

#289 Kingdom: The New Language

Recently we heard from a man who had spent the last 40 years in the middle east teaching in various universities. He had learned the local languages in each nation but also very importantly he learned the local culture. In many societies the culture has remained, in many respects, unchanged since Bible times. Of course there is the culture of war and social unrest and hostility that varies over the years. However, the family customs and social culture has unique facets in each collective group. Since this professor understood the cultures of these nations and particularly of Israel he had unique insight into the various stories in the Gospels and understanding of the parables. This was quite helpful in understanding the scriptures.

However, the Bible was written to be distributed universally to every nation, culture, tribe and tongue. In a short period of time the gospel of the Kingdom had spread to most of the known world at that time. Even to strange lands and wonderfully different cultures with very unique languages that were so varied that there was little similarity to the culture of Israel. In this arena the culture of Israel had no impact upon the understanding of foreign peoples. The same is true in the world today. For example; The culture of the USA has very little relationship to that of Israel 2000 years ago and the culture of the South Pacific Islands could not relate at all. In New Guinea the 600 languages are so limited that it is nearly impossible to speak of spiritual things. Many of the dialects are not written languages. The same is true in the Philippines.

It was God, Himself, that confused the languages and created this tremendous problem of universal communications. Now, He has told us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every nation. Translators have been translating the Bible into hundreds of languages for a hundred years. In each language the stories must vary because of certain limitations within the languages and the lack of proper words. Surely this has not slipped by the attention of the Lord when the Bible was assembled. But how to solve this tremendous barrier to universal understanding is still a modern problem.

We discover that the Bible has its own culture and its own language that is not Jewish, Arabian, English, American or African. We might call it the language of the Spirit that bridges the gap between the limitations in each language. While natural languages are still confused the “language of the Spirit” is the same in any culture. If we could understand the “language of the Spirit” and the “culture of the Kingdom”, God’s Word could be comprehended in any nation of the world.

But who can teach us this “language of the Spirit” and who can translate it into the various dialects of the world? This “language of the Spirit” is only comprehended in the renewed and developed spirit of man and it is only understood by the soul that is “redeemed, renewed and converted.” This sounds quite mystical and super spiritual but this dimension of understanding should be the “normal Christian life.” However, if all this “spiritual understanding” came at the time we were born again the church would be a library of spiritual truth. I suspect the problem lies in the degree to which we are “converted.”

Mat 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” [2] And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, [3] and said, “**Truly I say**

to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. [4] “Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

John 12: 39] For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, [40] “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART; **LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM.**” [41] These things Isaiah said, **because he saw His glory**, and he spoke of Him.

Luke 22: 32] but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

The KJV translates “turned again” as “converted.” Vines Dictionary says the word means to turn around or to turn from idols to God. We are using the term “converted” to mean turning or changing or transforming from one dimension to another. As in “converting” from raw material to a finished product. Here again the “language is a problem.” In John 12 Jesus quotes this verse from Isaiah 6:10 just after Isaiah saw the Lord, the Lord spoke these words to him. Jesus said that it was because Isaiah saw His glory and was speaking of the Lord. The word “converted” here is a key word to rectify the situation and heal the blinded eyes and the hardened heart.

Isa 6: 9] And He said, “Go, and tell this people: `Keep on listening, but do not perceive;

Keep on looking, but do not understand.’ [10] “Render the hearts of this people insensitive,

Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Lest they see with their eyes, Hear with their ears,

Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed.”

Here in Isaiah 6:10 the Hebrew uses “return” where Jesus uses “converted..” We could say “converted” or “turning” is our means of access to “healing” of the inner restrictions that prevent us from understanding and from hearing the Word of God.

The question then is if “conversion” is an instantaneous event that takes place when we are born again or is “conversion” like the process of salvation that develops as we turn more and more to God and away from earthly and natural things. My thought is that “conversion” is a process where we “transition” from glory to glory. We could say “A process where we turn more and more to God and more and more away from carnal things.”

The saints of past generations spoke often about the “conversion of the soul.” In the 263 references to the soul in the NASB there is no mention of the “conversion of the soul.” There is no mention of the “salvation of the soul” either. In the KJV of the Bible there are 8 references to being converted. This is another “language problem.”

If we claim that we perceive that “the language of the Spirit” is speaking of a progressive salvation and a progressive conversion and a progressive salvation of the soul we could be off in

“la la land.” Nevertheless we do suspect that out of our experience (with many witnesses) that these experiences are progressive. If we call the “progressive experiences” the development of the soul or the conversion of the soul or the progressive salvation of the soul or the awakening of the person to spiritual truths we may be speaking of the same thing and feel a witness in our spirit. We may just sum it all up abstractly by saying “We must all go on with God. or we have been at this mountain long enough”

In other words the “truth” of scripture can be assimilated from several different thought and word patterns. Even though the words vary, the truth is constant. Christianity IS progressive!

We may conclude that “if we have to beg people to come to church to hear about church” there must be some problem even if we don’t have a scripture for it. We wouldn’t dare say this is the “language of the Spirit” but still, the truth is witnessed within.

The point I am making is that there is a culture and a language of the Outer Court experiences that is common to Outer Court Christians. The “unsaved” have difficulty understanding this culture and language as we all know by experience. My theory is that there is another culture and a language of the Holy Place that is very strange to us at this point in our Christian life. The reason I suspect that is true is because we have been confronted by the culture and the language of the Kingdom of God and have struggled to comprehend the truths of that realm. I am guessing that there is a similarity between the language and culture of the Kingdom and the language and culture of the Holy Place.

The parables reflect the culture and the language of the Kingdom of God and that makes them difficult to understand. If we understand the culture and the language of the Spirit we could understand the culture and the language of the Kingdom because they speak of the same things.

Mark 4:10 And as soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, **began asking Him about the parables.** [11] And He was saying to them, “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but those who are outside get everything in parables, [12] in order that **WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE; AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND LEST THEY RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN.**” [13] **And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? And how will you understand all the parables?**

Jesus is using Isaiah 6:9 to explain about how to understand the parables. Those “inside” the Kingdom will receive understanding of these mysteries while those outside will only hear parables. If you can’t understand the language and the culture of this parable how will you understand the other parables? [because they are in the same language]. The context of this question was from Isaiah 6:9. Isaiah saw the Lord and the Lord spoke these words to him. Jesus said that it was because Isaiah saw His glory and was speaking of the Lord as we saw in John 12:39. Here He uses “return” instead of “converted” which precedes being “forgiven.” In John 12 it says “and be healed.” We might say that in the language of the Spirit returning, converted, forgiven and being healed are all interrelated. When Paul quotes this verse from Isaiah 6 in Acts 28: 26-27 he say therefore this “salvation” has been sent to the Gentiles. From this we see that Isaiah 6 is referring

to many aspects of “salvation.” Understanding is the foundation for these experiences which results in forgiveness, returning, being converted, being healed and salvation.

Rather than seeing that each writer is contradicting the others we should see that each writer is complimenting the others “in the language of the Spirit.”

The culture means the customs, institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or group. This is an abbreviated definition but even from this we should understand that the Bible, the Kingdom, Christianity even our group has a culture connected to it. The Holy Place Life and ministry has a culture and a language connected to it also. Over these last months we have investigated some areas of the mystery of the Holy Place and have struggled with the language. We have discovered that regular English words are not strong or expressive enough to convey new “spiritual thoughts” connected to the next dimension.

1 Cor 2: 4] And my message and my preaching were **not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power**, [5] that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

1CO 2:6 Yet we do speak **wisdom among those who are mature**; a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; [7] **but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; [8] the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;**

The same words that Paul was preaching were written down from past generations for all to see, even the devil, but the rulers of the earth could not understand them. Why? They were written in the language of the Spirit. Paul recognized the problem that he could only speak God’s wisdom among the mature that could comprehend the language.

1Cor 2:10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

1 Cor 2: 12] Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, **that we might know** the things freely given to us by God, [13] **which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.**

1 Cor 2: 14] But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and **he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.**

1CO 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. [2] I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, [3] for you are still fleshly.

It is because of these eternal truths that the next dimension of ministry will be to a smaller group.

Not only that but our ministry will be more and more to God so we can learn the language of the Spirit. Therefore, if the five-fold ministries cannot bring the saints to this maturity where they can comprehend spiritual things all we can minister is the milk and not solid food. Even in assemblies where the pastor THINKS he is giving MEAT we discover that even simple "spiritual truth" is not understood.

HEB 5:11 Concerning him we have much to say, **and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. [12] For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.** [13] For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [14] But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Paul couldn't teach them "the language of the Spirit" so he was limited to sharing the elemental things of the scriptures with them which is called "milk." Each person seems to be responsible to learn the "spiritual language" and become "mature." However, the five-fold ministries have been assigned the task of bringing the church to this maturity. How can we reconcile these two parts of Christianity? (The ministry's responsibility to teach and the believer's responsibility to develop in the Spirit)

In the Outer Court dimension of natural light all we see is frustration and limitation. Our "hope" must be anchored in the Holy Place Life and ministry. Until the ministries are able to lead the people into that "spiritual dimension" of the Holy Place, the believers will be very restricted in "the language of the Spirit and the culture of the Kingdom." Until the ministries make the transition to the Holy Place they will never be able to lead the people into that realm or learn to speak the language of that place. Until the believers are "in the Kingdom" they cannot understand the Kingdom, speak its language or know its culture. Everything of that dimension will seem to be a parable or a riddle of confusion. Still, Paul could speak "wisdom" among the mature!