

#273 Kingdom: His Life is the Message

After examining a few “demands of the Kingdom” we may be confused by the obvious lack of preaching on this subject. Why has the Kingdom message been so misunderstood over the past 300 years that there is so little mention of the Kingdom except as a cliché or a synonym for heaven?” I am speculating that the “demands of the Kingdom” have totally confused the proponents of God’s abundance of Grace poured out toward the world for the forgiveness of sins.

Rom 11: 5] In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice. [6] But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

Eph 2: 5] even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ **(by grace you have been saved)**, [6] and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, [7] in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing **riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] **For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; [9] not as a result of works, that no one should boast.**

Heb 13: 9] Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefitted.

There is a very strong case presented for God’s grace extended for the forgiveness of sins and for additional grace within the life of the believer. We are not disputing the absolute necessity for the grace of God in every area of our life for all time in this church age. What we are suggesting is that this same grace is surely available to meet the demands of the Kingdom and to live in that dimension of obedience. We may not even think in the terms of God’s grace to support us in the Kingdom obedience that is also demanded by scripture. There must be a grace to do the will of God because that is the only way we can participate in the Kingdom of God. To put the Kingdom as the first and foremost importance in our lives will require the grace of God. Once we put our hand to the plow it will require God’s abundance of Grace to keep us from looking back.

God’s grace is not only necessary to supply the ability to participate in the Kingdom it is also necessary to understand the Kingdom and to seek the Kingdom with all our heart. The danger is to receive the grace of God in vain or to stop short of all His grace provides..

1 Cor 15: 10] But **by the grace of God I am what I am**, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

HEB 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. [15] **See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God;** that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

When we don’t participate in the grace of God or utilize its fulness that is available to us we may

turn bitter and get defiled.

2Cor 6:1 And working together with Him, **we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain--** [2] for He says, “AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU”;

There is obviously no conflict with receiving the grace of God and working and laboring with Him according to the grace that has been given. Trying to create a conflict between God’s grace and our works and obedience is laid at the feet of our old psuche life. To live in obedience to the personal Kingdom within will require God’s grace in greater dimension. Just living in a static condition of Grace may be considered as vain. Having grace that we are not using may be considered as vain with the result that we support a root of bitterness.

Heb 13: 6] But **He gives a greater grace.** Therefore it says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.” [7] Submit therefore to God.

Heb 4:16] Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

Rather than offering an excuse for not submitting to the demands of the Kingdom or not accepting them because they seem to conflict with the grace of God, we should humble ourselves before God and ask for greater grace to live within the Kingdom demands.

It is surely true that the psuche life is not sufficient to live within the Kingdom demands but God has a “greater Life” that surrenders to a “greater grace” that is at home in the greater demands. However, the psuche life must be laid aside in order to receive and participate in the Zoe Life of God. The created life, psuche, is not sufficient to meet the demands of the Kingdom. It is the psuche life that falls into the Romans 7 syndrome of trying harder in our own ability to meet the demands of God.

John 12: 24] “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. [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.

Much of the conflict between grace and works is a conflict between the psuche life and the Zoe Life. Greater grace works through the Zoe life. The Tree of Zoe, the Book of Zoe, the River of Zoe, the Grace of Zoe are all connected to the Throne of His Zoe. The Throne of Grace is the source of all we need to complete the purpose of God. In time of great frustration and need the place we need to draw near is to the Throne of Grace that we may receive a greater measure of grace. We may ignorantly hold to some psuche perceived grace that conflicts with works and fall short of the abundance of grace that is available to live in the Kingdom demands.

Since the Kingdom reflects God’s absolute sovereignty, the Kingdom does not make suggestions or give options. It simply gives commandments and presents its demands. It sets its own standards and with authority it declares its own requirements. It offers no apology for its insistence upon

Christ like character and attitudes and upon its citizens attaining to a higher measure of His Life, Zoe. It assumes its full right to determine and evaluate those who are counted worthy of the Kingdom. This, of course, confuses those who focus upon super grace to cover over our casual attitudes and lukewarmness. The Kingdom is offended by those who want to participate in God's grace but then live for themselves.

Some may be able to fake the Christian life, some can fake true worship, some can fake submission but no one can fake obedience in the Presence of God. He knows those who are His! For this reason we must recognize more than a future Kingdom. To actually "see the Kingdom" means that we recognize His Kingdom Government within. This inner Kingdom is the mystery that has been hidden from past generations even though the Kingdom has not been hidden in the scriptures. To enter into and participate in the Kingdom [John 3:5] in the church age is a spiritual experience and not an operation of the flesh. The reason is because the Kingdom Government is within an inner life. The New Covenant provision supplies His laws written upon the heart and put into our mind. Obedience to these inner laws reflects our obedience to the Kingdom. Trying to do the will of God outwardly when there is no obedience inwardly is a common mistake. The Romans 12:1-2 surrender is first inward in the renewing of the mind to recognize His laws and receive the grace to interpret them. My opinion is that we need to discover His will inwardly before we discover His will outwardly. Only those who actually "do His will" can enter into the Kingdom realms.

I am guessing that "doing His will" begins in obedience to His Kingdom laws within. If we are faithful in this we may graduate to doing His will outwardly. Faking some outward obedience is not so difficult but God knows what is happening on the inside. We soon learn that the kingdom of man sets itself in opposition to the Kingdom of God and the throne of man is set in the psuche life. The Kingdom throne is set in the Zoe Life. Therefore, if we save our psuche life we preserve the kingdom of man. The lower life has difficulty comprehending the Kingdom of God but the Kingdom is home [normal] for the Zoe Life.

It is my opinion that the Kingdom laws within is that "leaven" that leavens the spirit, the soul and the body until the whole lump is transformed. The Kingdom laws within are the seed that produces the kingdom fruit. Confidence in His personal Lordship in our lives begins in our obedience to His inner laws. If we ignore these laws we are ignoring His government within us.

To speak of our "relationship" with God but then ignoring His laws within is another religious cliché. Relationship and obedience to His laws is synonymous in the Kingdom. Speaking of some sentimental relationship based upon human experience is popular but questionable if there is no obedience to His inner laws.

Jer 31: 31] "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, [32] not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. [33] "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "**I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their**

God, and they shall be My people. [34] “And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

To live in New Covenant times but trying to live by outward laws and outward obedience is a frustrating combination.

Eze 36: 26] “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. [27] **“And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**”

His laws, His statutes and His ordinances are written within and it is His Spirit that reveals them. If we obey them He will cause us to walk in them and through them we will learn to know the Lord.

Heb 10:16] **“THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM,”** HEB 10:16 He then says, [17] **“AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.”**

This IS the Life that IS the message of the Kingdom of God. Speaking words when there is no life of obedience within is the kingdom in word only.