what is below the surface or behind what is happening. Your expanded understanding will allow you to be more effective in being the part of the kingdom that God has destined you to become. Continue to seek the kingdom of God and His righteous ways of doing and being. Wisdom will continue to grow within you as you seek His righteous ways.

The principles, understanding, and wisdom written in this work have had a very great impact upon my own life. Yet, they, all taken together, are only the smallest beginning of the full revelation of the kingdom of God. Much biblical truth has been veiled to us in the past because of a lack of revelation of the kingdom; and, therefore, subject to misinterpretation. We will now be able to gain more understanding of the Bible as we allow the Holy Spirit to teach us more perfectly the meaning of the scriptures, particularly as we go back to the original Greek and Hebrew words and hear their meaning in light of kingdom revelation. God is today causing various men to bring forth many works to further proclaim the gospel of the kingdom and teach the scriptures without the veils of the past.

The next portions of **Kingdom Growth Guides** beginning with Part 4 are based on the revelation and Bible investigation contained in the book entitled [The Seventh Millennium](#). The purpose of Parts 4 & 5 of Kingdom Growth Guides is to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to us more of the kingdom of God by examining the Hebrew and Greek biblical text in the light of the revelation of the kingdom. Much light will come into our hearts and many areas of previously veiled truth will appear and change some key erroneous views of the pre-kingdom religious era.

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It Will Never Fail**

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Kingdom Growth Guides PART 4 (#032) thru (#040)

KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES *Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom*

THE KINGDOM AGE (#032)

The church age is giving way to the kingdom age. A bright, new day is dawning, a day in which the believer is looking to God to rule in the fullness of life. It has always been God's desire and plan to intimately relate to mankind filling His people with His presence; and, thereby filling the earth with His life and His way. The reality of God's love and provision of wisdom and power is arising in this day to govern the earth and all life.

The church is not merely being reformed but completely transformed. In the passing church emphasis age, the church, for the most part, isolated itself within its walls. A mentality developed which separated religious life from "real" life. Believers tended to separate their "Christian life" from the rest of their lives, especially from their business lives and the governing of their nations. The ruling of business, education, government, entertainment and most of the rest of life has been left to the ungodly, secular minds of the world. For the most part, the love, infinite wisdom and ultimate spiritual power of God have been excluded from the governing of our world.

The emerging emphasis of the kingdom of God is a new season. It is a season in which the church walls and structure can no longer divide God's people from the rest of life. People are breaking out beyond the church building walls. Spiritual wisdom and power are becoming a major factor in all of life. It is a season marked by the glory and grace of God, a season of both the love, and the wrath of God, a season of freedom and judgment, a season of peace and warfare; a season of captives being set free and evil kings being dethroned; a season for hidden mysteries being revealed; and erroneous religious doctrines to be replaced with truth, a time of increased revelation and understanding of the spoken and written word of God. It is time for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord. It is the time for the true King to begin to rule on Planet Earth. In this new season of God be prepared to be further changed.

Knowing the times and seasons

Knowing the season or time of the epic story of God and man can help us to understand and cooperate with the workings of God. **Man is dependent upon God to reveal Himself.** Though religion may make a valiant effort to know God, man cannot know God by his own mental effort. No amount of intellectual effort will ever lead to the knowledge and understanding of God. God must choose to reveal Himself to man. God sovereignly decides to reveal certain aspects of Himself to whomever He chooses, when He chooses. Though the Bible may be complete, truth from it will not be revealed to a man until God causes revelation within the individual.

Luke 12:56: "Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?"

The more truth God reveals, the more man has for which to be accountable. God, in His great mercy, allows time for man to prepare himself for the next revelation by fully responding to the previous revelation. Receiving revelation of God and treating it irresponsibly by allowing the perversions that it exposes to remain leads to destruction.

The powerful revelation of the establishment of the kingdom of God is coming forth on the earth. The revelation of God Himself dwelling within man to guide and rule the world is bringing blessing and peace to those who hear. God has allowed two millennia of mercy since Jesus and His disciples first announced the gospel of the kingdom. During most of this period of mercy, the gospel of the kingdom of God was not widely preached.

After the brilliant light of the first century faded, God's messengers had little or no light from God on the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, during the past two millennia characterized by mercy, man has been free to receive Christ Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, into himself. Yet he was not fully held accountable for the gospel of the kingdom. That era is ending and a new era beginning. The 21st century is the beginning of the third millennium since Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom.

It has been firmly documented from the Bible that the history of man from Adam to Jesus spans four millennia. From Jesus to the year 2000 AD is another two millennia. Therefore, the history of man according to the Bible completed six millennia in the year 2000, (give or take a few years to allow for man's errors of his calendar, etc.). **The seventh millennium began as the sixth ended.** We are now living in the seventh millennium. Seven is God's number of fulfillment or completion.

The first two millennia were characterized by God's natural law, the second two by the revealed law of God. The law of the mercy of God characterized the third set of two millennia. The law of the kingdom of God will characterize the seventh millennium.

The seventh millennium will see the revelation of the kingdom of God from heaven on earth. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached to the entire world and all the world must become responsible for the revelation of the kingdom. Rejecting the gospel of the Kingdom will cause corrective judgment from God to come upon vast numbers of people and great areas of the world's systems. **Catastrophic events will become commonplace during a portion of the seventh millennium as many of the scriptures of the Book of Revelation are carried out in the earth.** This is indeed the end of an era. The era of God's tolerance for rebellious, unresponsive man ends with the wrath of God becoming more evident. All natural and supernatural systems will bear the mark of the new era.

A large segment of the population of the world will destroy itself, as one group destroys another, only to be destroyed themselves by yet another group or by some natural plague or disaster. A generation of violent people has developed on the earth for the purpose of bringing judgment to vast portions of the world's population. There is now a generation of people without conscience and with an uncontrollable urge to destroy. (*Joel 2*) These people are a natural product of man seeking other gods and his own way and refusing God's way for many generations. The end of these people is their own destruction. The Bible speaks of these as

"cursed children, natural brute beast made only for destruction, whose god is their belly, with eyes full of adultery and cannot cease from sin". (2 Peter 2)

Natural systems of the earth are now unbalanced because of man's ungodly ways of living. The imbalance is causing increased natural disasters such as violent storms, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Inordinate tides and water levels will sweep over much of the earth's landmasses. New, deadly diseases will come forth upon man. The rays of the sun will cause much damage to humans, animals, and plants alike. Again, all of this has been set into motion by the imbalance of natural systems created by man's disobedience to the ways of God over the past two millennia.

Yet, God in his mercy has allowed the continuation of man while He is calling out a people who will allow Christ to live and rule within them. Many called out ones will be spared from these judgments and will remain to bring forth the kingdom of God from heaven on earth. They will become a part of the transformation of the planet.

God has not changed. Nothing about God has changed. He has always hated sin and would not be God if He did not judge sin. He still loves men and women and the door of redemption continues today to be open to all who will believe.

God also is pleased with His creation of this beautiful planet. It is His desire to cleanse and restore the earth as He did at the time of the Flood, and at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It has always been God's plan for His kingdom from heaven to rule the earth through mankind. His plan will be accomplished in this seventh millennium.

While the generations bent on destruction have come forth, at the same time there is a mighty army of valiant people of God growing on the earth--a generation of Godly believers who are filled with Christ. Men and women, who by love and faith are empowered to live and speak the kingdom of God on earth, are overcoming evil with good. Great displays of natural and supernatural power will emanate from them for the purpose of establishing good upon the earth.

We earthlings have no capacity to mentally ascend to heavenly things. We are totally dependent upon God to reveal heavenly things to us. Sincere men of the church have sought diligently, throughout past centuries, to define and teach the events of the end times. We have developed varied interpretations of the Scriptures that have become generally valued as truth among diverse groups of believers. The further revelation of the kingdom coming forth in the seventh millennium is forcing us to reconsider what the Scriptures really say in light of the revelation of the kingdom of God.

Prior to the further understanding of the gospel of the kingdom (such as is taught in the previous Kingdom Growth Guides), many expected the dramatic, glorious bodily return of Jesus to begin the establishment of the kingdom. While we anticipated a great moment of climax to occur at some future date that would begin the establishment of the kingdom, it was already quietly growing within us.

Luke 17:20-21: Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

The transition into the new era of the kingdom is already happening. Yet, there are multitudes that have no idea that sin is being judged and the kingdom is coming forth.

In the day that Jesus Christ walked bodily upon the earth teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, many religious people totally missed it. The great events taking place around them were seen as something other than the Son of God proclaiming the kingdom of God. It was not just the heathen who missed it; it was the established, Bible (Old Testament) preaching, religious leaders who could not see. Many people, who lived at the same time and in the same place where God's mighty works were proclaiming the kingdom of God, were not aware of what was really happening. It is no different now as the great events of the seventh millennium are unfolding and Christ again walks in His Body (the Body of Christ) proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

The religious leaders of that day were so involved in the old way, which was coming to an end, that it was difficult for them to adjust to the new era of the preaching of the kingdom. This led to their violently opposing Christ Jesus and the kingdom that He preached. They put themselves into the position of becoming enemies of the God they sought to proclaim. The gospel of the kingdom is very divisive. It leaves little or no room for straddling the fence. Either a person sees it and aligns with it or they rise up and oppose it. As the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom has come forth in the new era, some very religious people have put themselves into the position of becoming at enmity with God by resisting His gospel of the kingdom.

We must change with the times of God and not attempt to adjust the times of God to us for our comfort. Change is sometimes not comfortable. Yet, it is far easier to change with the time than to oppose God.

We must face the future, forget the past, and fulfill the present.

Now, in this time, godly people are experiencing an increase of spiritual light. At the same time, ungodly people are experiencing an increase in darkness. It is popular with ungodly people to change with the times and become increasingly evil in their ways. It is necessary for godly people to change with the times and become increasingly holy in their ways.

Holiness is an exciting adventure. There is nothing more exhilarating than experiencing the powerful loving flow of Christ by the Holy Spirit through our natural human bodies. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing the power of God released to change lives for good. There is no greater fulfillment for man than experiencing the kingdom of God. We must make the commitment to endure the severe conditions of change, even if it means adjusting some of our previous interpretations of Scripture. It will be well worth it.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM LIGHT (#033)

Christ Jesus came from heaven to earth. He was born without an earthly father by the seed of God through the Holy Spirit. Jesus was born outside the lineage of Adam and is without the curse of Adam's sin. He matured as a natural man without a sin heritage and was filled with God by the Holy Spirit at His baptism. Without the hindrance of a damaged soul, body, and spirit, He was one with His Father in heaven. All the love, power, and wisdom of God the Father abode in the man Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

Christ Jesus did not come to establish the Christian religion nor any other religion. He did not come to give us a religious order nor provide us with a set of ritualistic rules and practices to get us to heaven when we die. He came to redeem mankind and the kingdoms of earth. He came and now abides within believers to establish a very practical kingdom of God, one in which peace and good will toward man prevails. One of the mistakes of religious-thinking people is to consider Jesus as the champion of the Christian religion and compare Him to the champions of other religions of the world.

The supreme wisdom, truth, and understandings given through Jesus Christ are not for the purpose of being catalogued, classified, and labeled as religious doctrines and practices by man. The words of Jesus are not for establishing theology, religious services, or any other religious ritual. **The teachings of Jesus are to be the foundational framework for guiding and empowering the individual and every form of authority in the world.** The basic kingdom principles are not just a guide for religion or church. Every ruling authority must eventually structure the base of its function by the principles of God's kingdom given through Christ Jesus. No other form or set of principles will ever lead to peace on earth and good will toward man.

The theme of the Bible is the message of Jesus. The message of Jesus is the kingdom of God or, said another way, the rule of God from heaven on earth through redeemed man. The message of Jesus is not just how to get to heaven when we die or how to establish a set of doctrines for our denomination. As we stop looking with religious eyes and begin to ask God for practical understanding of His Word to guide and empower our lives today, we may be amazed at how simple, practical, and real His Word really is; especially the teachings of Christ Jesus in the Gospels.

In the passing church age, many Christians separated the "religious" from the "real" within their minds. They would stand outside a church building and function in the "real" part of their thinking discussing things that are real to them, such as their jobs or a recent sporting event. Then, they would walk inside the church building, sit down, and subconsciously shift their minds to the unreal religious portion of their minds. Everything that happened, every word heard or spoken, was then affecting only the religious portion of their soul. Little, if any, crossed over into the reality portion of their minds. This great wall of separation within the individual prevented the principles and wisdom of God from greatly affecting their life experience. It was not available in the reality portion of their lives to guide their life decisions. Decisions

about education, job, business, family, entertainment and other important areas of real life were made without the benefit of the supreme wisdom of God's kingdom principles.

Religion can become a blinding force that can rob a person of sight. One may see the words of a portion of scripture and not see the meaning and application of it for his life. One may hear the Word spoken and yet not have ears to hear the powerful truth that will affect his or her daily life. The words spoken may have doctrinal or religious meaning for the religious portion of their lives and have little or no effect on the kingdom of God ruling their entire life. The instruction and empowering principles for kingdom living will not appear to the person looking at the Bible with religious eyes and denominationally colored vision.

I have been a part of church services where the Word from God was brought with power and obviously affected the people in the congregation. Yet, I was amazed to see the people shift at the final "Amen," back to their "real" mode and resume conversation about recent sporting events and other such things as though nothing had happened. Only the religious part of their lives was affected and little or nothing changed in their daily lives.

Christ Jesus did not come to earth to fill a portion of our lives or to become a part of our lives. Christ must fill our entire life and become our life. The will of God will be done, and the kingdom of God will come in our lives when Jesus is our life. "Christ in you the hope of glory".

Similarly, we must not interpret nor apply the Bible from a partitioned perspective. We must seek an undivided view of spiritual interpretation of the Bible for our whole life experience. True purpose for man's life can only come from knowing God's purpose from His words. The words of God are a living and powerful force guiding the metamorphosis of the heavenly kingdom of God on earth. **A major purpose of man is to intimately relate to God in such a way that Christ is formed within him to establish the kingdom of God and rule and reign with him on the planet.**

Ruling and reigning with Him encompasses every aspect of life, not just religious matters. All governments, businesses, families, schools, churches, and other institutions in the earth are to be ruled by Christ living in man. Science, technology, arts, all disciplines of knowledge and practice, and every skill of man are to be ruled by the indwelling Christ in man.

The kingdom of God is much larger than the local church. It is given birth from the church but grows to encompass all aspects of earth. The kingdom of God is larger than redemption. It is in part the reason for redemption and the purpose of the church. The kingdom of God and His righteous ways of doing and being will rule our lives and, eventually, our world as we individually and cumulatively seek Jesus, the message of God. Jesus is the message of the kingdom of God on earth from heaven. He is the King over all other rulers and authorities in the world. He is the Lord over all other men and angels or any created thing.

The King is now present on earth to rule and reign with believers. The message of Jesus, the gospel of the kingdom of God, is coming forth on earth by the indwelling Spirit of Christ within believers. *Christ in you the hope of Glory (Col 1:27).*

He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father (John 14:12).

The enlightenment of the kingdom of God in the beginning of the seventh millennium challenges many of our traditional interpretations of scripture. Even the translations from the original language of the Bible coming forth during the sixth millennium beg to be reevaluated. A return to the original Greek and Hebrew text of the Bible viewed in the light of the revelation of the kingdom is needed to clean up some religious traditions interpreted into our contemporary Bibles.

When the Apostles, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, penned the New Testament, they were often recording events they personally witnessed or heard directly from the Lord. Paul, for example, taught the kingdom of God from the perspective of personally experiencing the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit performing miracles of healing, deliverance, and personal protection. Kingdom power was a part of their daily lives, along with persecutions from the Jewish religious leaders and resistance from a few church leaders.

Though kingdom power and authority were a part of their everyday lives, they lived two thousand years ago. There has been movement toward the fulfillment of some things since that time. Sometimes, because the Bible is so everlasting and alive, I feel that we are still living in that same time frame. Of course, most things do not change in the spiritual realm. The Word of God is forever settled in heaven; and, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Though the Word never changes, our ability to understand it does change as God gives clarification of revelation by the Holy Spirit. Some people talk about returning to first century Christianity. I believe we are entering even a greater season. **Seventh millennium kingdom reality** will exceed that of the first century. I believe Paul and the others would say a big "Amen" to that.

Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of God. After Pentecost the disciples had clear revelation of the gospel of the kingdom and proclaimed it with great power and clarity. Paul and others of his day had clearer revelation of the kingdom than any subsequent generation throughout the fifth and sixth millennia.

Paul, toward the end of his ministry, clearly warned that apostasy would soon occur within the church. **The great apostasy that began after the first century caused the revelation of the kingdom and the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to be hidden and lost to the church in general.** The great revelation and power of the first century was adulterated and lost as vast darkness covered the world. The church became a religious monstrosity as man's fallen ways replaced the pure leadership of Jesus Christ working within men through the Holy Spirit.

The apostles of the Lamb and the disciples of the first century had a clear revelation of the kingdom of God. Their **original writings in the Greek language** reflected the understanding of the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, the major English translations of the Bible we have today were translated fifteen hundred or more years after the first century. The great apostasy of the dark ages caused the pure word of the kingdom to be perverted, as many false doctrines of religion affected man's understanding and clouded the great gospel of the kingdom. Paul had warned that apostasy would come after he was gone. It came and caused the pure word of the kingdom of God to be taken from the church and replaced with other doctrines and rituals.

(Acts 20:29-31 NKJV) For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

In the second and third centuries, Christians were greatly persecuted. They were tortured, beheaded, burned, and thrown to wild beasts. Christians survived in caves, wilderness areas, and undercover in cities. Despite the attempt by Roman emperors to eradicate Christianity, it continued to spread and to remain relatively pure.

In the fourth century, Constantine, a Roman emperor, was miraculously converted to Christianity and made it the state religion, bringing an end to the great persecution. The state church of the fourth and fifth centuries was very different from the pilgrim spiritual church of the first three centuries. Constantine established Sunday as a day of worship and rest. During this time the church was no longer being purified by persecution and soon experienced an inrush of pagan ideas and ways. The church's prosperity was its greatest peril. This was the beginning of corrupt leadership and practices within the church. Instead of the church separating itself from paganism it adapted to it.

Church leaders established a hierarchy of control and power. They fought for position, bought and sold religious favors and positions, openly lived immorally, and developed doctrines to favor their positions of power. The Papal system developed with a number of locally powerful Popes. Eventually the power shifted toward Rome and a universal, all-powerful Pope. In the fifth century the Barbarians overthrew a portion of the empire and some were converted to Christianity. However, their conversions were nominal and helped introduce increased pagan practices into the church.

Though some Popes were better than others, in general, from about the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, the corruption continued. The Spiritual life of the first century church was replaced with a politically powerful, corrupt, and very ritualistic religious system. In this system, the people were required to pay for forgiveness of their sins, the church collected taxes, and leaders made themselves as gods. Indulgences were sold--the greater the sin, the greater the price. The church became very rich. Church doctrines were established by the Papal hierarchy to bring political authority under the Pope. According to their rules, salvation or forgiveness of sins could not be had outside the Roman Catholic Church. It was absolutely necessary for every human creature, in order to obtain forgiveness, to be subject to the Roman Pontiff. Any one with a different view was considered a heretic. In an attempt to rid the world of heresy, the church killed many of them.

Though the church was polluted by perverted leadership and false doctrines, I personally believe that there were real Christians with godly beliefs and practices on the fringes and hidden within the church body. It seems from scripture that there is always at least a remnant of godly people during even the darkest of times. They may not be openly visible and history may pass them by but they are there (*Romans 11:3-5*).

The renaissance period of learning brought a renewed interest in the Hebrew and Greek scriptures, which began to expose the unscriptural corruption of the medieval

church. Early reformers met with strong and deadly resistance from the church. The church began persecuting Christians instead of the Roman government persecuting them. The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries began the modern reformation of Christianity. Spiritual truth began to be restored, piece-by-piece, as biblical teachings were revealed to men. **The restoration of revelation continues today and the church continues to attempt to free itself of the lingering doctrines and rituals of the past apostasy.**

It was during the early part of the current restoration period (1611) that King James authorized the English translation of the Bible that we still use today. It was in this period of limited, spiritual light and ritualistic, religious background that the Bible began to be translated into other languages. Over twenty major editions of the English New Testament appeared before the Hampton Court Conference in which King James approved the project that produced the King James Version (KJV). Most of these, as well as the KJV, were little more than revisions of the earlier work of William Tyndale. The translation of the NKJ New Testament is estimated to be up to ninety percent of the actual wording of Tyndale's New Testament.

With the light they had, the men sought to translate the Hebrew and Greek text into English. But, they did not have the revelation of the kingdom of God or the gospel of the kingdom that the original first century writers had. They sought to make sense of the Word in the context and framework of their revelation and understanding at the time. Many of the Hebrew and Greek words could be translated different ways. There is no exact word-for-word comparison between the languages. The translators had to rely on their understanding of the context and the speaker's intent to determine which way to go with the translation and which English words to use.

A number of revisions of the King James Version have been produced, including the American Standard Version in 1901 and the New American Standard Version in 1959. All of the translations and revisions have borne the impression of the clarity of revelation and understanding of God from the point in time they were written. They also bear the essence of the spiritual color (area of revealed truth) of the individuals doing the translating.

God continues to reveal Himself and His ways to His people according to what they can receive and handle. The church is still very much affected by the trappings of the apostate church of past centuries. As periods of enlightenment come one after another, revelation comes forth and truth is restored to the church. It was only about four hundred years ago when salvation by grace through faith was restored to the church. From that time to the present, many powerful truths have been revealed to God's people. With each new enlightenment we tend to think we now have it all. yet the revelation of God continues to come.

The original text, as it was originally written, is believed to be the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God, God-breathed and without error. The translations of the Bible are not. They are an evolved series of translations through different languages from the original.

The recent clarification of revelation of **Christ in believers producing the victorious kingdom of God lifestyle with authority over the enemy and all of his works sheds bright new light on the Word of God.** At this present point in time, the revelation of kingdom begs for a return to the original language texts as

much as possible. The clear revelation that may be clearly seen through the Holy Spirit in the Greek and Hebrew text may be obscured in our translations. **We must depend on the anointing of the Holy Spirit to open and explain the scripture to our spirit.**

1 John 2:27: But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

Considering the Hebrew and Greek text in light of the kingdom of God potential now and in the future may cause passages speaking of victorious kingdom living to become brilliantly alive; and it may cause some passages to crumble, which seem to say that God's people can only wait to die or escape.

Various doctrines and rituals of the church originated in the apostate past or in the beginning light of the reformation period. Some long-held traditional doctrines may need to be exposed to the light of the kingdom by the Holy Spirit and measured by the Hebrew and Greek scriptures.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES *Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom*

DOCTRINES IN LIGHT OF KINGDOM (#034)

The word "doctrine" is a very religious sounding word. It sounds very important when used in relation to the church. Every religious order has its set of doctrines. There seems no end to the number of divisions caused by differences in doctrine.

No one knows the number of the multitudes of people who have been killed over religious doctrines. Conflicts and all-out wars have occurred through the centuries and continue today. Churches are split again and again; families, friends and nations are fractured by doctrinal disputes.

The word translated "doctrine" in the New Testament simply means "teaching." Doctrine can be true or false teaching depending on the source. It could be a doctrine of God (Titus 2:10), or a doctrine of man (Col. 2:22), and even a doctrine of demons (1Tim. 4:1).

Most religious people and all denominations, sects, and cults are convinced that their system of theology is doctrine from God. Therefore, they see any teachings that do not align with their system of theology as doctrines of demons and/or doctrines of man. Therefore, each group sees the other as deceived by doctrines of man or doctrines of demons; and, they see themselves as possessing doctrines of God. Doctrines tend to become sacred to the believer and, therefore, very resistant to change even when additional light comes from God. Doctrines can be passed from generation to generation for centuries without change.

In the limited light of the early reformation period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, doctrines were developed in the church and passed down. These doctrines of then fresh light mixed with fallacious doctrines and practices of the past have been rooted into the church and are now considered precepts of truth in the church today. When a doctrine has been in place long enough, it may be considered sacred, though it may have begun as speculative. Once it is considered sacred, many people would die or kill rather than consider change.

One of the enemy's most effective stratagems may be to pervert the truth of God by bringing forth doctrines of his own into the church. Centuries ago the powers of darkness brought doctrines into the then apostate church. Some of the doctrines of demons have become traditional, sacred doctrines carried forward into churches of today. The enemy affected the efforts of Bible translators of the early reformation period by coloring their selection of words according to some of these perverted or false doctrines.

In light of the continuing restoration of revelation, we must reexamine traditional doctrines by returning to the Greek and Hebrew text depending on the Holy Spirit to guide our pure heart toward truth. **We must not defend doctrines solely because our particular branch of the church traditionally accepts them.** It is not enough to believe doctrines just because we have believed them all of our lives. We must not substitute the stored data of our minds for the discernment of the Holy Spirit if we are to continue toward the powerful reality of the truth of God.

*1 Tim 4:1, 6:3: Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to **deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons**. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even **the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness**.*

Receiving Truth Exposes Mixture

The "words of our Lord Jesus Christ" may be used along with that "which accords with godliness" as a measure of wholesome doctrine. Clearly, our Lord's words in the Gospels primarily focused on the kingdom of God (the ruler-dominion of God) on earth. Godliness implies being in accord with the character and nature of God.

Therefore, any teaching, which does not appear to be in agreement with the words of Jesus Christ, nor in accord with the character and nature of God, should be reexamined. The words of Jesus are recorded in the Greek language in the New Testament. By the Word and the Spirit, we can know the words of Jesus and the character and nature of God. Any doctrine or teaching that seems to take away from the ruler-dominion (kingdom) of God on earth or in some way postpones or diminishes the victory over the powers of darkness is suspect and should be reexamined.

The false teacher and teaching can also be known by its fruit (Mat 7:15-20). In practice, any doctrine that does not seem to produce good fruit unto godliness in life should be reexamined.

Some questions we might ask regarding the fruit of a teaching are:

- (1) Does the fruit of the teaching seem to allow the powers of darkness opportunity to function now?
- (2) Does it in any way seem to promote ungodly behavior now?
- (3) Does it provide false assurance to those who practice lawlessness?
- (4) Does it create less motivation to serve God and seek His kingdom now?
- (5) Does it seem to elevate anyone or anything equal to or above God?
- (6) Does it cause us to despise prophecy or any other spiritual gifts?
- (7) Does it tend to ascribe the works of God to the powers of darkness?
- (8) Does it cause us to fear the powers of darkness?
- (9) Does it cause us to not love our brothers or our enemies?
- (10) Does it hinder our forgiving from the heart?

Our view of the answers to these and similar questions is not the final factor. Rather, it may be an indicator that the doctrine in question should be investigated.

The fruit of any doctrine is measured by the effect it has on those receiving the teaching. A true doctrine of God will motivate one toward godliness (alignment with the character and nature of God) and build faith, hope, and love. The teaching will promote godly behavior and activity toward profitable production of the will of God on earth. It should move the individual toward health and well being of spirit, soul, and body. A true doctrine of God will inspire a loving, respectful fear of God and a fearless disrespect for evil and the evil one. It will move the individual toward freedom from evil bondage to any person, place, or thing. A true teaching of God will move the person toward a total love for God and an allegiance to Him above anyone

or anything else. It will move the individual toward alignment with God's love and care for His creation including the earth and the fullness thereof.

1 Cor 10:26 KJV: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

A true doctrine of God will implant God's ways into man and the world.

The fruit of false doctrine will always tend to move toward the opposite of the true. It will tend to erode the principles and precepts of God and plant alternate ways. The doctrines of demons and/or man will allow or encourage movement away from alignment with the character and nature of God and will tend to weaken faith, hope, and love. It will tend to lessen godly behavior and activity of profitable production toward the will and purposes of God. It will tend to inspire a lack of respect for God and a fear of evil and the evil one. It will move the person toward bondages and addictions to a person, place or thing. Doctrines of demons and/or man will tend to create allegiances other than to God Himself. These false doctrines will cause the person to not love and care for God's creation, especially the earth and all its fullness.

Many teachings emanated from the defeatist attitude of the oppressed, apostatized church of the Dark Ages and were carried forward into the early reformation. People had been enslaved in religious bondages for centuries. They had not experienced the power of God flowing through their lives. Deceived and unjust religious rulers had controlled their thoughts and beliefs by controlling the teachings of the church. The essence of the doctrines and their belief was that Christians could only expect to live in defeat, misery, poverty, and repression in this life. According to these doctrines, all potential blessing, victory, prosperity, and freedom would come to them only in heaven after they died. The fulfillment of most of the promised blessings of God, which are for His children today, were moved forward in these teachings to heaven after death. Those promises, which directly referred to victorious living on earth and could not possibly be viewed as only for heaven, were seen as not for this time, but for after the future bodily return of Jesus to the earth.

Centuries of enslavement to fallacious doctrines have caused a slave mentality and a defeatist attitude to be formed within Christians much like the Egyptian enslavement had formed in the children of Israel. When it was time for the children of Israel to move into the Promised Land and possess it, they did not overcome their defeatist attitude caused by centuries of bondage. They did not adjust their beliefs to align with the will and plan of God. Even the great miracles demonstrated to them in the wilderness had not repaired their slave-minded defeatist attitude. Their lack of respect for God's power and their fear of evil made them easy prey for a false report and they did not receive the promise of God. Instead, they continued in the hardships of defeat. Only after that generation passed away and the next generation, who did not retain the old beliefs and attitudes, took over did the children of Israel enter victoriously into the promise of God.

Not until the twentieth century, the final moments of the sixth millennium, has there been an awakening, which has changed the defeatist attitude of the slave-minded church. There were great revivals and awakenings prior to the twentieth century in which many people became Christians. But, the focus of their salvation hope was heaven when they died, not the power and presence of God working in and through them to bring forth the rule of God into the world, to destroy the work of the devil,

and establish the kingdom of God on earth. Early American revivals were eventually squelched by denominational church disputes as different denomination leaders argued over the order of services and doctrinal positions.

Before the awakening of this current time, achieving holiness was often seen as striving to legalistically keep laws and rules. Though the church derived the laws and rules from the Bible, they became a bondage to the people. The people struggled with religious rules, without the teaching of the grace of God empowering the believer from within to live holy lives by faith. Some Christians are still affected by this view. This view tends to cause one to become a legalist and to seek to be holy by externally applying laws devised by the church.

Many others believe that holiness is unattainable in the experience of life and that they must depend on the mercy of God to forgive their continued unholiness. This view tends to lessen the search for further purification and holiness in life now, and accepts positional righteousness as a ticket to heaven that cannot be cancelled.

Both of these views are powerless to produce the power of Christ, the anointed One. They do not produce His anointing within God's people to empower them to live holy lives. The spiritual awakening of the revelation of the kingdom of God, coming forth on earth by the anointing of Jesus Christ within God's people, by the Holy Spirit, is restoring holiness and power to the people of God.

*Rom 14: 17: For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**.*

*1 Cor 4: 20: For the kingdom of God is not in word but **in power**.*

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM LIFE (#035)

The cross of Jesus Christ is beyond any doubt one of the most paramount events and significant factors of all human history and continues over 2000 years later to powerfully impact mankind. The shed blood of Jesus at the cross is God's only provision for the remission of sin. Apart from the cross there is no exoneration of man's sin.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is of equal importance as the cross.

Just as the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is imperative for the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is imperative for the overcoming of sin in man. The resurrection is to holiness, what the cross is to forgiveness. Provision is made for mankind to be redeemed from the penalty of sin by the cross. **Provision is made for man to be redeemed from the practice of sinful living by the resurrection.** God's only provision for man's holiness is the resurrected Christ indwelling believers. It is not the Christ of the cross, but the Christ of the resurrection, that lives in His people to motivate and empower man to live in real holiness now in this life.

The church of the recent past has emphasized the cross and the forgiveness of sin. The church in the kingdom age is also emphasizing the resurrection and the overcoming of sin unto the establishment of godly living on earth. Believers are born into the kingdom of God by the forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus at the cross. Believers mature into kingdom of God living by the life of Jesus, the indwelling resurrected Christ. It is all the work of God. In the past, the church has emphasized being born again by faith, but then trying to adhere to behavioral rules to achieve holiness and right standing in the church (Galatians 3, Romans 8,).

Attempting to keep externally applied laws can never accomplish holiness.

In the natural, rules are necessary for the development of immature children who do not yet possess the capacity to maintain inner guidance and strength to order their conduct. Mature individuals must develop inner guidance and strength. Reasonable rules are usually not overly oppressive to small children, but can be oppressive to mature individuals, who should be guided from within and not controlled from without.

The Spirit of the resurrected Christ dwelling within is the internal guidance and strength that will generate holiness in the life of the believer. The Word applied from without can only serve as a tutor to immature believers and as a measuring stick for unbelievers to reveal their sinful condition. The law leads to the cross. The Spirit leads to resurrection life.

Gal 3:23-26: But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

The resurrection life of Christ within far exceeds religion.

Paul and other first-century disciples lived a firsthand adventure of the resurrection life of Christ. They sought to be worthy of the resurrection life, and to reach the marvelous fullness of the resurrection of Christ within. This experience was not prevalent in the apostatized church that developed after the first century, and has been experienced only sparsely in the church of the more recent past.

Reformation-period Bible translators were affected by the generic church view that, in general, all good things would only come in heaven after death, or at the bodily return of Christ. Therefore, translations tend to be bent toward all references to resurrection being ascribed to only future resurrection after death. This tends to add some obscurity to the great truth of the potent resurrection life of Christ within the people of God now.

The religious Pharisees of the first century knew nothing of the powerful resurrection life of Christ. They were very meticulous in the Word (the Old Testament law) and very harsh with their application of the Word, especially toward followers of Christ. Paul admits to being one of the fiercest Pharisees prior to his conversion. He personally had a firsthand view of the difference between the resurrected life of Christ within and the religious external application of the Law. Paul related the advantages and superiority of the resurrection life over his past religious ways in the epistle to the Philippians.

*(Phil 3:5-7 NKJV): Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a **Pharisee**; concerning zeal, **persecuting the church**; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.*

Paul was a devout Hebrew Pharisee permeated with the harsh administration of the law. Religion was the first order of priority for his life. The word "Pharisee" is the Greek word "Pharisaios" (far-is-ah'-yos) and means an **exclusively religious separatist**. Its origin is from the Hebrew word "parash" (paw-rash'); a prime root meaning to separate; literally, to disperse; or, figuratively, to specify; also by implication to **wound**, **scatter**, declare distinctly, **sting**. The spirit motivating the denominational and religious strife of recent and current times is the same spirit that drove the Pharisees of the first century.

Paul emphasizes that knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection in a personal, relational experience is far superior to religion. Before his conversion to Christ, Paul, as a devout Pharisee, could only hope for resurrection after his death. However, after his conversion to a disciple of Christ, his hope was changed to experiencing the power of the resurrection life while he was alive, in addition to the future resurrection of his body.

In verse eight of the following passage, the word translated "excellence" is "huperecho", (hoop-er-ekh'-o) and means to excel, **superior, or superiority**; it is translated "better, excellency, higher, pass, and supreme." The word translated "knowledge of" is "gnosis" (gno'-sis) and means "**knowing**" or by implication "knowledge." Paul is saying that knowing Christ is far superior to religion or any other thing. Paul goes on in verse nine to say that he is now seeking the

righteousness from God through faith in Christ, instead of his seeking to keep religious rituals and practices of the law.

*Phil 3:8-9: Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the **excellence** (superiority) of the knowledge of Christ (**knowing Christ**) Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;*

Positional Righteousness

In recent times there has been emphasis in parts of the church on a teaching of positional righteousness as opposed to practical experience of holiness in life. The teaching asserts that man can only continue to live a sinful life in a sinful world, though he should do his best not to sin and always repent when he did sin. He is to trust in Christ by faith to forgive his sins, and to make it to heaven after death. Though he yet sins in his daily life, God sees him as righteous because of the work of Jesus at the cross. His position before God is that of righteousness while, in his practical daily life, he continues to sin. The emphasis of this erroneous teaching may have developed as a backlash or pendulum swing from the Pharisee-type legalism of externally applied law.

Though man cannot obtain holiness by trying to keep the law, the power of the resurrected Christ within man by the Holy Spirit can create a dynamic power and motivational force of love that can produce a life of holiness that will fulfill the laws of God. Practical righteous living is a reality in the kingdom of God age.

The Spirit of the resurrected Christ within will also empower the people of God to minister powerfully to the needs of others, and to endure the hardships of persecution. **Paul's striving was a process after the death of his old life to intimately know Christ and fully experience the power of His resurrection.**

*Phil 3:10-12: That I **may know Him and the power of His resurrection**, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.*

Here, Paul was not speaking of striving to attain the resurrection of his body after his death. He knew that his bodily resurrection was assured in the finished work of Christ. He was striving to attain the resurrection life of Christ now through the experience of fellowship with the sufferings of Christ conforming him to the death of Christ. In other words, he was striving after the death of his self-life unto the resurrected life of Christ through much suffering.

True Positional Righteousness Is Relational

The Spirit of Christ within is a direct link to the right hand of the throne of God. Through the Spirit of Christ, saints are directly connected to the all-loving, all-knowing, all-powerful God of all creation, the ruler of all things heavenly or earthly. Our lives are seated in the throne of God. The attributes of God are available to live in the power of righteousness now in this life through Christ.

True positional righteousness of the saints is one of direct connection to the power of the throne of God to live righteously, and to know and carry out the will and plan of God from heaven on earth, the kingdom of God. It is not just being seen as righteous while yet living in sin and spiritual impotence. The saint's striving is for intimate relationship with the Father through Christ by the Holy Spirit.

The grace of God is the unmerited favor of empowerment to live righteously, freely given to the saints, not a whitewash covering for our continued sinfulness and lack of spiritual power.

The resurrection power of Christ within by the Spirit brings revelation light.

The Word of God becomes powerfully alive as the Spirit reveals the mighty, life-changing, world-changing truths of the kingdom of God. Faith is greatly stimulated and becomes a living, growing reality in the life and work of the one who is filled with the power of the resurrection life of Christ.

The study of the Word of God is never enough within itself. Study of the Bible may be unprofitable without the powerful revelation of the Spirit. It may lead to religious understandings but cannot bring about the powerful revelation of God. The Pharisees of the first century studied the Word (Old Testament) perhaps more than any other known religious group. But without the Spirit of God it seems to have only made most of them more critical, and more of a hypocrite.

Teaching can have its origin from the study of the Word, and yet not be true revelation of Christ. A heart trained in the teachings of man will have difficulty receiving the revelation of Christ, even from the Bible. Paul said he had not received the gospel that he preached from man, but by the revelation of Christ. We know Paul did not sit at the feet of Jesus to be taught by Him while Jesus was in His body on earth. Therefore, we know that Paul is referring to the revelation of the resurrected Christ by the Holy Spirit.

*Gal 1:11-12: But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, **but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.***

Receiving teachings that are not through the revelation of the Spirit of Christ can pervert one's view of God and the world. Revelation of the Word by the Spirit can cause one to see God as He really is, and to share His worldview.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM DOMAIN - THE WORLD (#036)

Doctrines developed in the past apostate church age offered little or no hope for man or the world in this present life. The essence of these doctrines is that the world and its systems are hopelessly tainted with sin and, subsequently, evil. They, therefore, are fit only to be destroyed and replaced by a newly created planet. In this view there is no hope for the present world to be cleansed and restored. The only hope for the planet is total destruction by the judgmental fire of God melting and dissolving the very elements of the planet.

Some fruits from the essence of these teachings are:

1. A release of man's responsibility to preserve and care for the natural systems of the planet. There is little or no incentive for man to cooperate with natural laws of God's order. Short range, more immediately profitable actions are often chosen over those that align with God's natural order, which are designed for the continued existence of the planet's systems. The underlying rationale seems to be, "Why be concerned since it is all going to burn and be destroyed anyway, and probably soon"?

2. A lack of appreciation for the wonderful creation of the beautiful, life-supporting planet. The glorious essence of God can be seen in the beauty of His creation. The intense blue of mountain lakes reflect more than the breathtaking awesomeness of the magnificent mountain scenes. It also reflects something about our loving, great God. The unfathomable complexity of the chemical, physical, biological, zoological, meteorological, ecological, and other systems of the planet all speak of our God, who created them. They are all designed to intricately work together to support continuing life on the planet, and the continued life of the planet itself.

3. A lack of respect for life on earth and man's awesome and exciting potential with God. Man is the only part of God's creation designed to intimately relate to God, to actually experience knowing Him. Man is designed to rule and reign with Him now in this present age. A lack of appreciation for God's natural creation leads to a lack of respect for the life of man himself. Man is linked to and a part of the world's systems.

Do these fruits seem to line up with the words of Jesus and the nature of God? Jesus came *that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*. It is God's nature to give life, to heal, and to deliver. Someone else desires to destroy. *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy (John 10:10)*. It is not God's plan or desire to destroy the earth, but rather to purify it. **Jesus often spoke of the wicked being removed and the righteous shining forth on earth (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-43). The scripture also speaks clearly of God destroying those who destroy the earth.**

*Rev. 11:18b: And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, **And should destroy those who destroy the earth.***

Since the essence of the teachings that the earth is bad and fit only to be despised and destroyed does not appear to line up with the words of Jesus and the nature of God, we need to reexamine the scriptures that seem to affirm these teachings.

Does God love the world's systems or despise them? Are we to love the world or to despise it? Certainly, we know God loves man. However, God does not love man's sin and evil nature. **God loves the world, but does not love the evil in the world implanted by the devil.** In our considerations, we must make a distinction in our consideration between the created planet and the two systems that seek to rule life on the planet. One ruling system is the evil order of the enemy and the other ruling system is the order of God from heaven. Both of these systems are referred to as the "kosmos" in the Greek New Testament text.

One of the most well known scripture verses is John 3:16, which many Christians have taught to their small children. Many correctly use this verse to instill in children that God loves them so much that Jesus came to save them and everyone who will believe. We may read the verse, "*For God so loved the **world***", but think in our minds, "*For God so loved **me** or **mankind***". Granted, the individual and mankind are the focus of what is being spoken of here, but more than mankind is being referred to as the world.

The word translated "world" here is the Greek word "kosmos," which is generally interpreted as "world order". Strong's Concordance Greek Dictionary defines the word as orderly arrangement, and by implication, the world and its inhabitants.

["G2889. *kosmos, kos'-mos; prob. from the base of G2865; **orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration; by impl. the world (in a wide or narrow sense, includ. its inhabitants, lit. or fig. [mor.]**:--**adorning, world.**" The root or base is: G2865. *komizo, kom-id'-zo; from a prim. komeo (to tend, i.e. take care of); prop. to provide for, i.e. (by impl.) to carry off (as if from harm; gen. obtain):--bring, receive.*"]*

Jesus came to save more than mankind; He came to save the world. God desires to redeem all the "kosmos," all the adorning and decorative systems. Since God has given mankind authority and responsibility to have dominion on earth, man must first be redeemed and brought into order with God and His ways for the world to be saved or restored.

God chose to limit himself by ruling through man on earth and has never rescinded that position. Man has the free will to make decisions regarding the order of rule in the world. **Therefore, God had to become a man to save the world. God became a man in Jesus Christ.** His original created order is for man to have dominion in the world (Gen. 1:26-28).

The man Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, now rules in the world as he lives within believers on the earth by the Holy Spirit. As human beings receive Christ Jesus into their lives by the Holy Spirit and **yield control of their lives to the Spirit of Christ within, the will of God is done**

from heaven on earth through man. The kingdom of God from heaven rules in the world and the ways of God redeem and restore the kosmos.

The key to the redemption of the world is the salvation of man. Therefore, man's redemption is the world's only hope.

In every instance, the word translated "world" in John 3:16-17, is "kosmos."

*John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the **world** that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the **world** to condemn the **world**, but that **the world through Him might be saved.**"*

In these verses God speaks of man being saved in relation to the world being saved. There is no distinction made between mankind and the rest of the world as the object of God's saving love. **The priority in these verses is that the kosmos be saved.**

Mankind is a major part of the kosmos and is God's caretaker for the planet. Even the root of the word "kosmos," (komizo and komeo) means to tend or take care of, to provide for and keep from harm. Man is to carry out the order of God's design on the earth. The kingdom of God, the will of God, is to come forth through redeemed man--more specifically by Christ Jesus within man.

Two Worlds On Planet Earth

Obviously, God loves the world (the world He created and its systems of life). Yet, other scriptures make it clear that we are not to love the world (evil world order) or the things of the world (evil works in the world).

In scripture, there is one planet but two worlds spoken of. First, there is the world system that God created and loves and that we are to love as well. Second there is the evil fallen world system that was released by Adam and that we are told not to love. These two world systems are kingdoms--the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. The kingdom of darkness is evil but offers attractive enticements that appeal to the lust of the flesh and seek to lure people under its influence and entrapment. We are not to love this evil world system or the things it offers. Neither of these world systems is the physical planet but spirit-led systems working to guide and empower humans beings that have dominion on the planet. Human beings have the authority to decide which system is released into the world. Neither system will have dominion in the world without the will of mankind releasing it.

In every instance the word translated "world" in 1 John 2:15-17, is also "kosmos."

*1 John 2:15-17: **Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves 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. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

Man is not being instructed not to have loving concern for the world, but is being told to not have the love of (**from**) the evil world system. The world has its own kind of

selfish, lustful, greedy affection--the desires of the flesh. We are not to have that love of the world. **We are not to lust after the things of the world. However, we are to be filled with the love of God for the world and desire its redemption.**

The love of God satisfies.

The love of (from) God is a fully satisfying inner abundance. Individuals filled with the love from God feel no anxiety or frustrating need for anything else. Nothing further is required for their spirit and soul to be at perfect peace. From this inner abundance flows a great desire and potential to love the kosmos (the world and its inhabitants). This leads to serving mankind and the world around us by seeking to make things better for everyone, which brings the peaceful, prosperous, order of God to the kosmos. Love from God is a giving kind of love.

The love of (**from**) the world is not really love at all, **but lust for the kosmos**. It is seeking to fill an inner need that exists because the love of (from) God is not filling the individual. In reality the world's kind of love (lust) is not love at all. It stems from the lack of the presence of God's love within. The inner need created by unlove leads to **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**. The inner need becomes like a great vacuum trying to fill the void with the kosmos (the world and the things in it, including people). The kosmos is consumed, used, and destroyed as the inner need drives the individual to get more, have more, be more, and experience more. The love of (from) the world is a taking kind of unlove.

The love of God is in Christ Jesus. The potential for the very love of God in your life and mine is in Jesus. If the Spirit of Christ rules our hearts, the love of God is manifest in our lives.

*John 17:26: And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You **loved** Me may be in them, and **I in them**.*

Christ in man is the practical method by which love from God fills one's life until no room exists for the love (lust) from the world system for the things in the world.

There is a vast difference between having loving concern for the kosmos (as God also does) and seeking to possess or consume the kosmos from our lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of this life. The Spirit of Christ Jesus living and ruling within by the Holy Spirit guides and empowers individuals to walk in freedom from the lust of the flesh and to be filled with the love of (from) God. All people that do not have the love of God abiding within them by the Spirit will have lust for the things of the world. It is not possible for one in whom Christ Jesus does not dwell to be filled with the love of God and to be free of the love of (**from**) the world.

Gal 5:16-17: I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Many Christians may need to rethink their worldview.

A belief that God does not love the kosmos may have led us to devalue much of what God loves, and sent His Son to save. Man is inseparably a part of the kosmos.

To harm or destroy the world is to harm one's self. To bless and redeem the world is to bless one's self. As man takes care of the world, the world takes care of man. I'm reminded of an old saying that farmers once used, "If you will take care of the land, the land will take care of you." This same wisdom applies to all of the kosmos.

The world is not inherently evil. It is a marvelous and wonderful creation of God. The systems and order of the world are awesomely grand beyond all we can think. The complex intricacy of biological systems, ecological systems, and the physical make up of all things is more than all the minds of man together could ever understand. Yet, it all fits and works together to perpetually sustain life. The beauty of the colors, shapes, and patterns of the mountains, lakes, forests, plains, and mighty oceans are marvelous beyond compare. The delicate, delightful fragrances of the rose, the flowers of the field, the spruce or fir tree, or the pine tree on a still spring evening, all speak of God's love and provision for the world.

It is humbling to realize that God has put man in charge of caring for His marvelous creation. To not be concerned about caring for the people, animals, and the ecology of the world is to be apart from the plan of God. As man, by the power of the indwelling Christ, walks in accordance with God's ways, the kosmos is healed. Mankind, seeking the kingdom of God and His righteous ways of being and doing, moves man and the world systems toward healing and restoration (Matt. 6:33) (Rom 8:19-22). Mankind, seeking his own way apart from God, moves man and the world systems toward disorder and destruction. God has not planned the destruction of His creation. The power of Christ in man is sufficient to heal and restore the kosmos.

*John 3:16a, 17b: For **God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that the world through him might be saved.***

*John 1:29b: Behold! **The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!***

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES
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TAKING AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD (#037)

Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29b)

Removing the sin of the world is the plan of God. From the cause to the results, God's plan is to remove sin and replace it with the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. It has never been God's plan to destroy the planet, but to cleanse and restore the earth to the kingdom of God as it is in heaven. The glory of God shall cover the earth.

1 John 3:8: He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Psa 72:19: And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.

Isa 6:3: And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

Many denominations in the passing church age sincerely believed and firmly taught from scripture that God was going to burn up Planet Earth. This teaching is based on mistranslated scripture.

English bible translations are not word-for-word reproductions of the original.

The English Bible is translated from Greek and Hebrew. There were some changes in meaning of some passages made in the translation from one language to the other. In the limited amount of study that I have been able to accomplish in comparing the Greek text with our English translations, I have become reassured of the general accuracy of the translations. There are not many places where recently renewed revelation has exposed translator error (probably based on the translators' limited revelation of that time).

The cornerstone scripture for the belief that God will burn the planet in judgment is 2 Peter Chapter 3. I was shocked when I first looked into the Greek wording of this chapter. What is clearly being spoken of is the fire of God completely destroying evil and cleansing the planet.

The limited revelation of the time and the defeatist mindset of the translators are very apparent in this passage. **Some Greek words are translated differently in this passage than anywhere else in the Bible.** This veiled the original meaning of the passage and led to a different meaning that is not even within the context of the chapter.

The subject of chapters two and three is ungodly men and their judgment— false prophets, false teachers, unjust men, those who walk according to the flesh and despise authority, and those who turn from the holy commandment and are again

entangled. In 2 Peter 3:7, Peter tells us what is being judged and what he is speaking about when he writes, *“But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of **judgment and perdition (destruction) of ungodly men.**”*

2 Peter: Chapter 3 contains what is, perhaps, the most regrettable and damaging of translation errors. **Either intentional change or serious errors were made in the translation to English.** The translators were strongly affected by the widespread, long-standing belief that the earth and most of what was in it was evil and could not be saved but must be destroyed in judgment and replaced with another earth. This belief caused them to depart from their own translation practices and make serious translation errors.

From the wording of the English bible translations of 2 Peter: Chapter 3, it appears that God’s plan is to burn up the planet into nonexistence. This verse is the foundation for the belief that God will burn the planet in judgment.

Peter in his flamboyant manner was led of the Spirit to use the strongest possible language to communicate the total annihilation of the complete evil world order, not the destruction of Planet Earth. It is the enemy that desires we believe in the destruction of the planet instead of the destruction of his evil works and the restoration of the planet to the righteous and glorious kingdom of God.

In chapter two, Peter refers to the judgment of the world by flood and the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven. In these judgments **the planet was not destroyed** but was purified by the destruction of the evil.

English Bible translations make it seem that Peter spoke of the destruction of the planet. However, a closer look at the actual Greek text reveals that he did not speak of the destruction of the planet. Rather, he spoke of the destruction of evil just as God did in the previous judgments of the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

When God made a covenant with Noah and all surviving living things after the flood, He used the phrase “destroy the earth” (Gen. 9:11). He promised that He would never again bring a flood to **“destroy the earth.” Yet, it was not the planet that had been destroyed by the flood.** On the contrary, the planet was purified as evil man and his disorderly, ungodly ways were destroyed. Peter spoke by the Spirit of God in this same manner in 2 Peter.

(For a detailed study of the Greek wording versus the translated English wording see Chapter 7 of the book titled “The Seventh Millennium.” We will only mention here one major translation error that is a key to the erroneous teaching.)

A key word in 2 Peter 3:10 that is a translation error is the word interpreted in this passage as the **basic physical elements of the earth. This is the only place in all of Scripture that this word is interpreted to mean physical elements.**

The word translated **“elements”** is **“stoicheion,”** (stoy-khi'-on) and means something orderly in arrangement, a basal, fundamental, initial serial, constituent. In other words, “stoicheion” means the basic, foundational, principles of an order. In this passage it specifically refers to the foundations of the evil order affecting earth, not the physical elements of the planet.

Stoicheion is used seven times in the New Testament. **In every case it refers to basic principles or rudiments, either of the doctrines and oracles of God or of the evil world order. In no other place is it interpreted as the physical elements.**

*Heb 5:12 KJV: For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the **(stoicheion) first principles** of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*Gal 4:3 KJV: Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the **(stoicheion) elements** of the world:*

*Gal 4:9 KJV: But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly **(stoicheion) elements**, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*

*Col 2:8 KJV: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the **(stoicheion) rudiments** of the world, and not after Christ.*

*Col 2:20 KJV: Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the **(stoicheion) rudiments** of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,*

In 2 Peter 3:10&12, the meaning is the same. **The elements that are “dissolved” with fervent heat are the rudimental elements of the evil world order;** the basic desires, drives, beliefs and assumptions with all the actions, deeds, accomplishments, and whatever else they make or made.

The mature ones in whom Christ dwells have a part in cleansing and restoration.

We, as mature sons of God, have a part in flowing forth the powerful fire of God to restore the world to God's order, just as evil men have a part in bringing forth the evil world order. **The New Jerusalem is the purified, holy people of God free from influences of the evil world order.**

*Rom 8:19-22: For the earnest expectation of the **creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God**. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; **because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God**. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

In the same way that redeemed man is spoken of as a new creation, the earth, delivered from the bondage of corruption into glorious liberty, is spoken of as a new earth. The atmosphere around earth, free of the enemy, is spoken of as new heavens.

2 Pet 3:13: Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

The new creation, "new heavens and new earth," speak of the redeemed creation set free (loosed) from the bondages of the rudiments or elements of the evil world order. The new heavens are the redeemed heavens around the earth set free from the prince of the power of the air and his evil order.

Eph 2: 1-2: And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.

God speaks of redeemed man as a new creation of whom He says all things are made new in *2 Cor. 5: 17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away; **behold, all things have become new.***

When one is cleansed of sin and set free from the bondages of evil by the work of Christ Jesus, he or she is a new creation and everything is seen from a new perspective. Similarly, the work of God from heaven purifying the earth will cause it to become a new earth filled with righteousness, peace and joy. The new heaven (the atmosphere around earth) will no longer be affected by the work of the enemy. Jesus has already defeated the enemy and now lives in His people to set men free to do their part in setting the earth free.

*Isa 65: 17-19: "For behold, **I create new heavens and a new earth**; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, **I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.** I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.*

*Rev 21: 1-5: Now **I saw a new heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, **New Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as **a bride** adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them** and be their God. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "**Behold, I make all things new.**" And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

THE DAY OF THE LORD (#038)

What is the “day of the Lord”? Does this term refer to the day of the bodily return of Christ? Or does it refer to a season of Christ reigning? Or, is it perhaps a time of judgment? Precisely, what does the term “day of the Lord” mean? How can we possibly know when the “day of the Lord” is, if we don’t know for sure what it is? For me, this was one of those terms that seemed to have no particular meaning. It seemed to be a generic phrase having something to do with the Lord and His reign or something like that.

Seeing from a distance

As the kingdom of heaven on earth draws nearer, occurrences that have been vaguely seen from afar begin to take on more distinct form. From a distance, what may have looked like one event may prove to be several separate events. Spiritual men, seeing the revelation of God hundreds and even thousands of years down the road, may have clearly seen events by the Spirit but may not have had specific and detailed discernment regarding the chronological order of the events. At the time it was sufficient for them to have reported the events only as in the future. As time progresses, God is faithful to provide His people more specific, chronological discernment as needed to fit the season in which they serve.

For example, Old Testament prophets may not have seen the distance between the birth of Christ, His spiritual return at Pentecost, His bodily return, and how this all relates to the redemption of man, restoration of the planet, the judgment of wickedness, the kingdom of God on earth and other events. It was enough for them to see and say these things would happen, though from a distance it may have looked like one general event.

Similarly, the chronology of things now occurring and yet to come may have been more difficult for saints of only a few decades or centuries ago to discern. Saints of future generations will see more clearly than we do today. There has been and now is a tendency to group all events around the one major event of the bodily return of Christ. Some things looked forward to as coming at the time of the bodily return of the Lord came at His spiritual return at Pentecost and are now with us. At this time many mighty works of God wait only for our faith. One great hindrance to our faith is thinking we must wait for the Lord’s bodily return to victoriously overcome all the work of the enemy.

The Day of The Lord

The phrase “day of the Lord” is used twenty five times in the Bible, seven times in the New Testament, and eighteen times in the Old Testament. In every case it refers to severe judgments from God destroying the wicked and purifying God’s people, for the purpose of establishing God’s order through His people on earth. Sometimes a statement of God’s blessings for His purified people after the purging judgment is completed follows.

The Hebrew word translated “**day**” is “**yowm.**” It is from an unused root “**to be hot.**” It is translated as the warm hours of the 24-hour period. It is a space of time defined by an associated term and is translated many different ways.

The Greek word for **day** is “**hemera**” and can mean age, or a period of time. In 1 Cor 4:3 KJV, herema is translated judgment.

In Biblical symbolic language fire or heat often represent judgment from God. In prophetic type and symbol, the Old Testament utterances regarding the “day of the Lord” may also be seen as applying to the times and the people of today, as well as the times in which they were written. And, some passages such as, Malachi 4:5-6, refer only to the time of Christ and following.

The first major use of the phrase “day of the Lord.” is in Isaiah. One cannot help but recognize many parallels of Jerusalem and Judah in this passage and parts of the church today. In Isaiah, Chapter 1, God speaking through the prophet makes it very clear that He is not pleased with the corrupt religious ways of Jerusalem and Judah. He promises that the willing and obedient will eat the good of the land, but the rebellious will be purged. The goal or result of the purging is pictured in the first part of Chapter 2. **The authority to rule will be established in the Lord’s purified people over other authorities.**

Isa 2:2: Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

The day of the Lord is part of the process of purification leading to a godly people ruling on earth God’s way. The chastening and purging is aimed at the pride and loftiness of man, the ways of man that are exalted over the ways of God. Chastening is for the cleansing and betterment of God’s people, who will repent and turn from their ways to God’s way.

*Isa 2:12-17: For the **day of the LORD** of hosts Shall come upon everything **proud and lofty**, Upon everything **lifted up**; And **it shall be brought low**; Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, And upon all the oaks of Bashan; Upon all the high mountains, And upon all the hills that are lifted up; Upon every high tower, And upon every fortified wall; Upon all the ships of Tarshish, And upon all the beautiful slopes. **The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; The LORD alone will be exalted in that day,***

*Isa 4:3-4: And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called **holy**; everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and **purged** the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of **judgment** and by the **spirit of burning**,*

*Isa 30:27: Behold, the name of the LORD comes from afar, **Burning with His anger**, And His burden is heavy; His lips are full of indignation, And **His tongue** like a **devouring fire**.*

The day of the Lord is always chastening for God's people. It is not for their total destruction. Rather, it is for their purification. No matter how severe the chastening, there will always be a purified remnant. It is not so among the ungodly. **The day of the Lord can bring total destruction and annihilation to the evil and ungodly of the world.**

In Isaiah, Chapter 13, the day of the Lord is at hand against Babylon as destruction from the Almighty. The day of the Lord comes against Babylon cruel, with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate and to destroy its sinners, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. In contrast to Jerusalem against whom the day of the Lord comes for chastening to purification, the day of the Lord against Babylon is for total annihilation. Applying this toward the latter times, **there will remain a purified remnant of God's purified people, (New Jerusalem), but the evil world order (Mystery Babylon) will be left no remnant.**

Isa 13:9: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it.

*Isa 13:1, 4-6: The burden against **Babylon** which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, Like that of many people! A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together! The LORD of hosts musters The army for battle. They come from a far country, From the end of heaven; The LORD and His weapons of indignation, **To destroy the whole land.** Wail, for **the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.***

Both the Old and New Testaments portray the "day of the Lord" as a season of destruction for the ungodly and a purification of God's people resulting in the shining forth of God's ways to govern the world. The focus is not only fire but also the beautiful kingdom of God brought forth from the ashes.

*Isa 61:3: To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them **beauty for ashes**, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.*

*Mat 13:36-43: Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will **gather out of His kingdom** all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, "**and will cast them into the furnace of fire.** There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. "Then **the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom** of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

The day of the Lord destroys evil and establishes righteousness.

In all of the Scriptural occurrences of the "day of the Lord," these factors are consistent. Evil is always destroyed and godly righteousness established. This is the reason Jesus became a man and came to earth? The fire of God has burned on the

earth since Jesus returned in the Holy Spirit with tongues of fire at Pentecost. As the fire of God comes forth on earth today, the works of the devil are destroyed.

The day of the Lord is both personal and general. It is not just a future cosmic event. Nations, groups, and individuals may encounter the day of the Lord in their life experience. The day of the Lord in the whole earth is coming upon us. It began when Jesus came and continues to intensify as we have entered the seventh millennium. Man will continue to attempt to maneuver his way out of the results of his ungodly ways. He cannot escape the natural results of his ways. As he depletes a resource to try to fix a breakdown, he will create another breakdown.

The Day of The Lord in the book of Joel

Perhaps the clearest account of the day of the Lord in the Old Testament is pictured for us in the book of Joel. Shortly after becoming a Christian, at twenty plus years of age, I remember reading the book of Joel for the first time. It seemed to me that parts of it were a perfect symbolic description of my own life.

Joel 1:4-15: What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.

Awake, you drunkards, and weep; And wail, all you drinkers of wine, Because of the new wine, For it has been cut off from your mouth. For a nation has come up against My land, Strong, and without number; His teeth are the teeth of a lion, And he has the fangs of a fierce lion. He has laid waste My vine, And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white.

Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth For the husband of her youth. The grain offering and the drink offering Have been cut off from the house of the LORD; The priests mourn, who minister to the LORD. The field is wasted, The land mourns; For the grain is ruined, The new wine is dried up, The oil fails. Be ashamed, you farmers, Wail, you vinedressers, For the wheat and the barley; Because the harvest of the field has perished. The vine has dried up, And the fig tree has withered; The pomegranate tree, The palm tree also, And the apple tree; All the trees of the field are withered; Surely joy has withered away from the sons of men.

*Gird yourselves and lament, you priests; Wail, you who minister before the altar; Come, lie all night in sackcloth, You who minister to my God; For the grain offering and the drink offering Are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders And all the inhabitants of the land Into the house of the LORD your God, And cry out to the LORD. Alas for the day! For the **day of the LORD** is at hand; It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.*

In my own life experience, I had encountered the devouring of the locust, the wailing of the drunkard, and the fierce teeth that ruined the fruitful trees of my life. I also experienced the deep sorrow of repentance as I lay on my face wailing before the altar of God. Repentance led to cleansing, healing, and the beautiful restoration of God in my life. Some of my readers may have experienced their own personal day of the Lord, at hand for destruction, leading to repentance and eventually restoration.

Joel 2:25-29: And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent

among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Corporate Day of The Lord

Just as individuals may meet the day of the Lord, so it is for families, tribes, nations, and the entire world. **The great and dreadful day of the Lord for the entire world is at hand.**

After the destruction has done away with the loftiness (pride) of man, after everything high and lifted up is thrown down and only God remains exalted, the purification is accomplished and restoration begins. The new life of restoration is always more righteous, more holy, more filled with peace and joy than the old life. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The chastening must continue until the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will again be pleasant to the Lord. He is saying to Christians who have not kept His way, "Return to me and I will return to you"

The Day of The Lord in Malachi

The last reference to the day of the Lord in the Old Testament is in Malachi Chapters 3 and 4, which was written approximately 400 years before the birth of Christ. It clearly refers to the day of the Lord Jesus that was yet future at that time. The prophet Malachi clearly spoke of the day in which the Lord Jesus the Christ would cleanse and perfect His jewels, His people. At the same time great fire of judgment is prophesied for those who are proud and do wickedly. Probably this is the same coming near of God for judgment that Peter spoke of in 2 Peter?

We can know beyond any doubt that this passage speaks of Jesus and John the Baptist, who was to come in the spirit of Elijah before the Lord to prepare the way, because the Lord said so in the gospels (Mat 11: 14) (Mat 17: 11-12) (Mark 9: 12-13). Jesus identified John the Baptist as the one spoken of in Malachi 3: 3 and Isaiah 40: 3, as the messenger sent before the Lord to prepare the way. Also, Zacharias John the Baptist's father was told by the angel that announced John's birth to come that his son would go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1: 18).

*Mal 3: 1: Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, **Will suddenly come to His temple**, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.*

Malachi 3: 1 was written hundreds of years before Christ came to redeem the lost and to purify His temple, the body of Christ. He is now in the process of bringing forth the purified Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem. Believers are the temple of the Lord (1 Cor 3: 16-17). Jesus came suddenly to His temple on earth at Pentecost as a rushing mighty wind, and with tongues of fire. The believers were all filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ (Acts 2: 1-4). Jesus has been about the business of

purifying His people from that day to this. In these latter times we are seeing a multiplication, if not an explosion, of the work of Jesus Christ saving the lost, healing the needy, and delivering those in bondage. We are also seeing a great increase in swift, fiery chastening among disobedient believers, and judgments upon the wicked acts of man. Who can stand against the Lord today? The day of the Lord!

*Mal 3:2-7: But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; **He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver,** That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years.*

***And I will come near you for judgment;** I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien; Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts.*

*For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. **Return to Me, and I will return to you,**" Says the LORD of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'*

Many are now returning to the Lord. He is purifying His people by His redemptive death and resurrection life within believers. Who can endure and stand when He is present in His people, individually, and corporately. The purifying presence of the Lord will intensify. The destruction of the kingdom of darkness and its work will take place as believers die to their selfish lives and Christ with His great power appears in His people. Christ, working with His people from the right hand of the throne of the Father and within His people, is the mighty army of God. The impact of millions of purified believers marching together with the supernatural powers of God and His Holy angels can bring an end to the rule of the kingdom of darkness and bring forth the reality of the kingdom of God on earth. It can cause the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

There is a clear distinction between the chastening for purification of believers and the fiery judgments for the destruction of the wicked in Malachi 3:16 to 4:3.

*Mal 3:16-18: Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him **For those who fear the LORD** And who meditate on His name. **"They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels.** And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him. Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him."*

*Mal 4:1: "For behold, **the day is coming,** Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. **And the day which is coming shall burn them up,**" Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch."*

*Mal 4:2-3: "But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. **You***

shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this," Says the LORD of hosts.

The day of the Lord is manifesting now! We must come out of deception, believe in Christ's power within us to destroy the works of the enemy and to establish God's ways on the earth. The enemy is desperately seeking to hinder Christians from believing this powerful truth. One way he can continue his wickedness is to trick believers into believing that the day of the Lord is NOT NOW, and get them to look for it someday in the future.

The future bodily return and gathering together

The time of His bodily return and our gathering together with Him for the great celebration, with the saints that have gone on before is future and is the fullness of the kingdom of God on earth. This will be a great victory celebration not the beginning of winning the war against the evil one. The war and the victory are NOW, before the great victory celebration of the bodily return of Jesus to earth.

It is time for God's soldiers to stop looking to the sky and waiting for the next heavenly event to occur. It is time to go to war against the enemy. With Christ empowering and directing the battle from within us, the evil one and all his wicked, prideful work is ashes under our feet. Let the anointing fire of the love of Jesus be released from within us to save the lost, heal the needy, deliver those in bondage, destroy the strongholds of the enemy, love the brethren and tenderly nourish the children.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

"RETURN TO ME" (#039)

*Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. **Return to Me, and I will return to you,**" says the LORD of hosts (Mal. 3: 7b).*

The return of the Lord that is most important today involves men and women first returning to the Lord. He has promised to return to live in those who seek Him with their whole heart.

In past generations, Christians have looked to the future, bodily return of Christ Jesus for much of what is already available to believers now. Some Scripture, which applies to the coming of Christ Jesus now in purified believers, has been for centuries interpreted as generally referring to only the bodily return.

In the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, those translating the Bible into English and other languages were of the strong persuasion that the bodily return of Jesus was the only hope of Christians to overcome the evil in the world. Their translation work bears the mark of their persuasion. **Many words that should have been translated to refer to the manifestation of the indwelling Christ within believers were erroneously translated to refer toward the future bodily return.**

The Manifesting Christ

Several different Greek words are translated "coming" in the New Testament. The word "coming" occurs 125 times in the New King James Version of the New Testament. Most of those occurrences are translated from the Greek word "erchomai" (er'-khom-ah-ee). However, on 22 occasions the word "**parousia**" (par-oo-see'-ah) is translated "coming"; but on two other occasions "parousia" is translated "presence." In the two verses speaking of Paul, "parousia" is translated "presence."

*Phil 2: 12: Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my **presence** (parousia) only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

*2 Cor 10: 10: "For his letters, they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily **presence** (parousia) is weak, and his speech contemptible."*

The primary meaning of parousia is "a being near." It comes from the word "pareimi"* (par'-i-mee), which means "to be near" as "at hand," and comes from two words "para" meaning "near," and "eimi" (i-mee') meaning an emphatic "I exist." In addition to the primary meaning of "presence," parousia also means "coming presence" or "advent."

Every usage of the word "parousia" that involves Christ is translated "coming," which sounds future, instead of "presence," which gives the impression of being present. Coming is an acceptable translation in some verses, which actually do refer to the

visible bodily return of Jesus. **But there are others that refer to the victorious appearing or manifesting of Jesus Christ now in believers. These should have been translated presence or manifest.** The translators had no understanding at that time as to how Christ could be present or manifest except to bodily return.

The following verse, 1 Thess. 3:13, is a typical example of this slant in translation. We know that Christ Jesus is with believers now to perfect holiness. He is purifying our hearts now as His **presence** manifests in our lives.

*1 Thes 3:13: so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father **at the coming (parousia)** of our Lord Jesus Christ with **all His saints.***

The word "at" is the Greek word "en" and could be translated a number of different ways including "in" or "by." And of course, "coming" could be "presence." The word "all" is "pas" and could also be translated many different ways including, "any," "every," "everyone," and "whosoever."

This verse could read: **"That He may establish your hearts blameless before our God and Father by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with (or within) all His saints."**

The English translation makes it seem certain that the verse is referring only to a future **coming** of Jesus when He is bringing the departed saints with Him. This does fit with other verses, which do say that Christ will bodily return and will bring those that have died with Him. However, take a closer look at the Greek and it becomes clear that the verse is speaking of the manifestation of Christ within all His saints in this age.

2 Thes 1:11-12: Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps there is no scripture more explicit in distinguishing the **bodily return** of Christ and the **day of the Lord** than 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 4:18, and 5:1 to 5:11. The subject changes from the future **visible return of Christ**, to the present **day of the Lord**, at chapter 5, verse 1.

1 Thes 4:13-18: But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

These verses very clearly refer to the bodily return of Christ. Now observe the shift as we begin Chapter Five.

In the first verse of chapter five (1 Thess. 5:1) the shift is obvious. Paul begins with the word "**But.**" "*But concerning the times and the seasons.*" The word translated "the" is translated into many articles and could be translated "this" or "these." The word translated "seasons" is "kairon," the plural form of "kairos" (kahee-ros'), which means set or proper time. Thus, this portion could read: "**But concerning these times and these specific seasons,**" referring to the current times and seasons.

*1 Thes 5:1-4: But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the **day of the Lord** so comes as a **thief in the night**. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then **sudden destruction** comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this day should overtake you as a thief.*

The great and terrible **day of the Lord**, which comes as a thief in the night, is very different from the joyous celebration of the visible, bodily return of the Lord. As we have seen earlier, the **day of the Lord** is occurring and the **visible return** is yet future. The **day of the Lord** is great because of the promises of God coming forth in His subsequently purified people; and it is terrible because of the great destruction coming forth upon the wicked.

It is not necessary that anyone be lost or destroyed! Salvation is available for everyone. Salvation includes the new birth, deliverance, and healing for the repentant believer who will sell out everything for the one important thing--to be a dwelling place for the Spirit of Christ Jesus. **Jesus is more than the most important thing in life. He is the only thing!** There is no life apart from Him. Proud and lofty works of man, no matter how great they are in man's eyes, cannot bring real life. We should seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness within us now. "*Christ in you the hope of Glory*".

The kingdom of God is "at hand."

Though the potential for the kingdom of God way of life has been available for nearly 2000 years, since the time when Jesus returned in the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, apparently, the time is now full for the restoration of the revelation of the kingdom.

Over the centuries man has used his ingenuity in a failed attempt to successfully do life his way. The failure of man exhausting all of his ways finally leads to accepting God's ways of life. Writers of the New Testament and Christians through the centuries have been looking to a coming expression of Christ and His kingdom. The power of the indwelling Christ has been here since Pentecost. However, only now in this current season are the works of Christ more widely manifested in the world.

The error of thinking that only the bodily return of Jesus would bring forth the power to overcome evil is melting away as the return of the anointing of Christ within believers is having an impact in the world. However, this error remains firmly locked into our English translations of the New Testament. It is not reasonable for us to attempt in this work to deal with the many passages that bear this translation emphasis. We will, however, attempt to deal with a few more passages that are typical and some that seem to be of significance.

May we suggest that readers begin their own investigative study? Study of the original Greek words is within reach of most people with the language helps that are available today. Studying the Word in its original language will help bring forth truth. However, the study of commentaries, which are man's opinions of the Word and what it says, will not help. The major commentaries that are available all reflect this same erroneous persuasion as those of the English New Testament translations.

Now that Christ is present on earth within His people, what potential for overcoming evil is lacking? There is nothing lacking on God's part. There is nothing that Jesus will bring with Him at His visible return that will be more than is available now. The only things standing in the way of Christ being revealed to overcome evil in our world are on man's part. **Christ does not need to visibly bodily return to overcome evil and establish God's ways on earth. Man is the one who must return. Man must return to Jesus Christ.** The fire of God is available to flow through Christ in man to cleanse and heal our world.

Love and unity are key factors.

Love, that brings faith and unity, is a key factor in the puzzle of cleansing and restoring our world. No one person has all of Christ. Many godly people coming together in unity will reveal the fullness of the presence of Christ to meet the needs of the world for cleansing and restoration to God's rule. Disunity caused by unlove is an enemy of the revealing of Christ and the releasing of His power. Only love can melt the intellectual and cultural strife of a segmented Body of Christ in the world.

Religion with its sectarianism is an enemy to the work of God to restore the earth. Faith and power cannot grow in disunity. Disunity cannot be cured by compromising intellectual positions and religious doctrines. Unity can only come by laying down our lives, including our religion. Taking up our cross and denying self is the road to the love of God and unity, which will produce faith to reveal Christ and His power to the world to save, heal, deliver, and restore.

The fire of God will increasingly manifest as more and more individuals lose their own life and come together in the love of God. The power and love of Christ to change the world with faith that moves mountains awaits the agreement and unity of God's people.

As God's people come into unity in Christ those who trouble them will be repaid with tribulation from God.

*2 Thes 1:6-8: ...since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord **Jesus is revealed** from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming **fire** taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Many interpret the above passage as referring only to the visible return of Jesus. However, the rest of this passage makes it clear that it deals with the power of Christ **in his saints**, not the bodily return of Jesus.

*2 Thes 1:10-12: when He comes, in that day, to be **glorified in His saints** and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was*

*believed. Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and **the work of faith with power**, that the name of our **Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him**, according to the **grace** of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Jesus revealed from heaven **in** His saints, coming together with His mighty angels (ministering spirits), with spiritual fire is the church experience in this day, the **day of the Lord**.

*Heb 1:7: And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits And **His ministers a flame of fire**.*

*Heb 12:29: **For our God is a consuming fire**.*

The New Jerusalem Assembly

The Scripture speaks clearly of the heavenly Jerusalem, the spiritual **church** of Jesus, coming together in the presence of God, with Jesus, the holy angels, and the spirits of mature believers cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Many are now beginning to grasp the reality of the presence of God, Jesus, and holy angels together with us in union worshiping and serving God. Scriptures that have been veiled in the fog of religion or futurity are now opening to many and becoming crystal clear revelation and a present reality. When the writer of Hebrews wrote Hebrews 12:22-24, he was speaking to the believers at hand and not just future generations. He was writing of characteristics of the first-century church, all of which are being restored and present in the body of Christ now.

*Heb. 12:22-24: But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of **angels**, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to **God** the Judge of all, to the **spirits of just men** made perfect, to **Jesus** the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.*

The Greek word for Christ in the New Testament is "Christos" meaning "anointed" or "anointed One." **The anointed Jesus flowing through His people is a flaming fire of spiritual ministry and a consuming fire against wickedness.** The word translated angels is "aggelos" (ang'-el-os), meaning to bring tidings, a messenger, ministering spirits or preacher. The people of God are now beginning to grasp the significance of Christ living in them. We have begun to touch the fringes of the potential power of God available to the pure-hearted believer. Even in our wildest dreams, we have not imagined the fullness of the reality of faith and power available to the purified sons of God.

As the purifying fires of God do their work, people will be amazed at the level of love, faith, and power released in the children of God. The practical reality of the kingdom of God is coming forth now. As the purifying fires are burning and the glory of the Lord is manifesting, an army of people are coming forth who live only for God, speak not of their own but speak words from heaven as the oracles of God. The Spirit of Christ within them directly connects with Christ at the right hand of the throne of God. **Through that pure unfiltered communication with the throne of God, powerful, world-changing words are spoken into the earth.**

The entire world and heavens around the world will be shaken by the fire of God flowing from Christ through His sons. It is not wise to fail to hear and respond to the voice of God. Every thing that can be shaken is being shaken; only the truth of God and His ways will remain.

Heb 12:25-28: See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

The enemy, that old serpent the devil called Satan, is now, in a very practical sense, totally defeated. He and his demons cannot remain in the presence of the fire of the glory of God. He and his powers of darkness are in great fear of what is happening. His only chance is to continue to deceive people into not believing or recognizing the works of God. His attempt is to establish a false picture of his antichrist powers and bring fear upon uninformed Christians and unbelievers. His antichrist spirits have been greatly overrated by those who, in the past, have not had a clear revelation of the kingdom of God.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES
Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

ANTI-KINGDOM (#040)

The kingdom of God on earth is the order of God from heaven on earth.

In the kingdom of God, mankind and all he has authority over is fully ordered by God's heavenly rule.

Christ administers the ways of God from heaven to the world through redeemed, purified man.

The kingdom of God comes as the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10).

The Spirit of Christ within man accomplishes God's will on earth.

What could not be achieved by trying to humanly keep the laws of God is done as God's love is manifest through the Holy Spirit of God working in and through man (Rom 8:3-4). The Kingdom of God on earth means that the planet and all that is on the planet is ruled or ordered by the will and ways of God. This produces God's order of prosperity for all the earth and all of its various systems.

Righteousness is adhering to and aligning with the ways of God. Prevailing righteousness leads to peace on earth and goodwill or prosperity toward man. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17).

Christ Jesus is the law-fulfiller first in His natural body and now in His Body of many members across the earth (Mat 5:17).

Lawlessness

Lawlessness is any order other than God's order. Man and anything over which he has authority, anything he does, and anything he affects can be disordered by lawlessness working through man. Lawlessness is the lack of Christ flowing the grace and love of God from within man. It is the absence of the grace and love of God establishing God's ways.

Lawlessness is failing to adhere to and align with the ways of God. Prevailing lawlessness leads to strife and ill will, which leads to poverty for man. The earth and all its various systems are harmed by lawlessness and could be destroyed by lawlessness left unchecked.

Satan, also known as Lucifer or the devil, is the original lawbreaker and is the spirit behind lawlessness on earth. Man becomes the lawbreaker as he decides to go his own way (the ways of the devil) and leaves the ways of God. Lawlessness is against righteousness, against Christ, against Christ within man. A Biblical word for against is "anti." The Greek word "anti" (an-tee') means opposite and often denotes contrast. Anti-Christ means "lawlessness" or "against Christ."

Much to do has been made by theologians about the future coming of a specific man called Antichrist. Focus on the future coming of a specific man diverts attention from the present spirit of antichrist now working to discredit the great truth of the indwelling Christ in believers. The fruit of the teaching of a coming man called Antichrist is that Christians are less aware of and less concerned about the works of antichrist now in the world and among themselves. This allows the powers of darkness to continue their disruptive and restraining works against Christ (the Anointed One) and His anointing in man. This fruit does not line up with Christ's words and God's character and nature. As we have previously seen, whenever the fruit of a teaching does not line up with these things, the teaching should be investigated by studying the original Greek text in the light of the revelation of the kingdom.

I was again shocked as I began to study the original Greek words regarding antichrist. Again, the translators' lack of revelation affected the translation of the original Greek into English and other languages. The translators apparently had little or no revelation of the powerful Spirit of Christ within believers to victoriously overcome the works of evil in the world.

And, again, the church through the centuries, along with all modern translations and theological commentaries that I am aware of, have held fast to the interpretation of the text as referring to a specific future man called Antichrist. **A careful study of the original Greek words will reveal that there is not necessarily a specific man to come called Antichrist.** The biblical references to antichrist deal with the current work of the spirit of antichrist and lawlessness in man. The antichrist spirit is presently striving to restrain the work of Christ from bringing forth God's order (kingdom) into the world.

The spirit of antichrist is working today to deny the reality and the power of Christ Jesus now come in the flesh in believers. The enemy's desire is to discredit all spiritual gifts, anointing, and spiritual works coming forth from the Spirit of Christ within believers. This restrains the flow of God through believers, which hinders the overcoming of evil and restrains the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

The spirit of antichrist was operative during the first century working against the Spirit of Christ, which was coming forth in the apostles. John recognized that the spirit of antichrist would continue to be active as time passed, as well as in his day. **The work of the spirit of antichrist is always to deny Christ in the flesh, whether His original coming in His natural body or His now coming in His universal body of individual believers, the Body of Christ.** The spirit of antichrist will do anything possible to deny, prevent, or pervert the gifts and work of the Spirit of Christ coming forth within believers to establish God's ways on earth. The antichrist spirit is a spirit of lawlessness and will seek to establish lawlessness (his ways as opposed to God's ways).

*1 John 2:18 KJV: Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, **even now are there many antichrists**; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

1 John 2:22 KJV: Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

The antichrist spirit is a liar and a deceiver. One of his major schemes is to deceive church people and religious leaders by causing them to believe that spiritual gifts are not available and active today by the Spirit of Christ within believers. One of his most dastardly stratagems is to mimic spiritual gifts by bringing forth false signs and wonders and then allow them to be exposed as evil. This strategy causes many naive Christians to oppose all manifestations of spiritual gifts, including Christ Himself coming forth in the flesh of His universal Body, the purified Bride Church. This can prevent Christians from benefiting from the powerful gifts and revelations of the Spirit of Christ. Consequently, the work of God is hindered or restrained in the world. Thus, the devil is able to continue to oppress the people of the world and to propagate his lawlessness among men, including religious people.

*1 John 4: 1-3 KJV: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.***

*2 John 1: 7 KJV: For many deceivers are entered into the world, who **confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.** This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

John was writing to Christians when he spoke of the spirit of antichrist working through men attempting to deceive people into believing that Christ was **not coming forth "in the flesh"** of His universal Body, the ekklesia.

The reason Jesus came to earth, died on the cross, was resurrected, ascended to the right hand of the Father, returned to earth as a life-giving Spirit, and is now seated in His temple upon the throne of the hearts of the redeemed, **is to manifest Himself into the world and establish the kingdom of God on earth.**

The devil failed to stop Christ from dying on the cross and being resurrected. He failed to stop Christ from returning to earth at Pentecost. Now his only recourse is to restrain the appearing of Christ **in the flesh** of His Body, the ekklesia .

The spirit of antichrist will do anything that he can to attempt to restrain the appearing of the Spirit of Christ Jesus in His temple, the heart of believers. The antichrist spirit will deny the works and gifts of the Spirit coming forth from the Body.

*1 Cor 3: 16: Do you not know that **you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?***

*2 Cor 6: 16: And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."***

The enemy seeks to be seated in the temple (the heart of man) as God, showing himself as God, ruling in the world and being worshiped as God. He is the one who opposes God and endeavors to rule as God. His desire is still to be Number One in the world, to be like the Most High (Isa 14: 12-14).

The great "falling-away" apostasy

When Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians, he was looking ahead to **the apostasy that occurred in the church after the intense, spiritual light of the first century faded**. He was warning that apostasy would come shortly after he and the other leaders of the early church had passed away. That “falling away” or apostasy deepened during the dark centuries and continues to plague much of the church today.

The “man of sin is being revealed” today as the light from God increases and the antichrist’s work of evil intensifies. The enemy’s great work of denying and disrespecting the Spirit of Christ and His work in believers has reached great heights and enormous proportions in the world today. Public educational systems, the scientific community, governments, and even many Christians have been deceived into believing that the works of Christ through the Spirit are irrelevant to the practical needs of mankind and the governing of the world. Surely, the enemy has had widespread success in working through apostate men with powerful signs, lying wonders, and unrighteous deception to restrain the work of Christ. However, the enemy’s work is being revealed and becoming evident!

In the seventh millennium we are seeing the exposing of the man of sin, the antichrist spirit sitting as God in the temple of God, the heart of man. As the lawlessness of the lawless one intensifies, he is more visible and easier to discern. The brightness of the coming forth of the Lord in His people is exposing and consuming the antichrist spirit with the Word of the Spirit of the Lord.

It is the presence of the Lord that destroys the work of the antichrist spirit.

*2 Thes 2:3-9: Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the **man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?*

*And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of **lawlessness is already at work**; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then **the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming (presence).** The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.*

The anointed One and His anointing abiding within the believer is the source of spiritual discernment to know the difference between the cunning lies of the deceiving antichrist spirit and the truth of God. One will not know the difference by comparing intellectually discerned Bible teachings with other teachings of the same source. Spiritual discernment of the Word by the Holy Spirit of Christ will expose the lies of the spirit of antichrist.

*1 John 2:26-27 KJV: These things I have written to you concerning **those who try to deceive you.** But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; **but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.***

*2 Thes 2:3: Let no one deceive you by any means; for that **Day** will not come unless the **falling away** comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition.*

The "day" mentioned in this passage refers to the day of Christ's bodily return and is different from the "day of the Lord" as we have studied. "Falling away" is translated from the Greek word "apostasia" and means defection from the truth. Only this one time is it translated "falling away."

Study of these passages reveals that they are very consistent with other New Testament teachings and do not speak of a man called Antichrist, but speak of the spirit of antichrist working in man. Throughout history different men in different times have for a season been thought to be the Antichrist. Any man of history thought to be the Antichrist was probably in reality an antichrist. That is, one who was controlled by or influenced by a spirit of antichrist.

There will probably be other notorious men inflamed by the spirit of antichrist. There may or may not be a future embodiment of the spirit of antichrist in one particular man, **but the spirit of antichrist working now is our major concern.**

The important thing for believers today is to recognize the attack of antichrist on their own lives and in their own gatherings. Studying the Word can help us to recognize that we ourselves are possibly affected by the spirit of antichrist. The presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit can expose the attack of the spirit of antichrist and destroy his work.

Victory in the kingdom of God, in our own lives, is dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ (the Spirit of the King) coming forth, establishing His presence in our heart and destroying the work of the enemy.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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Kingdom Growth Guides PART 5 (#041) thru (#052)

KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES *Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom*

KINGDOM POWER (#041)

The seat of power in a kingdom rests in the king.

Only the king possesses all the resources and knowledge to empower individuals or groups to exercise his ways in order to order the kingdom. In the kingdom of heaven, King Jesus is not only the source of authority and power to order all life according to the ways of the Father; but He also is the life. Jesus is the very source of all existence spiritual or physical, supernatural or natural. The kingdom of heaven on earth is the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

Man has proven, from the time of his fall until now, that he is unable to successfully order life on the earth in his own strength or with his own wisdom. The lust of the flesh and the pride of life in natural fallen man produce need and greed that create self-centered beings that cannot order life according to the ways of the true King. It produces "little kings" that attempt to rule themselves and others. Every "little king" goes about seeking power to rule as much of the world as he possibly can for himself his way. Psychological or religious manipulation and political or militant force are some tools used by "little kings" to bring others under their rule and to establish their power to rule more of the earth. Manipulation skills and demonic intrigue are employed to seduce individuals, and then to use them to strengthen the "little king's" power to rule.

We are not speaking only of big-time political or religious leaders. Ordinary people may employ these and other techniques to get their way in life. To get what they need and want in life, they may use whatever systems and whatever talents they can to rule things their way. Even small children will often demonstrate practices of seeking to rule their world their way.

Dealing with the "Little King" Syndrome

Unfortunately, acknowledging Jesus as Saviour, walking the church aisle, getting baptized, joining the church, and attending Bible college or seminary does not necessarily remove all of the "little king" syndrome. It is very possible to make it through all of the above processes and yet be affected by the desire to rule one's own life and the lives of others, which is the desire to rule the world. Spiritual maturity is, in part, a development of doing away with one's own needs, desires, and agendas. It involves becoming a clear, clean conduit for the Spirit of Christ Jesus to flow into and through one's life. Spiritual maturity involves ordering one's life and, eventually, the world according to the will of the Father and not the will of fallen man. The Spirit of Christ Jesus the King must replace the "little king" of self-rule, which is truly a flesh king and is often reinforced by an antichrist spirit.

It is important to the enemy to keep this understanding from men, including those seeking to minister for God. The enemy will use anything he can, including religion, to perform a process called "blinding the mind". His desire is to blind the mind to the

existence of the "little king" syndrome in the lives of individuals. He will also attempt to blind the minds of people to the marvelous potential of being filled with or baptized in (saturated with and immersed in) the Spirit of Christ by the Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ Jesus the King (the KING'S SPIRIT). As mind blindness is overcome and spiritual eyes are opened to the awesome potential of the King's Spirit within, the love and power of Christ Jesus can overcome the "little king" syndrome and allow the true King from heaven to rule.

*2 Cor. 4: 4: Whose **minds the god of this age has blinded**, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

*Eph. 2:2: in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit** who now works in the sons of disobedience,*

*2 Cor. 3:5, 4:2: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but **our sufficiency is from God**, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, **not of the letter but of the Spirit**; for the letter kills, but **the Spirit gives life**.*

*But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?** For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.*

*Therefore, since we have such hope, we use **great boldness of speech**; unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.*

***But their minds were blinded.** For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.*

***Now the Lord is the Spirit**; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as **by the Spirit of the Lord**. Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.*

*But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, **not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth** commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

Who is the Spirit? *The Lord is the Spirit!*

How are we changed? *By the Spirit of the Lord!*

Who is the Lord? *Christ Jesus is the Lord!*

Who is the King? *Christ Jesus the Lord is the King!*

Who is the Spirit? *The King is the Spirit!*

The King is Christ Jesus the Lord, who abides in His people by the Holy Spirit.

Where is our power from? Who is our sufficiency to live righteously, to overcome evil, to be saved, to teach and preach and do all the works of God, to be ministers of the new covenant, to rule and reign on earth now? Is it the letter or is it the Spirit of the King, the One with all power that enables one to be as Jesus is, in the world? (1 John 4:17)

Such a glorious ministry!

The ministry of the Spirit is not a "get-by-until-Jesus-comes-back" type of ministry. It is the very life of Jesus being manifest, coming forth in our bodies. Only as our "little king" dies, only as we are delivered to death for Jesus' sake, can the life of Jesus come forth in our body. (Rom 6:11)

*2 Cor. 4:7-11: **But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.***

*We are **hard pressed** on every side, yet not crushed; we are **perplexed**, but not in despair; **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, **that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.***

*For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that **the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.***

*2 Pet. 1:3-4: as **His divine power has given to us** all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge (knowing) of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

THE GRACE OF GOD IS EMPOWERMENT.

*Eph. 2:1-10: And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the **spirit who now works** in the sons of **disobedience**, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the **lusts of our flesh**, fulfilling **the desires of the flesh and of the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us **alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), and raised **us up together**, and made **us sit together** in the heavenly places **in Christ Jesus**, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of **His grace** in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

*For by **grace** you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; **it is the gift of God**, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are **His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

The vastness and significance of the gift of God and the love of God for man are not easy for one to grasp. Not only while we were sinners, but because we were sinners, God gave His glorious grace gift to man.

The grace gift of God is much more than some have thought it to be. It is more than a free ticket to heaven and a blanket to cover our continued disobedience and spiritual powerlessness. It involves more than the death of Jesus on the cross. The grace gift of God for salvation also involves the resurrection of Christ Jesus and the Spirit of Jesus the King. It is the gift of the resurrected Christ indwelling the believer by the Spirit of the Lord empowering the believer to live righteously and to do the will and works of God. It is His workmanship. There is nothing anyone could do to accomplish the works of God apart from God doing the works.

Man must receive the gift of God by faith. One must believe in the heart the resurrected Christ and confess with the mouth unto salvation (Rom 10:8-10). The process of salvation begins with our willingness to believe and receive the work of Jesus on the cross to pay for our sin and the work of the Spirit of the resurrected Christ within to overcome sin and produce righteousness.

Those who will be saved and live godly in Christ Jesus will also participate in His death in this life. Unless one's "little king" is dead, one cannot fully receive the resurrected Spirit of Christ Jesus the King. The process of salvation includes the Spirit of Christ manifesting His life as King in the place of our dead "little king." It includes restoration, deliverance, and healing to destroy all the work of the enemy in one's life, and to provide a clean vehicle, an open conduit for the Spirit of Christ Jesus the King to dwell in and flow through. The presence of the Spirit of Christ Jesus the King flowing through the individual produces powerful righteousness and puts an end to powerless disobedience. **Thus, the grace gift of God brings one to salvation and establishes the kingdom of God in the world.**

THE MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD

The saving, restoring, purifying power of God flowing in, through, and around the believer may be spoken of by believers as the life of Christ, the presence of God, the grace of God, the anointing of God, the power of God, the glory of God, the presence of the Spirit of Christ Jesus the King, and in other terms. Our finished salvation depends upon the Spirit of God appearing or manifesting in our mortal body to accomplish His workmanship of full redemption. It is God that works in the believer both to create the desire and to accomplish the work of God to save, heal, and deliver man from all the work of the devil (Phil 2:13).

More is required than a head-knowledge type of believing that Jesus died for the sins of the world. More is required than conforming to a religious system by joining a church or following any system or set of rules and practices. Men will continue to yield to temptations and be entrapped in schemes of the devil until the presence of Jesus the anointed One of God is manifested in them. To overcome sin and sinful habits, one must abide in the powerful, spiritual presence of Jesus. In a real and practical way, one must walk in the powerful presence of the Spirit of Christ Jesus

and, thereby, put to death the deeds of the flesh. One who knows Jesus in this way does not walk in sin. If one walks in sin, one can know for certain that the experience of the grace of God, the powerful presence of the Spirit is not yet fully happening in one's life.

*1 John 3:5-11: And you know that **He was manifested to take away our sins**, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.*

*Little children, **let no one deceive you**. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.*

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

*In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: **Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother**. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

"God is love."

The predominant characteristic of God is love. His loving kindness released toward man cannot be stopped. The love of God can reach into the darkest corner; it can flow through the thickest wall; it can overcome the vilest evil. Evil cannot be destroyed by evil. **The love of God is the most powerful force in creation to destroy evil and establish righteousness.** God's love produces righteous obedience, peace, and joy in life.

The first characteristic of a person in whom the Spirit of the Lord dwells is the manifestation of the love of God. Anyone with the righteousness-producing love of God within will love his brother and overcome sin. God's love produces righteousness and dissolves sinful living. The person in whom the Spirit of Christ Jesus the King rules will practice righteousness and will love his brother.

Sin and unlove are not of God and anyone who practices sin is not receiving it from God. The devil is the father of sin. God is the Father of love and righteousness. Thus, one who practices sin is being fathered by the devil. In contrast, the Spirit of God is fathering one who is righteous.

This is not a lost-or-saved issue. It is not a born-again or not-born-again question. Certainly, one must be born again for the Spirit of Jesus to live within. But, many who are born are not yet fully grown; and, therefore are in a growth process toward righteous living. As minds are being renewed to the Word of God, and old life structures are being cut down and replaced with the seed of God, one's healing and deliverance from all the work of the devil is taking place. The Spirit of Christ is destroying all the works of the devil in the life.

Righteousness is a process carried out by the Spirit of God within the willing believer.

One must come into agreement with God for one's "little flesh king" to die and be replaced with the Spirit of the King from heaven, Christ Jesus the Lord.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)

We do not and must not continue to live in sin. We must continue on to maturity. The love of God must be perfected in us. If we truly know Him in the sense of abiding in Christ and having His Spirit abiding within our being, we will not live in sin. We will keep His commandments. But, while we are in the process of dying to our self-governing "little flesh king" and becoming ruled by the King from heaven, we have an Advocate with the Father. Jesus is there pleading our case, telling the Father that He is still working on the job of cleansing His child from all unrighteousness. Confessing our sin is the first step to forgiveness for the past act of sin and cleansing for future righteous living.

*1 John 1:8 - 2:5: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse us from all unrighteousness**. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

*My little children, these things I write to you, **so that you may not sin**. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

*Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. **But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him**. By this we know that we are in Him.*

*Gal. 5:14-17a: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "**You shall love your neighbor as yourself**." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh**. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another.*

The kingdom of God from heaven on earth is established and continues by the Spirit of God in man producing victory over sin and establishing God's will on the earth as it is in heaven.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM VICTORY LIVING (#042)

Victory never implies the lack of a war. On the contrary, victory signifies that there has been a war or some form of challenge. It indicates winning the war or overcoming the challenge. Faith and the spiritual life of every child of God will be challenged. To seek to be free from the battles and challenges of life is not a reasonable goal. However, being victorious over and through every challenge of life is the kingdom of God lifestyle.

*2 Tim 3:10-12: But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, **perseverance, persecutions, afflictions**, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured. **And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.***

*2 Cor 4:8-9: We are hard pressed on every side, **yet not crushed**; we are perplexed, but **not in despair**; persecuted, but **not forsaken**; struck down, **but not destroyed.***

God is our source, our healer, our redeemer, and our strength. No matter how intense the battle, we always know without a doubt that we can make it through to victory. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. Christ Jesus has defeated the enemy and won the war. We now battle from a position of standing in the victory of Jesus. Our battles are for our faith to believe and receive the powerful grace of Almighty God, which will drive off the trespassing enemy and establish the righteousness of God.

*1 John 4:4: You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because **He who is in you is greater** than he who is in the world.*

*Col 2:15: Having **disarmed** principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

The word "disarmed" is translated "spoiled" in the KJV and is the Greek word *apekduomai*, (ap-ek-doo'-om-ahee), meaning to divest wholly, to be stripped completely of all legal right, to be stripped naked. Jesus has totally stripped the devil and all powers of darkness of any and all rights to this world and anything in it, including your life and mine.

*Eph 1:19-23: And what is the **exceeding greatness of His power** toward us who believe, according to the working of **His mighty power** which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His 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 age but also in that which is to come.*

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

God will comfort and heal our pain.

God did not tell us that there would be no tears. He said He would wipe away every tear. On our journey into the Holy of Holies, there is the probability of some painful hits from the enemy. There may be experiences that appear too painful to bear.

They may threaten to destroy our very lives and may bring us to the end of all the human strength we can muster. The pain of losing a loved one in an untimely and devastating manner, the catastrophe of a tortuous divorce, the helplessness of seeing one we love maimed in a horrible accident, wasted by illness or tortured in persecution can all cause pain so severe that one may feel devastated and nearly destroyed.

Yet, because Jesus lives and the grace of God is real, because He loves us and is always there to carry us through, we will overcome and return to praise Him. We will come through with greater love for Him and for our neighbor, with a firmer faith, and a greater commitment to carry His love to the world.

*Rev 7:17: For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. **And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.***

Because God Himself dwells and abides within us and we are His people, we are victorious. As God wipes away our tears, the old pains and sorrows pass away. There is no more death. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Whether we live in this body or pass on, we are with the Lord (*Rom 14:8*) (*2 Cor 5:8*). Death is separation from God, and we will never be separated from Him (*Isa 59:1-2*) (*Rom 5:17*). We do not sorrow as those without hope. (*1 Th 4:13*) (*2 Cor 7:10*) Deep, long-lasting, devastating grief no longer exists in our lives. Yes, we may feel the intense pain of grief for a season, but it will be transformed into love. The more pain we experience, the more love will manifest in our healing.

*Rev 21:3-4: And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.**"*

CHRIST JESUS HAS OVERCOME

Because Christ Jesus has triumphed over all principalities and powers, neither the devil nor any of his demons nor any force of darkness can rule over the one in whom Christ dwells. The real truth is that the person in whom Christ dwells has, in the name of Jesus, complete authority to rule over all principalities and powers including the devil himself.

Our only battle is to stand on the Word of God and, in faith, resist the works of darkness. If our faith is strong, everything is subject to the Christ in us. If we believe the words of God from the Bible and the spoken words from within by the Spirit of Christ, we will bring them forth through our mortal bodies into the world and nothing will be impossible to us. We are the body of Christ, the tabernacle of God on earth, the instrument of God, the interface between the spiritual and the natural realms.

Nothing is impossible to him that believes. The supernatural is natural with God and with the one in whom Christ dwells, if we have faith.

*Eph 3:16-21: That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to **the power that works in us**, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

*Mat 17:20b: I say to you, **if you have faith** as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; **and nothing will be impossible for you.***

*Mark 9:23: Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, **all things are possible to him who believes.**"*

*Mark 11:22-24: So Jesus answered and said to them, "**Have faith in God.**" For assuredly, I say to you, whoever **says to this mountain**, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that **those things he says will be done**, he will have **whatever he says.**" Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, **believe that you receive them, and you will have them.***

The enemy has no power in the world except the power we allow him.

We allow the enemy to have power by our unbelief, ignorance, or negligence. His only power is to deceive and to cause you and me to not believe the Word and work of Christ Jesus. One of his greatest deceptions is to cause us to believe that he really does not exist or is not active in the world today. Then he can take on the disguise of an angel of light and work on and through naive Christians, as a religious spirit, **using perverted teachings of the Bible to destroy** faith in Christ Jesus now come in the flesh of His universal Body. In the same way, he will create division, confusion, debate, and disorder among Christians.

We cannot accurately blame the devil for the lack of the kingdom lifestyle among men and within our own lives. And, we can surely never blame God. We cannot even blame the lost and evil people of the world. We Christians must accept one hundred percent of the responsibility for the lack of the power of God flowing through believers to establish righteousness over evil; and, thus, establish the kingdom of God on earth. No one else has been given the dominion and the awesome indwelling power of God Himself to deliver our world from the bondages of evil and bring forth the freedom of the kingdom of God.

PRAY WITH ME

God, I pray, give us revelation to comprehend the vastness of Your very own might, strengthening us by Your Spirit within our inner man.

Help us, God, to experience the reality of Christ dwelling within our hearts through faith.

God, help us to walk in the reality of experiencing that all things are possible and nothing is impossible to him that believes.

Teach us how to speak to the mountain or to anything You desire to be moved or changed, in the name of Jesus, in faith, and not doubting in our hearts.

Father, I come before Your throne of grace. I receive mercy and grace. I receive Your empowerment to speak to the enemy in the name of Jesus.

Now, in Jesus' name, I command the powers of darkness. You will not hinder the revelation of this truth to the reader.

I break the power of every religious spirit and every work of spiritual blindness, in the name of Jesus.

I bind the power of the work of doubt and unbelief, in the name of Jesus.

Father, I ask You to release a spirit of revelation and spiritual discernment to illuminate the reality of this truth in the heart of the reader.

I believe in my heart it is done. We thank You for it, Heavenly Father.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES *Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom*

KINGDOM AWAKENING (#043)

In the seventh millennium, the sleeping giant is awakening.

Christians are beginning to awaken from their peaceful sleep to discover they are in serious bondage, with ropes of theological concepts, religious orders, and fallacious doctrines. The ropes are staked in tradition and pseudo-religious political systems that threaten rejection and persecution to anyone who would dare seek to be free. We, Western Christians, relaxed in our recliners while snacking on rich foods and watching our favorite, mind-numbing, television programs. We drove to work in fine cars while listening to our peaceful easy-listening music in wrap-around stereo and literally slept in the pew while the pleasant sound of false peace lulled us into deeper deception and bondage.

Oh, yes. We have heard the terrible stories about how bad the world has become, but that only caused us to close our little group off even more for fear of the evil out there. We have blamed evil men, the devil, the government, and even God for the terrible condition of our world - the rampant immorality, vast destruction of families, violence and crime, breakdown of authority, lack of integrity and ethical values in government, business, and some religious leaders.

Rather than trusting the Spirit of Christ within us, we have trusted in our favorite sect of theologians to discern the Word of God for us, puree it and mix it with water to make it easy for us to swallow without chewing, and add sugar so that it tastes good to our fleshly appetites. Secretly, the enemy may have also added his poison to this tasty mix.

Awakening to kingdom will release the power of God.

The world will be astonished by the tremendous flow of love and power coming forth from individual Christians as the sleeping giant awakens and begins to take responsibility and exercise authority over the powers of darkness to change our world. Religious deceptions that say, "peace, peace" when there is no peace, will be thrown off like a covering blanket upon awakening.

The powers of darkness will be driven from the awakening church. No longer will the church believe restraining deceptions that say, "There is no war; there is nothing for you to do or to overcome. Jesus will come back someday and everything will be fixed then. He will surely come and take us out of this dreadful world. There is no use fighting. The devil can't do anything to us today; he can't bother Christians. Anyway, God will burn it all up and make a new world someday. Go back to sleep and while you sleep maybe Jesus will come back or perhaps you will die and go to heaven and leave this evil world."

The powers of darkness are stealing, killing, and destroying the children of the world. Meanwhile, denominations fragment over whether to accept homosexual priests or not. Theologians continue to debate their favorite theories, and proffer their "preees" and "posts" of eschatology. They concern themselves with ideologies of

intellectual darkness and postulate their theses of conjecture and speculation while with their prideful systems of theology, they try to figure out and explain God. Naive church members, who have trusted in their favorite theologians instead of the indwelling power of Christ, can do nothing as their children are overcome in immorality, violence, and drug addiction; and, their own lives are consumed in the things of the world.

The sleeping church is not just in bondage to religion. It is also in bondage to pleasure, money and the things it will buy. Sports and games are gods for the sleeping church. "After all, there just isn't time for us to be involved in Bible study and prayer on our own. Dr. So-and-so will do that and give us a good sermon Sunday that will make us feel better and along with our offering should take care of our Christian duty for this week."

In the seventh millennium all this foolishness is coming down.

It is all wood, hay, and stubble and will be burned into non-existence. The kingdom of God will come forth as truehearted believers bring forth the anointing of the anointed One from within. They will stand and speak directly to the powers of darkness commanding that their work be stopped. Then the will of God will come forth on earth. Spiritual reality is again replacing religious concepts created in the minds of theologians with help from powers of darkness masquerading as angels of light.

Our war is not with theologians, pious religious leaders, evil violent men, or any other person. Our war is against spiritual powers of darkness that work on and through anyone they can. They seek to destroy faith in Christ now changing lives. They seek to divert men's minds to meaningless matters instead of life in God. The powers of darkness seek to pervert the pure Word and work of God.

Eph 6:12: For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

The sleeping giant has not even been aware that a spiritual war is in progress.

The awakening giant is throwing off religious bondages and realizing that we have been deceived into a false belief that there was little or nothing we could do in the spiritual realm to overcome the evil in the world. Many have been made to believe that the only things that could make a difference were in the natural realm. The realms of government, education, social order, law enforcement, military actions, and humanitarianism are seen by some as the only real avenues for dealing with the evils of the world, while spiritual warfare is devalued by the world and much of the sleeping church.

The truth is that only spiritual warfare deals with the root of the problem by alleviating the underlying cause and bringing about full correction and recovery. Warring against the symptoms with human means can never lead to a full cleansing of the root problems nor bring lasting correction and healing.

The awakening giant is learning to set aside striving in the flesh against others. The awakened people of God are beginning to employ the mighty weapons

of God to destroy strongholds of wrong thoughts and beliefs that enable the enemy to kill, steal, and destroy.

Every problem and negative work on earth can be and must be overcome first in the spiritual realm, the realm of undaunted faith, boundless love, and endless hope.

God's immeasurable GRACE empowering individuals from within is more than sufficient to destroy evil. Evil in one's own life must first be destroyed. Then, the purified child of God can powerfully intercede for others. Intercession takes on a new and greater meaning to the empowered son or daughter of God standing against and spiritually assaulting the works and powers of darkness that are binding others.

The mercy of God is fresh every morning. Today would be a good day to wake up, repent, put off the old man, and PUT ON THE NEW--the very life and power of the Spirit of Christ Jesus.

*2 Cor. 10:3-5: **For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.***

Pulling down strongholds of the enemy that are established in our world does not begin with bombing dens of sin, cutting off the supply of drugs, or the enactment and enforcement of more laws. Tanks, planes, bombs, guns, and toughened troops are not the tools to defeat the enemy's strong hold on our world.

Our mighty, spiritual weapons in God are employed and brought to bear upon the enemy through love by the Spirit. We war against and defeat the rulers of darkness with **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, healing and deliverance (salvation), and the Word of God, praying always in the Spirit** (Eph 6:14-18).

The awakening giant is discovering real prayer.

It is the kind of prayer that Jesus taught about, the kind that can move mountains and cast out demons. The same Jesus that spoke to the demons in a young boy and cast them out, the same Jesus that said to speak to the mountain now lives in the believer who has put off the old man and put on the new.

*Mat. 17:18-19: And Jesus **rebuked the demon**, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"*

*Mat. 17:20-22: So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will **say to this mountain**, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. "However, this kind does not go out except by **prayer** and fasting."*

"And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Prayer is much more than quietly bowing one's head to ask for something that one needs. There are examples in Scripture of men in prayer speaking to the condition

that God wanted to change. In dynamic faith they commanded evil spirits to release their hold and be gone. They spoke to the dead to arise. They spoke healing to the sick and deformed. Elijah spoke to the weather to not rain, and it did not rain for three years. Then, he spoke for the rain to come again and it rained (James 5: 17-18). Jesus spoke to the storm, rebuked the wind, and commanded the sea to be calm (Mark 4: 39).

Jesus promised believers, that as they abide in Him and He in them, they would do the works that He did and even greater works. In the early portion of the seventh millennium, many such works are coming about and will increase as the mighty outpouring of the power of God comes forth into the world to destroy the works of the devil and to do the works of God.

*John 14: 12-14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. "And whatever you ask **in My name**, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. "If you ask anything **in My name**, I will do it.*

UNBELIEF PRODUCES VAIN PRAYERS

To not believe and not accept these promises of Scripture is to take the Word of God in vain.

To pray without believing is to pray in vain.

To speak in the name of Jesus without faith is to use His name in vain.

To say we have the grace of God and yet remain without power is to take the grace of God in vain.

*2 Cor. 6-1: **We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.***

*Mark 16: 17-18: "And these signs will follow those who believe: **In My name** they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*

*Acts 3: 16: "And **His name, through faith in His name**, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.*

Luke 24: 45-49: And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

*Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, "and that repentance and remission of sins should be **preached in His name** to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. "And you are witnesses of these things.*

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are **endued with power from on high.**"

*2 Chron. 7:14: **If My people** who are called by **My name** will humble themselves, and **pray** and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

PRAY WITH ME

Father, in the name of Jesus, we come before Your throne of grace, we receive mercy and grace.

I agree with the reader that we are believers and we desire from our hearts all that You have provided for us.

Father, we choose to repent and turn from any and all that we have done or failed to do that has taken Your grace in vain, that has taken Your Word and Your Name in vain. We repent, Father, of every vain prayer.

In the name of Jesus, we bind the work of any powers of darkness that would hinder the full light of the Word and power of God from coming forth.

In the name of Jesus, we command you, Satan and all powers of darkness, you have no part in this work and may not in any way hinder or prevent the revelation of the Word of God and the work of God in the reader.

And just now, Father, I ask You to fill us with Your Spirit, endue us with power from on high. I pray specifically now for the reader to be baptized into the fullness of Your Spirit.

I pray for our understanding to be opened to truly comprehend the Scriptures. Fill us, God, with the Spirit and life of Christ. Let Jesus live in us to the fullest that You desire.

We humble ourselves before You, Lord, and choose to turn from our prideful, religious ways to seek Your face with our whole heart.

Father, we ask in accordance with Your word that You would forgive our sin and heal our land.

We pray in the name of Jesus, Father, let Your fires of revival come forth into our land. We ask for a mighty outpouring of Your love and Spirit to come forth in our own hearts and in our land.

Thank You, Father! We praise Your holy name!

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES
Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM REVIVAL (#044)

Revival and Renewal Lead To The Kingdom of God.

Revival and the outpouring of the Spirit of God occurred in spots in the closing moments of the sixth millennium. It was as if tongues of spiritual fire came forth upon a few churches that were quickly transformed into a gathering place for people from around the world seeking revival fire. They were like streams of spiritual fire that were propelled forth from a great mass of heavenly fire that had come near to earth. Many Christians rushed to these spots of spiritual fire to be purified and ignited with the fire of revival. Many of them became as blazing cinders and everywhere these blazing cinders went revival fires ignited.

Once ignited, these burning coals of fire had little or no respect for religion and all of its bondages and trappings. It is not that they were unruly toward the authority of God. On the contrary, they seemed to be willing to give up everything to please Father God and were deeply in love with Jesus.

Many people have been transformed from the revival fire that spread to many individuals and groups across the world. Within these scattered groups a new, deeper level of intensity of worship and desire for intimate relationship with God has continued to develop. The tangible presence of God is felt and many miracles are occurring in large and small gatherings.

Intimately relating to God has led to a great increase of the revelation of the kingdom of God and has exposed a need for significant changes. Many people have been leaving their religious past in search of more of God and His kingdom. Holiness, purity, and righteous living are being sought after and experienced even in the midst of an increasingly degenerate world.

Repentance from dead works seems to continue through times of brokenness and weeping as the Spirit of God continues to reveal areas of wood, hay, and stubble within believers' hearts and lives. An intense passion often develops for the presence of God.

Religious forms and theological interpretations are giving way to a reality of fresh revelation of the Word of God. Passages previously seen as important only for foundations of past religious structures are becoming life and reality as they are brought forth into the daily lives of revived believers.

Some feel that, in the past, the foundations had been laid over and over again in their lives. Only now has there come a reality of building a superstructure of holy life upon the foundation. For some, it was as if they had been standing on the foundation for many years without the reality of the presence of God. The outpouring of the Spirit of God is empowering believers in a way I've not seen before in my lifetime.

The sense of unending, peaceful power is simply there. It requires only openness to God and a hunger for Him. There are many different manifestations of the presence

of God occurring and many different types of gatherings are being affected. They range from gatherings of masses coming together with much music and ministry to small groups of believers in homes, businesses, and anywhere else a group gathers together to pray and seek the Lord.

TRANSFORMATION TO KINGDOM

The outpouring of the Spirit of God is providing the power and preparation for the transfer of the kingdoms of this world to the kingdoms of our God.

There is a major shift taking place in God's people, a transformation from earthly-focused beings to heavenly-focused beings - from earthly rule to heavenly rule - from man's ways to God's ways - from the tree of knowledge to the tree of life - from studying about God to hearing God.

It is transformation from the church-emphasis age to the kingdom-emphasis age. What we, the Body, experienced in the 1990s with fresh revival spots and renewal has progressed into the reality of personal spiritual intimacy with God, which leads to the will of God being done and the kingdom of God coming forth. The kingdom is coming forth in limited form, yet in greater scope than ever before.

The resurrected Christ Jesus, the all-powerful King of heaven and earth, is now appearing upon the earth in and through the maturing people of God. Christ, the King, is manifesting in His people. The supernatural church is appearing as the New Jerusalem is coming forth from the heavenly realm into the natural realm. Holy angels are present in vast numbers and are eagerly awaiting opportunities to minister powerfully upon the earth. Never before in my lifetime has prayer been so powerful and so often instantly carried out.

Heb. 12:22-24: ...you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

The shaking of the earth has surely begun and will grow stronger as the voice of God speaks from heaven through His trumpets of revival. He is speaking passionate pleas for repentance and turning from dead works. There has never been and will never be again a time exactly like this shaking of God that is beginning to be spoken into the world. It will not be good to ignore the voice of God and fail to adjust to the season of kingdom revival at hand.

Heb. 12:25-26: See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

What about false prophets and impure ministers?

No doubt there are tares among the good grain in the field of God's fruitful outpouring in the world. The enemy has surely planted his seeds among the good

seed, and will then expose his own works in an attempt to cause doubt and unbelief in the mighty work of God. His strategy is to discredit the works of God, by causing naive Christians and others to believe the revival is entirely the enemy's work and not the work of God.

God, in His wonderful mercy and abundant grace, has made provision for correcting this situation and told us about it in His Word. The workers of God's field are instructed not to pull up the tares lest they destroy the good grain. The part God's workers have in dealing with the tares is to pray according to the Word of God for angels to gather them out. The angels will not only remove and burn the tares, but they will also see that the good fruit makes it safely to its desired goal and is not lost.

Mat. 13:24-30: Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

"He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'

Mat. 13:37-39: He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels."

The kingdom of God must grow within the people of God.

The kingdom of God potential is seeded within believers and must mature to fruitfulness in the good heart soil, the soul (mind, will, and emotions) of God's people. The souls of most Christians are damaged, perverted, and contaminated by many generations of demonic deception, religious error, and abuse. People have been trained and are skilled in the programs of the enemy. The world's basic programs of understanding and practice are primarily those from the kingdom of darkness.

Large scale cleansing, healing, and reprogramming of the souls of God's people must take place for the kingdom seed (word) to grow into reality in the world. Christians must be reprogrammed from the ways that are currently ruling the world to the ways of God. No man or teaching system can effectively do this job. Only God Himself, working by His Spirit, can reprogram the souls of men to align with and bring forth, the kingdom of God.

God and His angels are renewing the hearts of His people. The powerful presence of God and ministering spirits (angels) are by supernatural power changing yielded individuals, reprogramming them to the ways of God. Some may lie quietly for hours in the presence of God while spiritual visions instruct or alter the person. A deep awareness of love for God leads to unrestrained worship and mighty surges of praise

to God. These conditions may happen again and again as God brings layer after layer of deep repentance and healing of the soul.

Changes, after spending time in the presence of God, are evident. Where there was selfishness, there is caring; where there was pride, there is humility; where there was depression, there is joy; where there was frustration and concern, there is peace; where there was fear, there is increased faith; where there was pain and bitterness, there is forgiveness and love; where there was shyness, there is boldness; where there was religious debate, there is powerful revelation of God and His kingdom.

God is preparing a people of kingdom destiny.

An army of God is being formed from the battered and bruised children of God, who are coming out of mixtures of darkness into the pure light of the glorious kingdom of God. Christ the King is manifesting in His people. Young people and children are being affected. Some small children are becoming specially equipped to carry the kingdom of God further in their generation. The generational regeneration tendencies will produce a more holy, more powerful generation of believers than the world has seen since the first century. These equipped and empowered children of God will overpower the works of darkness with the light and love of God.

Supernatural gifts, anointing, and powerful prayer will seem natural to these spiritually equipped servants of the Most High. Their capacity to know and use the Word of God will exceed that of previous generations. Spiritual warfare will move to new levels as the children of God overpower the strongest sorcerers and the most cunning deceivers attempting to continue ruling the minds of men and, subsequently, the world.

Christians that are alive on the earth at this time have both a great blessing to be a part of what God is doing and an awesome responsibility. God's intercessors and prayer warriors must rise to the occasion. Many must accept the call to spiritual warfare and take whatever action is necessary to get into the war.

Never before have the fields been more ready for harvest. This is not a time to wait or hold back. Rather it is a time for every called and gifted believer to release his or her gifts however and wherever God leads. This is not a time to look back at our failures or lack of productivity of the past. With the anointing of God in the presence of the fire of kingdom revival, some things that would not work before may be very productive now. God is looking for those who will hold back nothing and seek Him with their whole hearts.

PRAY WITH ME

God, give us an ear to hear Your direction in these powerful times.

Father, we repent for our failure to fully enter into Your plan and work. We choose to turn from anything that hinders or restrains us from fully entering into the gifts and callings that You have given.

Father, we ask, in the name of Jesus, for wisdom to know what is really important in our lives and what is not. We ask, Father, for anointing and

power of Your Spirit to lay down those things that are not really important and to carry out the work and ministry that You empower us to do.

Father, in the name of Jesus, we come boldly before Your throne of Grace. We receive mercy and grace. We thank You, Father, that we can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us, that nothing is impossible to us who believe.

We pray for the fires of revival to fill our own souls and to spread to the uttermost parts of the world.

In the name of Jesus, we stand against all the works of darkness. We thank You, Father, that the Lord Jesus Christ has already appeared for this reason, to destroy the works of the devil. Thank You that He has disarmed him, made a public display of him, and totally stripped him of all rights.

Thank You, Father, that we have power in the name of Jesus over all the power of the enemy.

In the name of Jesus, we command you, Satan and all powers of darkness, release those held in captivity. We bind the power of spiritual blindness, darkness, deception, and delusion in the name of Jesus. We bind the power of religious spirits and come against all religious strongholds in Jesus' name. We speak the destruction of religious strongholds, of man's traditions, and doctrines of demons in the name of Jesus.

We ask You, Father, in the name of Jesus, to release spirits of revelation, understanding, wisdom, truth, and light into the hearts of those previously held captive. We pray for Your Word to become alive to us. Give us a great hunger for Your Word and Your presence.

Father, we ask that laborers be sent forth into the harvest. We pray for these who are set free to be strengthened and empowered by Your Spirit and Your Word to enter into the harvest fields.

And we say, Father, here am I, send me. Let Your will be fully accomplished in our lives. We pray for Your kingdom to come and Your will to be done in our lives today.

We thank You and praise You, Father, for Your awesome greatness and Your immeasurable love. Thank You, Father for Your abundant grace and endless mercy. We worship You, almighty God, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES
Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL REALMS (#045)

The natural or earthly realm and the spiritual or heavenly realm coexist simultaneously.

For the sake of understanding, one might compare this to radio and other transmitted, electronic frequencies. Many different signals exist carrying many different formats and programs in the same place at the same time on separate independent frequencies. With the proper receiver and transmitter equipment, one may monitor or transact the exchange of information on any channel or frequency by tuning to that frequency. Reality at one frequency is not accessible to another frequency and does not appear to exist to other frequencies.

The spiritual realm might be likened to a higher frequency and the natural realm to a lower frequency. God and angels are spirits and therefore, exist in the spiritual or heavenly realm or frequency. At the same time in the same place, man and all earthly things exist in the natural realm or frequency. Redeemed man is a living spirit and therefore, has the potential to relate to the spiritual realm. Man is also an earthling living in a natural body with a natural brain that functions in the natural realm. Natural, unredeemed man cannot see into or hear from the spiritual realm on his own. He can only discern natural things; spiritual things do not appear to exist to him.

It is as though a veil exists between the reality of spiritual things and the reality of natural things. To move through that veil, one must change to the different frequency of the other side. For an angel to be visible in the natural realm, the frequency of existence must be changed to one close to that of natural man. At some point of slowing down the frequency, the spirit may begin to be partially visible with the natural eye. In order for man to interact in the spiritual realm, he must tune to the frequency of the spiritual instead of the frequency of the natural.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

There has been much confusion and debate among individual Christians and denominations regarding the filling of the Holy Spirit and/or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Scripture clearly speaks of being filled with the Spirit and of being baptized in the Spirit. Filling of the Spirit might be likened to spiritual presence coming from the spiritual realm to our side of the veil into our existence or realm and filling our being. Being baptized in the Spirit might be likened to being submersed into the spiritual realm on the other side of the veil. A person baptized into the spiritual realm has greater access to the spiritual realm or frequency. It is as if one is given a more powerful transmitter and receiver to do business on the heavenly or spiritual frequency.

The supernatural gifts are more available to one baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is easier to see into the spiritual realm and to hear God more clearly. Therefore, one can more accurately represent God's desire and plans into the earth. Many Christians consider speaking in unknown tongues as an evidence of being baptized in the Holy Spirit because it requires hearing from the spiritual realm and representing what is

heard by speaking it into the natural realm. This is the basis for much ministry from God to man. Preaching, teaching, prophesying, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, and all other spiritual ministry to man must originate from one hearing or seeing in the spiritual realm and representing or bringing forth what God is saying and doing.

Prayer involves speaking into and hearing from the spiritual realm.

Effective intercessory prayer can occur when one crosses over into the spiritual realm. The spiritual realm is the greater realm. The spiritual originally created the natural. The power to create or recreate the natural is in the spiritual realm. God Who is the creator of all is Spirit. The natural realm is changed as one enters the spiritual realm, discerns the will of God, prays to the Father in the name of Jesus, and then from the spiritual realm speaks forth the will of God into the natural realm.

The devil is a fallen angel.

Angels are spirits; therefore, Satan and all his demons do business on the spiritual frequency. That is to say they exist in the spiritual realm. Although natural man is not sensitive to the spiritual realm, demon spirits often assist natural man in sorcery, magic, and different, supernatural spirit crafts. A natural man participating in occult practices is informed by and guided by demons. Not being able to see clearly into the spiritual realm, the deceived sorcerer may think that God is his source. Also, the believer who is not yet baptized in the Spirit is unable to tell the difference and may fear receiving the baptism of the Spirit and entering into the spiritual realm. He may ascribe the works of the Spirit of God to demons.

To war against the powers of darkness, one must also cross over into the spiritual realm.

In the name of Jesus, we have authority over all the powers of darkness in the spiritual realm. Satan and every demon must obey any believer who truly speaks with the spiritual authority of Jesus. However, Satan and the powers of darkness are given certain authority by the Word of God. There are certain conditions in which the powers of darkness are given permission by God in His Word to attack and do harm. All of these conditions are brought about by man's decisions and actions. It is man who gives the powers of darkness opportunity to do their dirty work. The enemy knows his legal rights that are given by God and written in the Bible.

In a word, sin gives the enemy legal right or license to attack and torment Christians. In another word, repentance removes the license to attack or torment believers. Of course the unrepentant sinner who has rejected Christ has no defense against the wiles of the devil and must depend on believers for any protection that he may have.

In an earlier Kingdom Growth Guide, we dealt with unforgiveness, one of the major, legal rights given the enemy in the Word. Another major, legal right of the enemy is disobedience. To know the will of God and not do it is disobedience and sin.

*James 4:17: **Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.***

*Deuteronomy 28: 15: "But it shall come to pass, **if you do not obey** the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you."*

*Deuteronomy 28: 45-46: Moreover all these **curses** shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you **did not obey** the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.*

A biblical word for a legal right of the enemy is a "curse."

Christ has redeemed us from the curse (*Gal 3: 10-13*). However, to think that one can walk in unrepentant sin and not open the door to the enemy is foolishness. To begin to appropriate the work of God to be fully protected from the work of the enemy, one must repent

In addition to unforgiveness and disobedience, other areas of legal rights in the Word giving the enemy license to attack are: iniquity of the fathers, spoken words, judgments, improper vows, occult involvement, and improper soul ties.

The conditions that give the enemy license must be corrected.

Before a lasting work of deliverance from the work of the enemy in a person's life can be affected, the conditions that give the enemy license must be corrected. Jesus has provided all that is necessary to completely rectify the condition and set the person free. There is nothing lacking in the work of Jesus. The need is to appropriate the work of Jesus into the life situation. For example, we all know that Christ died to save every person in the world. However, not all are saved. Some have appropriated the work of Christ while others have not. Some are reborn and some are not. Those who believe and confess with the mouth are saved. Those, who do not, are not saved even though the work of Christ and the grace of God are sufficient and available to save them (*Rom 10: 8-10*).

The same thing is true with all the provisions of God through Jesus Christ. There is always an acceptance factor on the part of each person. Even though Christ has provided salvation including deliverance and healing, it will not be forced upon an unbeliever. One must believe in the heart and confess with the mouth to bring forth the provisions of Christ. Thus, a work of believing (faith) and speaking (prayer) is involved in appropriating the works of Jesus to set us free and to heal wounds from the enemy.

Obviously, the enemy must prevent believing and powerful prayer if he is to retain hold on his captives. They are only captive as long as they do not believe in the power and provision of the resurrected Christ in their heart and do not confess with their mouth unto healing and deliverance (salvation, "sozo"*).

**G4982. sozo, sode'-zo; from a prim. sos (contr. for obsol. saos, "safe"); to save, i.e. deliver or protect (lit. or fig.): --heal, preserve, save (self), do well, be (make) whole.*

The enemy will bring strong delusions wherever he can. He will send spirits of spiritual blindness, darkness, deception and delusion to cloud the spiritual mind of

the captives to keep them from seeing the truth in the spiritual realm. For those entrapped by "pharmakeia"* (drugs, alcohol, witchcraft, occult, etc.), he will send mean and violent demon spirits to torment and lead them into blatantly evil lifestyles.

**G5331. pharmakeia, far-mak-i'-ah; from G5332; medication ("pharmacy"), i.e. (by extens.) magic (lit. or fig.):--sorcery, witchcraft.*

For those entrapped in religion, he will send demon spirits masquerading in the costume of angels of light to subversively plant debate, strife, gossip, backbiting, accusation, condemnation, secret lust, pornography, manipulation, lying, etc., hidden behind a mask of light. He will even use scripture to mislead and create doubts and unbelief.

The enemy has many schemes or patterns of activity. Each and every scheme depends on spiritual blindness and deception to prevent the captive from knowing that the prison doors are open and that through Jesus one can walk out of all bondages to freedom in the kingdom of Christ.

*Isa 61:1: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; **He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound.***

*Luke 4:18: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, **to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.***

The Spirit of the Lord will proclaim and preach liberty, the opening of the prison, healing to the brokenhearted, and recovery of sight to the blind. Proclaiming and preaching is speaking. The Spirit of Christ within you can use your voice to speak healing to the bondages, bruises, and blindness inflicted by the enemy. The power of the Spirit of Christ can destroy the strongholds of the enemy.

If we can see these things within ourselves, we can deal with them within ourselves. We can speak to the conditions in our own life by the Spirit of the Lord, which is speaking in the name of Jesus, and drive the enemy from our land.

Merely using the name of Jesus in our prayer and proclamation is not speaking in the name of Jesus. **To speak in the name of Jesus one must speak from the Spirit of Christ, from the spiritual realm.** To attempt to vainly use the name of Jesus, without being filled with the Spirit of Christ and without seeing or hearing from the spiritual authority in Jesus, will not be effective and can cause increased disorder.

Acts 19:13-16: Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Another spiritual person is needed to bind spiritual blindness and darkness.

If one cannot see clearly because of the work of spiritual blindness or darkness, one will continue to experience doubt, unbelief, and confusion. One may feel it necessary to defend one's self and one's religious beliefs and enter into debate with the works of God. If this is the case, God can provide another person to be used of God to flow the ministry of Jesus to intercede and bind the spiritual blindness, doubt, and unbelief so that one may see, believe and be changed. The person interceding becomes a minister and must be led of the Spirit to help one come to Jesus and receive the work of healing and deliverance from the enemy's wounds and bondages.

*James 5: 16: **Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.***

The power of prayer of two in agreement is awesome in the spiritual realm. The spiritual prayer of two in agreement, in the name of Jesus, is like the voice of God, completely overpowering all enemy spirits. All evil spirits must absolutely obey the commands of one praying or speaking in the name of Jesus.

*Mat 18: 18-20: Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. "Again I say to you that **if two of you agree** on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*

For those entrapped by spiritual blindness and delusion, the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man is needed to avail the spiritual work of binding the works of the powers of darkness and loosing the works of the Spirit of truth and light into the heart of the one in bondage. When the evil spirits are bound, the person should be able to begin to see the light and truth of God and His Word. If the license is not soon removed, this binding will only be temporary. Without this powerful, spiritual help, the person will remain blinded and unable to receive the spiritual truth and virtue that would save, heal, and deliver him.

The decision to repent is the responsibility of individuals once they see their need.

When the light enters a person's heart, he or she can and must then decide to receive the light, come into agreement with God, repent of sin, and begin receiving the grace of God. No one can force another to receive the light of God and turn from his or her sin. Each person must make his own decisions. However, the person in spiritual darkness, covered by evil spirits of spiritual blindness, deception, and delusion, does not have the opportunity to receive the light until spiritual power is brought forth by prayer to temporarily bind (stop) the work of the enemy and allow the light of God to get in.

2 Cor 4: 4: ... whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Once the spirits of darkness are bound, the Holy Spirit must bring forth the Word of God. Speaking good thoughts or wisdom to the person at this time is not necessarily helpful. **Speaking the Word of God** is the only powerful tool the Holy Spirit needs to bring forth the light and power of God into the person's heart and life. **The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit** for permanently destroying the work of the enemy.

Eph 6: 17: And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Once the person has received the Word and responded in agreement with it, powerful prayer of agreement can effectively appropriate the work of Jesus by the Spirit of God and holy angels to drive the enemy from them and begin healing their heart and life from the afflictions of the enemy. The individual now has the power within himself to submit to God and resist the devil.

*James 4: 7-8: Therefore **submit to God. Resist the devil** and he will flee from you. **Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

In the final state, every person's healing and deliverance is between the person and Jesus. The minister can only help by adding his or her faith to the situation to bring forth or appropriate the work of the Spirit of Christ to push back the darkness; and then, by the Spirit of Christ, speak the Word of God into the heart and life.

As the Word and Spirit of God enter the heart, the person will be shown his sin by the Spirit and the Word. **As he or she then repents turning from disobedience and begins to walk in the Spirit, which produces obedience to God, the enemy's legal rights are canceled and destroyed.**

Gal 5: 16, 25: I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

The powers of darkness no longer have any legal right to torment or stress the person. The devil is a liar and a cheater and will continue to try to stress the person by deceit. He will bring up the old, past sins and disobedience in an attempt to torment them (John 8: 44). One need only continue to submit to God, draw near to Him and **RESIST the devil and he must flee.** Resisting the devil simply means exercising one's authority over him by speaking forth the truth of God and commanding him in the name of Jesus to be gone.

A NEW CREATION

When an individual's sins are forgiven by the blood of Jesus they no longer exist in the spiritual realm at all. God puts them away as far as the east is from the west. They no longer exist. They are permanently and forever blotted out by the blood of Jesus.

Psa 103: 12: As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Isa 1: 18: "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

*1 John 1: 7: But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.***

*2 Cor 5: 17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

We are a new creation. God chooses to retain no remembrance of our sin. We are pure and holy in Christ. As we walk in Him, in the Spirit of Christ, we walk in love for Him and our neighbor and do not walk in sin (Gal 5: 16) (Rom 8: 1) (1 John 2: 1).

If, however, we should slip out of walking in the Spirit of Christ and stumble, we have only to quickly repent and turn back to walking in the Spirit of God and again the blood of Jesus cleanses us. We are again a new creation in Christ Jesus. The devil has no legal place, but we may need to confront him and resist his unlawful attempt to deceive us into receiving his stress and torment.

MINISTERING AS CHRIST

The Spirit of Christ within the Body of Christ today will pray and minister as Jesus Christ prayed and ministered when He was on the earth in His natural body. Jesus spent much time alone with the Father speaking to and hearing from Him. He made His petitions to the Father alone in communion with Him. After communing with the Father, Jesus knew the Father's will and what the Father was doing before going among the people to minister. He had already brought His petitions before the Father and had heard and seen what the Father was doing. He did not go to the people to minister to them without asking the Father what He was doing in the matter. When He did confront the situation' He spoke to it with authority and commanded the enemy and all of creation involved to come into order with the will of the Father.

*John 5: 19: Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, **but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.***

SPEAK TO THE SITUATION

The powerful Spirit of Christ in His Bride will know the will of God and what He is doing and speak in power directly to the condition. In the name of Jesus the believer can command the powers of darkness and not continue to cry out to God for what He has already provided.

The minister must speak to the condition, the disorder, the disease, the demon, the storm, or whatever God wants to change commanding in the name of Jesus that the situation come into order and alignment with the will and Word of God. The believer must hear and see what the Father is doing, get in alignment with it, and flow with it. He or she must speak the will of God with the authority of the name of Jesus.

The spiritual realm is greater than the natural realm. When the work is done in the spiritual realm, it will manifest in time into the natural realm.

The work and power of God is activated by faith, which is an undoubting belief within the believer. Nothing is impossible to him that believes. What the Body of Christ believes and speaks will have an effect in the world. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the spoken word of God.

Rom 10: 17: So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

When a believer spends time with the Father hearing His word and seeing His will, faith is brought forth. When God by revelation clearly speaks something to a believer, all doubt is gone and faith is effortless. It comes by the word of God spoken or shown to the believer while in communion with Him. The power of prayer comes from hearing and seeing what the Father is doing and speaking and doing what He is doing.

One must not return to the tree of knowledge of good and evil and endeavor to figure out what God is doing. One must continue to partake of the tree of life and hear by revelation what God is already doing and get in on it by getting in alignment with what one hears and sees Him doing.

Trying to figure out what God is doing from one's own perspective can lead to sorcery as one begins to believe his own plan and speaks it forth into the world. One can actually become a hindrance to the will and plan of God by praying and speaking soulish prayers from one's own mind, will, and emotions as opposed to hearing God's desire in the particular matter at hand. All things are possible to him that believes, either godly or ungodly.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM FREEDOM 1 (#046)

Jesus said you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

*John 8:31b-32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed." And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free.**"*

What is freedom and what is not? Am I really free? How can the truth make me free? How can abiding in His word make one free? Can one truly become politically free, economically free, socially free by abiding in the word of Christ, becoming His disciple, and knowing the truth? And, if one can become free through this process, can an entire nation possibly become free? And if a nation can become free, can the whole world potentially become free?

In the past church age the emphasis was on church as opposed to the emerging emphasis of the kingdom of God. In the church-emphasis age, the Bible was generally interpreted as having value primarily only to one's "Christian life", or religious training and experience. God and His word were not sincerely valued as the source of wisdom and guidance for governing our entire lives or the governments of the world.

Many Christians, who have been educated by either religious and/or secular higher educational systems, have been trained to not value the Word and ways of God as realistic guidance for all governing aspects of life in the world. This has resulted in a multitude of various forms of bondage or slavery. Social, political, financial, physical, spiritual, and many other forms of restraints have taken control of the world's people and, subsequently, its governing systems.

The deception of inverted perception

An inversion of truth has occurred which tends to see the Word and ways of God as bondages that limit the freedom of individuals to participate in activities of carnal pleasure. The truth is that carnal pleasures only temporarily satisfy and always create a desire for more. In order to continue the individual's sense of satisfaction, one must continuously have new and increasing activities of carnal pleasure. Therefore, they become a lifestyle of addiction or bondage, stealing the individual's personal freedom to make real and free choices in life. The activities of the person's life become those that lead to the fulfillment or satisfaction of the addiction and not those that lead to prosperous production and true freedom in all areas of life and government.

The lack of productive and prosperous activity creates a dependent person, one who is dependent on someone or something else to provide life's necessities and external direction or control for life.

Freedom means to be at liberty, at liberty to make decisions without the despotic control of another external force. Some antonyms of freedom are: **dependence**, restriction, **bondage**, servitude, **slavery**, imprisonment, and **captivity**. Any **thing**

that brings one toward dependency is leading away from freedom and toward bondage or slavery to that **thing**.

Most people in the church-emphasis age did not understand the difference between independence and freedom. Many have been deceived into believing that independence from any guidance in their lives except their own mind was freedom. **Independence from all authority, including God, is not freedom!** Ungodly or carnal living is not freedom and does not lead to life. On the contrary it leads toward bondage and death, not freedom and life. Individuals, families, governments, institutions and systems of life will fail if the deception of carnal independence from God and His ways continues long enough. Death is the final result of independence from God and His ways. **We are either slaves of sin unto death or slaves of God's righteousness unto life.**

*Rom 6: 16-19, 20-21: Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. **And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.***

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

People in the kingdom-emphasis age are beginning to understand that freedom comes only from knowing the truth that God is the creator and designer of life and that He knows best how to live life and how to govern in such a way as to produce true freedom and prosperity in every aspect of life.

The church age people have tried to adapt principles from the Word of God to develop laws and rules for governing in the world. Often, the attempt to use the moral principles of the Word of God to establish rule in the world was met with much resistance by those who feared the loss of carnal independence. **Subsequent democratic attempts to compromise the ways of God to satisfy the carnal minds and personal addictions of the people have increasingly deteriorated life over the entire world.**

During the past church-emphasis age, people retreated within the church walls and left the world to its own end. The great fallacy of the churches isolationist philosophy is that no one in the world is truly isolated from the results of the actions of others.

In the emerging age of the kingdom of God, people are returning to life, returning to rule and reign with Christ and are beginning to have an impact upon the world. The great sleeping giant, the people of God who were asleep and in bondage in the church, are awakening and moving into life in the world. Kingdom-age people are realizing that the **renewal of their mind** to the Word and Spirit of God can bring the ways of God into their own lives and then into their families, communities, nations and, eventually, into the entire world. **No longer are we focused on the problems of the world but upon the possibility and potential of the power of God to change the world.**

Ruling and reigning with Jesus now

John 1 teaches us that Jesus was the Word and that He became flesh and dwelt among us. That same Jesus was crucified, resurrected from the dead, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and returned to the earth at Pentecost in the Holy Spirit, not just to dwell among us but to actually dwell within believers. To abide in the Word we must abide in Christ, We must abide in the Spirit of the resurrected Christ. Only as we walk in the Spirit can we be delivered from walking in the carnal mind of the flesh (*Gal 5: 16*). Only as we abide in Him and He within us by His Spirit can we know the truth and bring forth into the world His ways of life and government of all aspects of life in the world.

As we yield to His Spirit and renew our minds from our carnal and religious church age ways to His righteous and kingdom age ways, we can rule and reign with Him now in this life (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev 5:10). His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9). He must live in us and produce His thoughts, His way of thinking and doing. We shall live by the faith of the Son of God or we shall die by our carnal minds (Gal. 2:20; Rom 8:13).

John 15:4-11: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

*"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love."If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you, that **My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.***

Carnal pleasures never bring lasting joy.

Joy is an inner excitement of peace that endures. Joy is peace excited. Peace is joy at rest. Certainly, carnal pleasure is fun for a season. However, it will soon disappear leaving emptiness until the next participation in an activity of fleshly pleasure. This is true for nations just as it is true for individuals. The nation or the individual, without the joy of the Lord, must depend on manipulation, strife, and war to obtain the ingredients needed for carnal pleasures in order to obtain temporary satisfaction and a short-lived sense of happiness.

One of the greatest, natural, carnal pleasures is to rule over other people - to be Number One, to be better than others, to have power over others. Men involve themselves in conflicts that range from simple parlor games to great sports activities, business ventures, and all-out wars, in an attempt to be greater and to have more than others. Individuals strive against individuals, families against families, tribes against tribes, and nations against nations, all in an effort to be Number one and to take the things that others have for their own carnal pleasure. The more riches one can obtain and the more luxury one can purchase, the more

carnal pleasure one can have. I once saw a slogan on a shirt that read, "He who dies with the most toys wins". I later saw another one that read, "He who dies with the most toys, still dies."

The second greatest, carnal pleasure is probably sexual stimulation and activity. The world has moved gradually but steadily toward immorality and extreme sexual perversions in its search for satisfaction from carnal pleasure. Just as common, if not more so, is the practice of overeating for carnal pleasure. Recreational immorality and recreational eating are common forms of seeking carnal pleasure to replace the joy of the Lord that is lost from not abiding in Jesus.

One of the most severe forms of seeking carnal pleasure is the abuse of drugs and alcohol. For a short season one can alter the body chemistry with drugs and alcohol in such a way as to deceive the brain into a peaceful and pleasurable kind of feeling. However, like all other carnal pleasures, it does not last. More and more is required to get the same feeling as the addiction grows into a life-controlling bondage.

The joy of the Lord produces real freedom. In the kingdom age men and women are learning that abiding in Jesus, in His Word, and in His love causes His joy to remain in them and their joy to be full. Full joy dissolves the lust for carnal pleasures such as, ruling over others, being Number One, having more things, sexual immorality, sexual perversions, recreational overeating and others. The joy of the Lord is our strength to overcome the bondages of addictions to carnal pleasures and to walk in true freedom. The intense drive for carnal pleasure is destroyed by the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Col 1:27). Carnal pleasures pale in the light of the inner joy of the Lord when we truly abide in Him and He abides in us.

Personal freedom of the individual eventually leads toward national freedom. Spiritual freedom leads to moral freedom and then to financial freedom. Political freedom will eventually result when the masses continue in personal freedom. Only by abiding in the ways of God through Christ Jesus can freedom come forth in the world.

Someone has said that freedom is never granted by the oppressor. There will, indeed, be a great cost in obtaining freedom in our world. Throughout history many have died in an attempt to gain and maintain even a pseudo freedom or independence. Many fighting for a pseudo freedom were not really free but were servants to one form of carnal pleasure or another or some form of humanistic or religious philosophy of government. Subsequently, many who won the wars for freedom have then imposed their own brand of bondage upon others.

The cost of real freedom began with the death of Christ Jesus on the cross and the martyrdom of first century apostles. No man can number the multitudes of godly men and women who have been slain and shall be slain as the war for freedom on the earth roars toward a climactic end.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES
Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM FREEDOM 2 (#047)

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual for the pulling down of strongholds.

*2 Cor 10:3-6: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for **pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments** and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ**, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.*

The war is won or lost in the minds and hearts of men.

The true oppressor is not white over black, communism against democracy, gentile against Jew, Protestant against Catholic, or any other human or natural thing. The true oppressor is the spiritual enemy of God and man. The enemy uses all of these differences to inflame prejudice, fear, and strife in an attempt to rob the world of freedom. He desires to control and to become Number One, equal to God (Isa 14:12-14).

The good news is that Jesus has completely defeated the devil and now lives in believers to destroy all the work of the enemy (Col 2:15) (1 John 3:8b) (Luke 10:19a).

The bad news is that people of the world have been deceived and entrapped into seeking carnal pleasure, instead of delighting in the Lord and experiencing the joy of the Lord. The joy of the Lord will overcome the enemy's ability to corrupt an individual's life, and thereby take away his ability to steal freedom.

Neh 8:10b: Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

The devil has only the power relinquished to him by the people.

God has given dominion to man and has defeated the enemy. God has not rescinded His position of giving rule of the earth to mankind (Gen 1:26-28). Man lives or dies by the decisions that he makes. God will not intervene without man's agreement. The plan and work of God on earth will not come to pass without man's participation.

God had to become the man, Jesus, to carry out redemption and His plan on earth. Only mankind had the God-given authority to rule in the earth. Therefore, it was necessary that redemption come through a man. Jesus was that man and now can live in man by the Spirit of Christ and can carry out the will of God on earth. Only with the permission and participation of men will it be done, and only by the indwelling presence and power of the resurrected Christ can it be accomplished.

Man has given power to the devil by his collective decision to turn from the ways of God and from abiding in Christ to seeking carnal pleasures. The beautiful but cunning

serpent of Genesis Chapter 3, who tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, has become the ferocious, fiery red dragon of Revelation 12 by the power given unto him by the people of the world.

Christ Jesus, living in His people, is the power to restore what fallen mankind has lost.

Is it possible that man now has the potential of Christ within to completely bind the enemy's power and bring forth the plan and will of God on earth? Is it possible that destruction of evil is now within the potential of Christ in man? Is it possible that the Word of God is true and that good can overcome evil? Could it be that the Spirit of Christ bringing forth His love in the body of Christ throughout the world can bring forth righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit and overcome the evil of the world?

If we look at the problem, the multitudes of evil men bent on destruction, and the great deceptive philosophy of seeking carnal pleasure that rules men around the world, it does not seem possible. To the natural mind it is impossible that so much evil can be defeated and the kingdom of God come forth to rule the world. Looking at the giants in the land is exactly what the enemy desires for us to do (Num 13:32-14-1).

The victory waits only for men to have faith and believe the Word of God. Faith comes where there is righteousness, peace, and the joy of the Lord. Faith in God cannot be strong in carnal pleasure seekers. The prayers and faith of righteous men will unleash the power of God to change the world. The great outpourings of the Spirit of God upon His mature sons can bring forth renewal, and people can repent of seeking carnal pleasures and turn to God by the millions.

Powerful "day of the Lord" events can quickly change everything.

The great, apocalyptic, cataclysmic events of the book of Revelation can destroy evil works and quickly alter the entire scheme of things in the world. Yes, it may be a bloody, fiery road to freedom of the world, but God can protect and deliver His children. The kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of our God (Rev 11:15). We will rule and reign in the earth with Him (2 Tim 2:12). We will overcome the evil one by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. There is nothing too hard for the Lord (Gen 18:14).

Rev 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

In the church age, for the most part, Christianity was something people added to their lives. It was a part of their lives that helped them to be good citizens. **In the kingdom, Christ Jesus IS our life, not a part of our lives.**

Everything in the kingdom begins with the King, Christ Jesus. Our very lives must be given into His hand. **Whether we live long or die young in battle, we are the Lord's and will be present with Him. Whether we live or die, we shall ever be with the Lord.**

Rom 14:8: For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Adding God into our lives as part will never bring freedom to us and to our world. **Only as men wholly give themselves to the Lord will they find real purpose in the job they are given to do.** They will do every task as unto the Lord and will be better at every work the Lord gives them. They will serve God wholeheartedly in all they do as they serve God by serving others. Much more will be accomplished and greater prosperity will result from seeking to serve rather than seeking to gain for carnal pleasure.

Kingdom freedom is within the heart and mind of the individual.

Truly, the kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:21). We cannot be free in the world until we are free in our hearts. The masses cannot be changed except individual's hearts are changed within. There may be millions being changed in an instant, but the release of freedom still occurs individually in hearts.

Everything else will follow the mind and heart. We must come to the realization that the rule of the world is within the hearts and minds of men. What we think and believe is far more important than most have realized. The world and all of its complicated systems must respond to the faith and words of human beings. What people believe and say will manifest into the world.

The war is for the minds and hearts of men. The first battle of the war is the redemption of man. Men must come into contact with the living God and become connected to Him through Christ Jesus. Until the life is yielded to God and the Holy Spirit is indwelling and filling the life, the heart and mind will be in opposition to the will and kingdom of God. **The battle is won or lost in what men believe in their hearts.**

The just shall live by faith; the unjust shall die by fear and unbelief. What men believe in their hearts, they will speak with their mouths (Luke 6:45). What they believe and speak releases dominion forces given to man and begins to bring forth into the natural world the things man believes in his heart (Mark 11:23-24). Spiritual powers are poised to bring forth the thoughts and words of men into the world. The lips and the tongues of men are the source from which the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, can be launched into the world (Eph 6:17). As the resurrected Spirit of Christ dwelling within men speaks forth the empowered Word and will of God, it is planted into the hearts of others and into the world, and the world is moved toward freedom from the control of the enemy.

In the same way, evil words of unbelief, fear, and hatred are spoken forth from ungodly men's hearts. Their lips and tongues release the power of the enemy to bring forth evil words as curses to affect the world and hinder God's kingdom from coming forth on the earth.

The strongholds of the enemy are in the minds of men. The minds of men are controlled by the thoughts within, which are generated by the inputs coming into the mind. Whatever a person sees and hears over time will become reality to that person. The person will act and react in accordance with his or her perception of reality and their actions and reactions will affect change in the world. Therefore, the key to bringing forth the kingdom of God, God's freedom and ways of life into the world, is planting the truth of God into the minds of men. By the preaching of the Word, the world can be delivered and walk in freedom (1 Cor 1:21).

There are two sources of input into the minds and hearts of men.

One source is the natural five senses - especially the eyes and ears. The other source is the spiritual five senses - especially the spiritual eyes and ears. Everything seen, heard, or felt by man has an effect upon the mind of the person. Every word whether a vision or a spoken word contains and communicates a thought or thoughts. The thought is planted in the mind of the one seeing, hearing, or feeling. In the mind a planted thought or vision can grow into a belief - especially if it is heard or seen often from what is considered to be a reliable source.

Every communication whether a word, thought, or feeling has its origin in either the truth of God, or the lies of the enemy.

Though often subtle and hidden, every story, word, or communication moves one toward the ways of God or toward the ways of the enemy depending upon the origin of the communication. A person's mind is shaped into patterns of belief as a child and confirmed and modified as a person matures. The culmination of stored thoughts becomes the belief system of the life and will affect the destiny of the person. Subsequently, it will have an effect on the destiny of the world. Only by renewing the mind to the thoughts and ways of God can one be freed of the strongholds of thought patterns planted by the inputs of the enemy. Only by renewing the mind can one be filled with the powerful potential of God (Rom 12:2) (Eph 4:23) (Col 3:10).

Spiritual inputs from the Spirit of God within an individual can bring new images, words, and feelings directly from the Spirit of God into the mind of the believer. The visions, words, and feelings from the Spirit, if received and believed, can destroy old ways of thinking and bring new vision and power into the life and, subsequently, into the world. Spiritual gifts, such as prophesy are vital for those not yet skilled at receiving from the Spirit within themselves. A prophetic word can plant a picture, word, or a feeling from God into a life that can help bring forth the will and plan of God for the person.

In the same way, evil pictures, words, and feelings can be received in the minds of men directly from the powers of darkness. Evil communications can alter the patterns of thought within the mind and bring forth the plan and will of the devil into the world.

The choices that lead to freedom for the world begin with what men choose to see, hear, and feel. The things that are focused upon and allowed to remain in minds and hearts will bring forth the ways of God in the earth or the ways of the devil. **It is up to us individually to choose what we will hear and see. Our choices will destine our thoughts, which will destine our actions, which will destine our lives, which will destine our world.**

Freedom or bondage is a choice we make at the level of what we will look at and listen to. The feelings and thoughts we allow within our hearts and minds is the choice that leads to our freedom or bondage. The enemy desires that we believe that nothing can be done to change the world and that everybody is doing it this way or that way. So, we might as well do it the same way and enjoy carnal pleasures. He wants each of us to think something like, "I am only one person and can really do nothing to change the world. No one is going to know what things I allow in my thoughts, so it really does not matter very much what I think and do."

The sad truth is that the enemy need only deceive one person at a time to deceive the majority of the world. As long as believers think in this manner, the enemy can continue his evil works of bondage in the world. He can cause the church to remain in retreat within its own walls having little or no effect in establishing the kingdom of God, His ways and will into our world.

Thank God, now in our time the sons of God are awakening and coming forth proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom from heaven on earth. In this season, individuals are coming into intimacy with God, which causes them to seek and serve God with all their hearts. It does not matter if the whole world goes with them or not. These maturing sons of God will go anyway. It is not as important to them whether they have a lot or a little. The important thing to them is that God lives within them and is present with them. Long life is not their first priority. Their first and predominant concern is that the fullness of God comes forth in their lives faithfully completing their portion in the kingdom of God. Truly, the model prayer given by our Lord has become the theme and purpose of our lives.

*Mat 6:9-10: "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.***

When multitudes come into agreement with the will of God, the will of God is done in our lives and in the world. Do you see why it is such an important strategy of the enemy to divide and cause disagreement among believers? The great potential of millions of believers in agreement would bring a quick end to the enemy's work in the world. He could no longer hinder the kingdom of God.

The enemy's strategy of keeping minds focused on carnal television programming, movies, sports, video games, etc. is very important to him. These things contain subliminal and subtle thoughts and ways that will lead men away from the Word and ways of God. People, especially young people, will accept what they see and hear repeatedly; and, it will mold and shape their minds, which will mold and shape their lifestyle. **We cannot focus our thinking on the things of carnal pleasure and expect to live the kingdom of God lifestyle. Feeding on the Word of God by the Spirit of God will produce the kingdom of God lifestyle.**

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM LIBERATION 1 (#048)

The price of freedom is often war. If an alien force occupies a land and will not relinquish control to the true government of the land, the people of the land will not be set free until the enemy forces are defeated and forced to release the land and its captives.

As a young boy I can clearly remember seeing newsreel films of the liberation of prisoners of war from concentration camps during World War II. I remember the pitiful, starved, skin-and-bone bodies of the men who had survived the ordeal and managed to stay alive long enough to be set free. Those who had any strength left had large smiles upon their bony faces as they embraced their liberators with great joy. Others were too far gone, too near death to get up and could barely manage a smile of gratitude. Many others were already dead from starvation and disease. The liberation had come too late for them.

Everyone wept and jumped for joy. It seemed to me the whole United States of America was weeping either for their pain and loss or for the great joy of seeing husbands, sons, and fathers set free from cruel bondage. When the war was finally over, there was great rejoicing with dancing, singing, shouting and jumping up and down for joy. Everyone wanted to hug someone, anyone. Yet, many moms went to their private place and wept for the sons that would never come home. Widows bitterly wept for a season and then usually were married again. However, the moms could never fill the empty place created by the loss of their son. They could only find solace in the fact that their sons had died for a good cause, the cause of freedom.

God gave His Son for the same cause, our freedom. Jesus died for our freedom from all the cruel bondages of the enemy, freedom to live in abundance of righteousness, peace, and joy. He purchased our freedom to live eternally with God forever delivered from the pain of being separated from Him by our sin. Jesus endured the cross to purchase our freedom to come into God's presence to fully know His love that can overcome all evil in the world. Through Christ we have freedom to overcome fear, remorse, hate, anger, rage, greed, lust, and every evil that would beset us. We have freedom to experience the beauties of holiness and the lack of the frustration in our daily lives caused by evil. In Christ we have freedom to live in peace no matter what our circumstances and freedom to die to our old self life in order that Christ might fully live within us to do all He desires with our lives on earth.

The Blessings of the Lord drives out the enemy.

The presence of the Spirit of the Lord brings powerful love that drives out the enemy and destroys bondages. Christ Jesus has fully redeemed us from the curse and set us free. The primary work in assisting others in getting free from bondages is to assist them into the presence of the pure love of Jesus. Our warfare for them is from a place of rest in the victory already provided by Christ Jesus. Our primary focus is on the blessings of Christ Jesus and not the work of the enemy. There are individual cases where the Lord would have us to speak to the enemy strongholds in power.

Not every case requires specific attention. Where God is not speaking or showing us to speak deliverance we need not speak against the enemy or the stronghold. We should see and hear what God is doing and follow His leading. Most people will be set free in the presence of God by the blessings of Christ in Spirit led worship, prayer, and preaching of the Word in the Holy Spirit.

Yet, there still are many held in the cruel bondage of the enemy. They live in evil bondages of drugs, immorality, sexual perversions, pornography, alcohol, money, carnal pleasure-seeking, evil carousing, strife, hatred, fear, jealousy, insecurity, inferiority, gambling, pride, arrogance, religion, religious sects, cults, occult torments, blood lust, and demonic bondage of every sort. It is too late for many mothers' sons and daughters who are already dead from their evil bondage. There is no consolation for their loss. Their children did not die for a good cause. They did not die for freedom; they died from the lack of freedom.

The Body of Christ is changing from a defensive mode to an offensive mode.

The victory is already won at the cross and now the resurrected Christ by the Holy Spirit is rising up within believers set free by the power and Spirit of God. Christ in His people is attacking the strongholds of the enemy setting the captives free. There is a new generation of children born of parents who are set free. These children will walk in a greater level of spiritual power. The power and potential of God is coming forth on earth in the purified children of God to destroy every stronghold of the enemy and set every captive free. The revivals of the past will seem small compared to demonstrations of spiritual power brought forth by the Spirit of Christ through a new generation of spiritual children with holy angels working with them.

Strongholds of the enemy must be destroyed on an individual basis.

Strongholds are holds that the enemy has on individuals. They are primarily in the soul (the mind, will, and the emotions) of a person. A network of evil beliefs has grown into a stronghold from seeds of ideas planted in the soul. The stronghold enforced by evil spirits controls the person's soul. The spirits first entice the person and then hook them into addictions and patterns of destructive behavior. The network is a tangle of lies that allows the powers of darkness to torment the soul and blind the spiritual eyes to truth. Those in bondage are prisoners of a spiritual war that most of the past generations of Christians did not even know was going on. In the past, the church did not show up for the war and the enemy won by default. Multitudes of precious lives have been wasted and many are held in bondage.

The weapons of our warfare are spiritual and must be fought in the spiritual realm and from a perspective of victory in Jesus.

*2 Cor 10:3-5: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but **mighty in God for pulling down strongholds**, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.***

*Eph 6:12: For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, **but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.***

All that we need to attack and destroy strongholds of the enemy is in the Spirit of Christ and His words. The weapons of our warfare are spiritual prayer, speaking the words of God, praise, worship, and thanksgiving unto God. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Faith activates the power of the Word of God to destroy lies and establish truth. The all-powerful love of God flowing through the Spirit of Christ within the believer and out to those in need is the power of God to destroy the work of the enemy and tear down networks of lies, thoughts and beliefs planted by the enemy. The work of the Spirit destroys the yoke of bondage. The truth of the gospel of the kingdom of God brings abundant life and freedom.

The Lord does not use any one particular formula for destroying strongholds and setting His people free from the enemy's bondages. Jesus healed and brought deliverance in different ways. He continues today to work through believers to heal and deliver in different ways. God's Spirit uniquely ministers to different needs of different personalities who have different mixtures and degrees of wounds and bondages.

In the past ministers unskilled in hearing and moving with the Holy Spirit often used a "shotgun" type of approach. In general they used a formula-type approach toward binding and casting out evil spirits. Formula prayers designed to hit a broad spectrum of possible needs were blasted out in the hope that some would hit the target. In some instances, additional wounds were caused by the portions of the blast that missed the mark and instead hit the person or others who were close to the person. The Holy Spirit is a much better marksman. Like a skilled surgeon, He can carefully discern the need, removes that which needs removing, and heals that which needs healing, without creating additional damage.

The Holy Spirit knows the type and level of ministry required in each situation. God does not send a bulldozer to remove a splinter from the finger. Nor does He send a pair of tweezers to move tons of dirt. People's needs for healing and deliverance are extremely varied. They range from the demon-controlled serial murderer and the drug-addicted Satan worshipper to the naïve, young Christian who has been painfully rejected or who made a regrettable wrong choice. God loves them all and Jesus is the answer for them all. The method and the degree of ministry God will use are as varied as the persons and their needs.

In recent church history, there has been such a focus on being born again in order to go to heaven when one dies, that the powerful ministry of Jesus to heal the brokenhearted and set the captives free in this present life has been largely ignored. God is in the business of redeeming mankind's spirit, soul, and body. One's spirit is made alive, made a new creation, in an instant upon receiving the redemption of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The soul (mind, will, and emotions) is being saved by the process of the resurrected Christ by the Holy Spirit and the renewing of one's mind.

One's mind must be renewed, old patterns torn down, and new patterns established that conform to the words and ways of God. One's self-will must be broken and conformed to the will of God and emotions healed by the Spirit of Christ. The process of salvation of one's soul follows the instantaneous rebirth of one's spirit. Healing for the body will often follow the salvation of one's mind, will, and emotions.

*1 Th 5:23-24: Now may the **God** of peace Himself **sanctify you** completely; and may your whole **spirit, soul, and body** be preserved blameless at the coming (or*

presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ. He **who calls you** is faithful, **who also will do it**.

Rom 12:2: And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Eph 4:22-23: That **you** put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**.

Heb 8:10b: **I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

1 Th 5:24: He **who calls you** is faithful, **who also will do it**.

What God tells us to do He will empower us to do by the power of His Spirit within us.

Phil 2:13: For it is **God who works in you** both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Eph 3:16-20: That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through **His Spirit** in the inner man, that **Christ may dwell in your hearts** through faith; that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge;** that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.**

Luke 24:49: Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are **endued with power from on high**.

Assisting others to be healed and set free.

Power from on high indwelling the believer is the source of deliverance and healing first for one's self **and then in assistance to others**. The power of the indwelling, resurrected Christ is more than enough to break every addiction, all bondage, every evil habit, and to drive off every evil spirit. No stronghold can stand in the face of the empowerment of the Spirit of God released in prayer by faith in God. God's grace has provided unlimited power from heaven to restore, renew, heal, and deliver.

The Spirit of God can enable us to see below the surface of evil and destructive behavior to the root causes. He can also enable us to deal with the causes through specific prayer and speaking to the condition. Only in the anointing of the Spirit of God will these words be empowered and fruitful in one's life. There are many conditions common to many people and methods of speaking to the conditions. As the anointing of the presence of God is present to minister, one may receive healing and deliverance by knowing how to speak to some of these conditions common to many.

True repentance is always the first step toward complete healing and deliverance. It does not matter what the root causes were, what environmental conditions may have been a factor, or what kind of genes, family-line tendencies, or curses are passed down to the individual. The reality of the whole matter is that God gave His only Son for the redemption of mankind. He has by His mercy and grace provided in Jesus Christ all that is needed for one's complete victory over all evil and every sinful condition. The only reason one remains in sin is one's own choice.

*John 15:22: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, **but now they have no excuse for their sin.**"*

Imagine with me for a moment. If Jesus had not come and did all that He did, said all that He said and returned to earth in the Holy Spirit to do all that He does, and if He had not given us His Word, then one's excuses would be valid. One could reasonably say the devil caused me to do it, or family-line genetics and predisposition toward sin coming from my family line made me like I am, or that the environment I grew up in caused me to be this way and I cannot help it. True, all these things may have caused us to be bent toward sin and evil. **However, because Christ came and redeemed mankind with His own life, because He ever lives to intercede for us, and because He indwells believers to empower and bring about His righteous obedience within us, WE HAVE NO EXCUSE.**

The real factor is neither how much one has sinned nor what the causes were. **The real factor is: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH JESUS CHRIST?** Have you sought Him with your whole heart? Have you met Him at the cross and received forgiveness of sin by His blood? Have you received Him by the Holy Spirit into your heart and life? Have you made Him the LORD of your life? Have you sought His presence in the Holy Spirit? Have you sought Him in His Word? Have you repented for your sin and for not doing all these things?

Dealing with Common Root Conditions That Cause Bondage

Repentance means a turning about, a turning from our "self-walk" to a walk toward God. It means beginning to seek God with our whole heart. It means seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first above all else in life. After true repentance is in place, we can begin to deal with some of the root conditions of need for healing and deliverance that are common to many people.

Two of these common root conditions are discussed in previous Kingdom Growth Guides #022 BEYOND REPENTANCE and #023 FORGIVENESS AND BEYOND. These guides deal with **forgiveness, healing wounds of the heart, and binding and loosing.** It would be a good idea to review these and **be certain that these works are in place** before going on to the consideration of other root conditions that are common to many people.

As ministers and warriors in the kingdom of God, we are to offensively attack the enemy and his work in others. The strongholds of the enemy must be destroyed, from the root conditions to the perverted behavior they have caused. The spirits of darkness and negative character qualities must be directly addressed and destroyed or removed.

Areas of bondage may exist within a person even after true repentance. A part of renewing one's mind is to drive the enemy away, close any openings that may allow his return, and renew the patterns of thought and life. The anointed words spoken in prayer, in agreement with the Word and ways of God, can drive the enemy away, close all openings, and destroy wrong thought patterns. **The Word and ways of God must be implanted into the life by the Spirit of Christ.**

Disobedience and Iniquity of the Fathers

Two additional openings or root causes are **disobedience** and **iniquity of the fathers**. In addition to our own disobedience, there is much scripture to indicate that the children were often affected by the disobedience of their fathers. Though the sins of the fathers are the responsibility of the fathers only, the curse of the iniquity (tendency to sin) of the forefathers is passed on through the generations. We saw in the Heart-Trees and the Babylonian Family Pattern how children are affected by the iniquity of their forefathers. (See *PART 2 Kingdom Growth Guides*) This curse can especially be a problem when there is some history of blatant sin and/or demonic activity in one's forefathers.

*Deuteronomy 28:45-46: Moreover all these **curse**s shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you **did not obey** the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.*

*Exodus 34:7: ...keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children** and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.*

*Lamentations 5:7: Our fathers sinned and are no more, **but we bear their iniquities.***

*Numbers 14:33: And **your sons** shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and **bear the brunt of your infidelity**, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness.*

*Isaiah 14:21: "Prepare slaughter for his **children** because of the **iniquity of their fathers**, lest they rise up and possess the land, and fill the face of the world with cities."*

*Nehemiah 9:2: Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they **stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.***

Pray With Me

Heavenly Father, I repent of all disobedience in my life. And I repent for the iniquity of my forefathers that is in any way affecting my life.

In the name of Jesus, I sever all affects of the iniquity of my forefathers from my life and say they no longer have any effect on my life. I say it is done. This curse is severed in Jesus' name.

Satan and all powers of darkness, I command you, in the name of Jesus, this curse and all effects of the sins of my forefathers are severed from my life. You may never use them again to bring stress of any form to my life.

Thank You, Father, for the severance of this curse from my life. Thank You, Jesus, for freedom and liberty. Amen.

**Keep on Pursuing Love
It Will Never Fail**

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM LIBERATION 2 (#049)

Spoken word curses, improper vows, and judgments

Other common openings and root causes that give the enemy ground and may need to be dealt with are **spoken word curses, improper vows, and judgments**. Words are seeds, living things that can grow and cause change. Words mixed with belief can rearrange creation. Words spoken to children can shape their lives. Words spoken to us or about us are powerful to change our lives for good or for bad. The enemy certainly hears the bad words and is always looking for a legal right to do bad things. A negative or critical word, especially spoken in agreement with another person, gives the enemy the opportunity he awaits.

Some negative, critical words may be intentionally spoken for the purpose of releasing evil effects on a person's life by those that are very cognizant of what they are doing. Satanists, witches, etc., know how to work with the powers of darkness to come against the lives of Christians.

Other negative, critical words may be released in ignorance by ourselves or by other friends or family that do not realize what they are doing. Sometimes in discussing situations of those we are concerned about, we release negative words to others and even receive an agreement from them. The result of speaking negative words to or about someone is that it tends to bind the problem to the person. As believing sons of God, the words we speak are very potent especially when two or more agree.

*Matthew 12:36-37: But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For **by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.***

*Proverbs 18: 21a: **Death and life are in the power of the tongue.***

*Matthew 12:32: Anyone who **speaks a word** against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever **speaks against** the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.*

*Matthew 4:4: But He answered and said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every **word** that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

Making critical judgments of others can affect them and our own lives.

Judgments we have made are powerful tools for the enemy. Every negative judgment we have ever made of someone else can cause us to be affected by the very thing for which we judged them. Judgments set up a two-way road for the enemy not only to bind the person judged or accused, but also to bring the same thing upon us.

The difference between judgment and discerning is that there is no condemnation in discernment.

Luke 6: 37: "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

John 3: 17: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 8: 11: And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

*Matthew 7: 1-2: Judge not, that you be not judged. **For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged;** and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you.*

*John 20: 23: If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; **if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.***

Romans 2: 1: ...for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself.

Spoken vows can create bondage.

Vows are similar to spoken word curses because words spoken or written have caused the problem. Vows are usually promises or commitments spoken of one's self or to others. There are two areas of potential curses relative to vows. One is a vow made to God and not kept or a vow made to someone and confirmed by God that is not kept. The other is a vow made by a person by speaking limiting critical or negative words about his own life. "I'll **never** grow up---get married---have children---get well---be rich---be liked by others---etc. I **will not** live past a certain age; I **will** always be stupid---ugly---incapable---weak---etc. I **could never** sing---speak in front of people---get a good job---quit drinking---have a good life---etc."

Pray With Me

Heavenly Father, I repent of every negative or critical word that I've spoken. In the name of Jesus, I sever every curse from my life that has been spoken upon me by myself or others. I specifically sever (speak any known words that need to be severed).

In the name and power of Jesus, I sever from my life and destroy every negative word, negative pronouncement, negative agreement, negative confession, and negative prognosis. I destroy every work of satanic arts and sciences, every work of witchcraft or sorcery, all spells, incantations, and curses in any form. These works are severed from my life now and for all time and eternity in Jesus' name. Thank You, Father.

Father, I repent of every negative judgment that I have ever made of others or myself whether spoken, written, or thought. In the name of Jesus, I sever the curse of these judgments from my life, and from the lives of those I have judged. I specifically sever the curses and release the judgments I've made against my father, mother, _____, _____, and _____. I say that we are free of these judgmental curses. Satan,

you may never use these again to bring stress of any form into my life or the lives of others. Thank You, Father.

Heavenly Father, I repent for every vow that I've made to You or to any person and not kept. I choose to pay and make right those I can. Father, I ask You for mercy, through the blood of Jesus, to release me from the vows, which I cannot pay. I thank You, Father, that I am forgiven and released from these vows.

I repent of every negative and improper vow that I've ever made, and in the name of Jesus, I sever the curse of these vows and destroy their effect on my life. In the name of Jesus, I specifically destroy the effect and sever the curse of _____.

In the name of Jesus, I command you, Satan, and all powers of darkness, you may never again use these vows or any curses related to them to bring stress or limitation to my life in any way. Thank You, Father, for setting me free. I proclaim liberty and freedom, in the name of Jesus. Amen

Occult Involvement and Practices

Perhaps some of the most perplexing strongholds a person may face are rooted in **occult involvement and practices**. Although born again and in the Word, one may still be affected by demonic spirits and occult practices of one's past. Even without one's approval, one may find his or her mind invaded by occult thoughts. One may hear the thoughts in others' minds though he does not wish to. One may have evil pictures of lust and gore flash into his mind. Spirit beings and evil supernatural occurrences may appear to him. While one seeks to be holy, perverted, grotesque sexual thoughts and pictures may enter the mind.

Some individuals may have involvement with more socially acceptable occult practices. P.M.A. (positive mental attitude) and related sciences of the mind that seek to alter a person's attitude and life situations may seem like a good thing. However, if the science of mind leaves out Jesus as the source and the Holy Spirit as the administrator, it probably has its ultimate source in the enemy. Mind-power focuses on the human but has its roots in the occult.

Christians are sometimes tricked into a form of witchcraft or sorcery. A group of Christians may determine in their own minds, apart from the leadership of the Holy Spirit, what should be done about a certain situation. They may talk about the situation and form an agreement of opinion. They may then pray together for that situation to be determined as they think it should be. By doing this, they may actually cause it to happen even if it is not the will of God. As an example, they may be praying for a young couple not to get together, or to break up, or for two people to be attracted to each other and get married. They could be agreeing in prayer for anything they believe to be good without having truly heard from God on the matter. These "soulish" prayers can create much difficulty for people who have no knowledge as to how to warfare against them in the Spirit. They may have no clue as to why they are feeling a certain way or why certain things are happening to them.

Occult influences may enter one's life and create openness to psychic or occult influences through:

1. Heredity,
2. Involvement or interest in occult activities or practices,
3. Sexual intercourse with an involved person, and
4. Drugs.

Once this openness exists, it may remain open until the ministry of Jesus is appropriated by an act of the will of the individual to **renounce Satan, all occult practices, involvements, etc.** Occult practices include anything from psychic readings, astrology and parlor games of divination, to satanic worship and witchcraft of all sorts. This person may experience his or her mind being invaded with occult powers and activities against his will, and may find it difficult to enter into the presence and things of God until his openness to occult and psychic influences is closed.

*Acts 19: 18-20: And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of **those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them** in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.*

*2 Thessalonians 2: 9-10: The coming of the lawless one is according to **the working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders**, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

*Deuteronomy 18: 9-14: When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There **shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.** For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations, **the Lord your God drives them out from before you.** You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, **the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.***

Pray With Me

Heavenly Father, I repent of all involvement, interest, and curiosity in any and all cults and/or psychic or occult activities. I turn from all dependency on or use of any cultish, occult or psychic activity to meet my needs or desires. I declare that God and His words, by the Holy Spirit, are my only source of spiritual understanding and power.

**Satan, I renounce you and all cult or occult or psychic involvement or practices. I specifically renounce _____,
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____, and
_____.**

In the name of Jesus, I command that my openness to occult or psychic influence be closed and remain closed for all of my life, in the name of Jesus.

Satan and powers of darkness, I command you, in the name of Jesus, you may never again invade my mind or hinder my entering into the presence of God. These openings are closed and will remain held closed by the power of God, in the name of Jesus.

I declare that I have repented and have renounced Satan and all cultish, occult, and/or psychic practices. In the name of Jesus, all openness to occult and psychic influences in my life is now closed. Satan, and all powers of darkness, you may never use these again to bring stress in any form to my life, in Jesus' name. Thank You, Father, for setting me free! Amen!

Improper Soul Ties

Another often overlooked area of bondage one may have caused and continue to be affected by is **improper soul ties**. These are connections or ties made between people who have become close or intimate friends and/or companions. This knitting together is a good thing between husbands and wives or between close friends.

However, it can become a bondage when, through disobedience or lack of understanding, one has become knit together with another person whom one should not be bound together with. One may not have always heard and followed the will of God and, therefore, may not have always made good choices in becoming close with another person. One's soul can become knit together with another person's soul through close relationships, especially through sexual intercourse.

There are good and bad soul ties. Improper soul ties cause bondages that hinder God's plans for our lives. They can be severed by appropriating the ministry of Jesus, by **believing** in the heart and **speaking** with the mouth the severance of all improper soul ties.

*1 Samuel 18: 1-3: And it was so, when he had finished speaking to Saul, that **the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David**, and **Jonathan loved him as his own soul**. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. Then **Jonathan and David made a covenant**, because he loved him as his own soul.*

The soul tie between Jonathan and David is an example of a good soul tie. It was a bond that God intended and caused to happen for the carrying out of His will. Marriages put together by God are very similar soul ties. Their knitting together of their souls in love led them to make a covenant between the two. We should never attempt to sever good soul ties ordained by God. Some people have lifelong best friends usually formed in childhood or in adolescence. They may not see each other for years but remain just as close forever.

However, some soul ties are not of God. They are not His will or His doing. Many are formed by man or the enemy and can become very detrimental to the plan of God in a person's life. Family and friends are often perplexed when a woman chooses to be in a detrimental and ungodly relationship with a man who may beat her and severely

abuse her in other ways. Yet, she continues to remain with the man or repeatedly returns to him and feels she still loves him. This may not be love at all. It is probably a strong soul tie in the spiritual realm that must be severed for this woman to be free to go on with the will of God for her life.

Care must always be taken to only follow the Holy Spirit in determining the will of God in each situation. Not every abused person should leave every difficult relationship. Often there is more involved than what may be presented and known at the time. There is usually more to understanding a situation than the perspective of one of the individuals involved. God honors faith and could be working on a situation for salvation, deliverance, and healing for all involved.

Although a person may have left a close relationship years earlier and may never even think of the other person, a part of him or her may remain tied in the spiritual realm to the soul of the other person. Sometimes people do not understand why they seem to be unable to give themselves wholly into a relationship. Improper soul ties may hinder our freedom to give ourselves though we never think of the person. Soul ties are a work in the spiritual realm and do not go away just because we leave a relationship. Some people are tied to so many souls that their life is confused and bound.

Soul ties occur in close relationships of all kinds. One may become soul tied to a pastor or other spiritual leader and not be able to give themselves into another church or ministry after moving on to a new situation.

Perhaps the most devastating reality is that we become tied to anyone we have had sexual intercourse with. This includes former husbands or wives. Just because the couple ended the earthly marriage does not mean the soul ties between them ended in the spiritual realm. God must direct us as to which soul ties to sever and which ones that He wants to remain. We must never sever ties of a past marriage, even in abusive relationships, until we know the will of God for that particular soul tie. We must not only know if there should be a severing of soul ties but also when it should be done. Timing may be very important to carrying out God's plan.

Pray With Me

Heavenly Father, I repent of anything I've done wrong to create improper soul ties. In the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, as an act of my will, I sever all improper soul ties and spirit ties from my life. I specifically sever the soul tie and spirit tie with _____, _____, and _____.

(Continue to speak all names with which ties are to be severed.)

I say these ties are severed in the name of Jesus. Satan and all powers of darkness, I command you in the name of Jesus, you may never use these soul ties again to bring stress or bondage into my life. Thank You, Father, for setting me free. Thank You for severing these ties and curses. Thank You for liberty and freedom to give myself according to Your will. Amen.

Agreement by Another Person

Heavenly Father, I agree with these prayers of name. I stand in full agreement that true repentance has occurred and that all curses and bondages of every sort are severed from the life of _____ in the name of Jesus. I thank You, Father, for severing the curses of spoken words, judgments, and improper or broken vows.

Thank You, Father, for setting _____ free from all influences and effects of the iniquities of his or her forefathers.

I especially thank You, Father, for the severance of all curses caused by interest or involvement in cult, occult or psychic practices.

Thank You, Father, for severing improper soul ties and setting _____ free from the bondage of these ties.

I thank You, Father that the reader continues to walk in forgiveness toward others and continues to receive healing of the heart.

In the name of Jesus, these works are done as of this date and time. I command you, Satan, and all powers of darkness; you may never again use any of these things to in any way bring stress into the reader's life. Satan and all powers of darkness, I bind your power in the name of Jesus and I command you to be gone from and to be far from_____.

In the name of Jesus, I proclaim liberty and freedom in the life of _____. I thank You, Father, for healing and deliverance through Your mercy and Your grace gifts flowing through Your love. Praise You, Lord, for Your great and awesome works. Thank You, Jesus, for an abundant, joyful and peaceful life. You are glorious, Lord, and Your ways are above all we can think.

I ask You now, Father, to bless _____ with the fullness of Your Spirit, truth, knowledge, revelation, enlightenment, joy and peace. Let the fullness of Your love be manifest in the heart of the reader in Jesus' name. Amen!

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT (#050)

In the natural realm governments are most often changed by a new regime overpowering and replacing the old. If an oppressive government has made slaves of the people, a stronger force must arise and make war against the oppressor. After the oppressor is defeated and the captives are set free, the war ends and the victors rule. The new government is in full control and begins the process of restoring and repairing all that was damaged by the oppressor.

In the kingdom of God, our new King is the Child that was born, the Son that is given. The burden of the empire or government is upon His shoulders. He carried the load of the cross upon his shoulders to redeem the world. Today, as He lives within His people (His Body on earth), He carries the load of responsibility for governing the world, through the sons of God.

*Isa 9:6-7: **For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase* of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***

Nations that have lived for a long time in the darkness of bondage are not accustomed to light and freedom. King Jesus is the great light shining into the darkened world. The people dwelling in darkness will fully accept and align with the new King when they see His light. The kingdom of light will overpower the kingdom of darkness as Christ shines forth in the purified, holy sons of God.

*Isa 9:2: **The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.***

Individuals who have been in great darkness of oppression see the great light of the glorious gospel of the kingdom and are set free as they come to the light. (Mat 4:16-17)

*Isa 60:1-2: **Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.***

*John 8:12: **Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."***

*John 12:36: **"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."***

In Jesus God became man to redeem and rule or govern the world. Only man is given authority to have dominion on earth. It is man's God-given responsibility to

govern the world according to the will of God. Christ Jesus the King came as one man and paid the full price for the redemption of man and the world. Man now has the potential and responsibility to become **sons of God** and to become **one with Christ and the Father**, for the purpose of ruling and reigning in the earth.

This is the season on the earth for the King to rule and reign in His sons. Sons of God are one with Christ and the Father. Sons are in Him and He is in His sons (John 1:12) (Rom 8:14).

War must be waged to unseat the kingdom of darkness. It is time to declare war on personal sin. The people of God must be delivered from personal sin that separates them from the supernatural power of God. The sons of God must defeat personal sin before they can flow the unlimited power of God to set the world free from the bondage of corruption. The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead will not dwell with sin. The Father in Christ and Christ in us makes us to be one with God. Sons of God are holy as He is holy.

*Rom 8:19-21: For the earnest expectation of the **creation** eagerly waits for the revealing of the **sons of God**. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because **the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.***

*John 17:20-21: (Jesus speaking) I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, **as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us**, that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

*John 14:18-20: (Jesus speaking) I will not leave you orphans; **I will come to you.** "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. **Because I live, you will live also.** "At that day you will know that **I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.***

We are beginning to see the fulfillment of these Scriptures.

It is happening! It is here! It is now! Men are becoming purified by the work of the Lord and are walking into holiness. God by His Spirit is resting upon and within His sons. We become sons when we are one with Jesus. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. Only He living in us can make us sons of God. When we are truly one in Him as He is one in the Father and Jesus and the Father are one in us, we are the sons of God. We become the sons of God when we stop being sons of the devil and are cleansed from his hindering, lying ways (John 8:44). When we overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony (lifestyle), and do not love our lives to the death, we become mature sons (Rev 12:11).

Now in this present time, the anointing and God's power is within purified humble sons upon the earth! Awesome miracles and works of God are now happening to those who believe! The potential is with sons of God to bring forth the government of God to rule and reign in families, business, education, media, agriculture, health care, transportation, political governments, music, wildlife management, forestry management, and all areas of life on Planet Earth. As sons of God produce sons of God and children brought up by sons of God grow up without limiting beliefs, or should I say "unbeliefs" of the past generations, great exploits in

all areas of life will become common. The love and power of God now abiding in sons of God can overpower darkness and release light into the world.

Becoming mature sons of God

In the past, church-emphasis age, some people believed that all who had prayed a prayer to accept Jesus as Saviour were completed sons of God possessing all the fullness and power that they would ever have this side of heaven. In the kingdom-emphasis age, men are beginning to understand that becoming a son of God means becoming one with the Son of God and being led only by the Father. Becoming a son of God is a process. A part of that process is being delivered from the works and ways of the enemy. It is a process of no longer being ruled by one's own soul or anything else other than God Himself. It is a process of becoming filled with the love, power, and wisdom of God and the fullness of the Spirit of Christ.

If you were the son of a cow, you would be a cow. You would think like a cow, walk like a cow, eat like a cow, and look like a cow. If you were the son of a duck, you would be a duck. You would think like a duck, walk like a duck, quack like a duck, and swim like a duck. If, through becoming one with the Son of God, you are a son of God, you will think like God, walk like God, speak like God, you will be the son of God on the earth. In His sons God is on the earth, walking about, thinking like God, and doing like God. Sons of God are ruling and reigning with Christ in the earth.

Jesus was one in number when in His natural body. He was multiplied in the first century disciples. However, they were few in comparison to the many sons that are coming forth in this age of the return of the kingdom of God emphasis and real oneness with Christ Jesus in the Holy Spirit.

This is not at all an elite or even a forerunner thing. Every human being has the potential of becoming a son of God. It is open to every person in the world. **The elite One is Jesus and the forerunners were back in the days of Pentecost.** We are to be a part of the harvest of the kingdom age coming forth on earth.

Sons of God are followers of Christ. They follow more than church doctrines, dogmas, precepts, and principles. They follow the light of God within themselves. They move in spiritual realms guided by Jesus Christ within them. Sons bring forth governing forces from heaven by the Holy Spirit to establish the Father's will on earth.

In the church-emphasis age, ruling and reigning with Christ was seen as occurring only after Jesus bodily returns. In the kingdom-emphasis age, it is being revealed that Christ in His people is the potential for ruling and reigning in life now. Now, the governing forces of the world are subject to Christ and, therefore, subject to Christ in man.

*Rom 5:17: For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more **those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.***

*2 Tim 2:11-12: This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, **We shall also reign with Him.** If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

*Rev 1:5-6: and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and **the ruler over the kings of the earth**. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, **and has made us kings and priests** to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

*Rev 5:10: **And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.***

Jesus is the King. He is the only bona fide ruler of the earth. He is the highest power over the earth and all that is in it. Christ Jesus has at His disposal all the supernatural power, wisdom, and knowledge. All of the attributes of the Father are in the Son. There is nothing impossible to Christ; nothing is too hard for God.

*1 Tim 6:15: KJV: Which in His times He shall show, **Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.***

*Col 1:15-20: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.***

*And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. **For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell**, and by Him to **reconcile all things** to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

The change of governments from the enemy's rule to the kingdoms of earth becoming the kingdoms of our God does not begin with what men do on earth. **It begins with what men hear and believe on earth.**

In the church-emphasis age the kingdom was taught and preached by many as a future happening. As long as the government of God on earth is preached and believed as only future, it cannot and will not come to fruition in the earth. All the potential for Christ to rule the earth and for the will of the Father to be done on earth as it is in heaven is now fully in place in the earth.

Sons of God, in the kingdom-emphasis age, are teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, the good news of the government of God. As the kingdom is preached and people believe, the power of God is further released to establish the will of God on earth.

Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mat 6:10).

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM MINISTRY 1 (#051)

Preach The Kingdom

*1 Cor 1:21: For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God **through the foolishness of the message preached** to save those who believe.*

The kingdom of heaven on earth begins with what men think and believe. Belief systems develop from people's perspective of reality. The experiences of a person, especially things repeatedly seen and heard from what is accepted as a reliable source, will determine one's perspective of reality. A group of people with different backgrounds will have different perspectives. They could all be given the same exposure to the same circumstances and they each would see a somewhat different thing and come to different conclusions.

They would decide different courses of action in response to the circumstances as they perceived them. Interpretation of what one experiences is a natural process of the mind and automatically occurs. The resulting interpretation will depend on the programming within the person's mind. Human minds, somewhat like computers, are programmed with stored data and potential courses of action for dealing with current input based upon previous experiences or programming.

The mind has the power to process information and to anticipate possible results of a situation and potential courses of action to alter the situation toward achieving an envisioned goal or inner desire. Logic and strategy are developed in the mind based on the person's perspective of the situation at hand. Experience and training have given the individual his or her perception of strengths and limitations of his or her power to change the situation and circumstances. **Except for an extremely desperate situation, one will only use those resources believed to be potent and available to alter the situation. One will not use resources that one does not know are available or one does not believe are potent enough.**

Centuries of programming have formed Christians' minds resulting in perceived limits regarding the power and potential of Christ in man to change the world. The great reformation period of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries began a massive reformation from the age of severe darkness to increased light of God. That reformation continues today reaching into the greater and higher light of the message of the kingdom of God. Sons of God are preaching, teaching, and demonstrating in power the message of the gospel of the kingdom. By the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, people are progressively discovering self-imposed limitations and breaking through them to greater revelation of the power of God available to them.

Jesus preached and demonstrated the kingdom of God.

*Mat 4:23: And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.***

Paul preached the kingdom of God until the end of his life on earth.

*Acts 20:25: "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone **preaching the kingdom of God**, will see my face no more.*

*Acts 28:30-31: Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, **preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.***

The gospel of the kingdom is implanted by preaching with demonstrations of power by the Holy Spirit. God confirms the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom with miracles. Hearing the truth of the gospel of the kingdom and seeing its power demonstrated causes people to believe.

*1 Cor 4:20: **For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.***

1 Th 1:5: For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance,

Preach the kingdom as you go.

Preaching the kingdom does not necessarily mean speaking from a pulpit or platform. In whatever opportunity large or small that God sets before you preach and teach the kingdom. As you go about your life in whatever activity you are engaged, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you to preach and teach the kingdom in power. Demonstrate the kingdom lifestyle before your children, peers, and anyone else God places in your life or gives you an encounter with.

*Mat 10:7-8: "**And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'** "**Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.***

The word of the kingdom can set people free from restraints.

The negative, limiting words of past, powerless teachings and experiences have imprisoned the souls of many Christians. Limiting, negative words or experiences were like bad seed sown into our hearts. The seeds grew into prison bars of unbelief. We became restrained and limited on all sides. It was like being in an invisible enclosure. We couldn't straighten up and stand tall because our head would hit the ceiling of the enclosure. We couldn't move in this direction or that because we would bump into the wall. All this crippled our ability to function in the spiritual realm. It damaged our ability to believe and our great potential of spiritual power to rule and reign in accordance with the will of the Father was severely impaired.

Hearing the message of the gospel of the kingdom and seeing it demonstrated in power by the Holy Spirit sets us free from restraints to begin to flow the living water of the Kingdom message to the thirsty people of the world.

We must hear the word of the kingdom and replace the restraining religious doctrines of the past with kingdom truth. Left in place, our old, mental programming

would continue to restrain us from presenting the powerful love and the grace of Christ to the world around us. We must renew our minds to what Jesus says about us and the kingdom of God on earth. We must begin to flow the spiritual power of the living God by the anointing of the Anointed One, Christ Jesus within. We must not listen to our old, mental programming and allow only a trickle of the rivers of living water to flow from our inner being. We must receive the Word of the kingdom and allow unrestrained rivers of living water to flow to the dry and thirsty land around us.

*John 7:38-39a: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**" But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.*

Now is the time! The time is now! God is abundantly flowing His grace, His love, and His power to and through His people. The Word of the kingdom, the gospel of the kingdom of God, is presently coming forth now on our small planet.

The kingdom of God is not just about church. The kingdom of God from heaven encompasses all of life. The powerful principles and anointing of Christ are the foundation and power for true, godly success in every area of living. No business will succeed like a Christ-directed and empowered business. No teacher will teach children reading, writing, and arithmetic better than one anointed of Christ. Every job, work, or service will be performed better by Christ-directed and empowered people of God.

Will we continue to be just a trickle in a dried-up river bed? A river bed that should be flowing full of the crystal clear, life giving, cleansing water from the throne of God through the Anointed One, Christ within us?

Rev 22:1: And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Do we dare stand before God and tell Him how bad His world is? Tell Him how dry and barren the world and its people are while we are the only thing limiting the flow of rivers of living water? Do we dare continue our "trickle down" spiritual living of the past?

Thank God for those who are now and have in the past been flowing rivers of living waters heartily serving God, in ministry, business, education, and every area of the kingdom of God. If you are one of those and you know that your river is flowing full, please pray for the many "trickle down" servants.

Minds are renewed by the engrafted word of the gospel of the kingdom.

Renewing the mind is a spiritual work brought about by the decision processes of the mind. We must make natural decisions with the natural minds to focus upon things of the Spirit of God and His Word and eliminate inputs which are of another spirit. Spiritual discernment must be exercised to recognize what is of the Spirit of God and what is of religion, the world, or spirits of darkness.

*Heb 5:14: But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who **by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

Rom 12:2: *And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Eph 4:23: ***and be renewed in the spirit of your mind**,*

Col 3:10-11: ***and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him**, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

The positive message of the gospel of the kingdom must be planted in the heart. One must control what one sees and hears, which will affect what one thinks, feels and believes. Focusing upon the vast, unlimited potential of the kingdom of God with all its provisions, power, victory, glory, beauty, peace, and joy will lead to the reality of the kingdom of God in you on earth. As the kingdom spreads like leaven in bread dough and multitudes focus upon Christ and His kingdom and begin to seek the Lord with their whole hearts, the kingdom is established in our world.

Mat 13:33: *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.*

Mark 9:23: *Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, **all things are possible to him who believes.**"*

Prov 23:7: ***For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.***

Mark 11:23-24: *"For assuredly, I say to you, **whoever says** to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' **and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.** "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, **believe** that you receive them, and you will have them.*

Phil 4:4-8: *Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by **prayer** and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things.

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KINGDOM GROWTH GUIDES

Maturing in the gospel of the kingdom

KINGDOM MINISTRY 2 (#052)

The number of heaven's citizens living on earth is growing.

*Phil 3:20-21: **For our citizenship is in heaven...***

Evangelism is one of the major works of the Spirit and power of God to change the way of life and governance of the world. The Scripture says, "You must be born again" (John 3:6-7). The process of becoming a citizen of the kingdom of God begins with spiritual birth. As in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. A natural child cannot be born alone. It requires the participation of others to bring forth birth. Participation in the procreation process in the spiritual realm is called evangelism.

The previous rulers of the passing world order, the powers of darkness, do not like to see citizens of their kingdom transferred into the kingdom of light. **Every soul that is born again strengthens the kingdom of God on earth and weakens the rule of darkness on earth.**

The powers of darkness seek to blind the minds of everyone they can. Their intent is to prevent people on earth from seeing spiritual light and coming into the glorious kingdom of Christ Jesus, the true King of Planet Earth.

*2 Cor 4:4 KJV: 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.*

*John 8:12: Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "**I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.**"*

*Col 1:13: He has delivered us from the power of darkness and **conveyed us into the kingdom** of the Son of His love.*

In the fading church-emphasis era of the past, evangelism was largely carried out by intellectual discussion of the Word. Soul winners would go out armed with their favorite Scriptures, lists of questions and comments to engage unbelievers and those of different denominational faiths in conversation. They would attempt to persuade them to receive Jesus as savior and join the church. Preaching from the pulpit often presented the goal of evangelism as joining the church as much as or more than receiving Jesus. In many cases the terms were so entangled they became synonymous. In other church groups evangelism included conversion to compliance with a number of church rules and ordinances, such as baptism, dress, participation in certain activities, and abstinence from others.

Evangelistic meetings and crusades were productive tools.

There were powerful evangelistic moves of the Spirit of God during the church age, but for the most part, evangelism was not very powerful and was often one here and one there. Yet, gifted evangelists saw many born again in large evangelistic

meetings. Until the preaching of the kingdom in very recent times, missionaries often met with very little success. Many spent most of their lives with very sparse, visible results. They were planting seeds that are bearing much fruit today. Generally, the church found it very difficult to get people to go out of the church and evangelize. Many classes and meetings were held to discuss “witnessing” and evangelism in the streets and door-to-door. Yet, actual participation was difficult to get started and more difficult to keep going.

In the kingdom-emphasis age, the power of God is manifesting in miracles, healings, and other signs when the Word is preached with boldness into present-day darkness, which has rapidly grown more severe in recent decades. The full-blown darkness of sin and occult practices has brought widespread darkness in the world. Violence, crime, immorality, perversion, deceptive occult practices, and other evil works have clouded the landscape of earth. The light of God is piercing the gross darkness through powerful miracles and mighty works of God somewhat like the first century when Jesus began His ministry of light in an almost totally dark world. Casting out demons, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, prophecies, and dramatic demonstrations of the power of the Spirit of God are sent to break through the blindness of the minds of the people entrapped in darkness. As darkness intensifies the light becomes even more powerful and shines with increased brightness.

Isa 60: 1-5: Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.

The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. *“Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.*

Power evangelism is the way of the kingdom age. Thousands have come to Christ in recent years through the bright light of anointed, powerful ministry. Spiritual gifts, miracles, and healings are gaining the attention of multitudes of those who were sitting in darkness.

Mat 4: 16: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.

In the darkest parts of the earth, the light is shining forth in powerful manifestations of the Spirit demonstrating God’s love and power to the multitudes dwelling in spiritual darkness. In the seventh millennium, the power of God flowing through pure hearted sons of God will bring millions of souls into the kingdom and anointed ministers will help guide them toward maturity in walking in the kingdom of God lifestyle.

In the passing church age, the power gifts often were merchandised. They were used for building churches or denominations and for enriching ministers in material goods. Men sometimes sought to build their kingdoms with the power gifts of God rather than build the kingdom of God into the hearts and lives of God’s people. In the kingdom age, only those with healed and purified hearts will

be able to continue to flow the power gifts of the Spirit. **All others are being exposed and set aside from the flow of the work of the Spirit of God.**

*Rev 2:26-27: **And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations;** He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'; as I also have received from My Father.*

*Rev 19: 15-16: **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.** He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

*Rev 2: 16: Repent, or else I will come to you **quickly** and will fight against them with **the sword of My mouth.***

*2 Pet 2: 1: But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves **swift destruction.***

The sword of His mouth is the powerful words spoken forth from Christ Jesus the King ruling and reigning in and through the purified holy sons of God. Kingdom apostles and prophets are bringing forth powerful words to bring correction and repentance. Quickly repenting and being cleansed will lead to greater life; failing to do so can lead to "swift destruction."

Power evangelists are speaking forth the light of God and demonstrating the kingdom of God. Power evangelism is flowing through pure hearted people of God, not just a few, chosen, mighty men. **Word without power is not the kingdom of God; it is a form of godliness.**

2 Tim 3:5: ...having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Prayer and laying on of hands in the name of Jesus by believers is producing miracles and healings that are turning individuals and their families toward Jesus and away from this present darkness. Spiritual power gifts are flowing through God's pure hearted people. **This work will continue only in those who refuse to merchandise it or to allow it to be merchandised.**

1 Cor 4:20: For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.

Music is a powerful force.

In the emerging kingdom age, music is as varied as the people who participate. There is the soft and sweet music that moves one toward spiritual realms of great peace and blessing. And, there is rolling, dynamic, powerful music with a great powerful engine of the Spirit to move men into awesome praise and worship of almighty God, producing freedom to interact with God, and boldness to flow in the gifts of the Spirit.

Live music on the street, in the park, in the town square, and wherever else the Spirit leads is an awesomely powerful evangelistic tool.

Music is also a very easy spiritual gift to merchandise. In the fading church-emphasis age, many gifted and called musicians and singers sold out their gift to merchandisers.

Using the gifts of God and the anointing of the Spirit to get something one wants or needs, such as money, fame, or recognition is a deadly practice in the kingdom age.

Pretending does not work in the kingdom age. Real is the operative word. One's motives must be real; one's ministry and message must be real. The phony pretending that some got away with for a season in the church age will not work in the kingdom age.

*Job 20:5: That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And **the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment?***

*Mat 23:28: **Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.***

*James 3:17: But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality **and without hypocrisy.***

Men and women are drawn to the real love of God flowing through a pure hearted believer. But, they are repelled by the fake, pseudo love portrayed by some Christians of the passing church age. Singleness of heart is a characteristic of sons of God; duplicity is a characteristic of religious Christians.

Luke 11:34 KJV: The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

*Luke 11:35-35: Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, **the whole body will be full of light**, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.*

The pure light of God's love flowing through pure hearted believers is a very powerful force drawing unbelievers toward God. In the seventh millennium, the increasing number of believers with clean hearts flowing clear light are causing potent evangelism to bring vast numbers of new citizens into the kingdom of God.

*Mat 5:16: **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.***

The mountain of evil will be overcome.

The seemingly insurmountable mountain of the deplorable state of affairs on Planet Earth will be changed. All of the seemingly unsolvable problems created by the greed of unregenerate men and the hypocrisy of religious men will be overcome.

1 John 5:4-5: For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

The mighty works of God have already begun and will continue into the future.

The plan of God is full restoration of His ways ruling through the sons of God upon the earth. The full manifestation of Christ overcoming the world will be completed in the seventh millennium. If you are reading this, you are blessed to be alive in a time when you are a potential part of the mighty works of God to restore men and, eventually the planet.

Do not be deceived or misled by the persecutions and natural disasters coming forth in the world. The great apocalyptic and cataclysmic events are a part of the complete renewal of the earth. One must look beyond the destructive fire upon the earth to the restoration of the ways of God. His righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit will eventually rule Planet Earth. The kingdom of God is now ruling in the hearts of sons of God and is already beginning to affect the world. The sons of God must bring forth the kingdom of God from heaven to redeem and rule the earth.

The time of the writing of this work is the early stages of major transitions in the Body of Christ and the world. Transition times are not times marked by a sense of natural stability. Periods of great change are most often marked by times of great tribulation. Powerful, purified holy people of God are now being prepared to be a part of the great transitions of our small planet.

The early centuries of the seventh millennium are not a time for faint-hearted, nominal Christians; and, certainly not a time for religion and religious debates. It is a time for wholeheartedly seeking God - a time for great joy and rejoicing as the presence of God fills His temple. It is a time for great faith in God's people to bring forth mighty exploits of the work of God. It is a time when pure hearted men, refined by God and unclouded with evil, will bring forth astonishing revelations. It is a time of the spiritual meeting the natural and becoming one in the hearts of human beings.

Simultaneously, it is a time of great cleansing and massive dissolving of all that opposes God. There shall by no means enter into the fullness of the kingdom age anything that defiles.

*Rev 21:27-22:6: **But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. 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.

They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants **the things which must shortly take place.**

Author's Final Note

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me.

Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but are eyewitnesses of his majesty, 2 Pet 1:12-16.

Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy, 1 Cor 14:1.

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