

#271 Kingdom: Personal Responsibility

I have often wondered why the message of the Kingdom was received with offence and rejection. Why such a blessing as God's personal rulership and government in our lives is considered as an intrusion on our freedom in Christ. Why does man think that any interference in his total independence and freedom to judge, direct and plan his own life is unreasonable? This points out another dimension within the fall of man and his separation from God and His purpose that must be corrected within the process of our salvation. Kingdom obedience is the key to this restoration.

There are so many scriptures that directs our attention toward this conflict between God and man and God's predetermined footsteps for mankind. What God purposed before the foundation of the world is set in stone and will not be changed or modified for any man. This turns into offence to the person that is always trying to get God to do what the person wants Him to do.

Luke 19: 13] "And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.' [14] **"But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'** [15] "And it came about that when he returned, **after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him** in order that he might know what business they had done. [16] "And the first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' [17] "And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.' [18] "And the second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' [19] "And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' [20] "And another came, saying, 'Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; [21] for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.' [22] "He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? [23] 'Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' [24] "And he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' [25] "And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already.' [26] "I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. [27] **"But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence."**

Mat 25: 30] "And cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We could sum this up as "either He rules supreme in our lives or we are in deep, deep trouble! Christ considers all those who reject His sovereignty and absolute authority over them as His enemies. This is not a matter of just acknowledging who He is but in obedience to who He is. There are many scriptures that show the Kingdom is not sentimental or that it shows special tolerance for those who reject His absolute and total authority over all of mankind and His sovereign power to predetermine the end from the beginning. He receives whom He will and He rejects whom He wills.

Rom 11: 20] Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; [21] for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. [22] **Behold then the kindness and severity of God;** to those who fell, severity, but to you, **God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness;**

The severity of the Kingdom seems so out of place with the “gospel of the half-priced sale.” Because we have made the forgiveness of sins the “gospel of salvation”, the “Gospel of the Kingdom” seems like a foreign gospel, a different gospel! Of course the “Gospel of the Kingdom” is certainly a different gospel than what has been preached. Our premise is that the Gospel of the Kingdom IS the true gospel and the “gospel of the bargains” is a man made gospel that ignores the demands of the Kingdom of God.

We could say that the “Gospel of the Kingdom” is the “gospel of personal responsibility” to the sovereignty of God. “We do not want this man to rule over us” is the same as saying we reject His sovereignty, His government and His Kingdom, consequently we reject His salvation. We only will accept our independence from any responsibility to the King of Glory. We will accept His death as our forgiveness of sins but we still insist upon living for ourselves. Just because He died for us is no reason for us to be obligated to do His will. If we are now expected to do His will that would be trying to earn our salvation and just be “works” and not “grace.” If His grace covers my sins then it must also cover my rebellion and my right to continue to live for myself and not to be obligated to do His will. If salvation is “free” then we cannot put some price or cost on it. I will accept what is “free” but I don't expect to pay any price to participate in something that God designed for Himself.

Rom 14: 7] For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; [8] for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. [9] For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

2 Cor 5: 14] For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; [15] **and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.**

The “gospel of the Kingdom demands” has not been hidden in the scriptures but has been confused and emasculated by the “gospel of the give-aways.” The “gospel of the half-priced sale” has declared that nothing is required except to believe something about Jesus and accept God's unmerited favor and His free gift of grace. Of course all error has some element of truth but when this “truth” is removed from the revealed message of the Kingdom demands then truth has become error even if we can find a scripture that seems to support the error.

To be “counted worthy of the Kingdom” has been confused with being counted “worthy of forgiveness of sins.” To participate in forgiveness of sins by faith should not be confused with participating in the Kingdom by faith. We may proclaim by faith that we are already raised up and seated with Christ on His throne and are now ruling with Him but if the experiential evidence is not there, our “proclamation is just words spoken into the air.” To proclaim that the Kingdom is

merely acknowledging that Jesus Christ rules over all the works of His hands is one thing but to submit to His sovereign government within each of us and walk according to His laws is quite another. To acknowledge that Jesus rules my life by faith when there is no obedience will not help anyone when we stand before the judgement seat of Christ to answer for what we have accomplished while living in this body.

Mat 7:24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. [25] “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. [26] **“And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. [27] “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.”**

Just ignoring His words and not acting upon them is courting disaster! There IS a practical outcome of the Kingdom that is experiential in each life that is fully submitted to the Kingdom government of God that proceeds from the throne of God within. Some abstract “faith” that has no evidence visible within our life is a false faith that cannot be accepted as any participation within the Kingdom by obedience. When “faith or grace” is substituted for obedience we are on shaking ground that one day will collapse. To say that I am a citizen of the Kingdom by faith and not by works is ignorance when we understand the purpose of the Kingdom in the life of each saint of God.

Luke 14:16] But He said to him, “A certain man was giving a big dinner, **and he invited many;** [17] and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for everything is ready now.’ [18] **“But they all alike began to make excuses.** The first one said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.’ [19] “And another one said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.’ [20] “And another one said, ‘I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.’ [21] “And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, **‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’** [22] **“And the slave said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’** [23] “And the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. [24] **‘For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.’”**

When we are born again the evidence is that we “see the Kingdom.” When we are born of the water and born of the Spirit the evidence is that we begin to press into the Kingdom. If we continue to live in the flesh we cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. If our only concern is escaping hell and making heaven our home we may accept a static condition called “salvation” as safe IF we believe something about Jesus. However, what if we are judged by the Lord as a “worthless servant” who has neglected to multiply what he was given? Is it possible that we could be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and a grinding of the teeth after we are born again? Those who have been dutifully been invited to participate in the wedding feast but then

give excuses will be rejected.

What if we offer the excuse that “Lord, I am born again” but I never saw the Kingdom of God so I am not accountable? Jesus, Himself, said that once we are born again we should at least “see the kingdom” so there is no excuse. John 3: 3] Jesus answered and said to him, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”** [4] Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” [5] Jesus answered, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**

In other studies we have coined the phrase “the bondage of the Outer Court” but here we will coin another phrase “the ignorance of the Outer Court.” That means that once we have experienced some of the Outer Court experiences we declare “We are saved” so if we die tonight we are going to heaven. The question then appears in bold letters “But where in heaven will you go?” We have assumed that these outer court experiences guarantee our destiny to be “heaven.” However, what about the worthless servant that ignored the commands of the master to multiply what he was given and they would settle up accounts when He returned? The destiny of that “Servant” was suddenly changed from “Outer Court” to “outer darkness.” Even those who had a definite invitation to be guests at the wedding feast later were rejected because of their lack of interest.

Even though these questions may not have definite answers in scriptures when they are set in the demands of the Kingdom, the consequences are quite clear. If we only accept the “gospel of forgiveness of sins” the Kingdom requirements seem too radical for the modern church that is only interested in “getting all we can by grace” but ignore our “required” submission to the King and living in Kingdom obedience. Doing the will of God seems too demanding upon those who “are saved by grace” but it is very clear that only those who do the will of God will participate in the Kingdom of God. Is that “works?” Yes, and that is what the Kingdom demands.

2 Cor 5: 10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, **that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

Rev 22: 12] “Behold, I am coming quickly, **and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.** [13] “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” [14] Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

Rejecting the demands of the Kingdom because of some doctrine about works and grace is

really ignorant because the demands of the Kingdom supercedes that partial gospel. Why ALL who are born again cannot see the Kingdom is a great mystery because the Kingdom is not hidden. Why all who are born of the water and the Spirit do not force their way into the Kingdom is still a great mystery. Why so many who are “saved by grace” refuse the demands of the Kingdom is another mystery. Jesus intimated that some just refuse to see even though they had

eyes to see. Some have no desire to hear even though they have ears to hear. Some just don't want a "Savior" to also rule over them as "King" because these two offices are not compatible in their doctrine.

THE KINGDOM IS A LIFE (ZOE)

As we have said many times when we see the Kingdom we immediately realize that our measure of His Life is not sufficient to incorporate the Kingdom demands. We will feel our helplessness and hopelessness and inability to live in the radical obedience that is demanded by the Kingdom. This will require a "higher Life" that is only available in Christ. This is beyond the various doctrines of a higher life that we hear so much about but requires the actual experience of the "higher Life."

John 12: 25] "He who loves his life (psuche) loses it; and he who hates his life (psuche) in this world shall keep it to life (zoe) eternal.

The problem is that we cannot keep the natural life (psuche) and also receive this "higher life-Zoe." It seems to be this "natural life-psuche" that is in conflict with the "Kingdom Life-Zoe." But what if we believe something about Jesus but continue to hold on to the psuche life? There will be eternal loss! Why should we "hate the psuche life?" Because it rejects the Kingdom and its requirements! Because it makes up doctrines about "just believe" and "I am saved" therefore, my destiny is heaven. Because it is this life that makes up doctrines about "super grace" with no demands or requirements. It is this life that accepts "forgiveness of sins" but rejects the right of Jesus Christ to demand total obedience of all who are in His Kingdom.

Once we "see the Kingdom" we should immediately "hate everything" that keeps us from His governmental rule within our lives. We should "hate the life" that declares our independence from absolute obedience to the King. We should "hate the life" that stands in the pulpit and preaches nonsense to draw in numbers and make the visitors feel good.

Luke14:25 Now great multitudes were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, [26] **"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.** [27] "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

The psuche life will have great difficulty with this requirement of discipleship but the Kingdom Life will acknowledge His absolute right to demand our total attention to our calling. Since "anyone" includes "everyone who comes to Him" our universal calling is to "discipleship." This requirement of discipleship is regularly rejected by the "psuche life" in the pew and in the pulpit.

The conclusion then is that the "Christian life" is the "Kingdom Life" and the terms should be interchangeable. When we see the Christian life IS the Kingdom Life the whole Christian experience takes on new dimension and meaning. In current theology [present truth] we could say that the "Christian life" must incorporate itself into the Kingdom Government of God and walk in total obedience to Christ and His throne. Since the Kingdom Life can only be identified by the

essential qualities and character seen in the Kingdom person, the Kingdom is only visible objectively when it is experienced subjectively.

The Kingdom Life cannot be judged by what we “DO” but only by what we “ARE.” Our life, our character, our integrity and our obedience is what is judged by the Kingdom as authentic or not. Judging our “life” by what we believe is evidence of the “psuche life” using doctrine and logic to determine if we are Christians or not. Establishing “standardized doctrines” to judge the Christian life ignores our works and our behavior. Standardized doctrines ignore whether we are “worthless servants” or not and whether or not we have multiplied what we were given or if we even acknowledge Jesus Christ as our King who demands our obedience.

We may believe all the “standardized doctrines” and not even be born again but be faking the attributes of the Christian life in outward appearances but have no Kingdom Life within. The problem is that God knows the difference and IF He judges by the Kingdom standards we may all be in trouble.

This “lower life” considers faithful attendance in the meetings sufficient for eternal salvation. Luke 16:11] “If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you? [12] “And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? [13] “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

It is amazing that the demands of the Kingdom have been ignored because of a human concept of grace! This “grace” is the product of the psuche life! MT 21:43 “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. [44] “And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.”

When this gospel is preached to “believers” that were only fed “free grace” it is rejected as some new error that must be publically condemned. Many in the pulpit believe that God’s unmerited favor supercedes all demands of the Kingdom. The Kingdom demands are explained away as only applicable to rewards and not to salvation. Who has the courage to confront this error that has swept over the multitudes in the visible church that have believed a half truth?