

#321 Kingdom: The Opportunity to Rise to a Higher Life

Overcoming the religious opposition to a “New Message” that Jesus introduced 2000 years ago and the disciples preached and demonstrated will require a higher Life than is normal today. When the Kingdom was lost by the church in about the year 200 the message of the Kingdom was also lost. Our theory is that the “church of the restoration” [Lampstand] will restore both the message and the demonstration of the Gospel of the Kingdom. I am guessing this will incite a forceful opposition and will be publically labeled another “kingdom cult” similar to the Jehovah Witnesses. The last restoration was labeled “the Charismatic cult” and spoken of as a “para-church.” which means para- >prefix 1 beside; adjacent to 2 beyond or distinct from. It was declared not “church” but something outside the church.

Both the moral and spiritual atmosphere within the regular church today is not yet conducive to the Kingdom message or the Kingdom life. Therefore the message of the Kingdom will be divisive and the church will be ambivalent and contradictory because orthodox doctrines will be challenged. The “Gospel of Grace” will be presented as the only valid gospel and the demands and laws of the Kingdom will be rejected. Presenting clear scripture concerning the Kingdom will be indecisive because of former “orthodox doctrines.” The questions concerning the dichotomy between the Gospel of Grace and the Gospel of the Kingdom will remain an unsettled issue because it is difficult to reconcile “grace” with the Kingdom demands. However, Grace and the Kingdom are inseparable. We might call this “The grace of the Kingdom with the abundant Kingdom grace.”

Still, some will fight the message of the Kingdom and some will fight all opposition to overcome and possess the Kingdom. Hopefully this will produce a “contagious Christianity.” However, a “modified Consecration” has always produced a “non-contagious, modified Christianity” and we anticipate the same will be true in this restoration. The “free salvation gospel” that costs nothing is seen as worth very little. The great value in the Kingdom IS its tremendous cost. It costs everything! The parable of the pearl and the parable of the hidden treasure is the revelation of its value and its cost. When we try to reconcile this great cost [sold everything to purchase the Kingdom] with a free salvation we run directly into this “grace of the Kingdom.” This is the “grace” to understand the great value of the Kingdom AND the grace to pay whatever price to possess the Kingdom. This flies in the face of most all of our “orthodox doctrines of grace salvation.” The “extreme cost” will be the battleground for the opposition to resist the gospel of the Kingdom.

It requires real vision, understanding, revelation and power to pay the very highest price for the very highest value. It is only when the cost becomes irrelevant because we clearly see its great eternal value that this transition can quickly take place. Paul could quickly count everything as dung AFTER he saw the prize of the upward call of God.

We discover the Kingdom is not subtle in its demands and never apologizes for the cost. The Kingdom confronts us head on with a “crisis” that demands a “decision of full Consecration.” **Does this appear to be a dangerous decision? Yes! But it affords us the greatest opportunity to experience a higher Life.**

Consecration demands a step forward and then a leap into the future age. The “current conventional wisdom” is that this is a dream, a fantasy of His will being done on THIS earth as it is being done now in heaven. The Kingdom has been presented by the orthodoxy as a “futurism” but not as a current reality. Some have labeled it a “fanaticism” and irrelevant in today’s society!

As a result of the past accepted “orthodox doctrines” we need to win maybe 2/3 of the church or more to the Kingdom. The “orthodox church” has become a mission field for the Kingdom preacher. All these “new programs” and “new emphases” will produce nothing because they retain the status quo within the visible church. Until the “visible church” is awakened from its comatose state in the status quo, no program will produce anything eternal. Whatever happens in the next restoration must happen “redemptively” within the church to advance it into the Kingdom Government and Life. All non-redemptive programs leave the church where it was.

Some are recognizing now that the “visible church” is in the stage of pre-resurrection life and therefore in a pre-kingdom redemption. Too many are in a “pre-believing stage” because of a second hand message that has lost its relevance to the Kingdom of God. Too many are preaching about the Jesus whom Paul preached but have no first hand experience with the risen Christ who sits at the right hand of the Father. They may preach Jesus as Savior but have no revelation of the King of Glory who is NOW ruling **until** He has made all His enemies a footstool for His feet [which are in His body]. Many of us are stuck between “basic conversion” and the “Kingdom Life.” The next restoration will begin with that transition. That means “conversion from the world” to “conversion to the Kingdom.”

Recently a Chinese Scientist “created” his own facts about “cloning” and has fallen into disgrace. The “real scientist” is expected to follow the facts wherever they lead and not to create facts to prove a theory or suit his goals. In many places the Kingdom has been reduced to irrelevance because too many have “created facts” to prove a theory and confirm a doctrine about the Kingdom. They failed to follow the Kingdom facts found in scripture, no matter where they lead.

Mat 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Another translation says “Blessed are those who know they are bankrupt, theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.” In other words those who already know everything are eliminated from the race before they begin. They don’t even get to the starting line. With those who truly belong to the Kingdom, the Kingdom belongs to them or the Kingdom is theirs.

But what about these “Kingdom demands” and these “laws of the Kingdom” that have become so controversial because of the “gospel of grace and free salvation?” What about the “demands” of Matthew 5- 6 and 7? Have these “demands” really been postponed until the Millennium, as some say? Are these the “moral laws” for the church, age as some say?

If the Kingdom was a set of moral laws like the “laws” of the Old Testament, would we really be equipped to keep them any better than Israel was able to keep the Laws of Moses? Especially because these Laws are more difficult to keep than the Laws of Moses. Of course not! **If** we cannot define the difference between the Old and the New Covenant we leave ourselves in the same hopeless situation as the natural man doing the best he can to meet the standards of God.

Regardless of which covenant we try to obey by the natural man's ability, we will fail. IF the New Covenant does not supply ALL that we need to keep the Laws of the Kingdom then it is obvious that we have to do the best that we can out of human effort.

Jesus was NOT a moralist imposing a higher law upon the people that were not spiritually equipped to keep those Laws of the Kingdom! Then Matthew 5-6 and 7 are not set forth as moral laws but are a definition of how the Kingdom Person is able to live within the New Covenant Provision under the eternal government of God. Man was originally designed and created by God to live according to the Laws of the Kingdom of Heaven. These are the Laws that are built into all of creation. How does this understanding help us today? When man fell he lost the ability to live according to these Laws of creation. However, the new creation person is free from these limitations.

The real Gospel of our Salvation is the "Gospel of the New Creation" that after Christ IS created in the image of God. Imposing these Laws upon the unredeemed and the unregenerated would accomplish nothing eternal. However, these Laws are a revelation of the provision that God has set forth for the New Creation Person in Christ Jesus and explains how the New Covenant Person will be able to live under the Government of God. Imposing these Kingdom Laws on helpless natural man would be a curse and not a blessing and these Laws are designed to be a blessing. "Blessed is he who----." Of course the born-again baby in Christ or even the children of God are going to find these Laws impossible. This is precisely why the new believer must be matured, developed, enabled and filled with the Holy Spirit and have the Living and Abiding Word of God actively functioning within him.

The work of the five-fold ministry is to bring the new believer into the full provision of the New Covenant and then the new believer must be developed to function within the Kingdom Government of God. **If the five-fold ministry cannot develop the new believers to become full New Covenant Priests they have completely failed in their calling.** It is really shameful that after over 30 years of exalting the five-fold ministries and speaking of the necessity of their ministries that so little actual evidence of the development of new believers is seen.

It is little wonder then that we have developed doctrines postponing the Kingdom to the future or the Millennium and excuse the five-fold ministries from responsibility because of the carnality and lack of consecration of the believers.

It seems clear to me **that neither the Holy Spirit or Jesus is looking for people who are willing to live by the Laws of the Kingdom.** What they are expecting is a people who are willing to be transformed so the can live according to the Laws of the Kingdom. The Kingdom was never designed or intended for the natural man or the carnal Christian. The demands of the Kingdom are far too difficult for them to obey and it would be a travesty to expect the fleshly Christian to keep these Eternal Laws.

The "process of Kingdom development" **just begins at the Consecration Offering.** Therefore, if the five-fold ministries are not able to inspire the believers into full consecration they have NOT completed their ministry OR fulfilled their calling.

I have to repent of teaching people the Laws of the Kingdom for over 20 years before they were equipped to keep the Laws. This has ended in total frustration in both the believers AND the ministry.

The problem of excusing ourselves and taking a defensive position because of the lack of commitment in the believers, will not be acceptable in the Kingdom. The Kingdom leaves NO possibility for excuses to be valid. The parables presents the Kingdom as absolute, demanding, holding every servant to full responsibility of performance. The Kingdom is not sentimental and does not excuse apathy but judges it decisively. "Bring that unprofitable servant to My Presence and slay him." If we read the scriptures just the way they are written we see that the Kingdom is not complicated and is straight forward in its proclamation and judgement! It is clear to me that the Kingdom DEMANDS a complete consecration into a higher Life.

It is this reality that surprises us and confronts us and at first appears to be so extraordinary that it cannot be for the church "under grace." Then we suddenly realize that these Kingdom requirements, DEMAND a greater grace, a Kingdom Grace that is of a different kind. One that functions freely within the Higher Life of the Kingdom.

We wonder about the grace that Paul demonstrated in 2 Corinthians 6 and also Chapter 11 because it seems extraordinary. Of course this IS a higher Grace that functions within the Higher Life. Therefore, which do we need first, a greater grace or a Higher Life? They should come together as active elements within the resurrection Life following full consecration.

Therefore, developing this Inner Life of the Kingdom seems to be the first priority for us at this time. Why? Because the Kingdom has to be planted, sprout and take root within us. God must establish His Kingdom within us and establish His throne in this Inner Life [inner man.] If there is NO regenerated Inner Life there is no good soil in which to plant the seed of the Kingdom.

In other words just planting "gospel seeds" in the minds of new believers is not finding the good soil that produces a Kingdom Harvest. My theory is that the "good soil" is in the "new inner life" where the Kingdom Government actually grows. The mind of the new believer becomes the battle ground where Satan snatches the Kingdom seeds away, the sun beats down and people tramp it out when it sprouts. Planting Kingdom seed in the mind of believers is counter productive.

When the church began to major on the minors it became a minor issue in society and lost its impact upon the world system. This is the same problem we see in Washington at the present time. Islam and its violence has become a major threat to the whole world. However, the politicians in Washington say the crises must wait while we argue over all kinds of minor issues. The USA faces major crises and the politicians just focus on minor topics for debate. They divide over irrelevant issues rather than unite to fight a common enemy.

The visible church has done the same thing but the church in restoration must stay focused upon the central issue which is establishing God's Eternal Government in the life of each believer. If we ignore the preparation of the good soil in the inner Life we will continue to focus on the minors and outward issues and the trivial things. When the church has focused upon the minor issues and

ignored God eternal purpose and His eternal Government it has become nearly irrelevant within the society it was called to convert. It has lost its saltiness. We may fault the church but the responsibility must ultimately fall upon the 5 fold ministries.

When the church is top heavy with “leaders” who are “first”, the center of gravity is off the Kingdom balance. The “church” must be reoriented to a new center of gravity. Leaders are not wrong but leaders who are “first” are functioning out of the Kingdom requirements. If the leader aspires to Kingdom leadership he must become the servant of all and therefore, the last of all. This will require the greatest “reorientation” within the church and the most traumatic for the “ministries.” The egocentric will not be able to make the transition from being first to becoming the “servant of all.” The “Consecration Offering” is designed to solve this problem. Becoming “first” is common under the natural light of the Outer Court. The consuming of the ego in the fire of the Consecration Offering is primary! Then the resurrection Life IS into the Spiritual Light of the Holy Place. This Light dissolves the desire to be “first of all” and creates the contentment to just be the “servant of all.” It seems obvious to me that the frustration and helplessness we feel now is because we understand that the life we now possess is insufficient to function in the Kingdom dimension. This is not wrong to feel this way because it is really true. However, following the Consecration Offering God will raise us up to a higher life in which the Kingdom demands can be lived by His Life in us. This is not just hype because it is only by using God’s provision that we can live in the Kingdom requirements.

Every time we have leaders who are “first” we must have believers who are “second.” “You are all brothers” proclaims the equality that is built into the citizens of the Kingdom of God. Still, the equality of the Holy Place Priesthood cannot be applied to those in the Outer Court who are being prepared for the priesthood that is equal. Saying that the Outer Court believers are all equal to the Holy Place Priests means there is no understanding of the Kingdom Life. While they all are given the equal opportunity they are not equal in their attainment to the Kingdom. Neither are all equal in their living within the Kingdom Laws of God or in meeting the requirements of the Kingdom.

Nevertheless, the Kingdom IS the great equalizer of those who are in it. Many of those who stand outside are declaring that we are all equal because we are all children of God. While that may be true in the Outer Court, that is not true of those who have developed the Holy Place Life and ministry. The “servant” that produced nothing was thrown into outer darkness. However, in outer darkness there may also be equality!

A pastor that is self-assertive, domineering and demanding usually produces a church that is passive, silent, fearful, anonymous, and irrelevant! These pastors are very difficult to “Christianize”, in the Kingdom sense. These “systems” are outside the Kingdom of God. They also produce a church that is helpless to accomplish any eternal work, much less manifest the Kingdom of God.

Still, it is the pastor that generally molds the opinions, set doctrines, establish church goals, define destinies, and sets up his own pet doctrines. He is generally the one that categorizes the congregation and defines the ministries. The question then faces us (who are looking for the restoration): How can we rescue the “laity” from the “system” so they can become effective

citizens of the Kingdom and ministers of the New Covenant? As long as we have “the minister” AND the “laity” there will never be equality in the body because the “system” prevents it. We are not saying this is wrong in the Outer Court dimension but this “system” can never produce a Lampstand Church, which IS His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

The “laity” has been marooned on the Outer Court Island for second class citizens and are considered as “lepers” by the “ministries. As we were told, the “laity” are good for handing out tracts and sweeping the parking lot but not acceptable to minister anything spiritual. While that may be true within this system, it is not true in the Kingdom. If the “laity” are only good for physical tasks then the “ministries” have miserably failed by leaving them in the Outer Court and strangers to the Kingdom Covenant of God.

Boasting about the inability of the “laity” is a direct condemnation upon the “ministries” that are supposed to make them able servants of the New Covenant and citizens in the Kingdom. Blaming the “laity” for their carnality has been a popular game, but now we recognize the responsibility of the ministries IS to loose them from their carnality.

The “mortuary churches” are permitting the church members to sit regularly in the meetings and dying a slow death from the lack of spiritual food and spiritual inspiration. We have just presented an abstract goal of going on to something we cannot define. Or to “grow up in all things” just to die sitting in a pew every Sunday. Too many are too busy, just being busy, but producing nothing and becoming nothing of benefit in the Kingdom. The problem is that too many “ministries” are included in this busy for the sake of being busy group!

All this business is leaving a spiritual vacuum in the church that is not drawing people in to fill the vacuum but driving them out to create a greater vacuum. This spiritual vacuum is driving the believers into the cults or worse looking for reality. The Kingdom IS the reality they are looking for.