

#341 Kingdom: The Cross and the Inner Life

Whether the cross is spiritual or physical it is always handled and either endured or enjoyed by the inner life. The attempt to accept the cross by the natural mind or by gifts or by physical endurance is that which makes the “cross” so devastating. An inner resolve and inner grace are of the most benefit when trials come to us. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, while so valuable to us in the ministry, are of very little value to us in the inner experience of the cross. This does not mean that the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit are not of very great benefit to us in times of suffering but that the gifts are for another purpose all together.

The Inner Trials and the Inner Cross are what ultimately sanctifies us and sets us apart for God and His purpose. His purpose is directly related to His will for us. We discover that “His Will” becomes an inner experience more often than it becomes an outward exercise or physical work. When we first begin in the Christian life and seek to know and to do God’s will, it is assumed that God requires that we go some place or do a certain thing. Of course that is true in the beginning experiences because He is teaching us obedience.

The gifts, while extremely important in a ministry, do not sanctify us in God’s purpose. Of course the gifts, operated in extreme humility, identify an inward life of consecration and obedience. Still, very carnal and undisciplined people can operate in the gifts of the Spirit and often the gift can be valid and accurate.

The inward death of “self” and the old nature are of exceptional importance in developing the inward life into the image and likeness of Christ. Our inward death to everything that is not “in Christ” is the way we identify the activity and growth of the inner Life “of Christ.” Since this “LIFE” is the resurrection life of Christ, anything that is before “resurrection” becomes of little importance. The inner cross is designed to deal with inner defects and not just sin.

The gifts appear very shallow in comparison to operating out of the

inward life. Sometimes we see men of God who are so full of themselves and imperfect in their outward social experiences, but very proficient in the gifts, that we question the gift rather than understand the depth that God can work in the inner life.

Mat 7: 14] “For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

If this gate is very small and low, as some say, then it requires great humility and a very large inner life to pass that way. A large “self” will not be able to pass through. Enlargement waits us on the other side but it is the enlargement of Christ “in us” that is our hope of glory.

Psalms 18: 18----But the LORD was my stay. [19] **He brought me forth also into a broad place;** He rescued me, because He delighted in me.

It is following the trials and humiliations that **God brings us into a broader place** where we may experience more of the dimensions of Christ.

Psalm 18 is for the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. { Introduction by the translator }

Some of these Psalms are real life experiences and reveal to us God’s intention for these trials. Those who do not seek or receive God’s grace in the trial will fail to receive the benefit of the trial. To be able to rest in a quiet and a peaceful habitation in time of trouble is valid evidence that God has done an inward work in us.

When the inward life is entirely subjected to God’s will and God’s way, the trials bounce over us and from us and cannot affect us. Struggling by human effort during the trial causes the grief to increase. It is the superficial Christian life and the inward variableness that causes us so much distress. This is the result of an inward uncleanness or some

impurity. God's only desire is to do us good in revealing the inner uncleanness or inner controversy with the Spirit of Christ.

Psa 125:1 Those who trust in the LORD Are as Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

The evidence of the birth of the inner life into the higher life of Mount Zion produces the fixed state in the person. It produces a confidence in God who directs their path and this confidence indicates the steadfastness of the abiding life.

It is in this time that the division between the soul and the spirit is so important. The soul is still subject to outward disappointments and foolishness until it is totally surrendered and the garbage removed.

Our "first consecration" soon appears so shallow and ineffective because it was given to God without much understanding of what was required of the inward life. We probably have misunderstood the suffering of the inward senses because they are not always connected to outward circumstances or visible controversies.

We soon realize that the "consecration offering" is an "offering" that continues throughout our life while we live in this dimension of our existence. There is a certain "sequence" in the consuming of the sacrifice. This may not be universally the same for all persons because of different defects that must be removed and the inward steadfastness and commitment of each person. Finding other persons who are experiencing the same dealings of God is very helpful but God may not permit this until He has become all in all within our life. This is very confusing until we see things from the eternal viewpoint.

It is in these times, when the natural life exalts itself, that we feel unclean and if we permit it to continue we may soon get cold toward our consecration and then discover that our inward life has decreased. God is still "for us" and will quickly restore us when we repent. Trying to recover without the inward help of God is a very slow process. The superficiality of the Christian life, which is very evident everywhere, is

the result of the lack of a continued growth in the inward life. We should become sensitive to recognize the human way of doing things as compared to the spiritual way of doing things. The same is true concerning the way we conduct ourselves among others. Of course we may not be sensitive to these things when we begin to develop the inward life.

Having patience with those who are in a continuous state of changeableness is difficult to adjust to until we can see from God's viewpoint.

One thing we may observe is that many who are totally consecrated in the general sense of God's will, still may fail in certain situations involving various circumstances. In other words we consecrate ourselves wholly to God but we fail in present circumstances because we are not fully consecrated in the moment to moment times. We may not be fully aware that "people" are a source of exposing our moment to moment consecration or our failure of consecration. We may still be faithful in our general consecration while failing in our moment to moment consecrations.

Staying within the divine order of the Kingdom Government of God and abiding in His Kingdom Laws is, of course, the way to fulfill our consecration. This is only possible when the inward life is in harmony with the Kingdom of God, within. While this may appear overly complicated, it is the very reason for developing the inward life. We should be more and more aware that ultimately the Kingdom is the reason for most of the requirements for our change and rectification.

Always seeking to return to the divine order is the way through most all difficulties. When this is our purpose, God will always support us. Finding contentment "in the Divine Order" is a first priority in developing an inward life. Finding our place "in the garden of God" returns us to the place of internal enlightenment. The ultimate "enlightenment" is in the paradise of God, the New Jerusalem, which we might call "eternal enlightenment!"

There must be a valid reason for all the dissatisfaction and turmoil in “successful” and wealthy people. Even some Christians in the church are in this same kind of turmoil. Rev 3: 17 And you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. The ultimate joy is only found in the “paradise of God” which IS the Divine Order. This accounts for the various levels of “glory” in the “Paradise of God.”

The person that is not satisfied with what he has in the natural realms will always be unstable in the spiritual realms. This is because he will always be seeking contentment in the natural realms. The result is he is subject to the natural light of the natural realm.

Some scriptures are misunderstood simply because we interpret them in natural light. For example;

John 2:13 And **the Passover of the Jews was at hand**, and Jesus went **up to Jerusalem**. [14] And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers seated. [15] And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the moneychangers, and overturned their tables; [16] and to those who were selling the doves He said, **“Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a house of merchandise.”** [17] **His disciples remembered that it was written, “ZEAL FOR THY HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME.”**

Jesus had been in the temple many times during His lifetime while they were doing the exact same things but He never responded this way. Why? He only did the things that pleased His Father and did those things that were His Father’s will. Therefore, until God revealed His will in this matter, Jesus was not free to act. We should understand that the “zeal” was from the Father that dwelt in Him. This was not Jesus acting from His own “anger” but responding for the Father. There was no difference between the Father’s will and Jesus’ will. They were acting as one.

The inner life does not grow or become content under constant activity and conversation. It requires its Sabbath rest also. In fact the outward rest in the Old Covenant probably just speaks of the inward rest in the New Covenant. Many who practice “outward rest” may have no “internal rest” at all. It is for this reason that Sabbath is not outward but inward. The inner life is fatigued by constant activity and can grow cold because of it. A strong inner life requires some solitude for its strength. It is in these times of solitude that fasting is successfully practiced.

A Sabbath rest is sometimes required between levels of growth. It might be the “rest” that accomplishes more inner work than the fasting. The scriptures indicate there is a “transition” from “us being in us” to being “in Him” that we might be one. This union is taught as “doctrine,” however, there surely must be a reality like this. This seems certain because it is what Jesus prayed for in John 17. Some assume that this “oneness” indicates sometime after we pass from this existence. Since there is no time in God this may be too shallow an interpretation.

The difference between the natural light of the Outer Court and the Spiritual Light of the Holy place will, no doubt, confound us until our spiritual eyes adjust to that new dimension. The “inner eyes” of the “inner man” and the “inner ears” of the “inner man” are not accustomed to seeing or hearing the sights and sounds of that elevated place. My theory is that this IS the reason that we enter each new dimension as babies. We certainly enter into every dimension of the Kingdom as babes.

Over the last many years we have spoken many things in “faith” that never happened. We have declared the Word of the Lord over many situations that never changed. We laid hands on many people who didn’t get healed. We have heard many “teachings” that said only believe and speak the Word and healing will go forth. This was validated by scripture, yet nothing happened. We assumed that if the word said it, and we believed it, that settled it.

We later discovered that “speaking the Word” and “obeying by the

Word” were intricately linked together. We learned that “speaking a word” was not speaking “by the Living and the abiding Word.” This simple discovery set us free from this confusion.

When we speak to the weather or the wind we find it obeys us because there is no resistance from the wind. However, when we speak healing faith over people, they may well resist that word and receive nothing. This may confuse us until we understand the sovereignty of God and the free will of man. Man still must believe and concur with the “word” before the word is personally effective.

Another of the mysteries may be this process where the Eternal and Living Word of God dwells in us so completely that there is no need to hear a language of the Spirit but the Word passes between from Spirit to spirit without words. We don’t know what was “said” but we know instinctually some things that we don’t know how we know. We assume some information has passed but we don’t know how it passed.

In identifying the work of God in the inner man it has become obvious that God uses both

mercy and judgement to build and to destroy. Mercy is bestowed upon the creature to pronounce favor and grace while judgement is bestowed upon the creature to destroy its propensities for itself. Those who only covet the mercy of God will be happy but unchanged. Those who only receive the judgement of God will faint under the lack of comfort.

Therefore, mercy and judgement function together. Both may be seen as the grace of God.

Psalms 85:10] Loving-kindness and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Loving kindness and Truth often seem like opposites when out of love and mercy we tell the truth which may appear as judgement. God certainly reveals “truth” that will judge the lie that we hold to concerning our inner corruption.

The next stages of ministry must discern the need and the requirements of God for their personal sanctification. Otherwise we may be ministering out of human compassion rather than from the Spirit of God. Ministering Love and mercy when God is ministering Truth and judgement is in conflict with God's eternal purpose. The contrary is also true. In other words the standard methods of "ministry" will not benefit the souls in this next dimension.

It is for this reason that the "priesthood ministry" must stand before the Lord, minister to the Lord and burn incense that they may become His ministers. Standing at the Incense Altar precedes the ministry to people. Ministering "God's will" is not according to man's compassion but out of God's truth.

This goes far beyond the capacity of man to enable us to minister the Light of the Holy place. For that reason the Inner Man must be conformed to the image of Christ and only speak what the Father says and only do what we see the Father doing. Therefore, there must be a profound breaking of the natural tendencies of the minister to prepare them for the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Of course, none of this can take place by human effort and all must come about by the grace of the hand of God through our consecration. Since many hidden things must be revealed, it may require suffering to expose the darkest of these things.

Our false concepts of what constitutes maturity in ministry deceives us. We assume that because we know some things and have been around known ministries that this constitutes maturity. Our inner life may be seriously defective after we know nearly everything. The ministry FROM the Sanctuary is the ministry OUT OF the inner life. If we are going to limit our ministry to only speak what we hear and do what we see, in the inner man, it is obvious that the Spiritual Light of the Lampstand is essential. If this interpretation is correct, it is essential that our whole concept of ministry be adjusted from knowledge to revelation.

This should not be interpreted as something incredible but we should

begin to consecrate ourselves to God for this purpose. If we are interpreting the Holy Place Priesthood ministry correctly, it seems clear that continuing to “minister” from the natural light of the Outer Court is counter productive to this next dimension of ministry.

The cross, within the inner life, is only painful within and is not understood or observed by those around us. The outward cross may be discerned by our friends and family but the inward cross must be carried alone because it cannot be understood by others. This is a personal and private encounter with the Living God who exposes the corrupt and secret thoughts of our inner man. It is He, alone, who is offended by these things. This is not a not a carnal offence but an offence because of our lack of perfection into the image of Christ.

When we set our vision upon the Kingdom and ask God to bring us into that dimension, He begins to reveal the anti-Kingdom things in our life. Some are outward and some are inward. If we don't remember what we prayed and committed our life to, these responses by God in answer to our prayer are confusing to us. We may wonder why God is offended by such a small thing. We may forget that we asked God to take us to that higher life. He reveals things that prevent us from achieving to the higher life we requested of Him.

Since the Kingdom is a much higher life than we are presently living, He is faithful to reveal our defects as they affect that level of purity necessary. If we are expecting some automatic transfer to the higher life without a change of our inner life, we have misunderstood the meaning of a higher life. A higher life means a more pure and perfect life than we are now experiencing. Therefore, God reveals improper attitudes, superficiality, hypocrisy, lies, wrong motives and duplicity. When we deliberately deceive, God points that out as unacceptable in the Kingdom.

Each of these defects must come under the cross, be subject to death and expelled. If we assume that our death on the personal cross is external we have misunderstood the inward cross. Most of our outward

defects are the result of corruption in our inward life!