

#317 Kingdom: the Restoration of the Lay Movement

Our goal is always to work from the Absolute of the Kingdom and Absolute of the King downward toward the practical applications within the church. From the ultimate “absolute” down to the relativism of the functions. For example; All function must be in relationship to the Kingdom. When we identify the “church” it involves the complete concept from new believers to the priesthood of ministries. It encompasses all the experiences from the first genuine experience in the Outer Court to the goal of sitting with Him on His Throne. When the church begins to function in any way that is not relative to the Kingdom it is already gravitating toward error. To state this simply we could say that the church is relative and only has significance in relation to the King and His Kingdom. This also means that every “ministry” is relative and only has significance in relation to the King and His Kingdom. We can make the same comparisons with each function, gift, position, title and grace that is valid in the church. The church is that group that is pressing into the Kingdom. The Kingdom is NOT pressing into the apathetic church. The church then is relative and becomes authentic in the Kingdom.

We cannot remove the Kingdom from God’s original purpose for man that was established and set in stone before the world began. When the Kingdom is absolute, everything else must become subordinate because the Kingdom IS cause and everything else is effect. To try to seek unity in the church outside the absolute of the Kingdom and its eternal Government has never been practical or successful.

relativity >noun 1 the absence of standards of absolute and universal application.

The greatest part of the feel good messages we hear assumes the absence of absolute standards from which we can judge the relativism of the church and its goals. The church can only have valid standards in its relationship with the Kingdom. Every time the church sets its own standards the church becomes irrelevant. Why? Because it has chosen independence from the Absolute King and His Absolute Kingdom. The church is not yet fully “Christianized” until it recognizes and lives within God’s eternal Government.

It is not possible to arrive at the desired end when we use wrong methods, establish false goals, and gravitate in the wrong direction. We cannot use wrong means to come to a good end. In the natural we may see accidents that turn out good but this is not an accident if we arrive at His Kingdom Government. If we fulfill the requirements of Matthew 5-6- and 7 it will be no accident but a total surrender to His Government within us. If anyone tries to reach their eternal destiny by disregarding His Kingdom Government we can give no encouragement or comfort because it is a hopeless situation. That will just never happen because our only hope is in the Holy Spirit’s work within us and His goals are focused upon the King and His Kingdom.

The Experiential Kingdom IS the Eternal and Living Word of God becoming life and activity within us. We might say that the Word which IS God must become flesh in us. One of the goals in this next restoration will be the elimination of the “ministry class” and the establishment of the One Priesthood Ministry after the order of Melchizedek. This involves the High Priest AND His sons. This “priesthood” is Head and body with every member being of equal importance and

functioning in obedience and sensitivity to the Head, even Christ! If we look at these “metaphors” from the natural light of the Outer Court they are confusing but in Spiritual Light of the Seven Spirits of God they fit into the Kingdom and His Government.

My theory is that we cannot arrive at that end if we choose the wrong means. I am guessing that the “divided priesthood” or the “ministry class” is the wrong means to reach that end. The “ministry class” creates an uneven playing field that eliminates the “believer class” from participating. The “believer class” are the spectators and are not permitted on the playing field. The immediate goal seems to be to identify these marginal issues that are plaguing and confusing the church, expose the relative and refocus upon the absolutes.

My theory is that the “ideal church” is the “lay church” or the “body church” where every member is an ordained minister. That means “ordained by the Holy Spirit following the Consecration Offering.” The “ideal church” will always revolve around the King and His Kingdom and NOT around some ministry or some one minister. The “ideal church” will not belong to any ministry group but **“all ministers will belong to the church”** instead of the present system where the church belongs to the minister.

1Cor 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. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? [4] For when **one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men? [5] What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one.** [6] I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. [7] So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Every time the church belongs to the apostles or ministers it causes division. This is obviously NOT God’s plan!

1 Cor 3:21] So then let no one boast in men. **For all things belong to you,** [22] whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; **all things belong to you,** [23] and **you belong to Christ;** and **Christ belongs to God.**

Here Paul says that the opposite of the existing practice is true. The church doesn’t belong to the ministers but the ministers are given to the church and become the church’s servants. Of course we all know the principle but that is not what we see practiced. **In the Absolute Kingdom dimension “all things BELONG to the church.”** The church **BELONGS to Christ. Christ BELONGS to God.** This is quite simple. The ministries **BELONG** to the church, the church **BELONGS** to Christ and Christ **BELONGS** to God. This sets God and His Eternal Government as the absolute priority of the ministries, the church, and Jesus Christ! The “5 ministries” ultimately **BELONG** to the body and are the low persons in the hierarchy instead of the “headship ministries” as is taught.

The ministries that belong to the church makes the ministries relative. The church that belongs to Christ makes the church relative. The ministries only have their significance in relation to the

church. The church only has significance in relation to Christ. When either the ministries OR the church has its significance in themselves they become irrelevant because they have perverted their purpose. In the Kingdom we can't use wrong methods to reach a right purpose.

Therefore, **“the universal priesthood”** MUST include and involve the “lay church members” or it will just be more of the same but with a new name. All the Apostles began as laymen. They were ignorant and unlearned fishermen. They were not a “priestly class” but human nature gravitates toward “class” and one person rising above others. We are not criticizing that in the Outer Court dimension but we are speculating this “human nature problem” will be eliminated in the Holy Place dimension. The practice of setting the “ministry class” against the “believer or laity class” is concluded at the Consecration Offering. These “human concepts” are burned in the fire of His Love. All “priesthood ministries” must become part of the body of Christ, our Great High Priest.

If the saints are to become “one perfect man” and that “perfect man” is Christ who IS the Head of the one perfect man, then ALL ministry must be within the body. However, ALL ministry is relative and only has significance in relation to the Head. Ministries that have become an end in themselves are already irrelevant.

Maybe we can discover how this happens.

Acts 6: 3] “But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom **we may put in charge of this task.** [4] “But **we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”**

This seemed like a good move and this plan found favor with all the people but it was the

beginning of the “divided priesthood.” Now these seven men should devote their time to this ministry of waiting on tables in submission to the “higher priesthood of the Apostles.” However, let us see what actually happened. The ministry shifted from the Apostles to the lay persons.

Acts 6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. [10] And yet they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

Stephen then preached the longest sermon that has been recorded in the New Testament EXCEPT the Sermon on the Mount. The Chapter 7 of Acts is devoted to this sermon so it is like God is shining his beacon light on this “division” of ministry!

Acts 8: 5] And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them. [6] And the multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. [7] For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.

A recent concept was that since these men left their “apostle appointed post” of serving tables and tried to do the ministry that is only assigned to the 5 fold ministries they must be disciplined.

Acts 8:26 But **an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying**, “Arise and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a desert road.) [27] And he arose and went; and behold, there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship.

Now the eunuch who was a lay person and new believer and continued on to Alexandria and the church began there, according to church history. The “lay movement” was established.

Acts 8:39] And when they came up out of the water, **the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing.** [40] But Philip found himself at Azotus;

Saul was not a priest but had been given authority to persecute the church. Jesus knocked him off his horse and called him to the priesthood. Rom 15:15] But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, [16] to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, **ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.**

Paul was a lay person that was chosen by Christ to function as a “priest” but Paul was of the wrong tribe. That is OK because NOW the priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek that has NO physical requirements.

Acts 11:19 So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. [20] **But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.** [21] And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord. [22] **And the news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.**

When the “believers” or “lay people” were scattered from Jerusalem they began to preach Christ and a “believing group” formed at Antioch. Barnabas was a messenger sent to Antioch to see what these “believers” had done. The problem was that Barnabas didn’t return to Jerusalem to report back to those who had sent him but went to Tarsus to look for Paul who was just a “lay person” to come to Antioch. The fact is that EVERYBODY at Antioch were just “believers” or laymen” who had no special calling or position or title.

Acts 13:1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, **prophets and teachers:** Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [2] And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, **the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”**

Out of the midst of this “lay church” there rose up the ministries of prophets and teachers. Now the Holy Spirit separated Saul and Barnabas and called them to “the work.” It was AFTER this that they were called “apostles” or one who is sent. Timothy was an apostle who did the work of an evangelist. The point I am making is that these ministries were NOT narrowly described but just referred to the work they were doing at the moment and not ministry “positions” or titles of professional ministers. We are not speaking against ministries but against a “ministry class” that excludes the “believer class” from the universal priesthood to which ALL are called.

If the Holy Spirit had said “set apart for Me one of the Apostles in Jerusalem that I have called to the work” we could conclude that the “professional ministry” was the plan of God. However, the several examples given in scripture should be enough to cause us to shift the emphasis to the “laity” or universal priesthood ministry. We are NOT saying that “professional ministries” are not important in the Outer Court functions but these ministries must be united with the universal priesthood in the Holy Place and not remain as a “ministry class” outside the universal priesthood.

Today the Franciscan Monks are called the “third order of priests.” (1) the professional priests (2) the professional nuns (3) the Franciscan Monks. We might see through this distinction as phony but ignore the two orders in the Protestant Church of (1) the professionals and (2) the believers. The Franciscans are third class citizens and the believers are second class citizens who have been elevated from “no class.” Still, we have developed the “spectator class” that relate to the third class. The church in general is ruled by a “class sensitive” leadership with “class sensitive authority” guarding a “class sensitive ministry” over a “denominational sensitive assembly.”

We are NOT saying this is wrong! What we are saying is this “system” will soon become an abomination. I am speculating that the “lay persons” must soon become the “demonstration centers” for Christianity. They must become the light and the salt of the secular society. This “demonstration” must be of the “new order” of the universal priesthood. Then do we no longer need the “clergy?” of course the “clergy” has a function but in relation to the universal priesthood! The clergy must preach to the “old order of spectators” to get them fully consecrated to the “new order of priests.” It is a “**dirty job**” but someone has to do it. Get rid of the “Garbage” will be the “dirty job.” However, the “professional ministries” must participate in the procession to the land fill. (Garbage dump)

Someone must begin with the “word of restoration” becoming their “personal life” in demonstration and not just another message. The shift must be the “laymen ministers” being on the field in the heat of the game while the “encouraging ministries” functioning as “coaches on the side lines.” I am guessing that this next restoration will begin as a “spiritual awakening” among the “laity class.” This is what we saw in the Charismatic Renewal. Most all the “grass roots ministry” was done by this “laity class” but this never developed into a “universal priesthood class.” Maybe it wasn’t time yet! The “laity class” cannot escape the “class system” except by consecration, death, and resurrection into the “universal priesthood.”

Since the “laity” cannot enter into a theological debate, their ministry must be of the demonstration of the Life of Christ to the secular society. This “life” is both salt AND light. Theological arguments provide neither. We are expecting a pragmatic laity that is focused upon

the demonstration of the practical living of Christianity. **pragmatic** >adjective 1 dealing with things in a practical rather than theoretical way.

“I was hungry and you fed me”, “I was in prison and you visited me” is pragmatic Christianity. A **theoretical Kingdom** or a **theological Christianity** has reached the end of its usefulness now in the church. None of this has converted the world or manifested the Kingdom to the secular society. It seems that only “**a ministry of Life**” will minister the gospel to the whole world.

What IS the evidence that we have risen in our scale of existence from animal, to human, to Christian, to Kingdom and to sacrificial Love? Some are not even “sensitized” to the change necessary to fulfill God’s eternal purpose. Some in the church are still “sensitive” to race, culture, tradition, denomination, family, friends, jobs, retirement, and social standing. They are easily offended because of their sensitivity to earthly things. Those who are only sensitive to their own needs, pleasure, social status or ministry are not yet candidates for the Kingdom priesthood.

When we recognize this we understand that without full consecration there can be no advancement because we are driven by a false sensitivity. What exactly IS our Law of Happiness? Is it too high or too low? It is just a “Law” that applies to others or is it a personal Law within? Is the Kingdom just another philosophy or is the Laws of God within us modifying our vision and character? Are we following after a “stereotype Christian” that is orthodox or striving to become a “Kingdom Christian” that lives by the Laws of God.

A “Kingdom Christian” who is a “lay person” will far surpass the “orthodox professional minister” who is a good believer and a good preacher. The qualifications for the “clergy” are NOT the qualifications for the Kingdom. Anyone who will constantly surrender and live under the cross can become a Kingdom Christian in training very quickly.

The Total Kingdom is the Total Answer to all the frailties in the church. A partial Kingdom is no solution to the current problems in the church. The Total Kingdom cannot function in a divided priesthood because this presents a divided kingdom with ministries and spectators. Every church that has “canceled the Kingdom” as a motivating force within will soon become irrelevant. The “kingdom someday” philosophy will have no impact upon the church today!