

## #278 Kingdom: Reigning through the Incense

Since God prepares our heart to know Him and to respond to Him it must be God who leads us into His fulness and function. Since it is clear that we cannot function independently in the realm of the Spirit, that IS the Holy Place Life and ministry, there must be a process to change us into the substance and essence of that dimension. The self-help approach of Romans 7 is of no help to us to prepare ourselves for the spiritual life of the Holy Place. For that reason it requires full submission and total surrender, opening our inner Life to God and laying aside what is of us [the self life] so we can be infused by that which is God, Himself.

He must cast out everything that is not of God and everything that offends God for Him to take **His rightful place on the Throne of our Life**. However, He can only thrust out that which we have fully surrendered to Him. He is not house cleaning a place He has not been invited to clean. While His work is not JUST house cleaning it may begin there. Building the Temple as the sanctuary of His Presence is a much more intense inner work because it has to do with even the thoughts and intensions and motives of our heart. Just our inner attitudes may offend Him.

As we see in the type of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place and the manifest Presence of God above the Mercy Seat, only God can dwell in that place. If we open up the Most Holy Place of our Life to Him He cannot permit anything unlike Himself to dwell there. This is not just uncleanness but includes thoughts and attitudes and motives that are not like Him. God may have to enlarge the place of His dwelling because of cramped quarters. He must have room to move and govern. The reason is because we can only govern [objectively] in the measure that we are being governed [subjectively] by God. We only have sovereignty in the degree that we submit to and obey His sovereignty.

Another thing we have seen is that when there is hesitation on the part of a believer to make a full consecration, God is very slow to participate in the change. That residence is too small for Him to take up residency. He can wait until one is freely willing and ready for a desperate Consecration and a reckless abandonment for God to complete a work in them.

The point is that if we are seeking a lasting experience of His Presence there must be a lasting experience of His indwelling. A "visitation" is not a priority now. My theory is this; To experience Him deeply there must be a profound union with Christ in the spirit and Life realm. This is very much different from an intellectual understanding about Him or a visitation. This is not a union that is in the emotional realm but is in the spirit and Life realm. At certain times during worship or in unique situations we may feel intense levels of His Presence. This is quite different from a lasting union with Him in our spirit and in our Life. The difference is either a surface experience or a deep and abiding Presence. For the deeper experience we must give ourselves to Him without limitation or without reservations. I suspect that we can only experience and explore His fulness when He communicates Himself to us within this spiritual dimension that we are calling "union."

For a veiled look at this "communicating Himself to us in union" we only need to understand the transference of life from the Vine to the branch through this graft which we are calling "union." There is something more in view here than "fruit" and that is spirit and Life.

When we say the “communication of Himself” we mean of His substance and of His essence. It is this “communication” in which we are transformed into His character, attitudes, disposition, goals, love, Life and spirit. My theory is that we cannot grow up in all things into Him unless He communicates Himself to us. Teaching and learning and discipleship by men only point us to the One who can indwell us and transform us by the communication of Himself to us. Barrenness and unfruitfulness is an impossibility when we are in union with Him and when He communicates Himself to us in spirit and Life.

John 15: 5] “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. [not even pray]

John 15: 6] “If anyone does not abide in Me, **he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.**

The extreme seriousness of coming into this union of Vine and branch is seen in the alternative of being thrown into the fire. In this “abiding union”.there is a transfer of “substance” that produces the fruit. In the natural we would call it “sap.” In the spiritual we would call it “communicating Himself.” The futility of believers trying to produce that “fruit that remains” by their own best effort is witnessed in nearly every assembly. The Romans 7 approach to fruit bearing is so pitiful it becomes painful. Abiding in Life union with the Vine is the ONLY solution to “fruit that remains.” Multitudes think they can produce fruit through “ministry” or “prayer” or “witnessing.” To declare that we are not interested in gifts, only in the fruit misses the whole point of union. Gifts can be “sent to us” from a distance but Fruit is by Life union. Speaking about bearing “fruit” from a distance is ignorance! The anointing and the gifts are part of the process that draws us closer to Him..

John 15: 4] “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, **so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**

This seems plain and straight forward and a fact that doesn’t need a lot of revelation. Unless you abide [life union] in Me you WILL BEAR NO FRUIT. That is the end of the argument and eliminates the other options or possibilities. Still, the pragmatist will try to bring forth something that can be touched and identified and then declare to the world that this IS fruit. We can line the fruit up in pews and count heads and offer the proof by the tithe. Therefore, abiding in the Vine must be optional! According to our understanding we will just produce fruit through evangelism. Others will try “prayer” to produce fruit and quote the promises of God.. Is prayer then irrelevant? Certainly not! However, it is Incense that produces the fruit that remains. Incense, “at the Altar of Incense” rises up out of our union with Him in Life and spirit. Trying to find some inspired words to pray is different than “communication” rising up out of spirit and Life.

The location of this Altar of Incense in Hebrews 9 reveals this truth and shows the Altar sitting immediately at the Ark of the Covenant, behind the Third Veil right in the manifest Presence of God. Neither the Ark nor the Altar of Incense is mobile now because they have come to their permanent resting place. This is union of purpose!

The question has arisen of how we can continue to give ourselves more and more to Him in total surrender? I suspect it is a matter of Love [agape]. The more He communicates Himself to us (and He IS Love) the more we desire Him and Love Him. Not with a humanly manufactured love but with His uncreated Love-agape. Everything that we need to fill our place in eternity must come from Him and out of the eternal realm. Whatever is OF the earth must remain ON the earth.

I imagine that when we love Him with the same Love that He loves us that earthly things will grow increasingly dim and He will be the center of our being, our essence and our substance, and our desires.

Eph 3:14 For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, [15] from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, [16] that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; [17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, [18] may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.**

This scripture is beyond the capacity of the natural man and it seems only someone who had touched the reality of this experience could write such a thing. If we ever experienced this dimension of His Love, what great truths would be revealed.? Obviously, this experience is preceded by first **“being strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.”** Even if we can quote this verse we still don’t know what it means. However, to experience this measure of His Love would open up realms of knowledge and understanding that are far beyond us today.

Still, Paul had some confidence and faith to pray for this tremendous blessing for the Ephesians. Therefore, we have another small insight into Incense Prayer.

Eph 1:18] I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, **what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, [19] and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might [20] which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, [21] far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. [22] And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, [23] which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.**

Here is still another example of Incense Prayer but in this realm [**realm >noun 1 Law- a kingdom. 2 a field or domain of activity or interest. from Latin regimen ‘government’**] we witness the Incense used in the activity of “reigning” and being filled up to all the fulness of Him that fills all in all! Even though we have no idea of what this says, it seems clear if we are seated with Him this “realm” it is “Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

I am speculating that at the Incense Altar we join with Him is ruling over these powers and dominions and over every name that IS named in this age and also in the age that is to come. It is for that reason that we call this “Reigning through Incense.”

Phil 1: 9] And this I pray, **that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge [epignosis] and all discernment,** [10] so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; [11] **having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ,** to the glory and praise of God.

How do we know this is “Incense prayer?” It is obvious that it is not ordinary prayer that we are familiar with. Who can pray a prayer of this magnitude out of the natural mind? As Love [agape] abounds more and more we increase more and more in our “epignosis” or true knowledge {correct knowledge} so we can live blamelessly and be filled with the fruit of righteousness, all for the glory of God.

Col 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge [epignosis] of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, [10] so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the [epignosis] knowledge of God; [11] strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously [12] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Since we are not experienced in “incense prayer” we have difficulty recognizing this higher dimension of the Incense. Still, we have a feeling this Incense is rising up to God rather than falling to the ground. Since this is not just “mental prayer” we assume that these words are rising up out of Paul’s Life and spirit. In this case we could speculate that Paul IS the “Incense Altar” and the Incense IS the Prayer that is rising up to God in response to God’s revealed will.

John 17 is another example of Incense prayer called the “prayer of our High Priest.”

Since our theme is “Reigning through Incense” we need to see this other dimension of Incense Prayer. It is apparent that these examples of prayer are not identified as Incense Prayer. However, we also recognize that this is certainly not ordinary prayer. It seems that Paul is cooperating with God to get the will of God done on the earth and praying for the will of God in the lives of the saints in these various locations familiar to Paul.

The reason this may not be so clearly a type of “reigning with Him prayer” is that we are not so familiar with this kind of prayer at all. Of course we are just guessing but finding out from God [Showbread] what He is doing and saying, and then “doing” and “saying” the same thing on earth is another kind of Incense prayer! Asking God to accomplish the same things on the earth that we discerned at the Showbread is another kind of Incense prayer. That way “man” cooperates with God in the decision making process for the earth and IS “reigning with Christ” under God’s sovereignty.

We may think this is not a very important ministry of prayer because we are not telling God what He ought to be doing but finding out from God what He intends to do and then asking Him to do it. This may seem to be below our anointing, grace, calling, title, and experience. This could be done by a new believer! Then we wonder why “new believers” don’t pray in this way. He may only reveal these “Incense things” to His friends who have done His will.

John 15: 14] **“You are My friends, if you do what I command you.** 15] “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; **but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.**

When Christ brings us into His confidence and reveals what He is doing so we can cooperate with Him and ask Him to do it, we are ready to burn Incense. Most of us are honest enough to know that we are “shooting in the dark” when we pray. We use the scatter gun approach to prayer and name everything we can think of hoping we will hit the mark by firing in all directions. If we pray long enough and hard enough sooner or later we will get an answer. Of course by that time we have forgotten what we prayed.

Then there is the concept that we have to work up a certain kind of faith before we can pray. If we knew what was on His heart to accomplish we could just ask Him to do it. The faith part is getting into that place where we know what IS on His heart. Praying from a distance and wondering IF He heard us is the opposite of Incense prayer.

This “deeper knowledge” of Him reveals a “deeper knowledge” of ourselves and the miserable state we are in. In the Light of God we see our defects, spots and wrinkles! We may have been cleansed of our sins but we discover we have not been cleansed of ourselves. We could call this the “Incense problem.” Reigning with Christ from the Altar of Incense is not easy and only the stout hearted will overcome the revelation of themselves.