

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God..."

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Book One

By J. Preston Eby

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Chapter 1

The Kingdom Of God

“KINGDOM” — what a magical ring that word plays upon the ear, yet when it comes to the subject of the Kingdom of God there seems to be no end to the carnal-minded reasonings of man as to what it is, where it is, and how it will come to pass. If you were to ask several average professed Christians what the Kingdom of God is, you would receive a variety of answers. There are a great many ideas, opinions, interpretations, conceptions and mis-conceptions among believers as to what constitutes the Kingdom of God. Vast multitudes of people believe that any minute Jesus will appear in the sky and whisk away (rapture) those who are saved and take them to heaven to enjoy the Kingdom of God. They teach that the Kingdom of God is heaven and that it has no relationship with the earth. For these the “end time” means the cataclysmic end of the universe, the destruction of the earth by fire, the sending of all unbelievers and wicked people to eternal damnation in hell, and the establishing of an eternal order of bliss for the saved in some far-off heaven somewhere.

Others teach that the Kingdom of God is purely earthly, and that it will be a political and social structure enforced on earth for a thousand years at the return of Jesus Christ with His saints to rule and reign. This theory has been popularized by the Schofield Bible. To these the Kingdom of God is the restored kingdom of Israel fulfilling the Davidic covenant. Jesus offered this kingdom to the Jews, but they refused; therefore Christ withdrew His offer and postponed it until a future time when they would accept Him as their King. When that day comes, they say, Jesus will come back and set His feet upon the Mount of Olives. His saints with Him, He will come to the eastern gate of Jerusalem. Having been sealed up for centuries, this gate will be opened for Him to pass through into the city. He will then set up His headquarters in a building, sit on a throne, and be crowned King. His Kingdom will then be established. People from all nations will journey to Jerusalem to see Jesus — in person — and to worship Him in a millennial temple there. From Jerusalem the Kingdom will expand to rule over all nations. The nations will quit fighting — will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and there will follow a thousand years of unparalleled peace, blessing, prosperity, and righteousness.

A variation of the above plan involves the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic nations of earth as descendants of the “lost” ten tribes of Israel — the northern kingdom of Israel carried away into captivity. There is some evidence that these tribes have become the modern nations of Britain, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, north-western Europe, etc. According to this concept Christ comes back to reign over these great Israel nations rather than the Jews — and the capital city of the restored Israel Kingdom will be London, England, where the throne of David is now located. This Kingdom will be earthly, political, judiciary and military.

Still another teaching is that the Church (organized Christianity) is the Kingdom of God. The covenantal promises God made with Abraham and David have been transferred to and fulfilled spiritually in the Church. The Church is thus the New Israel in the earth. This theory prevailed during the Middle Ages (also called the Dark Ages) when the

supreme head of the Church (the Pope), complete with a crown, a throne, a government and an army, ruled the nations of Europe for a thousand years as the Kingdom of God on earth. Unfortunately, this period, instead of being the most enlightening, progressive, prosperous, righteous and glorious epoch in history was in fact the darkest, most illiterate and ignorant, superstitious and backward, of earth's generations! Some among us even today believe that the Kingdom will come as a result of Christians becoming politically active, taking over the existing political institutions, getting elected to office, and ruling the earth through the power of politics. This is exactly what happened when the Roman Emperor Constantine began mixing Christianity with carnal government which gave rise to the Papacy and the temporal powers of government were seized by the so-called Church. The result was not earth's "golden age," "Utopia," or "Jubilee," but the now infamous "Dark Ages" ruled over by the kingdom of MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

The Bible speaks of a number of kingdoms. The first world empire — the Chaldean Empire often called "Babylon" — was a kingdom. God inspired the prophet Daniel to say to its king, Nebuchadnezzar, "...the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory" (Dan. 2:37). Then there was the kingdom of Israel — the family descended from Israel, which became one of earth's nations or governments. Nearly all kingdoms involve an ethnic entity (racial group) and their government. The kingdom of Israel under Solomon was a type of the Kingdom of God. Therefore the Kingdom of God is dual: (1) A GOVERNMENT. A government — or kingdom — is composed of four things: (a) a KING, ruling over (b) people, subjects, or citizens within (c) a definite jurisdiction of territory, with (d) laws and a system of administering them. (2) A FAMILY. As with all kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel was a family of the children of Israel. In respect to the Kingdom of God, it comprises the Family of God — a family into which man may be born, which shall be formed into a RULING or GOVERNING family that shall have jurisdiction over all nations, that is, the whole earth, and, later, the entire universe!

As Bill Britton once wrote: "What a marvelous mystery! What a glorious destiny! This new nation of holy people is God's Kingdom. This Kingdom has a King of kings. And there are kings and priests. There are overcomers who rule and reign with Him. There is a bride and Bridegroom. There is a first-fruits, a harvest, and a great gleanings. There are 30 fold, 60 fold, and 100 fold in that great harvest. There are 144,000 who follow the Lamb wheresoever He goes, and there is an un-numbered multitude standing triumphantly before the throne. There is a Holy City and a Temple. There is a marriage supper attended by Bridegroom, bride, guests, servants, and even intruders. What else could there be in this Kingdom? More by far than our minds could comprehend. Get ready. Be there!"

The dictionary defines "kingdom" as "a government or country headed by a king or queen; a monarchical state; a realm or domain." The word "kingdom" is made up of the noun "king", and the suffix "dom". "Dom" is a noun-forming suffix to express rank, position, or domain. For example, a dukedom is the domain over which a duke has authority or exercises rule, and in the abstract the rank of a duke. In like manner a kingdom is the domain and the people within that domain over which a king exercises authority and rule. It is the "king's domain". "Kingdom" is thus a contraction of "king's domain". The term, Kingdom of God, can mean no other than the domain over which God exercises rule as King. It is God's declared purpose therefore that His people, His holy nation, His peculiar treasure, should be the domain over which He would rule as

King, and ultimately all the earth and all things and every creature. The Lord's greatest dominion at this time is in the lives of His elect and chosen ones. We are now becoming ruled and governed by the Lord totally and absolutely. He has extended the dominion of His Kingdom to our hearts and lives, and now the Lord will rule us with complete and undisputed dominion. And He will continue to rule and reign in our lives until every enemy within us is made subject to Him. This is the present truth of the Kingdom of God!

God has a plan, a wonderful Kingdom program for this earth and every person on this earth. You might be surprised to discover how many people go through life — some of them even go to church and speak in tongues — but never truly realize that God has a plan and purpose for them and for the ages. Friends, things are not just “happening” with God. He didn't fling this earth out in space and then sit back and say, “Whatever will be, will be.” God has a plan and He works all things after the counsel of His own will. God is sovereign and nothing shall thwart His plan. Once you begin to see yourself as a vital part of that plan and purpose, that what He has planned and purposed for your life will not be defeated or stopped, you will then begin to walk forth in victory and in life. But, precious friend of mine, let me assure you that this won't come just because you give mental assent to it and make a positive confession — this comes only as we bring our lives into conformity with God's priorities. We need to understand what God's priorities are and then flow with those priorities. The Lord's people are dabbling around with so many non-essentials, playing little church games, majoring in minors! The real purpose for which God sent Jesus into the world was to ESTABLISH ON THE EARTH HIS KINGDOM! And His ultimate purpose is that the kingdoms of this world shall experientially become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ. That is the plan of the ages. The prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, and which vast multitudes unheedingly repeat by rote, says, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done...” Where? “On earth as it is in heaven.”

The all-wise and omnipotent Creator planted within man's very nature a tendency to form into tribes, clans, colonies and nations with some kind of government, having a patriarch, chief, or king. Every kingdom requires a king. You cannot have a kingdom without a king. Neither can you have a king without a kingdom. The king must have a sphere over which he rules with absolute authority. If you don't believe that ask Constantine II, exiled king of Greece, who for a time lived in Italy and now lives in London. He is no king — he doesn't have a kingdom. He is out of a job. A true king must have a kingdom.

For people living today, living under democratic governments in the western world and in the twentieth century, the word “kingdom” is not at all a natural term to use. We know a lot about governments and politics, but very little about a kingdom. In Bible days, however, this was not the case. Most nations were then ruled by a king. The king was not elected by the people and he ruled with absolute authority — the king's word was law. Today, when our elected officials are held more accountable for their actions, I'm not sure we can begin to appreciate the absolute power of an ancient monarch. A thousand years ago, when a king spoke, people trembled. Subjects didn't say, “I'll, ah...take that into consideration, your majesty.” What they replied was, “Yes, your majesty!” The closest modern equivalent I can think of would be a decision handed down by the United States Supreme Court. You wouldn't argue with it, you would just accept it. And yet, that doesn't even come close. In the New Testament just a word from King Herod was enough to slaughter all the male children in Bethlehem two years old and younger. A king like Herod might be hated, but because of his position and power he was still treated with great respect.

Today there are few kings left in the world, and those that still bear the name actually wield very little power. They are kings by title only. The kingdoms of today are a rather hybrid form, that is, a figurehead as a king, yet the kingdom is ruled by some kind of assembly or parliament. They are constitutional monarchs and present to us a picture far different from the king in ancient times. The idea of doing obeisance before someone and being obedient to his every wish and command is foreign to us if not even repulsive. The very thought of not being in control of their own lives has not even entered very many men's minds. We in this country are used to "freedom" and any "kings" that come along may have some difficulty asserting their influence over us. Alas! That is the very reason so many Christians today have found no entrance into the Kingdom of God! They want God's grace and His blessings, but are submitted to His authority very little.

We have now come to the most sublime of all truths. Our hearts should bow in holy reverence and rejoice that the heavens are opened and that the mind of Christ is coming to dwell in men. We should be glad with joy unspeakable and full of glory that the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven are being unveiled within our very hearts. The light of the Holy Spirit's wisdom and revelation is shed with its quickening and illuminating rays upon our understanding, dispelling the mists, dividing the light from the darkness, that all the elect sons of God may find an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God in this great Day.

May the blessed spirit of truth make very real to all who read these lines that the phrase "the Kingdom of God" is only a manner of speaking. That is why Jesus never said, "The Kingdom of God is such and such," but always, "the Kingdom of God is like such and such." He explained the Kingdom in terms of parables and metaphors. There is actually no such entity as the Kingdom. It is not a kind of visible structure or outward establishment that God sets up. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!" It is rather God Himself exerting His rightful power to actually rule by His Spirit over all people, to bring them consciously under His control, to subdue them to His purposes, and direct them by His will. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom as "coming," He does not mean some "thing" or some "age" or something else which is to appear or begin. He speaks of God Himself making His rule effective in the hearts and affairs of men. May God help us to see the great and eternal truth that when we speak of the Kingdom of God we are talking about something that has no existence at all apart from GOD HIMSELF. Just as we speak of the grace of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the wisdom of God, the righteousness of God, or the power of God, we deceive ourselves if we think of them as having some tangible existence apart from God Himself. They are merely verbal ways of describing God Himself as He acts and manifests out of His state of being. So the Kingdom of God is a way of speaking of God Himself as He moves in power and glory and goodness and wisdom and righteousness to influence and rule in the hearts and activities of men!

THE RULE OF GOD

It is significant to note that the phrases "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven" are not to be found in the Old Testament. They are strictly New Testament terms beginning with John the Baptist and Jesus. When Jesus came He did not preach a message called grace, or salvation, or justification, or sanctification, or regeneration, or even the Church. Could there be any more glorious message than the one that fell from His lips as He began His sonship ministry declaring, "The KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND!" From that time forward the great teaching of the Lord centered in the truth of THE KINGDOM. His

gospel was the gospel (good news) of the Kingdom of God. He only lightly touched on the other subjects which today are considered the great doctrines of the Church and then only as they related to the Kingdom. All of these things are included within the Kingdom, but the Kingdom is none of them. The Kingdom is THE RULE OF GOD. It is the DOMINION OF GOD. That is exactly what it is. And Jesus came with just that message — the revelation of the RULE OF GOD within the hearts of men, and through men, over the earth, yea, over the whole vast universe! First He must reign completely in our lives. The Kingdom of God is God in Christ in the saints governing the creation of God. The rule of God begins in the hearts of His elect.

Jesus, after His resurrection, asked Peter three times if he loved Him. He then said to him: “When you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and Another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go.” Commenting on these words, the Holy Spirit adds: “This Jesus said to show by what death Peter was to glorify God” (Jn. 21:18-19). The expressions when you were young and when you are old speak of two distinct periods in Peter’s life. They indicate His walk before and after entering the Kingdom. The reference to his past (when Peter was young) and to his future (when he would be old) is not a reference to age but to spiritual immaturity and maturity. Emphasis in the first statement in on the pronoun you (“you girded yourself, you walked where you would”). During this period, Peter’s walk with the Lord was a walk which centered on self — on where he wanted to go and what he wanted to do for the Lord. How impetuous was he in his desires! But the day would come when Peter, subject to Jesus as his King, would allow the Lord to do with him as He willed.

The words, another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go, succinctly describe the walk of the Kingdom. The “another” here refers to the Lord. The walk of the Kingdom is far from easy and unlike anything we have experienced in the past. Whereas the Lord tolerated and even overlooked the many inconsistencies in our walk when we were young (immature), He now subjects us to a discipline of fire until His image is formed in us (Mal. 3:2-3). Every part of our being — spirit, soul, and body — must come under His dominion. All our strongholds will be exposed and reduced to ashes, and every thought made captive to the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:3-5). In the Kingdom we come to know God as an all-consuming fire — not to destroy but to purge and sanctify us (Heb. 12:29). “Who among us,” asks the prophet Isaiah, “can dwell with the devouring fire?” The answer: “He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, who despises the gains of oppressions, who shakes his hands, lest they hold a bribe, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil, he will dwell on the heights...his bread will be given him, his water will be sure. Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will behold a land (the Kingdom) that stretches afar” (Isa. 33:14-17).

The epistle to the Hebrews was written to those who were following on to know the Lord. In the twelfth chapter the writer informs his readers that God wanted to wean them from their babyhood walk in God and that which appealed to their physical senses in order to introduce them to that which was real and lasting — the Kingdom. To experience the Kingdom, they would have to forsake the elementary principles which the whole church world glories in today, and go on to perfection. Jesus as King would become the living reality of their lives. But for this to happen, their earth and heavens first had to be shaken. That the earth in us (our humanity) must be shaken before we can enter into the Kingdom is a truth very few would deny. But that our heavens (religious experiences, concepts, understandings, ministries, activities) must also be shaken before we can

receive the Kingdom is another matter. To realize all that God has for us as His sons in the walk of the Kingdom, our earth and heavens must give way to a new order — to a new earth and heaven. Not a new earth of mountains and valleys and streams and trees; not a new heavens of galaxies, solar systems, suns, planets and moons; but a NEW HUMANITY AND NEW SPIRITUAL DIMENSION. Only then can we know what the Kingdom really is and how to walk in it and minister it to creation. All religious activity apart from the realm of the Kingdom is naught but hay, wood, and stubble. It makes very impressive edifices, but it is not the Kingdom of God, and will disappear forever in the all-consuming fire of God.

KINGDOM OF GOD — KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

There are many strange ideas around about the difference between the terms “Kingdom of God” and “Kingdom of Heaven”. It has been taught that the Kingdom of God is spiritual and heavenly, whereas the Kingdom of Heaven is temporal and earthly, and that the two cannot be mixed. Actually, if there were any truth in that, it still sounds backwards! Some say that the Kingdom of God is an eternal kingdom of God over all and that the Kingdom of Heaven is an earthly and temporal program, some future divine dynasty to be established on earth, and that it is of special significance only to the Jews, who, still awaiting their Messiah, will see His righteous government in control of the world, and in their hands, during the Millennium. Others assume that the Kingdom of Heaven means a kingdom in heaven, so they are waiting to die so they can go to their kingdom in heaven where they intend to spend eternity strumming harps and dancing up and down the streets of gold.

Ignorant men have long tried to make a distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, as though they were two separate kingdoms. They often explain that the Kingdom of Heaven embraces the “Church age” and the Kingdom of God will be set up during the “Millennium”. The simple truth is that the two terms are used interchangeably in numerous places in scripture. To cite only a few of several examples, when Matthew recorded the Sermon on the Mount he quoted Jesus as saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” But when Luke recorded the same saying of Jesus he said, “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.” Again, Matthew quoted the Lord, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the law and the prophets prophesied until John” (Mat. 11:12-13). Luke says, “The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it” (Lk. 16:16). In these two passages the messenger spoken of in both cases is John. His message was said to begin where the law and the prophets left off. His message was announcing a kingdom. In one passage that kingdom is called the Kingdom of God, while in the other it is called the Kingdom of Heaven. The time was the same, the man was the same, the message was the same, and the kingdom was the same in both cases.

Our Lord’s instructions upon sending out the twelve were, according to Matthew, “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat. 10:7). According to Luke, “He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick” (Lk. 9:2). Certainly Jesus did not preach two conflicting messages at the same time! Certainly He was not announcing two separate and distinct kingdoms and declaring them both to be at hand! These, and many other passages, show the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are one and the same. Yet — there is a difference! God does not have TWO

KINGDOMS — He has only ONE. There is not one Kingdom of God and another Kingdom of Heaven. There is only one Kingdom. However each of these two terms is not without its special significance. For, you see, heaven is a REALM and God is a PERSON. The Kingdom has its origin in the REALM OF HEAVEN, and in the PERSON OF GOD. The term “Kingdom of Heaven” denotes, on the one hand, from whence (from what place, location, realm or dimension) the Kingdom proceeds, while the term “Kingdom of God” reveals, on the other hand, from whom (from what person or being) the Kingdom originates. When we consider these two items, place and person, it immediately follows that as to REALM the Kingdom is out of the heavenlies, but as to PERSON the Kingdom comes from God. It is called the Kingdom OF God because it is from and by God. He is the Instigator and Head of the Kingdom. It is called the Kingdom OF Heaven because it has its inception in heaven — the invisible realm of Spirit.

The prophet Daniel brings the two together when by inspiration he says, “And in the days of these kings shall the GOD (person) of HEAVEN (place, realm) set up A KINGDOM, which shall never be destroyed” (Dan. 2:44). Jesus then brings the two together when He says to Pilate, “MY (person) kingdom is not of THIS WORLD (place, realm): for if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now MY (person) kingdom is not from HENCE (place, realm)” (Jn. 18:36). Through their relationship we understand there cannot be a Kingdom of Heaven without the presence of God. On the other hand, where the presence of God is, there is a manifestation of Heaven’s Life.

Ah, then, this Kingdom of God may also be called the Kingdom of Heaven! To call, then, the Kingdom of God the Kingdom of Heaven is to ascribe to the Kingdom of God every heavenly and spiritual perfection. The Kingdom of God is, for example, heavenly in its origin — that origin is the bosom of the eternal Father. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its purpose — that purpose is to restore creation to its original glory. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its king — that king is the Son of the Highest, Head and body. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its subjects — those subjects are the children of God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its nature — that nature is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its entrance — that gateway is not by birth of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but by birth of God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its laws — those laws are not ordinances, rules, or regulations — they are spiritual principles. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its method — that method is not by might, nor by power, nor by the enticing words of man’s wisdom, but by the Spirit of the living God. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its prerogatives — those prerogatives are for the sons of God to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a kingdom of priests after the order of Melchizedek, Saviours on mount Zion. The Kingdom of God is heavenly in its privileges — those privileges are to be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to the inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. In brief, the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Heaven — it is the Kingdom of Heaven because it is the kingdom or dominion of the GOD OF HEAVEN!

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM

What holy assurance stirs within as the Spirit of God floods our souls with the divine understanding of truth so sublime as this: “For BY HIM were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created BY HIM and FOR HIM:

and He is before all things, and BY HIM all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). Your whole outlook on life will change from one of fear and dread to one of blessed assurance and confidence with the entrance of the understanding that ALL THINGS are vassals of His power, His dominion, and His control, and ALL THINGS are in His hands. Nothing exists without His consent. None acts without His orders or prospers without His blessing. In His omnipotent hands the nations of the earth in all their vaunted might and power are but dust upon the scales. You will not spend sleepless nights worrying about the Chinese, or the Russians, or the terrorists when your heart rests assured that God has ordained all these things for His purpose and He is in control of them all as well as your life and mine.

Oh, the unfathomableness of the wisdom and power of our God! How can mortal minds even begin to comprehend it? He is the omnipotent and omniscient Source of everything. He speaks and atoms come into existence. He utters His voice and light shines into the darkness. He commands and billions of galaxies appear. He breathes and life begins to flow. By the manipulation of His fingers He sets the stars in their courses and with the span of His hand He measures the heavens. He sets bars and boundaries for the oceans. He says to them, “Thus far and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stopped.” They may beat upon the shore and run up the beaches, but they have to fall back into the boundaries God set for them. “Praise ye Him, all ye His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise ye Him, all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree that shall not pass. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above earth and heaven” (Ps. 148:2-13).

Oh, my soul, what words are these! All things on earth and throughout the unbounded heavens are under His command. The whole creation, like a great machine, every part working in precise coordination with each other, all fulfilling the purpose they were designed to do. Even fire and hail, the snow and vapors, and the stormy wind fulfilling His word. Everything obeying the will of the Almighty. All accomplishing their designed purpose in the great scheme of creation. Listen in reverence to these divine words, “A man’s heart deviseth his way, but the LORD directeth his steps” (Prov. 16:9). “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of waters He turneth it whithersoever He wills” (Prov. 21:1). “The steps of a man are ordered of the LORD, and He delighteth in his way” (Ps. 37:23).

The Lord whom we worship controls the hearts of all kings, presidents, prime ministers and rulers whether they realize it or not; God it is who is ordaining their paths and directing their ways. He turns their heart in the direction He wants them to go. He raised up Pharaoh for a purpose, and it was the Lord Himself who kept hardening his heart (Ex. 7:3,13). Now I, like many who read these lines, was raised up with the mentality that somehow the devil got the whole thing and that the earth belongs to “the prince of the power of the air” and “the god of this world.” No, it doesn’t! The word of the prophet is wonderfully true, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1). God owns it all and He gives it to whom He wills. He has

the right to appoint stewards over creation based on His purpose and their faithfulness, regardless of moral, religious, or other considerations.

Let's look at three people in the scripture whom God raised up to rule the earth. Isaiah talks about Cyrus, the Persian king whom God put in charge of the earth (Isa. 44:24 to 45:7). God called Cyrus "My shepherd." That's astounding, to think that God would raise up a heathen king to accomplish His purposes in the earth. But the Lord says, "I will raise up Cyrus, My shepherd, and he is to rule over the whole thing by My divine appointment." In Daniel 4:28-37, we discover that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, ruled by God's divine appointment. If we think of the Kingdom of God as a democracy, we are falling short in our thinking. There's only one vote — and it's God's. He says, "I'm going to appoint you, Nebuchadnezzar, and you're going to be the king and you're going to rule and you're going to fulfill all my will, and I'll establish you in all the earth. And I'll give you wisdom and power and might and majesty." He promised it to him and it happened. Then when Nebuchadnezzar started thinking that he had done it himself, God said, "I'll take it from you."

God took the kingdom from Nebuchadnezzar by causing him to lose his mind for a season. He went insane and lived in the wilderness, ate grass like a cow, had long hair all over his body, and his fingernails grew like bird claws. At the end of this humbling experience, Nebuchadnezzar repented and blessed the God of heaven as the only source of all kingdoms and powers and confessed that God was fully able to "humble those who walk in pride." If we look again in Daniel, we find that Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's son, had the same problem with pride that his father did, and so God also smote him in an instant and took away his kingdom.

Almighty God raises up kings, and casts them down at will. He drowns the mighty Pharaoh in the depths of the sea, and puts His hand on a little shepherd boy tending the sheep and makes him the greatest king the world has ever known. He tells us what is going to happen on the morrow, and casts the shadow of events that will happen in the years and ages to come. He can do all this because He planned it all, created it all, and controls it all; and it will all work out the way He has planned. In spite of men, angels, or demons His purpose is always fulfilled. He is the eternal King and the only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords! What a mighty God we serve! If the God we worship were less than this, we would be in trouble. We serve a God who is guiding us, our loved ones, our president, the governors of our states, the kings and princes and rulers and even our enemies unto the ends of the earth. His mighty hands are in all things and the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. In due time all will see the fullness of all this.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that the will of God is sovereign. It is done in the long run everywhere and always. His thoughts are carried out; His laws are enforced; His purposes are accomplished. Man may delay them, defy them, deny them, set himself up with utmost strength against them; but he can no more resist and defeat them than he can push back the ocean tide. The world moves on in the course that He has marked for it. Not in a straight line — the wickedness and perversity of men may push it back a little with His permission; they drag it to the right and left of the true direction; but it returns again and pursues its resistless course until the goal of the Almighty is reached. As Nebuchadnezzar said long ago, "He doeth His will among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

Nations and kings and the great ones of the earth are like clay in the hands of the potter. "He girds them though they have not known Him." He uses their very folly as an instrument of His wisdom. He makes their wrath to praise Him, and the remainder of that wrath doth He restrain. The greatest crimes that have ever been committed have been wonderfully used by Him to further His truth and justice in the world. The crucifixion of Christ made Christ the world's Saviour. The slaying of the saints prepared the way for the triumph of the early Church. The burning of the English martyrs made England Protestant. The atrocities of the Spaniards led to the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon race on the American Continent. Out of the hugest evil God's foreseeing mind works good, and the march towards the perfect day goes on in spite of the craft and strength of devils and men.

If it were not for this we should lose all faith in God, and all hope for the future of His world, if we did not believe that in the end God is always victorious, and that man's haughty ambitions, evil designs, and fickle passions are over-ridden and thrown aside by His unerring power. The world is not a battlefield in which the results depend upon human combatants alone, or a huge game of chess in which statesmen, rulers, soldiers, thinkers, the press, chance and accident, and the forces of goodness and the forces of hell have the winning and the losing moves. God is over all and in the midst of all. He has the last, decisive word in every dispute, the final and winning move in every game. Through all the ill-doings and stupidities of men His unceasing purpose runs. And there is only one will that always gets done. It is the mighty will of Him who is the sole Master of the world, God in Christ Jesus.

In all our lives that same will is done. It is done in every saint's life, in every life of faith and obedience, in the joy and strength and peace of those who trust in God. It is done in every foul, unclean, intemperate, and godless life, in the misery and unrest and hell which follow the heels of sin. You cannot escape God's will or overturn it. It holds you in love or grips you in suffering. He is the Lord of our lives, and if we will not take the way of His dear children, then we have to take the hard way of transgressors, and that also is of His appointment. The will of God, whether infinitely gracious or terribly severe, is done on every one at last. And what we are to pray for is not God's sovereignty — that is beyond our praying— but something much more beautiful, that HIS KINGDOM MAY COME. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven." That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! What I want to point out to you is the difference between the sovereignty of God and the kingdom of God. The Kingdom is something beyond God's sovereignty, higher than God's sovereignty, more glorious than God's sovereignty. We must never confuse the two.

The scriptures speak of the Kingdom of God as "everlasting" on one hand, and as having a definite historical beginning, progress, and termination on the other hand. When we allow the Holy Spirit of Truth to teach us, we see that the Kingdom over which God rules has two distinct aspects: the everlasting and the limited, the universal and the local, the general and the specific. There are passages of scripture that clearly declare that God has always possessed absolute sovereignty over all creation and that He rules as King over all. God is ruler over heaven and earth. He is the supreme Governor of the universe. If Creator, then surely He is the Owner and Possessor of all realms. By inherent, incontestable right, He is sovereign Lord. There is but one will in the universe and that will is the will of God. "The Lord reigneth" is declared again and again. He is King over all principalities and powers. "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Ps. 95:3). "The Lord is King for ever and ever..." (Ps. 10:16). "The Lord

sitteth King for ever” (Ps. 29:10). “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all” (I Chron. 29:11-12). “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and sitteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan. 4:17).

God’s sovereignty is exercised over both heaven and earth. There have been many occasions when His sovereignty has been manifested through His direct intervention in the affairs of kings, rulers, and nations. He has often demonstrated His sovereignty through mighty miracles and judgments, proving that He is Lord. One such instance is seen in His dealing with Pharaoh, as we have mentioned. The seat of God’s government is His throne. The throne of the Most High is the highest thing in all of God’s universe. There is nothing higher. It is a throne of consummate power and majesty and glory. From that throne God rules over all creatures and things. And yet, strange as it may seem, shocking as it may sound, THIS IS NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

The Kingdom of God is not the sovereignty of God as such; God is always and everywhere the sovereign God. If His sovereignty were His Kingdom there would be no need to pray, “Thy Kingdom come.” Jesus would never have said that it is necessary to be “born again” in order to “enter” into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is beyond sovereignty and only the Kingdom ultimately satisfies the heart of the Father. The Kingdom is what He is after through His sovereignty. The Kingdom is the sovereignty of God in action to overcome all resistance and bring willing submission of every creature. Sovereignty is God ruling over men. The Kingdom is man submitting to God. In sovereignty God enforces His will upon men even when they are not aware of it. In the Kingdom God is calling and wooing man until God and man become one. Sovereignty is God above man ruling and overruling. The Kingdom is God and man in union. In sovereignty there is only one will — God’s. In the Kingdom God’s will and man’s will are united.

The Kingdom is not the reign of God as such, for God is ultimately reigning as the King eternal and the King of the universe at all times. The Kingdom is, rather, the gracious action of the sovereign God of heaven by which His reign is recognized and revered and entered into by those men whom God had previously permitted to walk in their own sense of “self-hood.” The Kingdom is the gathering together of all things into one in Christ. The Kingdom is reconciliation. The Kingdom is the restitution of all things. The Kingdom is salvation. The Kingdom is regeneration and transformation. The Kingdom is every man presented perfect in Christ Jesus. The Kingdom is God All-in-all.

In the nineteenth century, Karl Marx went off to university, where he renounced his faith in God in favor of atheism. He defied God and seduced arrogant minds and ignorant masses. Marx gathered his armies and weapons like a dark cloud over man’s highest hopes. Marx and his hearers shook their fists at history, revelation, and divine will. But we have seen, are seeing, and shall yet see that Jesus Christ is Lord of the opposition — “Bye-Bye Marx!” Jesus Christ is Lord of all! But some are persuaded that the collapse of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe heralds the dawn of the new age of the Kingdom of God. After decades of Godless tyranny both the Iron Curtain and the Berlin

Wall fell and the captive nations were set free. The world looks with wonder on these astonishing events as a historic turning point in the world political structure — Someone in supreme authority raised His hand and actually rolled back the vast and icy seas of communism. Great news! A real cause to celebrate! New-found freedom is always a cause to celebrate, and any undermining of godless systems is surely a reason to be glad.

Now the light of the gospel of Christ can more easily penetrate the darkness of those great lands. The Lord revealed to me in a dream in 1983 that He would soon liberate Russia from the yoke of communism and that this liberty would be followed by a massive “religious revival” which in turn would ultimately be followed by a mighty move of the Spirit of God. I have witnessed these events take place with the exception of the final one. How we praise God for what He is doing! What a day to behold the wonders of our Lord! But — is this a manifestation of the KINGDOM OF GOD? I think not! It is rather an action of God’s sovereignty. Just as “law” is a facet of the government of the United States, yet the government is something vastly more than “law,” so is the Kingdom of God an aspect of God’s sovereignty, yet God’s sovereign acts are not the Kingdom of God. God sovereignly moved to bring down atheistic communism, but this did not bring the Kingdom of God to Russia nor to the world. Everything that happens is controlled by His sovereignty. But the Kingdom of God is something infinitely greater, grander, and more glorious than the sovereign act of God to destroy a corrupt system of government. Many such governments and tyrannies have fallen throughout history. God Himself brought them down. But casting a devil out of a man does not make him a saint. After the devil is cast out he must then be quickened by the Spirit of God and made alive unto God. In like manner, eradicating communism out of Russia brings no one into the Kingdom of God. Except the Russian people be born again, born of God, born of the Spirit, they can neither “see” nor “enter” into the Kingdom of God. That is the realm beyond sovereignty.

The Kingdom of God is more narrow in scope than the region over which God rules as Sovereign. At all times and in all circumstances God has dominion. He is Lord of ALL. Even evil men and vile deeds in their worst expressions are under His sway and scepter. Satan is the servant of God as an adversary to challenge us so that we may grow stronger in the Lord. Yet wicked men have not entered into the Kingdom of God. Neither has Satan, though he does God’s bidding, been translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son. All men are subject to God’s sovereignty, but when we come to the Kingdom the scriptures speak of a “calling” to the Kingdom of God, of “entering” into it, of its being “shut” or of people being “cast out” from it, of its being “sought,” “given,” “possessed,” “received,” and “inherited.”

The Kingdom of God is limited to that domain where God’s saving power has defeated all opposition, broken down every wall, transformed all that is contrary of God’s nature, mind, and will, and has brought men into willing submission to His authority. Where the nature of God and the mind of Christ have mightily conquered, the state of things is called the Kingdom of God. Where hearts are changed, where sin and error and darkness have been defeated, where truth and righteousness advance, where the will and ways of God are raised up as reality and life in a people, where the mind of Christ rules out of union with God — there the Kingdom of God has come and is advancing. In the Kingdom it is no longer God ruling over you by sovereignty, but the life, mind, heart, nature, power, wisdom, knowledge, and will of God entering into you, becoming your very own reality.

The Kingdom of God is the power to transform. Its citizens are a holy people. Its kings and priests are all righteous, wise, mighty through God. Its territory is one of light and beauty and glory. In the days of Christ's earthly sojourn, as He was choosing the first men for His Kingdom, He selected men of passions and faults like yours and mine; but He manifested the power to change them! He found Matthew the tax collector — mercenary, commercial, selling his birthright for cash and commission, metallic, his god more a Roman coin than the God of Israel. Yet Christ changed him, and forsaking all, Matthew marched to the drum beat of the Kingdom of God. Then James, selfish, introverted, hedonistic, wanting the right hand at the throne of Christ, finally finds that the glory of life lies in works of faith, mercy, goodness, righteousness and the power of God. Christ finds John, a man irascible and of bad disposition, "Boanerges — a son of thunder," but when Jesus is done with him he becomes the great apostle of love and reconciliation. He finds Thomas, ever stumbling over his mind, intellectually slow to believe; but he finally cries, "My Lord and my God" and marches to a great kingliness of spirit. He calls Simon Peter, impulsive, bragging, making great boasts but bogging down in the face of the taunting of the crowd; but finally Peter is willing to be crucified head downward for his Lord. Before their change they were subject to God's sovereignty, but after their change they were one with God in nature, power and purpose. That is the reality of the Kingdom of God! It is the experiencing of God Himself BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY! This is the kingly life. When you and I step into Christ we become a part of a great imperial, majestic program to make Christ King of kings and Lord of lords. Alexander the great, Caesar, Hannibal, Napoleon and Hitler never dreamed of the breath-taking consummation of power that Christ prophesied for Himself and those who are one in Him when He uttered the sublime words: "MY KINGDOM".

According to the good pleasure of His will, and to the praise of His glory, the purpose of God from eternity focused on the Kingdom. A Kingdom not of this world, a Kingdom not of men blindly ruled and over-ruled by the unobserved sovereignty of an unknown God, but a reign in the hearts of willing and loyal subjects. The story is told of a king who was famous for his abhorrence of waste — so it was quite surprising when he came into the room where his aides were assembled carrying a breathtakingly beautiful pearl in his hands. Showing it to the first of his aides, he asked, "What do you think this pearl is worth?" "Oh, many trunks full of gold, your majesty," he replied. The king said, "Smash it." "It would be an insult to the king to destroy such a beautiful pearl," replied the aide. The king turned to a second man and showed him the pearl. "How much do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked. "One cannot put a price tag on such a beautiful pearl as this," replied the second man. "Smash it," said the king. "Such senseless destruction is unthinkable," replied the second aide. The king turned to a third man. He was a humble laborer who, in return for a kindness he had shown the king, had been invited to live in the palace. "What do you think this pearl is worth?" he asked the man. "More than all the gold I have ever seen in my entire life," he replied. "Smash it," said the king. Without a moment's hesitation, this man took the pearl to where there were two large rocks and in an instant, reduced the pearl to a thimbleful of useless dust. "The man is mad," cried the others in the room. Holding up his hand to quiet the murmurs, the laborer said: "Which is of greater value; a beautiful pearl or obedience to the king's command?"

The Kingdom of God that I am proclaiming today is composed of that company of elect sons of God who have aligned themselves with God; who listen to His voice, who put on His mind, who obey His commands, who walk in His nature, who do His will and carry out His divine purpose in the heavens and on the earth. They are the loyal subjects of His Kingdom and ever do His bidding. Their King is the Lord God Almighty and He is their

Father. They obey without question; for it is their nature to do only and always those things that please the Father. They are the true citizens of the Kingdom of God. They are first under His rule and authority, but they are ambassadors of that divine Kingdom. They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. They are destined to share His glory and sit with Him upon His throne. They are the members of the government of God and the Kingdom of Heaven is expressed through them and the power and the glory of the Kingdom is being committed into their hands for the age and the ages to come.

This is the Kingdom Jesus came and announced, taught, personified, demonstrated and brought into reality among men. Are all Christians in the Kingdom of God? Perhaps you have heard someone say, "All Christians have Jesus as Saviour, but not all have Him as Lord." A young boy might put it this way: "I am the son of my father, but I don't want him to tell me what to do." The Kingdom of God in its simplest definition means that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD! He must be Lord in us, and He must be Lord through us. This is the mark of sonship. This is the power of the Kingdom.

Such is what God planned in a new creation species of men redeemed and transformed into the image and likeness of God. Such is what God has purposed to bring all men into in His due time. Such a glorious climax to the Father's plans, which has now been made known unto God's elect by the Spirit, has not always been revealed to the sons of men. Righteous men and prophets received glimmering hints, but it was not given to them to know. Mighty angels were curious, but they too had to wait until the fullness of time (1 Pet. 1:10-12). Little by little, however, God had dropped hints of a wondrous Kingdom to come. Dim at first, then becoming brighter and clearer, was the lamp of prophecy. As a candle in a dark place is helpful, so was the prophet's testimony about Jesus and the Kingdom, which inspired hope until the Day dawned and the Day Star arose within our hearts.

One glorious day the firstborn Son of the living God walked among men and announced, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15). The new reign of God had come to the birth. The call went forth throughout all the earth in the power of the Spirit for men to become willing subjects to the Kingdom of God. First twelve, then seventy, then vast multitudes responded to the call. On the day of Pentecost alone about three thousand precious souls, quickened by the Holy Spirit with eyes to see and ears to hear answered the call and were gathered into the reign of God. No longer did devout men wait for the Kingdom, but they were in it, and they ate and drank in the Kingdom of Heaven. Let God be praised! for His rule in ransomed hearts had begun. Everywhere men and women were translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of Heaven. Even in lonely exile on the isle of Patmos, John the disciple could exult that he was a brother and companion to the saints "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

Chapter 2

The Realm Of The Kingdom Of Heaven

There are many strange ideas around about the difference between the terms “Kingdom of God” and “Kingdom of Heaven”. Carnal-minded men have long tried to make a distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, as though they were two separate kingdoms. Our Lord’s instructions upon sending out the twelve were, according to Matthew, “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat. 10:7). According to Luke, “He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick” (Lk. 9:2). Certainly Jesus did not preach two conflicting messages at the same time! Surely He was not announcing two separate and distinct kingdoms and declaring them both to be at hand! These, and many other passages, show the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are one and the same. Yet — there is a difference! For, you see, heaven is a REALM and God is a PERSON. The Kingdom has its origin in the REALM OF HEAVEN, and in the PERSON OF GOD. The term “Kingdom of Heaven” denotes from whence (from what place, location, realm or dimension) the Kingdom proceeds, whereas the term “Kingdom of God” reveals from whom (from what person or being) the Kingdom originates. When we consider these two items, place and person, it immediately follows that as to REALM the Kingdom is out of the heavenlies, but as to PERSON the Kingdom comes from God. It is called the Kingdom OF God because it is from and by God. He is the Instigator and Head of the Kingdom. It is called the Kingdom OF Heaven because it has its inception in heaven — the invisible realm of Spirit.

In this message we shall consider the meaning, magnitude and magnificence of the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. The gospel of the Kingdom is not the good news that we shall go to some far-off heaven somewhere and live forever in an external paradise. As extraordinarily marvelous as that would be, God has something for us far, far better than this! Going to a place called heaven is not what Jesus had in mind when He proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven. The religious tradition concerning “going to heaven” is so strong that it distorts people’s ability to perceive and understand what is written in the Word of God. When we emphasize the concept of going to heaven to live forever, the gospel of the Kingdom becomes incoherent. Preachers are always making the foolish statement, “Except a man be born again he cannot get to heaven.” THAT’S NOT WHAT JESUS SAID! It is an absurd perversion of the word of our Lord. Jesus wasn’t talking about going anywhere — He plainly said that unless a man is born again by the Spirit of God he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

Oh! Why do men play with the Word of God? Why do they twist, change, mis-quote, mis-represent, and distort the good news of the Kingdom? Is it not the incredible darkness of the carnal mind and the ignorant foolishness of religion? I tell you today that the gospel of the Kingdom of God has absolutely nothing to do with dying and going to heaven — it has everything to do with the rule of God coming into this earth. Redemption is not a change of location — it is a transformation of the state of being. The Father’s desire is not that we leave the world behind someday to “fly away” to our mansion in the sky. His desire is for us to leave the world behind right now and press forward each day deeper and deeper into the depths of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

I once read the story about Thomas Huxley. He was a devoted disciple of Darwin, the famous biologist, teacher, and author. Huxley staunchly defended the theory of evolution. An avowed humanist, he was bold and convincing as he traveled widely giving his lectures, which were a series of blistering attacks on Christianity, and especially what he called, "The alleged resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth." One day, having finished a series of public assaults against Biblical truth, Huxley was in a hurry to catch his train to the next city. He took one of Dublin's famous horse drawn taxis and settled back with his eyes closed to rest himself for a few minutes. He assumed the driver had been told the destination by the hotel doorman, so all he said as he got in the cab was, "Hurry, I'm almost late. Drive as fast as you can." The horses lurched forward and galloped across Dublin at break-neck speed. After they had gone some distance Huxley glanced out of the window only to realize that they were going west, away from the morning sun, not toward it. They were not headed toward the train station but were actually getting farther and farther away from it. The scholar leaned forward and shouted to the driver, "Do you know where you're going?" Without looking back or slacking the pace the driver yelled a classic line. It was not meant to be humorous, nor is it when you think about the truth it contains. "No, your Honor," the driver shouted back, "but I'm going as fast as I can!"

That story is more than a story. It is the graphic illustration of the whole church world today. All think they are on their way to heaven and they are going just as fast as they can to get there. Great speed, much commotion, a rapid pace — but a journey to nowhere! They have eternal life, alright, and they are headed somewhere, but not where they think. The planet with the golden streets, the mansions, the harps, the white night gowns, the fluttering wings — all the visible, external things their hopes are fastened upon DO NOT EXIST. And they are traveling at break-neck speed in the wrong direction — away from all the glorious and eternal reality those things represent!

One of the beautiful symbolisms given us in the book of Revelation is the Holy City "coming down from God out of heaven" (Rev. 21:2). When John said that this city comes down from God out of heaven, he wasn't talking about coming down past Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. He meant not that it would settle down over the mount of Olives or any other geographical location. In the Bible a city represents a government, and the "holy" city is a righteous government. It is not a man-made government. It doesn't have a "Democratic," "Republican," "Reform," "Labor," or "Conservative" party. It emanates from God, out of the celestial or spiritual realm, and is established on earth through a heavenly people. May the blessed spirit of revelation grant us the clarity to see that this city shall never rule until it has in all truth become the "holy" city, prepared, adorned, and "made ready." She comes down from heaven. Her origin is divine, her nature, her character, is heavenly — "out of heaven from God." One is reminded of the scripture, "As IS the heavenly, such are they also THAT ARE heavenly...we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:48-49).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:2-5). My beloved, John saw the city descending down from God to earth. He did not see us going out into space somewhere. God is going to perfect His elect right here upon

earth with a divine life that comes out of God from heaven, and they are going to reign upon the earth. “Suddenly there came from heaven the sound of a rushing mighty wind...and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men! And He shall dwell with them! God is coming to dwell with mankind. That is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Yet millions of Christians vainly imagine that they are going to a city up in the sky to live there with Jesus forever and ever. Multitudes believe that somehow they will escape “The Great Tribulation” by being “raptured,” snatched up to heaven. The testimony of scripture is just the opposite of man’s childish superstitions. God has always come to man. In the sacred mists of long ago Eden the Lord God came down and walked and talked with Adam. In another place we find that the Lord appeared on the plains of Mamre and walked and talked with our father Abraham. God came down on Mount Sinai in flaming fire and smoke before the face of the whole assembled nation of Israel, and gave them His law. God instructed Moses to build the tabernacle in the wilderness so that He could have a dwelling place in the midst of our Israelite forefathers. Long centuries later “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (Jn. 1:14). John saw the city descending from God, and it is descending from God. With every message of God that is preached, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every person that is born from above, thus becoming a citizen of that city, it is coming down to earth. With every person who receives the anointing of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every member of God’s elect who grows up another step into perfection, into the image and likeness of the Holy One, the Holy City is coming down to earth. With every revelation that comes to us from the Spirit of God and that takes us onward into the perfect fulfillment of God’s great plan and purpose in our lives, the Holy City is descending to earth. As the principles of the Kingdom of God — righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost — are established in our lives, the Holy City is coming down from God out of heaven. When the nature and character of our heavenly Father are formed in us, and His precious mind rules our hearts, the Holy City is descending to earth. With every victory over sin and sickness, over limitation, darkness and death, the Holy City is descending to earth. Beloved, it will continue descending with the development of the body of Christ into its full stature. It will descend and descend until the prayer that Jesus taught for sons is fulfilled: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

In an article some time ago Terry and Tykie Crisp wrote, “Why is it that this Great City is coming DOWN OUT of heaven? It’s because of the burdened appeal of creation! Beloved, there is coming a GLORIOUS CHURCH in these last days, a church which has been caught up to the highest heaven, to the very throne of God...but who, because of the spirit of sonship in their hearts, will not be able to ignore the groaning of the prisoners! They will come down from the heavenlies in High Priestly attire, bearing their gem-studded breastplate, which is the burden of mankind upon their hearts...with deliverance, with power, and with authority, to set the captives free! Imagine, if you will, a church so virtuous and bright that the nations of the world will walk in the light thereof, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor to it, submitting themselves to her authority, and seeking wisdom from her mouth!” — end quote.

This great city, the heavenly Jerusalem that started coming down on the day of Pentecost, shall continue to come down from God out of heaven. That is, it shall continue to descend from out of the divine consciousness and life of the Lord into the receptivity and consciousness and experience of His people on earth. It shall persist until

all that dwell upon the earth shall walk in its light and enter in through its gates. Then shall the whole earth be filled with the glory and the knowledge of the Lord. Even now the new heavens — THE NEW MIND AND SPIRIT — are descending into our hearts, our nature, creating within us a new earth for the tabernacling of God. Every thing that God sends down out of heaven is infinitely good and glorious. Two thousand years ago He sent Jesus as His best gift, and all the world has been blessed by that gift. When He brings heaven down to us we know that He is bringing His best. Every good and every perfect gift cometh down from above. A king once gave a diamond to one of his friends, and the friend said, "Sire, this is too great a gift for me to receive." But the king answered, "It is not too great a gift for a king to give." In like manner, if the full manifestation of the life and glory of God in you, His elect, seems beyond what you deserve or are capable of, remember! it is NOT TOO MUCH FOR GOD TO GIVE AND DO!

According to the beloved John everything on earth IS going to be transformed. He speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. He speaks of all things made new. At present heaven and earth are quite separate states of existence, but in the new City of God which John beheld in spirit they are no longer two, but one. It is my conviction that the veil between seen and unseen is a very flimsy one, and that this seemingly solid matter that forms our prison-house is not so very solid after all. Probably it is nothing more than our own thought exercised upon a very limited plane, a darkened perception. It is quite conceivable that we might wake up, as it were, from a sleep, and realize that there never has been a material and a spiritual, but that we have all the time been living at the very center of reality, only we did not know it. If men were only endowed sufficiently with the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and ready for the change, the veil between heaven and earth would be taken away, the heavens would be opened, and the two would be seen as one, as it was with the servant of Elisha that day in Dothan when he saw the armies of heaven upon the mountains of Israel. This is what John means by the city coming down; it is heaven taking possession of earth and absorbing it into itself. That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

The world is to be won for God; there is to be a transformed society of men on earth; in the end earth will become heaven. Death will be abolished, and sin and sorrow will flee away. When John used the language of Isaiah about the city needing no light of the sun he meant it in even a grander way. Henceforth God in Christ is to be the light of every man's life, all the nations are to walk in that light, and love and brotherhood be all in all. But he makes a bold stroke at this point by departing from the Old Testament dream of the Jerusalem Temple. He says that God Himself will be the Temple, and men shall worship Him in spirit and in truth. Looking back, as it were, upon the desecration and destruction which had fallen upon the temple that was formerly the pride and the glory of Israel, he says in effect: Well, let it go! At the best it was only a beautiful symbol for a still more beautiful reality. Nothing is lost by the ruin of that which was built by hands. God Himself is our Temple — God in Christ! We need no other. The whole earth is full of His glory, and in Him we live and move and have our being. By destroying the outward it throws us back upon the inward; it removes the local and temporary to fix our gaze upon the universal and eternal.

Some of us surely have noticed the beautifully significant picture of God's purposes given us in those glorious and divine events that transpired at Sinai, the mountain of God, when Moses and the children of Israel came face to face with God there. Until this moment encounters between Yahweh and men had always taken place on an individual basis.

But now there was a dramatic change — the private and individual revelation is transformed into a public and corporate one. An entire nation, from sage to servant, witnesses Mount Sinai engulfed in smoke, God descending in fire, the mountain quaking to the rising crescendo of the shofar (ram's horn), and the Voice giving the law — the Constitution of God's chosen nation on earth.

A magnificent event, yet in the midst of this cosmic marriage, something else of strange and great significance is taking place. The whole story is found in Exodus, chapter nineteen. First, "God descended on Mount Sinai, and God called Moses to the mountain peak" (Ex. 19:20). Once Moses begins to ascend, God tells him to "go back down" (Ex. 19:21) and warn the people not to cross the boundary. Moses replies that they "cannot climb mount Sinai. You already warned them to set a barrier around the foot of the mountain and not to cross it, for whoever touches the mountain will die." Again, God says to Moses, "Go down. You can then come back up along with Aaron. But the priests and the rest of the people must not violate the boundary" (Ex. 19:24). As soon as Moses descends, God begins the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God..."

Why was this momentous occasion marked by so many directions, instructions, warnings? Had God forgotten that He had already commanded Moses to tell the people not to approach the mountain? Why must Moses point out to God what God certainly knows? This scene is not merely a logistical account of where everyone — God, Moses, Aaron, the priests and the nation — were positioned on that historic occasion. It depicts a divine tension between the idea of "ascending" and "descending." Moses seemed to think that the highest spiritual experience is achieved by turning one's back on the world, forsaking wife, children, friends, job, responsibilities, recreation, and all the mundane things of life, and ascending into a high plane in the Spirit alone. But God is saying that His way of merging and becoming one with creation, has an altogether different focus. The task of sonship is not to escape the world and ascend into the heights of God in some mystical experience, but to bring God down, to redeem the world, change humanity, and transform creation, to suffuse spirituality into every aspect of its existence. Before Moses ever "ascended" into the glory of God, God first "descended" on Mount Sinai before the faces of all the people. Then further, He sent down His law — His nature — into their midst. Had Moses merely gone up the mountain — had God not also descended — the laws he brought down would have been more suited for the mountain peaks and the seekers who climb them in search for God. But at Sinai the entire nation saw the almighty Yahweh descend into the world of His creation. And that very day the Lord said, "Ye shall be unto me an holy nation, and a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS." Ah, when God and man meet and are brought into union, there is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

Do you want to know where the glory of God can be found? God came down in Christ Jesus and tabernacled among mankind and men beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now God has descended again in the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. The Kingdom OF Heaven is not the Kingdom IN Heaven. The prayer Jesus taught us to pray is not, "Come, take us away up to heaven to live with You," but "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." It is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and in earth. No man can ascend into the world of God until first God descends into his world. The descending and ascending bring glorious UNION between God and man. It is there that we know oneness with Him and receive His law, His government in our hearts!

THE KINGDOM OF “HEAVEN”

The Kingdom of Heaven is the Kingdom of, or out of heaven. There is perhaps no subject in the Bible about which there is such shallow thinking, such dullness of understanding, and so many distorted notions, as the subject of heaven. Where is heaven? What is heaven? Is it a place? Is it a planet? Is it a galaxy? Is it beyond the stars? Is it a condition of life? Is it a different dimension of living? If our very Father is in heaven, then we ought to know something about heaven, for it is the source of our life, the realm of our origin. We know this because the Father who begat us dwells in heaven; therefore we are out of heaven and from heaven. If He is our Father and heaven is His natural environment, His habitat, we should understand what that realm is really like.

By saying God is in heaven, Jesus does not mean to localize or locate God. He is not telling us of a place where God is and where God lives apart from any other place in the universe. If that were the case then there would be no God anywhere outside of that place called heaven. Those who think of heaven as a place, usually think of Him as being very distant. Somehow we have gotten the idea that heaven is a long way off. This error has crept into many songs sung by the church world. In the Pentecostal Church where I was raised as a boy two of the favorite songs were “When We All Get To Heaven” and “Won’t It Be Wonderful There.” Another with which many who read these lines will be familiar says, “There is a happy land, far, far, away.” And even in that popular hymn, “The Old Rugged Cross,” we sing, “He will call me some day to that home far away...” How did we get that conception? Certainly not from Jesus or the apostles! When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, He said, “No man hath ascended up into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (Jn. 3:13). That is, Jesus claimed that while He was sitting and talking with this rabbi, He Himself was actually in heaven. This means, of course, that heaven is here and now.

The easiest way to understand heaven is to realize that it is where God lives. The question follows: Where is God? Is He on a planet thirteen trillion light years beyond the farthest star? Or, is He everywhere, omnipresent? The Psalmist David posed this intriguing question: “Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thine hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me” (Ps. 139:7-10). Is there some point out in the universe where you can draw a line and say, “God comes to this point. Beyond here God does not exist. If you cross this line you will leave the presence of God.” Ah, the scriptures testify that God is before all things, all things were made by Him, He upholds all things, He fills all things, and He is greater than all things.

It is abundantly clear that wherever there are things, there you will find God. Is there any place where there are no things? If there is, man has never found it. There is no scientific evidence that such a place exists. As far as man can see with his telescopes, including the new and most powerful Hubble telescope, there is no end to the universe. Man is unable to find the outer perimeter of the cosmos. The galaxies and the swirling nebulae stretch out into infinity. Since God both created all things in Himself, and fills all things with Himself, it is an absolute certainty that to find the end of creation would be to discover the limit of God. God is infinite, unlimited, boundless, unending and

inexhaustible. The creation is co-extensive with the Creator, therefore, there is no end to the cosmos for there is no end to God. Certainly that answers the question of the Psalmist, "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"

Will you agree with me that everything everywhere is made up of things that are visible and things that are invisible? And is it not true that visible things never remain the same but are always changing, and that invisible things always remain the same and never change? "The things which are seen are TEMPORAL," says the Lord, "and the things which are not seen are ETERNAL." This is the wisdom of God in a mystery. But it should be clear that the realm of the unseen is the realm of the INVISIBLE GOD! That which you cannot see is called Creator, Origin, Source, Cause. That which you can see is called creation, effect, form, matter, things.

The wonderful attribute of omnipresence is one of the foremost parts of God's glory. God's omnipresence — that is to say, God's presence everywhere and wholly everywhere — is rooted in the fact that He upholds all things and fills all things and is higher than all heavens. That is the testimony of scripture. God's presence is with all His creatures of all kinds, and in all places of His dominion. Give strength, then, to your understanding, and give wings to your imagination, and give holy fear to your heart, as we try to enter upon those great matters — "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man...but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." When you try to do it, you cannot limit the presence of God to any one place on earth, or in heaven: no, nor to all places on earth and in heaven, taken together. Place, precinct, locality, situation — when you attempt it, you soon find how absolutely impossible it is to limit and restrict God in that way. Heaven and earth, time and eternity, all worship their Maker in these adoring words, and say: "Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain Thee: how much less this house which we have builded." And then, if anything could add to the awe and the wonder of all that, it would be this other all-transcending truth — that He who is everywhere is also wholly everywhere. Now that the almighty Father is wholly, and is continually, with every one of us in all the completeness, and in all the totality, of His Godhead — what an absolutely staggering thought is that!

In the early 1600's the Christian mystic, Jacob Boehme, wrote: "If you want to know about Heaven and what Heaven is and where it is, you do not need to cast your thoughts many thousands of miles off, for that place, that heaven thousands of miles away, is not your Heaven. The true Heaven is not a created place but an uncreated place, and it is not found in a particular place but everywhere, even in the very place where you are standing and going. For when your spirit within you is able to penetrate inward through and beyond your own flesh and life, and is able to catch hold of the innermost moving of God, then you are clearly in Heaven. Moreover, if your eyes were but opened, you should see God everywhere in His Heaven, for Heaven is found everywhere. For instance, when Stephen saw Heaven open, and the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, his spirit did not suddenly transport itself into outer space, but rather Stephen's spirit had moved inward, within, into the innermost place where Heaven is found everywhere, for God fills all things. So you must realize that this world with all of its physical properties is in union with the vast vistas of the heavenly spaces above the earth. There is only one Heart, one Being, one Will, one God, All in all."

I know that these words seem to be incredible but they are truth. I point you today, dear child of God, to another world, spiritual in content, which lies beyond the immediate grasp

of the physical senses. It is a world that exists within and beyond our physical existence, with its own structure, modes of behavior, patterns of communications, knowledge, wisdom and power. It sees without being seen. This spiritual realm bears the same relation to the sensible world as the Creator does to the creation, as the spirit does to the body. This realm is heaven. Heaven is not a place, not a geographical or astral location — it is a sphere or realm of reality. It is a dimension of life. It is a level of God-consciousness. It is the invisible realm of Spirit that transcends this gross material realm. It is as omnipresent as God is omnipresent. It is co-existent and co-extensive with the physical universe, but on a different level of reality and being. It is the dimension of spirit reality, of being where God is all that He is. Heaven is also the realm in which God is revealed by the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God is known by the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God can be touched in the Spirit. Heaven is the realm in which God can be experienced in the Spirit. Heaven is everywhere. Heaven is closer to you than the air that you breathe, closer even than the blood that courses through your veins.

Let all who read these lines clearly understand that God's heaven is not the inexhaustible universe of stars and suns and planets and swirling nebulae. Heaven has nothing whatever to do with the time-space continuum or matter in any form. The true heaven is beyond it all, above it all, before it all, yet in it all. Heaven is that high and holy and invisible realm of SPIRIT, the pure and divine and eternal and incorruptible realm of GOD HIMSELF, which existed before ever a star or a planet appeared. Heaven, therefore, can only be entered BY THAT WHICH IS SPIRIT. Is that not why Jesus spoke of heavenly things to Nicodemus and said, "Except a man be born again, except a man be born from above, except a man be born of the Spirit, he can neither see nor enter into the Kingdom of God."

Let every man know for a certainty that carnal eyes cannot pierce the invisible realm of Spirit. The Russian astronauts returned from space and said, "We have been up there, we have looked around, we didn't find or see God." Of course not! Natural minds know nothing of that realm, for we perceive only those physical things recognizable by the physical senses. Natural ears are unable to hear that which is spoken in the realm of the spirit, for spirit vibrates on a frequency higher than and superior to the low vibrations of matter. Heaven is all around us, in us, through us, but we must be raised out of our natural consciousness in order to touch it. But the dimension of heaven is ten thousand times ten thousand MORE REAL than this gross material realm to which our mortal form has been subjected.

Heaven is our Father's native realm, and the realm in which the sons of God shouted for joy in that blessed day when they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Heaven is our Father's natural environment. It is His home and habitat. Heaven is heaven by virtue of the fact that His presence, nature, power, wisdom and glory make it such. If God dwells in me, then heaven is within me, for He is my Father "in heaven." When teaching His disciples that magnificent prayer called The Lord's Prayer, Jesus was not thinking of a distant Being in some remote area of the universe. He was referring to One whose existence was the very essence of His life. What was true of Jesus Christ as He lived in Palestine twenty centuries ago, is equally true of all sons and daughters of God today. Our Father is in heaven and also in our hearts. The word "also," however, is superfluous — GOD IS OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN IN OUR HEARTS! That is the truth of the matter. To know this is to know a new and deeper dimension to life. To know the presence and person of God our Father within is to experience heaven in the here and now, to be in heaven. But even more than that, we will cede our lives

now as the residence and habitation of the Most High. We will know ourselves to be the home of our heavenly Father, the base of His operation, just as Jesus did. “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works” (Jn. 14:10). The Father who dwelled in Jesus is the Father in heaven. Thus, we and heaven are one. To say that God is in heaven and also in my heart, and to then separate between the two, is to entirely miss the mark. Once God’s DOMINION has been established by the Spirit in any human heart, the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven is accomplished in that life. Heaven rules there! That is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. And the Kingdom of Heaven, my beloved, is at hand!

FROM REALM TO REALM

The only life you know is the life that you have lived, and it’s the world to which you are accustomed. But there are worlds within worlds. Oh, sure, we have only one Earth. But in that one Earth are many countries and many different terrains, climates, cultures, languages, religions, and kinds of people. If you go into just one apartment building, how many different worlds are there within that building? There are drug worlds. There are child and spousal abuse worlds. There are suicidal worlds. But there are also believing worlds, righteous worlds, and loving worlds.

On a late night some years ago I turned on the television. Johnny Carson was chitchatting with a “show-biz” guest. Suddenly the thought flashed through my mind, Who else, pray tell, but a “show-biz” person could Johnny interview? Who else was of any importance or interest to the viewing public? Johnny, I realized, must have only IMPORTANT people — CELEBRITIES — on the show. Show business is his world, and he could not be expected to “descend to a lower level.” An actor or entertainer is in THE ONLY world that counts! All others are beneath him. Show business people have their own journals and publications, just like other worlds. They speak their own language, have their own terminology, totally incomprehensible to an outsider. They are all knowledgeable about their own world and its personalities, though they may or may not know much or anything outside their all-important world. The same is true, of course, of all other fields — the sciences, medicine, the arts, car racers, body-builders, investors and thousands of other “worlds.” I began to think about how many different worlds exist within this world on the planet Earth. And even smaller sub worlds within those worlds. We speak of the Free World in contrast to the Communist World, the World of Islam, the Third World and many others.

I want to tell you about another world very close to you which some who read these lines may never have even visited, let alone lived in it. It is my world. It’s a beautiful world! It’s a wonderful world! It’s a vibrant world! It’s a victorious world! It’s a glorious world! IT’S THE WORLD OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ON EARTH. Natural minds discern the natural. Spiritual minds discern the things of the Spirit. Natural minds cannot discern the things of the Spirit because they each belong to distinctly different realms. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2:14). For natural minds to comprehend the spiritual is equally as impossible as for a creature of the animal kingdom to comprehend things human.

By instinct, beavers build dams. But all these dams follow the same pattern. The beaver cannot think out some new, different pattern and make some new and different thing. Ants may form anthills; gophers, snakes and rodents dig holes; birds build nests. But

they always follow the same pattern. There is no originality, no thinking and designing of a new idea, no new construction. The beavers' dams, the ants' hills, the gophers', snakes' and rodents' holes, the birds' nests are all made purely by instinct. A test was made with weaver birds. For five successive generations, weaver birds were kept in a place with no nest-building material available to them. The fifth generation had never seen a nest. But when nest-building materials were made accessible, that fifth generation immediately made nests just like weaver birds have always made nests.

Humans are of a higher order than beavers. Beavers may see men, and may observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. Just because a beaver can build a wonderful dam of logs, branches, stones and mud in the creek, you would never give him a contract to build a hydro-electric dam of concrete and steel on a mighty river. You may take the beaver to the river and let him observe how men build dams of concrete and steel, yet the beaver has no comprehension of what it sees. It discerns only things pertaining to its own realm. It has positively no understanding of the ways of man, or of the meaning of his movements, or words, or habits. Likewise, heavenly beings are of a higher order than are mere humans. They belong to a higher realm, another world. There is no common ground of knowledge. Therefore natural men are totally incapable of comprehending that which pertains to that higher order. And so — until men are quickened by God's Spirit, until they are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit, and made alive to the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven, and are translated into it, it is impossible for them to have any understanding, either of God, or His ways, or of His realm.

Jesus is the example par excellence of a man living and walking in the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. He came to earth and walked among men in their realm, but at the same time He walked in the Kingdom of Heaven realm. He was a spiritual and heavenly man who walked among men. He had dominion over them. They planted their smartest lawyers and most learned theologians in the crowd and tried to trip Jesus up — He made fools of them. They tried to throw Him over a cliff and destroy Him — He just walked through their midst and went His way. Never man spake as this heavenly man spake. Never man lived as this man lived. Never man did the mighty works that He did. He lived on earth, but He came from a higher world and lived by the laws of that higher world. And He made that heavenly world available to you and me. That is what Jesus was talking about when He went about preaching the Kingdom of God and declaring, "The time is fulfilled; and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand: repent and believe the good news!" (Mk. 1:15).

The Kingdom life we have received is given from heaven, and is heavenly. It is a life that reaches heaven. Once we obtain this life, we have fellowship with heaven and are joined to heaven. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our life-style is heavenly. Our thoughts and desires are heavenly, and we dwell in heaven. Although according to outward conditions we still live on earth, yet according to the inner life we are in heaven. We are a heavenly people, the heavenly man. The situation is just like the Lord's during His time on earth. He said that though He "descended out of heaven," He was still "in heaven" (Jn. 3:13). He walked in the conscious awareness of both realms, but His reality was in heaven. He was the embodiment and personification of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Mature sonship is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven in manifestation.

The following words by T. Austin-Sparks are so very pertinent to our present thought. "There were these things about Jesus, so that when you met Him on the surface, face to

face, as a man, it was just impossible to feel that you had met everything, that that was all. There are some people whom you meet — and that is all. You meet them, pass the time of day or have a few words with them, and then you part, and that is all. They came and they went, and there was no more to it than that. It was never so with the Lord Jesus. If you had met Him, you would have immediately met something more than the ordinary, but you would also be left with the consciousness — That is not all; there is something very much more there than I have seen or touched. He implies a vast amount more than I have been able to recognize or grasp. That Man has a lot more behind Him than is on the face of things. He did not put all His goods in the shop window, so to speak: you were conscious of something there of a vast and profound fullness and depth, and that left a mighty impress.

“There was behind Christ another world of resources that He could draw upon, an extra world of knowledge that was available to Him, an extra world of relationships, heavenly relationships: with the Father, yes, and with other intelligences, celestial intelligences. What a big world He had behind Him to draw upon in this life down here, in its vicissitudes, its difficulties, its trials, its adversities, when He was alone and no one could help Him. Even those who would want to seek to help Him could not, for they could not minister out of that other world. He was alone here. Without the resources of this world, He had another world to draw upon, a wonderful other world of resource.

“Oh, how much more real that must be to all sons of God in our consciousness! Here I have come to the end of my resources, here I am right up in a corner, here I am, not knowing, so far as this world is concerned, which way to turn; but I have another world to draw upon, a very real world, and that other world can come right into my situation. And it is just as we are living out from heaven, out from our extra, our plus, world, that things will partake of the character of the eternal, and that into this life will come the imperishable, the incorruptible. God is always seeking to have it like that. That is why He allows the problems and the impasses, to teach the sons of God that this is not all. There is another world of resource, all so infinitely in advance of what is seen.

“Looking at the Lord Jesus, speaking as men speak, we could say that that Man was governed by different standards, by different conceptions, by different ideas, from anything in this world. He did not act just as people usually act here. His conduct was different from the usual conduct of people, from the established and accepted order of things, of how it is done, and how people think it ought to be done. No — He did not belong to that realm at all. He could not be involved in this world’s system of ideas and procedure and conduct at all. He would just not allow Himself to be roped into that order. He had another world with an altogether different set of conceptions, and He acted according to them and was governed by them, and that made Him so strange amongst us. The Lord Jesus was a foreigner to this set-up, this whole order of things. He belonged to another world, and He had that other world’s conceptions. There was a great difference about Him. They just could not keep Him in, they just could not make Him conform, they just could not understand Him at all!

“It was those very heavenly standards and conceptions and ideas that were the incorruptible things. This world’s ways of going on — what do they lead to? They lead to corruption. At their fullest, highest, greatest, they lead to corruption. Never, never was that more apparent than in our own day. The whole world is sinking into an infernal morass of corruption. But His ideas did not work out that way. You and I — we have come to know something of the Lord, something of the Lord’s standards, the Lord’s ways,

the Lord's conception of heavenly things, and we know quite well that this is not corruption, this is LIFE AND INCORRUPTION. We are rejoicing because we have come to know the Lord; but what have we come to know? Something from outside of this world altogether, something different.

“The Holy Spirit coming down from heaven has not come just to make us successful in this world, not just to prosper our carnal ventures here, not to be used by us to realize the thing in which we are interested and to further those plans of ours. He has not come down from heaven for anything like that. He has come down to reconstitute us as heavenly people and bring heaven into man's world. That is His whole work, the reconstituting of our whole being according to heaven's ideas. That is what He is getting at in His work in our lives, His dealings with us, His ways with us. He is after getting us to turn everything to heavenly account, to make us according to heaven's pattern. He is after the incorruptible” — end quote.

THE LAWS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The unseen world of the Kingdom of Heaven is available to men on earth today by faith. Let me give yet another illustration. Radio is a method of sending out sounds for long distances by the use of electricity. The radio waves are sent out from a tower. The waves travel out in all directions and they are everywhere. That is why you can travel down the highway at 80 miles an hour and clearly pick up the signal at all times. But — you must have a receiver! A radio receiver is usually called a radio set or just a radio. One of its parts is the antenna. The radio waves in the air strike the antenna and are carried into the set. Of course, the air is full of radio waves broadcast by different stations. The place where you sit as you read these lines is literally filled with radio waves. Music, voices, and noises of various kinds are all around you, passing through the walls, and even your body. Do you feel them? Can you hear them? Do you see them? No — but they are there, they are all there, co-extensive with every visible thing, occupying the very same space! Yet each wave exists in a different “world” entirely. They are on different frequencies. Therefore they don't interfere with each other, they don't mix and become all scrambled up. They are not in the same world.

That is what I mean by a “realm” or “dimension.” It is like a frequency. It can occupy the same space and yet be another world altogether. That's how God can be in heaven and in the room where you are sitting and in your heart at the same time. He is simply on a different frequency, in a different dimension or realm, but occupying the same space. Heaven has nothing to do with a “place,” either here or beyond the stars. Heaven is a REALM OF REALITY, a DIMENSION OF LIFE. It is as omnipresent as God is omnipresent, as omnipresent as the universe is omnipresent — it is where He dwells.

In order to hear the radio sounds that are in the air you must turn on your receiver. But you want to select only one of these wave lengths. For that purpose the receiver has a tuner. As you turn the dial, at each position a different frequency will flow into the condenser and then be translated into sound heard by your ear. The radio waves exist as it were in a different “dimension” than the things you naturally see, feel and hear; but they are right there, nevertheless, and can be heard if you are able to “tune in” to them. In like manner, the Kingdom of Heaven is all around you and right within you IF ONLY YOU CAN TUNE IN TO IT! That is what Jesus meant when He said repeatedly, “He that hath an ear, let him hear!” The spiritual ear is the “tuner” of the New Creation Man!

The definition “three dimensional” is used to express a law of physics which mathematically proves the length, height and depth of the universe. All physical things have these three dimensions of height, length and depth — a bead, a book, a house, a mountain, a planet, a star, or a universe. And yet — the three are ONE! If you have an ice-cube, the height of the cube occupies the same space as its depth or its length. They are not three separate “places” within the cube, but three “dimensions” or realities occupying the same space.

A book called Flatland, by Dr. Abbott, attempts to show how there is above us and about us other powers which we little realize. In that very clever, small volume, Dr. Abbott uses a keen analogy. He tells of “Flatland” where there was neither up nor down. Everything moved in two dimensions only. Various geometrical forms of matter, as triangles, squares, octagons, points, and lines represented the soldiers, wives, politicians, and various groups of personalities in that flat land. The author appeals that if someone from another dimension world were to reach into the kitchen of Flatland and lift out a cook stove it would be an unexplainable catastrophe to the people of two dimensions — length and breadth. They could not look up or down, and so the removal of the stove would be a mystery too deep for their limited lives. Now, suppose the same power would put the cook stove back in answer to their prayers. That would be a profound “miracle” to them. But to the person of the higher dimension it would be very simple and not miraculous at all!

Since God exists in a world of other dimensions, then heaven is closer than religionists would like to think! It is all around us, yet we have no way of knowing it unless we are able to “tune in” to its frequency. And it operates upon laws that pertain to that other world, laws which the carnal mind can never comprehend, but laws just as true and precise as the laws of the physical world. When God operates in our world by those higher laws we call it a “miracle,” but in that world it is natural. What to God is normal and elementary is to man mysterious, miraculous and inexplicable. The ability to move into another dimension and back again in spirit, soul, and body, was demonstrated by Jesus when He moved in and out of closed rooms without having to use a door, and when He moved through crowds without being seen. All of His signs, wonders and miracles were but acts performed according to the spiritual laws of the spiritual world. To one living in that world there is nothing “miraculous” about it — it is normal! The Kingdom of Heaven is a miracle realm: for it is the dwelling place and operation sphere of the Lord God Almighty. It is how and where He works. It is a super-natural realm, that is, above and beyond what to us is natural. The supernatural element pertains to all He does. Therefore, when He wants something done without the supernatural in it, He employs someone of the carnal, natural plane to do it!

We should not have to try and convince anyone that there is a spirit dimension and there is a matter dimension. The inspired apostle states it this way: “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” The Kingdom of Heaven refers to a vast realm of spiritual reality. All spiritual reality emanates from this one realm of the Kingdom of the Spirit, even before Jesus opened this realm to all men. As one has written: “What do we find in the Bible? A continuous record of happenings that we call supernatural, which cannot be fitted into our interpretations of normal cause and effect. Abraham and Sarah have a child when respectively an hundred, and ninety years old; Joseph accurately foretells through dreams; Moses brings plagues on Egypt, crosses the Red Sea on dry land, gets water from a rock and daily manna; Joshua crosses the Jordan, and brings down the walls of Jericho, and stops the sun for a day; Elijah stops

and then brings the rain; Elisha makes an axe head swim; Daniel spends a night among hungry lions; the three young men walk in the fiery furnace and come out without even the smell of smoke on them. Jesus was continually doing things beyond natural explanation, bringing calm in a storm, walking on water and thus counteracting gravity, feeding five thousand with five loaves, healing all kinds of diseases, and raising the dead. Paul and the apostles saw prison doors open, chains fall off, the dead raised up. Do we not recognize that here are happenings which are products of another dimension, the spirit dimension, and altogether beyond the scope of human thinking and action?"

No law of nature can be broken, but any law may be superseded by a higher law. Lower laws may always be overruled by higher laws. Such overruling occurs when we walk in the spiritual order of the Kingdom of Heaven. So-called miracles are not really miracles at all, any more than the airplane that defies the law of gravity and flies through the sky is a miracle. It is simply that the law of aero-dynamics supersedes and transcends the law of gravity. Miracles are simply VERY NATURAL ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO A HIGHER LAW. When one is sick and the illness has not responded to medical treatment, if we then minister out of the power of the Kingdom of Heaven and the person is healed, no natural law has been violated. A new and higher law has been demonstrated — the law of the Kingdom. Jesus came and demonstrated this realm in an unprecedented measure and proclaimed its accessibility to all men. The manifested sons of God shall manifest out of this Kingdom Realm to bring deliverance to all creation. We have experienced its power and its glory by measure, but the day of fullness is wonderfully nigh at hand and the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God. That is the Word of the Lord to this generation. The Day is dawning!

Scattered among earth's billions is a special species of people. They are in the world but not of it. These have known from the beginning that they were different. They have gone through the motions, tried to be a good Christian, held every office in the church and tried to live the way they were told. But in the midst of all the effort to belong, there has always been something that kept this people from blending in with the majority. There has been an emptiness and a knowing deep inside that this was not the reason they were here. There has always been something that separated them from all the external forms of religion they have passed through. This, precious friend of mine, is the day of RECOGNITION! This is your day of knowing and understanding where you came from and where you have been in order to arrive where you are right now, and where you are going. Something deep within has cried out, "I didn't come into this world just to get saved from hell." Deep has called unto deep and you knew you were born for a purpose. You knew that you were here by divine appointment. You knew there was something greater, more glorious, and transcendental in God. You knew you were born to unveil God's great plan, will, purpose, wisdom, nature, power and glory in the earth!

While writing this message a sermon tape arrived in the mail from Bob Torango in Dickson, Tennessee. It was precious to hear that he was speaking of these same realities. At one point he said, "Moses had to wake up to who he was. Moses thought he was Pharaoh's son. He thought he was an Egyptian. He had no idea that his mother had put him in an ark and floated him down the river. He had no idea who he was until he met up with his kindred. In that experience he found his true citizenship. He discovered that he was nothing more than a resident of Egypt. God revealed to him that he was a free-born Hebrew. He was not a Hebrew by pledge — he had been birthed into that reality. And today the Spirit of God makes clear to God's elect that we are not of that Jerusalem that is below, but we are citizens of that Jerusalem that is above, which is the

mother of us all. God is re-introducing us to who we really are. Instead of so many titles He is awakening us to what kind of blood-life flows through our veins. It is not the life of man, but the very life of God that is invested in us. And armed with this knowledge we are becoming less and less identified with the outer man and more and more identified with the inner man.

“I have a friend in Oklahoma who has a Green Card. I never knew that Chris wasn’t an American. He acts like an American, he talks like an American, he looks like an American. He doesn’t speak Slavic or any other language. He speaks perfect English. And yet — I just found out that my friend isn’t an American. He’s still a citizen of England. He has a Green Card. Amazing! To think that someone I have been around so long isn’t even a citizen of our country. You know, there are a lot of people in the world like that. There are a lot of people praising, singing, clapping, worshipping, paying tithes, working; they have ministries, they are blessing people, but they haven’t yet become citizens of the HEAVENLY KINGDOM. The churches are filled with people who don’t know what country they belong to. They are expecting a deposed, exiled King to come back from outer space and rescue them. They are waiting to be evacuated from planet Earth. But for those of us who are citizens of the Kingdom of God, OUR KING IS IN ZION — and we are the Zion of the Holy one of Israel (Isa. 60:14)” — end quote.

From the time when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God first shouted for joy, rhythm and rapture have rolled upward and onward through all the boundless and endless spiritual universe as the sweet expression of the mind and will of almighty God. This spiritual universe, this Kingdom of Heaven, is the home and heritage of every son of God. He belongs to it, and it belongs to him. He is in it, and it is in him. He holds himself in harmony with it, and it fills his spirit with its songs. He apprehends its truth, enjoys its beauties, expresses its love, utilizes its power and partakes of its holiness. There is no place in it where he may not feel at home — no place where he has not a right to be; for it has been the Father’s good pleasure to give him the Kingdom. His life is not measured by years, but by its possibilities and expansiveness. Divinity and eternity are born within him. This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven!

Chapter 3

The Realm Of The Kingdom Of Heaven

(continued)

When you look at a map of the world you find parcels of land with names such as Canada, United States, Russia, China, England, Africa, etc. These are the names of geographical territories. Here in El Paso we live only a few miles from the Mexican border and sometimes I drive down there to take friends who want to experience Mexico, or to shop or get dental work done. When I cross the border I am driving on soil that is called Mexico. When I return and cross the border again, I am back in a country called the United States of America. These are the names of these land masses. But when you listen to the news and hear that the United States has sold a million bushels of wheat to Russia, that Japan has sold a million automobiles to America, that Russia and the United States are working on an arms limitation deal, that Europe is sending peace-keeping forces to Bosnia — what are we hearing? The news-caster isn't talking about land, the soil that bears those names. He is talking about the people who live in these various lands. It is the citizens of Russia, Japan, the United States and Europe that he is speaking of. Not the places, but the people. The people that live in the places. The people are identified by the realm or territory where they live. In just the same way, when the scripture refers to "heaven" and "earth," it is not referring to places as such, but the beings who inhabit them. When the scriptures say, "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad," what is going to rejoice? Is it stars, suns, planets, and moons; is it hills, rocks, trees, valleys, and rivers? Of course not. It is the inhabitants of those realms who are to rejoice and be glad.

In the opening chapters of the Bible the Garden of Eden reveals the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. It is not the Kingdom IN Heaven — it is the Kingdom OF Heaven, the Kingdom that originates in and out of a heavenly realm. Our prayer is that the Kingdom will come, so that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. God is now creating a new reality on earth, a people that is heavenly but that walks on earth. They bring heaven down within themselves to earth. They have no desire to leave earth to "go" to heaven. They are not looking for either a rapture or death. They are the city that comes down from God out of heaven. "Behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

This new reality is formed in the elect of God in this hour and shall spread over all creation. God is creating something new. A new history is beginning. A new world is coming to earth. The earth shall be filled with the glory of God. God is raising up the life of Christ in a people and through the sons of God He is putting a seed into the earth. We are now the light of men and the light of the world. We are now the salt of the earth. We are the new seed for the new age. God's purpose in raising up Christ in us is that through us the generations of mankind may be lifted out of the curse of sin and death, toward the revelation of eternal life and glory. Why else did Jesus heal the sick and raise

the dead? Why did He exalt the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed? Why did He touch, with miracle power, the hopeless and possessed? Surely not in order to tell them that they would be blessed after death in some far-off heaven somewhere! He brought the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God to men great and small right here on the earth because the Kingdom of God was at hand! He brought heaven to earth. That is the homeland we seek. There is no other to be sought, for the tabernacle of God is with men. Strange, is it not, how all the churches on earth teach just the opposite! They teach that the tabernacle of man is with God — in heaven. But the goal of all God's redemptive effort is that finally He will be a God whom men will see on earth, a God who will make earth to be one with heaven, where Jesus is Lord over all men and they, in Him, will live in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some years ago Gene Edwards ministered a word of revelation of powerful import. I have shared this once before, but feel to share it again because of its special relevance to this subject of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In the following paragraphs I will unfold as faithfully as I can the concepts he set forth. In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did an incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched — entering into union with one another. The realm where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before — not heavenly and not earthly — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time, space, or natural law. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything on this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.

Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there — just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm. He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. Out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being. That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being.

All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a “breath of life” — the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's “breath of life” is not air — it is the Spirit of

the Almighty which giveth understanding — intelligence and wisdom! Only the light that God IS was more glorious than this exquisite creature — man in God's image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can't peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm — no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God's image. There is no "god" in any other creature that can awaken them to spiritual, heavenly realities. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by any thing or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm. He is at home with who he is and who they are. He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth. He is the only creature that has ever been, is now, or ever shall be, that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

Consider with me, my beloved, What is the natural habitat of man? He is spirit — his natural habitat is the heavens! He is dust — his natural habitat is the earth! Both? No! Neither? Yes! Neither. And yet, in some strange, mystical way — both. This glorious creature God created — where is his "home"? Ah — God prepared the place for man as soon as He created man. He created a place that corresponds to man's true state for man to inhabit. The earth, contrary to all that you may have been taught, is not the natural habitat of man. And neither are the heavens the natural habitat of man! The Garden — and only the Garden — and no place but the Garden is your natural habitat. That's where you belong — that is your true world, your homeland, your motherland — that unique realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The Garden was not heaven, neither was it earth. It was a realm where God could walk, and where man could walk and talk with God. It was the dimension of the spiritual body — spirit and body, heaven and earth, visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial, blended into one. The greatest of the glories of heaven was in that Garden — the tree of life was there. And that was man's habitat. It was not merely where man was — it was what he was.

This great truth of man's STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God — which City we are (Rev. 21:9-11; Isa. 60:2,14). "And I saw the New Jerusalem...having the glory of God: and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded their fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 21:10-11; 22:1-5).

How do you suppose the tree of life was transferred from the Garden of God to the City of God? The simple truth is — it wasn't! The Garden still exists. The Garden is in the City. The Garden IS the City. In this City two realms interface once more — the new heavens and the new earth — not two separate entities, but that place where heaven and earth are joined, the Land of the Interface! This is where righteousness dwells — the new mind and the new body. That is your world, my beloved. You and I belong to an interface. We are an interface. We are part heavenly and part earthly; part spiritual and part physical; part visible and part invisible. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place of union with God in the interface where heaven and earth overlap. We are a colony from the heavenlies inhabiting the earthlies. We belong to neither and we belong to both. We are of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are in the Lord Jesus Christ, the HEAVENLY MAN. He, more than any other man, is an interface of these two realms. He is the second man, the last Adam. He embodies and reveals within Himself the true purpose of God in man.

Only in Christ can one understand the true nature of all things. He is of both these realms and He is in both of these realms. He is in both and He is in neither. It is a great and deep and glorious mystery. Oh, the wonder of it! He is a MAN seated in the higher than all heavens! We who have been born of water and of the spirit are of His species. We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, life of His life. We belong to His realm. We walk with Him today in the Garden of God, in the City of God, in the LAND OF THE INTERFACE, for it is the only place where we can comfortably move in both realms. And yet it is not both realms — nor is it either realm — it is a combination, the union of the two, an entirely NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! That's what you are! You are spirit and you are body. You are God and you are man. You are divine and you are human. That is our destiny — to be both in union in one! That is our habitat. And redemption progressively brings us into our inheritance in this blessed Land of the Interface. The salvation of the soul, the redemption of the body, will complete the work. Let us press on, saints of God! The full splendor and bountifulness of this precious Land lies just before us! As the crab lives in two elements — water and land — so the New Creation Man lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens!

THE CONNECTING LINK

God has a great purpose in creation. He made the heavens and the earth. He made the world for Himself as a field wherein to unveil Himself and make visible what He is, in all the perfection, wisdom and truth of His Being. Creation has an origin and a purpose, and this origin and purpose were determined by the wisdom and pleasure of the omnipotent Creator. The world around us has a meaning. It is not a world such as materialistic science supposes, which came from nowhere in particular, has no particular aim and nobody knows where it is going, nor what the end shall be. Against that we set this divine declaration, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Creation came from God, it goes back to God. He reigns over it, and it will fulfill His purpose which is altogether and absolutely a glorious purpose. It will bring to God a revenue of praise and glory and adoration as no other device could do. Therefore it has a meaning. It is the field of the development and display of God's wisdom, power and glory, a means by which He makes Himself known and understood, a means by which too, not only is God known, but a supreme joy and eternal blessedness will be achieved. This is the secret without which creation cannot be understood.

God's purpose in man transcends by far the beauty and glory of creation. The unfolding pattern of God in creating man has never changed. "And God said, Let us make man in

our image, after our likeness: so God created man in His own image...” In this text the fall is shown not to be man’s normal state. Man today, like Adam, may be far from God, yet in his heart, as in the scriptures, a witness will be heard, saying that this distance is through self-will. He may live in sin and sorrow; but deep in his conscience he knows that such a life is in opposition to the will and purpose of his Creator. Therefore the man in God’s image is shown before the fall — to confirm the voice that speaks to every human heart, and declare that though all men walk as Adam, sin and death are not a part of God’s eternal order, but a mere temporary arrangement in the working out of God’s great plan. Man’s proper place is seen IN CHRIST, the last Adam, prefigured by the first Adam before he fell. Adam, in the image and glory of God, ruling all the works of God’s hands, is the type of man in Christ, as God ordains him.

A king in Europe, a kindly monarch, went to visit a school. Children were being taught concerning the various kingdoms into which nature and man were divided. The king wished to ask the children some questions. A sweet little girl stood forth, and the king said, “Now, my dear, tell me what these are,” holding objects in his hand. She said, “A flower, a bird, a beast.” “Tell me to what kingdom the flower belongs.” “To the vegetable kingdom, sire,” said the child. “Tell me,” said the monarch, “to what kingdom do these animals belong?” holding up various animals. “To the animal kingdom, sire.” “Tell me, my dear,” said the king, “to what kingdom do I belong?” Now, I think if she had said he belonged, for the most part, to the animal kingdom, she would not have been far wrong; but the little one had great reverence for her king, although he had so often failed to recognize the Kingdom to which he belonged. The little, blushing maid did not like to say that he belonged to the vegetable or the animal kingdom, but “out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise.” The little one, with her eyes full of tears, for she had heard the tittering of the laughter which was running through the school at her embarrassment, looked up into the face of the king. “Now, tell me, dear,” he said, “to what kingdom do I belong?” “You belong to the Kingdom of God, sire.” And the king bowed his head, for the arrow had gone to his heart. He said, “My dear, pray that I shall be worthy of that Kingdom, the Kingdom of God.”

The answer of the child is the answer which I give you. Do you desire to teach the child that which will enable it to triumph over the lusts and passions of a mere animal nature? Train the child from the beginning to know that he or she belongs to the Kingdom of God. Teach them that they are the Offspring of the Father of spirits, and that first and greatest of all is the spiritual nature which they have, and not the physical or psychical nature. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Teach them that sex, station, and race are nothing in that Kingdom of God. Teach them that “there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all ONE MAN IN CHRIST JESUS.” Teach them to seek for that New Creation which God’s Spirit alone can impart, that they may be worthy of that Kingdom, and that they may have the Love which rules in that Kingdom from its divine center to its utmost circumference, and which crushes lust and sin and death beneath its feet.

By such stature, nobility and rulership committed to Adam we get some idea of what sort of beings we are. One might be so impressed with the majesty of the silent, speechless mountain that lifts its white peak high above the clouds as to worship in silence at its altar — so suggestive is it of the Infinite. But what is a mountain, or a star for that matter, or billions of galaxies of stars and suns and planets and moons as compared with a man? They think not, they speak not, neither do they feel or hope or love or plan or build or have a duty or a destiny. Man is God’s image and likeness! It is interesting to note that

the almighty Creator fashioned and formed everything of nature throughout all the unbounded heavens and unto the depths of the earth and then, after completing and ordaining all, He gave us the true estimate of man's greatness and purpose when He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have dominion." Man is therefore not only the most important creature on the earth, but the most important creature anywhere in the universe. Can we not see by this that Adam stood in the midst of the vast creation as the REVELATION OF GOD to it all.

In the image of God and with dominion over all the works of God's hands man was the connecting link between the invisible God and the visible creation. Both heavenly and earthly, spiritual and natural, visible and invisible, dwelling in the Land of the Interface between the two worlds, Adam was the expression, representation and revelation of the invisible God to the visible creation. He was God's priest and God's king. As a kingly priest, with one hand he reached forth, taking hold of God with his spiritual nature, while with the other hand he reached out, taking hold of creation in his earthly form; and under his glorious dominion he brought the two together in himself into union. What a priesthood! What a kingship!

Adam was God's special gift to the entire creation, from the highest heaven to the lowest hell. He came not from the brute ancestry, nor from the muck of some primordial sea, nor from the mire of the jungle, but from the hand and spirit and breath of the divine Creator. Time will not allow us to dwell on the glories of man in God's image, but Adam was perfect, pure, and powerful. He was without spot or stain, taint or tarnish, pure in character, perfect in holiness, powerful in personality. He was the embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge. He was able to do on the morn of creation what no sage, scientist, or naturalist could do today. He found himself surrounded from the beginning with vast kingdoms of living things — fish, birds, animals. These were brought to him and at the command of God he gave them names. In the typology of scripture a name denotes a nature. Make no mistake about it, my friend, Adam did something greater far than merely classifying all the creatures which God had created in the world. When he "named" these creatures the wonderful truth is that he "natured" them — that is, he spoke creatively into them the nature that his mind of wisdom and knowledge conceived. Sovereignty and authority rested like a crown of glory upon the head of Adam the magnificent. He was made the Lord over all the creation of God to rule and reign as the visible expression of the invisible Creator. In him God was to be seen and known and touched by every thing everywhere.

We are never told how long Adam lived in that wonderful Garden where the glory of God was revealed through him in dominion and blessing to creation, but that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image and likeness of God was but a dim figure of the day when a whole company of sons in God's image would reign in splendor over all things in all realms throughout all worlds and all things in heaven and in earth would be gathered together into union with God in His life and purpose. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the first and Head of this glorious company, and as typified and shadowed by the first man Adam, He is the connecting link between God and creation — in spirit from God, in body from creation — the revelation of the invisible Father to the visible worlds. From the Land of the Interface He is the Word made flesh, dwelling amongst us, full of grace and truth.

The Kingdom of Heaven opens to us all the power, resources, and abilities of the heavens and puts at our disposal everything God has and is. BUT THERE MUST BE A

MEANS OF EXPRESSION. There must be a means by which God can translate heavenly things into a language that the world can understand. The Spirit of God may be everywhere and moving everywhere but human, natural eyes cannot see the things of the Spirit. There is no way they can “tune in” to that world. But the world can see the moving of the Spirit IN US! The world sees a moving of the Spirit in men living upon this earth and the body of Christ is used to express, manifest, reveal and interpret God to the world.

God is now perfecting His sons in wisdom, holiness, knowledge, grace and power and God will set this Man before His creation and say, “Here is my image and my likeness. In this one is my dominion and my authority.” It will be as though God is saying to His creation that it is not necessary for them to see the Creator, for they will see this Man He has made. Was it not this very truth that Jesus spoke to His disciples one day and said, “Have I been so long time with you and you do not know me? He that has seen me has seen the Father.” So it will be with all the holy sons of God.

The word “Christ” simply means ANOINTED. When the Spirit of God came into the world and descended upon Jesus, He then became JESUS, THE CHRIST. He was a human, God man. He was a God, human man. He was the forerunner of the ultimate man that God is bringing into the universe as the revelation of Himself. This highest and ultimate of God’s creation will reign throughout the ages first from pole to pole, then from world to world, and finally from galaxy to galaxy, throughout all the unbounded heavens. There is one thing the Holy Spirit would impress deeply upon our hearts today — if we are not walking in the place that God has for us, then GOD IS BEING SEPARATED FROM HIS CREATION. He is not then glorified as He should be before all worlds and all heavens, for God is to be GLORIFIED IN US. Not apart from us, but IN US. Oh, the mystery of it! It will be God’s glorious New Creation filling all the earth and sky with the manifestation of Himself — the great Man that God brings forth. God and man, ONE CREATURE, to be praised and honored and glorified through all ages and unto the ages of the ages.

THE KINGDOM FAMILY OF GOD

The Bible is a book of faith and hope. It looks, not backward or downward, but forward and upward. Its face is ever set toward the Dawn. It always points us toward the best that is yet to come — the completion, maturity, fullness, consummation. In its first pages we read of the heaven blest Eden; of a time when mankind was free from pain, sorrow and evil, because man was free from sin. While man walked in his primitive state of innocence his home was a Garden — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He reigned splendidly over all realms from the lowest to the highest, symbolized in the dominion given him over the lowest realm of the fish of the sea, the higher realm of the beasts of the earth, and the highest realm of all, the birds of the heavens. These are but word-pictures of a dominion more powerful and extensive than mortal minds can comprehend. God was his familiar Friend and intimate Father. But we read on a page or two and a change comes over the order of things. Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, disappears, becoming but a history recorded, a faint memory beyond the pall that hangs dreadfully over the mind of man. Joy, peace, glory, power, holiness and life vanish, and leave in their wake sorrow, discord, weakness, shame and death. When man sinned pain, limitation, frustration and death entered the world, man’s heavens grew black with clouds; God no longer communed with him in the spirit of the Day, and he was driven out of the Garden, at the gates of which the cherubim were posted with swords of flame that pointed every way, as if to say, “No return, no return.”

Then Jesus came! The message He gave was the Kingdom of God. It was the center and circumference of all He taught and did. After four tragic millenniums the gates of Eden suddenly swung open and the Kingdom of Heaven was seen again on earth. A man in God's image and likeness stepped forth out of that long-closed Land of the Interface and the glory and power and nature of God was seen upon Him. He came with a gospel — the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. He lived and moved in the realm of sonship full and complete. He lived and moved in the realm of the Kingdom which He came to proclaim and which for three years or more He demonstrated before men. He began His public ministry with preaching the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news." On His first circuit through Galilee, He taught in their synagogues, and preached the good news of the Kingdom, Himself saying, "I must preach the good tidings of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent." On His second circuit through Galilee, He went about through cities and villages, preaching, healing, and bringing the good tidings of the Kingdom of God. On His third circuit through Galilee, He went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, healing the sick, casting out devils, raising the dead, and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. When He was near Bethsaida, and saw the great multitudes who were as sheep having no shepherd, He had compassion on them, and ministered to their needs, and spake to them of the Kingdom of God. Even when He presented Himself alive following His crucifixion, by many proofs, He appeared to His apostles during forty days, speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Creation once more beheld God in the form of man.

Eden is God's picture of His plan for man. Eden is the proto-type of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This Kingdom plan was fully represented in the Garden of Eden. All four necessary elements of the Kingdom of God were there in Eden. Eden was the land, Adam and Eve were the people, the Lord was the King, and the Lord's command about the eating of the trees of the Garden was the law. God's own ideal for man was not a kingdom as we conceive of it, but a family. All the world was to be a Garden of Eden. God and man were to live together in sweetest, most intimate fellowship. The family is God's ideal for us. Israel was a family — the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were the tribal families of Israel. The family became a kingdom, but it was a family-kingdom. Joseph was given the birthright, Judah was given the scepter, unto Levi was committed the priesthood, and each tribe had its part.

Adam was the son of God, and Eve was his daughter-wife, with their home in a Garden, and God Himself a Father-Mother in the midst. Its atmosphere was love; its music the rhythm of their wills with His. Sweeter music never filled human ear. When the work of redemption is fully accomplished, and every bit of darkness and discord destroyed, we know again the glories of Eden — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Then the ideal of the Father's heart is realized. The Garden becomes a City, but it is a Garden-City, all the sweet simplicity of the nature-life of the Garden, and all the authority and glory of the City, are joined in that wondrous Garden-City and City-Garden. God's elect are now citizens in that glorious City. We are a family of sons gathered into Christ Jesus. We see His face in the spirit, His likeness is upon our countenances, for His name is written in our foreheads. Our light is the glory of His presence, His life-giving Spirit the water that flows through our street and waters our tree. Our atmosphere is love; and the music of wills made one in Him pervades our land.

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is the eternal union of heaven and earth. The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place in heaven or upon the earth. It is the blending, merging,

intersecting of heaven and earth. The spiritual realm provides the government, the righteousness, the wisdom and knowledge, the peace and joy, the love, the wonder, the eternal significance, and the glory of the Kingdom. The people and things of earth are the outward forms and visible expression of the inward reality of the Kingdom.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

It will help us in our understanding of what it means to live in the Kingdom of Heaven, to look at the order of life in the realm of nature. I am indebted to Henry Drummond's wonderful out-of-print book *NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD* for a number of the thoughts shared in the following paragraphs.

Every day in the year more than 300,000 babies are born in the world. All have tiny faces and usually the same number of ears, fingers, arms, legs and toes. All are little humans, quite alike in size, and with the same needs for food, love, protection and learning. Each also has his or her own special features. Each is like every other baby and unlike any other baby born on that day, or on any other day in history. Now, if these same 300,000 people were to meet on their twenty-fifth birthday, their specialness would be even more obvious than at birth. Some would be very tall, some very short, and the rest would be somewhere in between. They would vary from very fat to very thin. Skin colors would be yellow, brown, white, reddish, black, and all kinds in between. Equally different would be the many types of personalities, mental abilities, talents, and ways of living in these 300,000 people. All were born on the same day and at the time were similar in many ways. All breathed alike, ate alike, and cried alike. But within twenty-five years, each had grown up into an individual who is like other human beings, but who is also very different from other humans. Some would like Mexican food, others American food, and others Chinese food. Some would speak English, others French, and others Russian. Some would worship God, some would be atheists, and others would revere ancestral spirits. They would dress differently, think and act differently.

There are two strong forces in nature which influence human life and determine what a person will be. These two forces are **HEREDITY** and **ENVIRONMENT**. Neither one alone is sufficient to mold a full and useful human life. Heredity is a word used to mean the way in which certain characteristics are passed from parents to children, generation after generation. Because of heredity, each baby is born with human characteristics that make him distinctly human. Environment is a word used to stand for all the conditions and influences from without which become a part of a person's life and affect his development. Included in a person's Heredity is the color of his or her skin, hair, and eyes, physical stature, facial characteristics, temperament, and many other physiological and biological features. Included in a person's Environment are the food he eats, the liquids he drinks, the air he breathes, the place he lives, the home he is brought up in, the values he is taught, the diseases he may have, and the ideas, people, and education he is exposed to. Thus it can be seen that Environment is altogether as important a factor in what a person will be as is Heredity. Perhaps even more so!

It needs to be very clear in our minds that the nature of man is received through Heredity, but the sustenance, development, and conditioning of that nature depends entirely upon the Environment. For instance, a child may be born with an aptitude for music. Because of his Environment that talent may lie undeveloped, or he may become a rock star or a violinist in a symphony orchestra. Environment makes all the difference! The first and primary purpose of our Environment is to sustain life. The Environment is that in which

we live, and move, and have our being. Without it we would neither live, nor move, nor have any being. Within every living organism is contained the principle and the power of life; but in the Environment is the power to sustain and develop that life, the conditions of life. Every living thing normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, water and food. When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and when we further bear in mind that the food supply is contributed by the Environment, we shall realize at once the importance of the meaning and the truth that without Environment there can be no life!

Almost three-quarters of the human body is water. Other important substances in the body are calcium, phosphorus, and carbon. These substances are called “elements” — they are among the hundred basic substances of which every thing in the visible universe is made! Your physical body is composed of some of the same elements as is the world around you, and only by being in harmony with that world, only by intermingling what it is with what you are do you have life. For example, through the secret pores of your skin two pounds of water are evaporated daily from every healthy adult. The water has to be replaced. And from where does it come? From the Environment! Meanwhile you are breathing, taking in air you can use and sending out air you cannot use. From the air you breathe in, your lungs take oxygen. You must have it to live. Matters not how much life you have in you, or if royal blood is flowing through your veins, you must assimilate your Environment to live! Heredity is not enough. The Environment is really AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. We and it must be one. We and it are one. Life depends upon that UNION — the Organism united with its Environment. An Organism in itself is but a part; its Environment is its complement. Alone, cut off from its Environment, it is not. Alone, cut off from my Environment, I am not. Without food, I am not. Without air, I am not. Without water, I am not. Without love and protection and communication, I am not. I continue as I receive. My Environment may change me, but first it has to sustain me. Its secret transforming power is directly molding body and mind and is sustaining the very life itself.

This is a great truth in the physical world. It is but a wonderful picture of the greater realities in the SPIRITUAL WORLD! This is a truth of so great importance in the spiritual world that we shall not mis-spend our time in pursuing it. In the spiritual world he will be among the enlightened and wise who understands this one great truth: Without Environment there can be no life! I speak of course of the Spiritual Environment of the Spiritual Realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. What does this amount to in the Spiritual World of God and His sons? Is it not simply the grand and glorious truth spoken by the first-born of the New Creation when He said: “Without ME ye can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). Through the mighty work of regeneration we have been birthed into the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven as SPIRITUAL ORGANISMS, spirit beings, begotten of God, the offspring of our heavenly Father. There has been awakened within us a new principle and power of life — God’s very own divine life, the life of heaven.

But let every man consider this that I now propose: even in this, our New Creation Life, we require a SECOND FACTOR, a something in which to live and move and have our being — an ENVIRONMENT! The Kingdom of Heaven has an Environment. The Spiritual World has an Environment. The whole universe is a type and shadow of this glorious truth. Every star has its gravity. Every planet has its Environment. Every living organism has its Environment. Without the Environment of the Spiritual World we cannot live divinely as sons of God or move or have any spiritual being. Without the Spiritual

Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven the life of sonship within us is like the body without air, the fish without water, the eagle without its nest.

The great Pattern Son, Jesus, walked in the full and enlightened consciousness of the inter-relationship between Organism and Environment. He did not live independent of that Spiritual Environment which surrounds and envelops the sons of God. Jesus declared, "Believe me that I AM IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME" (Jn. 14:11). It was not only the Father IN THE SON (heredity), it was also the Son IN THE FATHER (environment). The Father was the center and circumference of Jesus' life. That blessed Christ also prayed for the younger sons who were to afterward follow in His steps, saying, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me (heredity), and I IN THEE (environment), that they also may be one IN US (environment)" (Jn. 17:11,21). Christ knew that as a son He was the Organism and His Father was the Environment. The Father was that IN WHICH THE SON LIVED AND MOVED AND HAD HIS BEING. Although He was the Son of the Father, He could in no way live independent from the Father. And what is the Environment of the sons of God today? It is God in Christ. God in Christ, and we in Him, is our Environment in which we live and move and have our being!

Multiplied thousands of God's precious saints have been lifted into new and wonderful realms of understanding and experience as the great truth of "Christ in you" has exploded within their quickened hearts. But I declare to you today that altogether as magnificent is the marvelous fact of OUR BEING IN CHRIST. To know "Christ in you" is to know the reality of your inward spiritual life, but to discover yourself as being "in Christ" is to apprehend the fact of Christ as your Environment, your sphere of existence, the realm of your new life and being. This Environment is a world that surrounds you and also separates you from whatever is outside of it. This Environment is so strong that it not only sustains but it also protects whatever is within it from all that is without, even as our atmosphere on earth protects us from the deadly rays in space. And again, it supplies, to whomsoever is within it, whatever it contains, as our atmosphere supplies all that is needed for our physical life. The Father of glory is most truly AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. He is Himself the Environment of the Spiritual World of His sons. We live by the Father! By translation into the Kingdom of the Son we have been raised up into a new and altogether different Environment in the heavenlies, of which Jesus spoke when He said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. ABIDE IN MY LOVE, EVEN AS I ABIDE IN MY FATHER'S LOVE" (Jn. 15:9-10). In the light of Christ's union with the Father, our union with Him becomes clear. His life in the Father is the law of our life in Him.

Our present thought is a very simple one. We seek to show the boundless range and omnipotent power of the atmosphere of this wonderful Kingdom of Heaven. God's Spirit is bringing a truth of highest importance before us, compelling us to give heed that the spirit of revelation may unfold its marvels to our believing hearts. There is a deep design. Paul wrote that if any man be in Christ he is a NEW CREATION. Not only is he himself new, but he now lives in a new world, on a new "planet," as it were, in an entirely new order of things. The things, the Environment of the old creation have passed away and ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. Every created thing has its Environment. Every created organism, on earth or in any other world, has to live and move and have its being in its particular Environment. The eagle is not afraid that when he flies in the sky he will have too little wind currents. Imagine a fish crying, "Cast me not into the water, lest I

drown!” Imagine a sunflower refusing to turn toward the sun lest it get a sun-burn. The Environment of the New Creation is the Father in the Son. Ah, precious child of God, you can no more live and grow up into the image and likeness of God apart from daily and constant and intimate and vital union with the Father than a fish can live without water. Jesus forcefully expressed it thus: “Abide IN ME...he that ABIDETH IN ME ...the same bringeth forth much fruit. If ye ABIDE IN ME...ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you” (Jn. 15:4-7). The Organisms is composed of the very same elements as its Environment, but it cannot live in separation from its Environment! The two must be one. The one must live by the other. We have been made partakers of the divine nature, but that fact will never bring us to mature sonship. We must live by the Father, in blessed fellowship, participation, and union with Him!

The most common error in the lives of many of the Lord’s people is the attempt to live without assimilating Christ as their Environment, failing to make Him the absolute center of their existence, the sphere of their life. Friends, family, job, amusement, home, hobbies, worldly pursuits — all too often these are the Environment by which we live. No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus, “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, DWELLETH IN ME...as the Father hath sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me” (Jn. 6:56-57). As the natural man must have sustenance from his Environment, so the spiritual man. The spiritual man must come to know how to live by his Environment.

After he has gotten life you must give him food. Now, what food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or with creeds, or with commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with programs, or with experiences? No; there is a rarer luxury than all these — so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich, that they who have will never live on any other fare again. It is this: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mt. 4:4). Nothing can satisfy the son’s appetite but this — he hungers for the bread that cometh down from heaven. Nothing else will fill him. Nothing else will satisfy him. Everyone knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. It has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. They are but sugar-water. It has pleasures, and amusements, and excitement, and works; but there is no food there for the immortal craving of the spirit. It has worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly events, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate.

The church world is hungry, too. Starving, in fact. Oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has impressive rituals, and stirring programs, and moving ceremonies, and splendid ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and incense, and temples, and cathedrals, and priests, and preachers, and creeds, and organization, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved “in the work,” and committed “to the work,” and “giving to the work.” They do and do but in all this something other than CHRIST has become the central factor. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the program, or the ministry, or the experience, or the method, or the personality or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate and millions of Christians are drunk with them and in their inebriated hilarity think they know the living Christ.

There is no SUBSTANCE in them! The divine ingredients of the celestial atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven are missing. Sons of God cannot live in that Environment. So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No possibility of starving or suffering malnutrition on this fare. It is eternal food for the sons of God to live upon. And notice — sons live on every word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. That is how the Greek expresses it. Is it not dreadfully true that the vast majority of Christians are living on words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God? They live on a by-gone revelation, a word spoken to another people at another time, a historical creed, that which God spoke through St. Augustine, or through Luther, or through Calvin, or through Spurgeon, or through Whitfield, or through Finney, or through the Pentecostal pioneers, or through the Latter Rain prophets! It is stale bread, spoiled meat, stagnant water and a dead word. It is a word that God spoke, but not the word that the Spirit is speaking. It is a word that in some ancient day proceeded out of the mouth of God, but not the word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying unto the churches." It is yesterday's manna, and it has bred worms and stinks. It is truth, but not present truth. But the living bread of the living Christ in His living revelation to His elect sons in this day is meat that the world knows not of, meat that endures unto eternal life. In spring-time it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. Oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

How graphically Douglas Wilson illustrates our relationship with this Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven in one of his booklets. He wrote, "Can we imagine such a thing as this? A child is born into the world that has no hearing, no sight, no sense of smell, or taste, or feeling, and it cannot speak. Many children are born with one or more of these disabilities and there is a possibility that children could be born without any of these five senses, or the ability to speak. It is of such a one we are now thinking. It cannot see, or hear, or feel, or smell, or taste or speak.

"IS THERE ANY POSSIBLE HUMAN WAY TO REACH SUCH A CHILD LIVING IN SUCH A BODY? It is living in a world filled with normal human beings. It has the same life in it that is in the others. But it cannot communicate with those beings in any way. It cannot see what is around it, neither hear. It has no sense of feeling, and therefore would not know when it was touched. It has no sense of smell, nor of taste, and has no communication with the outside world or appreciation of anything in it. This child would have no means of learning from that world around it. It would only know that by some means unknown to itself it is surviving in its own little world. It has no conception of what mankind is. There is no way by which it can express itself to the surrounding world. What a horrible condition! But please know this. There are literally multitudes of God's people who occupy that very condition spiritually.

"It is these five senses and our ability to speak that give meaning and value to our existence in this world. It is possible to get along without one or two, perhaps three of these senses, but such a person is terribly handicapped. But to have none of the senses nor the ability to speak, would put such a person into complete isolation. There is no known means by which such a person could be communicated with. It would be a world alone.

“Let us suppose that the child grows, reaching at least a partial maturity. Then one day, by a miracle, it receives sight. We have no way of knowing what the emotions in such a person would be, upon its reception of sight. Suddenly out of a world of darkness, the sight would reveal the beings and all the proportions of the world about it. A WHOLE NEW WORLD WOULD SUDDENLY COME INTO EXISTENCE FOR THAT PERSON. Such a world would never have been dreamed of. There had been no means of even suspecting such a world. It would be confusing, bewildering, frightening. The mind of such a person would have had no way of conceiving anything that the eyes now see. YET THIS WORLD HAD BEEN THERE DURING THE WHOLE LIFE OF THAT INDIVIDUAL. This person had been right in the middle of it all the time. It was not a new world, but new to this person. And yet, the child would still have little conception of this new world. He would have no idea of what would be safe or dangerous in this world. He would have no knowledge of beauty or ugliness. He would have no sense of value of good or bad, or the meaning of the things he sees. Such a person would not understand the difference between a tree or a man. He would not know that an animal is an animal or that a bird is a bird. All of this would have been around the person all the time, but he had not known it.

“Again, this person goes on for weeks or months, and then another miracle is performed and its ears are opened. ANOTHER WORLD IS SUDDENLY OPENED TO THIS ONE BY THE OPENING OF THE EARS. A vast, expansive new world comes to this one in the world of sound. He would hear people talking and wonder what those sounds were. He hears music, and the chirping of birds, and marvels at what he hears. He has no ability yet to evaluate the sounds, so there must be a learning process by which they can all be sorted and arranged and catalogued as to what they are, pleasant or unpleasant. He had no means of even dreaming of such a thing as sound, having been locked up in his own world apart from it all. He has possessed no means of contacting those around him. And the people about him, though filled with compassion and a desire to help this creature, could not in any way ‘get through’ to him” — end quote.

Believe me, precious friend of mine, THERE IS A WORLD AROUND US THAT THE NATURAL MAN HAS NEVER SEEN. It is there now, and has always been. Little by little God is opening our spiritual eyes and we are beholding with wonder things that we have not suspected or even dreamed of as being about us. With our physical senses we have absolutely no comprehension of that world, because there has been no way for it to communicate with us. But the Spirit of God is opening the vision of His elect in this hour to see things that eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. There is a realm, a dimension of reality, a sphere of existence, a world, a universe, a Kingdom that God has prepared for His sons, and He is revealing it to us by His Spirit.

Strange and wonderful emotions stir within us as we begin to discern the value of the things we see by the eye of revelation. We are testing them and trying them to grasp their certainty and their purpose and intent. We are daily exploring this wonderful world of the Kingdom of Heaven that is opening before us. We know that it is the land our heavenly Father has prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. There is no way for this higher world that is around us to reach us until God opens a channel. Mighty angels and glorious creatures in heavenly realms may be possessed of a burning desire to make us understand about this new world, but they cannot do so. Never until God Himself quickens and transforms us by His Spirit is this new world opened to us. Carnal-minded men think of heaven in terms of golden streets, harps, gold slippers, white robes,

palm branches, trumpets, and so forth. But heaven is a busy world in which mighty things are accomplished. Heaven is an active, aggressive realm and it is all around us and within us. Some of us know by the moving of the Spirit that this spiritual world is in existence here and now, and it is our Fatherland. Jesus came and demonstrated heaven, but the people could not see it. Before their very eyes Jesus demonstrated the power and the glory and the life of that bright world about us, yet most were blind to it.

One morning the servant of Elisha awoke and stepped outside the house where they were visiting. He looked about and saw that he and his master were surrounded by a great and terrible army and he cried to Elisha to ask what they should do. He was frightened beyond belief because in his limited ability he could see no way out. But can we not hear Elisha saying, "Don't be fearful, we have more with us than they have with them." Consider the astonishment upon the countenance of this servant and hear him say, "I wonder what is the matter with you, Elisha. I went out and scanned the mountains, I saw all the host of the enemy there. I don't see anyone here with us." So Elisha prayed the Lord to open the eyes of the young man, and God did so. What a sight he saw! ALL THE TIME HE HAD BEEN IN THE VERY MIDST OF GOD'S ARMIES OF HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE AND DIDN'T KNOW IT. He had been surrounded by the very power of God and the world of God, but he possessed not one faculty that could reveal it to him. He was just as certain as the Russian Cosmonauts that there was nothing there. He could not see, taste, feel, smell, or hear what was all around him. There had been no connection between himself and this other world until God opened the eyes of his spirit and revealed it to him.

Men who witnessed the demonstration of the first telephone made by Alexander Graham Bell, refused to believe that there could be any such thing as a telephone or a voice coming through a wire. THERE IS A WORLD ABOUT US and we try to tell people about it but they inform us that they have seen all there is to see and heard all there is to hear, because they have the Word of God. But the Kingdom of Heaven is not a book, the Kingdom of Heaven is not a place, neither is the Kingdom of Heaven an age. The Word was not made a book, the Word was not made a place, the Word was not made an age — the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now that same Word is made flesh in us, in all who are the sons of God. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! Hallelujah!

Chapter 4

Birthered Into The Kingdom

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).

This is the last resurrection appearance of Jesus before His ascension. At this time Jesus discussed with His disciples the coming of the Holy Spirit and gave them instructions about waiting in Jerusalem. He gave them some idea of what would accompany their experience of receiving the Holy Ghost. They would receive power. During His three and a half years of ministry, Jesus attempted to turn the minds and hearts of the disciples to spiritual things, and graduate them from constant expectation of external and natural happenings. The earthly kingship idea of Messiah was prominent among the Jews. They expected that when Messiah came he would defeat Israel’s oppressors and immediately go to Jerusalem and sit on David’s throne. The people would inaugurate him as king of Israel, and Israel would soon become the one world kingdom. They had good reasons for believing this idea, because they believed the prophets of the Old Testament.

Jesus tried to overcome their concept that the restoration of the kingdom was to be a literal affair. He tried to transfer their vision from the literal to the spiritual. He tried to make them see something other than a visible kingdom. He kept proclaiming that there was an invisible Kingdom of the heavenlies wherein is found life and reality. It was natural for them, however, to look for a literal, restored kingdom in the earthlies, for with their natural minds that is how they perceived the promises of the prophets of old. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets had left an impression upon the people of Israel that the Messiah for whom they looked was going to come and establish a literal kingdom of a visible government in the earth.

For example, turn to Isaiah, chapter nine, and read. Do so as though you were an Israelite looking for Messiah, as though your nation had been overthrown by the foreign armies of Babylon, Assyria, or Rome. You are in subjection to a foreign power, and you are listening to your prophets prophesy. They are proclaiming that because Israel sinned, because they kept not the law of the Lord, because they went a whoring after other gods and did abomination before the Lord, God sent the foreign government to destroy their land and their holy city and temple, and carry them away into captivity. Suppose yourself sitting among the Israelites, listening to Isaiah prophesy, weeping because your nation had sinned and God had brought the judgment of your enemies upon you. You long for the time when you can go back and see Jerusalem’s walls erected again, and the temple of Yahweh glittering once more in its glory upon mount Moriah.

Put yourself in the position of one of those citizens of Israel listening to the Word of God coming to them from their prophet, gazing at Jerusalem in rubble, under the hand and dominion of a foreign, heathen government. Just imagine yourself listening to the prophet speaking to you the words recorded in Isaiah chapter nine. “For unto us (Israelites) a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his

shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7). This is the Word of God through the prophet, to the people of Israel. If you can, place yourself back there listening, as a people whose land, government and throne have just been devastated by foreign armies. Now God promises you a king, a Messiah. He promises that when he comes he is going to re-establish the throne of David, which to them was a very natural and literal throne in a physical and visible city on earth. This Messiah will restore the kingdom to Israel and bring in an age of peace and blessing. He is going to sit on David’s throne and kingdom to rule it, to establish it in judgment and justice. You are now bursting with the bright hope of the glorious kingdom of David! And you have a promise from the prophet Isaiah that it is going to come to pass. And the scene is repeated again and again through the prophets Jeremiah, Daniel, Zachariah, Ezra, and others.

The Jews in the days of Jesus were still looking for the Messiah that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, Haggai and Malachi had promised. Each one of those prophets gave them the idea that this Messiah, when he came, would be a temporal, external, visible king. A king that would militarily defeat their enemies, go up to Jerusalem and ascend mount Zion, rebuild the palace as well as the temple and the walls, and sit again on the throne of David re-established there. Putting oneself in their place before Jesus came, one can understand that with their natural minds they had real reason to believe that this earthly kingdom would come to pass. Their prophets had made it clear that this was what they could expect.

The Jews could not see the spiritual reality to which the prophetic utterance pointed since they did not have spiritual insight. They could see only with their literal, individual, human approach and perspective. They could see only the promise of the visible kingdom they supposed the prophets were prophesying about. It seems that this was still in the mind of the old prophet Simeon when Jesus was brought into the temple in Jerusalem as a babe. Even the words of the aged prophetess Anna and the angel, if taken in the letter of the Word context, reflect the hope of a literal kingdom established in Israel, in Palestine. Thus one can see and understand why the disciples, also, in spite of Jesus trying to transfer their hope from that which is natural to that which is spiritual, from an earthly Kingdom of God to a spiritual Kingdom, held tenaciously to the visible, temporal idea. You can understand why they, not being quickened by the Spirit, and without spiritual perception, could still be in expectation of a literal kingdom established upon the earth.

The primary reason for Peter turning away from the Lord, denying Him, and the other disciples scattering into the night, was because the Messiah they had followed for more than three years was not fulfilling what they thought Isaiah and the prophets said he would do. He was not conquering Rome. He was not seizing power. He was not becoming king. They became confused. They supposed that this Man was supposed to take David’s throne in Jerusalem. Instead of taking David’s throne, He is letting Pilate sentence Him to death upon a cross. All the disciples trusted in the words of the prophets and cherished the hope of the restored kingdom of Israel. The disciples were confused and frustrated because they had no spiritual perception yet. They had been born of the flesh, but not born of the Spirit. They had been born of man, but not born of God. They had been birthed from the earth, but not birthed from above. They could understand natural words with natural minds, but were unable to understand spiritual

words with spiritual minds. They, like Nicodemus, could understand earthly things, but had no understanding of heavenly things.

What is the Kingdom of God? It is a goal — a quest set before us toward which we daily press — the goal of entering into a completely different realm; a different civilization; a higher order; different form of government; a realm governed by God. The Kingdom is a heavenly thing, for it is the Kingdom of Heaven, the subject of God's heavenly counsels. The Old Testament prophecies made known His earthly counsels. They concerned natural men, physical nations, geographical locations, carnal warfare, territorial conquests, literal thrones, outward rituals and ceremonies, national laws, temples of stone and gold and cedar wood, animal sacrifices, priestly vestments, feast days, etc., etc. This is of great importance, showing how completely the Kingdom lies beyond the outer world. It has a different origin; it is revealed at a different time; it cherishes a different hope; it is entered by a different birth; it belongs to a different sphere. After the glowing commendation of the faith, inheritance, and exploits of the Old Testament saints and heroes, in Hebrews chapter 11 we are distinctly told that all these "received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that without us they should not be made perfect." Does not our Lord tell us that "among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he"? The Kingdom of Heaven is the spiritual realm of which Christ is the Head and King. The true Church is the metropolis of the Kingdom, the sons of God are the throne, the center of order and government in the Kingdom.

George Hawtin wrote of this realm: "May the blessed Holy Spirit open the eyes of our understanding that we may see that beyond the veil of flesh is the realm of God. There men and women, having passed through the binding, blinding veil of the flesh, pass out into the open sunlight of God's precious revelation. There they begin to see things as He sees them and to understand them as He understands them. In that realm beyond the veil of our human flesh we come to know God as He knows us. Here we begin to walk no longer in the light of the sun and the moon, or in the light of the natural mind, but we now walk in the light of the Shekinah, the light of the Holy Spirit, who has come forth from the Father into the world to dwell, not with men, but in them. The way we once thought of God and understood the things that belong to His realm becomes foreign to us. Then we thought that God was such an one as ourselves, but now we see His purpose is to make us like Him.

"Beyond the realm of the flesh we walk, not only in a new realm, but in an entirely new mind. It is the mind of Christ. Here in this heavenly realm we begin to think as God thinks, to see as He sees, to comprehend as He comprehends, and to desire as He desires. Here we become citizens of a new world, a new country, even an heavenly country. Here old things are passing away and all things become new. We cannot have a renewed mind while we live and walk after the desires of the flesh and the carnal mind. That is where the prosperity doctrine has led millions astray. They have set their affections not on things above, but on possessing the things of the earth, and unbeknown to themselves, while they demand everything that appeals to the natural man, their desires for the treasures of the Spirit begin to fade away.

"After enumerating his abundance of natural things and natural gifts, talents and accomplishments, all of which belong to this realm of flesh and blood, the apostle Paul declared that he counted them all on the level of dung, and that is exactly what they are. Men and women who glory in the natural and the abundance of earthly things will be

found sleeping when the trumpet sounds. Our Father in heaven has made provision for us whereby we may live above the world as true citizens of the heavenly realm. In this realm of the Spirit we have a new heart and a new mind. We have new eyes to see the invisible, new ears to hear the inaudible. Here in this world we communicate only with words that are spoken, but those of us who have walked at all in the Spirit have found that the Spirit of God speaks to us very definitely without the use of spoken or written words so that we know what He said and what His rebukes and instructions were. In this realm beyond the veil of the flesh, in this heavenly country and new citizenship, we begin to know His voice as we never knew it from the far off country of the flesh. It is a new realm, a new era, a new country and a new citizenship. Those who walk here have a new attitude. This is the realm of life eternal, and I am convinced that neither life nor death nor principality nor power nor things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” — end quote.

Hannah Hurnard relates the transformation that came to her life at the discovery of this higher reality. “Little by little everything in my circumstances altered. It was as though I had really moved into another country — a heavenly one, where I was surrounded by things that I found more delightful than anything that I had experienced in the past. Even more wonderful than that, I actually began to feel as though there were angels and heavenly beings coming and going all the time, and, for a very matter-of-fact and practical person like myself, this was a most wonderful and awesome experience. All sorts of spiritual influences and inspirations were given to me which seemed to ‘open the eyes of my understanding’, so that I seemed to have been born into a new world and universe altogether, or to have escaped from the prison-house world of what my physical senses could perceive, into a vast and glorious world perceivable only through newly developing spiritual senses. Not through psychic senses, which enable people to see what is going on naturally elsewhere in the world, or what is going to happen in the future, but through spiritual understanding of truths which had been hidden to me until then — and which now began to reveal a world of REALITIES and experiences and contact with higher powers, such as I had never before envisaged” — end quote.

THE NEW BIRTH

Let us go back some two millenniums to the venerable city of the great King. It is night. A citizen is stealing along the street furtively, keeping to the shadows. Having gained admission into the house where a certain itinerant teacher is staying, the visitor says to Him, “Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.” It was really a brave and daring thing for this night visitor to do. On the one hand, he was a distinguished citizen, an ecclesiastical authority among the Jews, a member of the renowned Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of Israel. On the other hand, the teacher whom he had come to consult, although famous for certain healings and teachings, was only an untitled rabbi from Nazareth in provincial Galilee.

The first words of the new teacher are, however, astounding. The words spoken by Jesus to Nicodemus are freighted with divine significance, for in that interview the Lord revealed foundation truths concerning the Kingdom of God. Instead of deferentially receiving him, Jesus said to him, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” What an unexpected, stunning affront to this exemplary Pharisee, this honorable member of the Sanhedrin, this professional expert in Israel! The Kingdom of God was a term with which he had been familiar since childhood.

He believed that by virtue of his own birthright as a Jew he was already a member of that Kingdom. And now this itinerant carpenter-teacher from despised Nazareth dares tell this distinguished Pharisee in his very face that unless he is born again, born from above, he will not ever see the Kingdom of God! Astounded and confused, he asks, defensively, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" But the new rabbi, in no way offended by his visitor's stupid question, proceeds to repeat, with increasing detail and emphasis, the terms of entrance into the Kingdom of God. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

Imagine the unborn twins Jack and Jill debating whether there is life after the womb. Their small, dark world has been unusually active lately, and both Jack and Jill realize that their days in the womb are numbered. But while Jill argues that there is much more to existence than their life in the womb, Jack refuses to believe in something he has never seen. Then suddenly their world begins to collapse. They feel a tug, intense pressure. There is pain for the first time ever. Jack holds on; Jill slips. Her head is pushed harder and harder into a dark tunnel. There is pain, more pressure. It's happening, thinks Jack, this is the end. And while he holds on for dear life, he sees a piercing light and hears Jill's final cry. Then silence. But while Jack weeps for his sister, Jill lies safely in the arms of her mother. She has been welcomed into a new family and a whole new world — a world of dazzling light, vast distances, and great opportunities. And Jill wishes she could tell Jack that there is indeed life beyond the womb and that it's better than anything imaginable. But she can't; Jack will have to see for himself. IT IS BIRTH THAT BRINGS THE NEW IDENTITY AND THE NEW WORLD.

A human life begins at the moment of conception, but at that point in time it is not truly a person, it bears little resemblance to the man or woman it will one day become. At the time of conception the embryo looks more like a fish than a human being. Many important changes take place as the child develops in the womb over the gestation period of nine months. The formation period ends with the onset of childbirth. When the baby is ready, a change in the chemistry of the mother's body causes the contractions that bring the birth to begin. Continual and intensifying contractions finally thrust the baby out into a new world. The attending physician cuts the umbilical cord and severs the connection between mother and child. The infant's lusty cries broadcast the news of a new person arriving in the world. Think of the great changes that must take place in the infant at the moment of birth. In an instant, after hours of struggle, from a liquid environment, he is now surrounded by air. From total darkness, he is now flooded with light. From a world of confinement and silence, he is now brought into a world of freedom and communication. He must begin to breathe immediately. No longer will he get nourishment from his mother's blood; he must begin to eat. There is everything to learn, and the learning starts immediately and never ends. It is exciting, thrilling!

In the great and wonderful plan of God, the birth experience determines a human being, for it is by birth that the previously unborn fetus takes on its identity as an independently living, breathing, human being. Can we not see that identity begins with birth? The nature of our birth, and its reality, determines who we will become. Our pedigree and genealogy is of utmost importance. Your life is a unique creation of God. You are a special creature in all of God's vast universe. It is at birth that the certificate is issued whereby the child is registered as a citizen of his or her country and the world. It is at birth that a name is given to the child, establishing for all of his life his individual identity. In like manner, the birth experience determines the identity of a son of God who

possesses the life of Christ. Jesus did not tell Nicodemus, “Ye must be conceived again,” although there is truth in that, too. He said, “Ye must be born again.” It is a mystery to us all, but the fact remains that God has ordained that a wonderful transformation takes place by birth. It is at birth that the child is given the “breath of life” thus becoming a “living soul.” All through the Bible birth was the event that established the identity of the child and his or her position in the family as a son or a daughter. Inheritance, protection under the law, legal matters of all kinds, and pedigree were all reckoned from birth. Conception determined none of these things under the law — only birth. How wonderful and significant are the blessings and benefits that accrue by birth!

“What a mighty transformation there must be in a man’s life, in his nature, in his character, in his state of being, in his desires, in his attitudes, in his behavior, in his understanding, in his goals and objectives before he can truly say, “I am not of the world. I have a new birth. I am born into another Kingdom. I belong to another King. I am in the midst of the world with all its crookedness and sin and sorrow and limitation and pain and death, but I do not belong to it.” I wonder if you can get that.

We hear of the new birth and we think we understand it. Faintly we hear the truths of sonship and imagine we are already sons of God. We have seen through a glass darkly, but face to face we behold all things as they are. The mists that have hung like shrouds upon the distant majestic peaks are fleeing away before the rising sun of righteousness that we may know as we are known. In the true and eloquent words of another: “Believers of all ages have sold themselves woefully short on all the great promises of God. We have been content to say that every believer was born again and needed but to wait until some distant day when he would fly away to heaven either by death or by rapture. I remember seeing this sign vividly portrayed by the public highway: Except a man be born again, he CANNOT GO TO HEAVEN. That statement, I fear, has been the sum and substance of Christian belief, but we have missed the true meaning of the truth given to Nicodemus so long ago. To be born from above is to be BORN FROM A HIGHER REALM. Spirit is higher than flesh even though both should grow together in one body. To be born of the flesh is one thing, for there you are born into a NATURAL REALM capable only of partaking of NATURAL THINGS. But to be BORN OF THE SPIRIT is to be born into a new and higher realm where the ETERNAL THINGS are CLEARLY SEEN before us even as natural things are seen by the natural man. Without birth from above it is IMPOSSIBLE to see the kingdom of God, for natural men have not been given the power to see spiritual things.

“The realm of the new birth is the realm of sonship. It is the realm where Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived and moved and had His being. Not that He was born again, for He had never sinned nor died and needed not the regeneration of ordinary men. But He lived and moved in the REALM OF SONSHIP full and complete. He lived and moved in the REALM OF THE KINGDOM and opened up the way for us to enter in. As Moses led Israel to Kadesh Barnea where they could actually see the promised land but through unbelief turned back to the wilderness, so Jesus led the whole world to a sort of spiritual Kadesh Barnea where the glory of the Kingdom came into full view only to be lost sight of in a spiritual wilderness in which we have wandered for almost two thousand years. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived in a realm above and beyond ordinary men, for while we have lived as sons of men, He lived as the Son of God. While we have been from beneath, He was from above. While our kingdoms have been of the earth, He was not from hence. While this is undeniably true to any honest man, yet, praise be to the eternal

purpose of God, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became the Son of man that we who were born sons of men might become sons of God” — end quote.

Regeneration, new birth, sons of God — these are all terms with which most Christians are familiar. The beautiful analogy is accepted by everyone. But all this means to the average Christian is that he conjures up the nice spiritual feeling of thinking of himself “as if” he were a “real” Son of God, as Jesus was and is. The average Christian has absolutely no idea of the transcendental implications of this new birth into the family of God. Most think of being a child of God as sort of an “honorary” title conferred on them by an indulgent God who accepts them as “little adopted human children” to whom He plans to give as their reward for accepting His gift of eternal life a beautiful park, a celestial playground called “heaven.” This heaven is designed for them to enjoy for eternity, playing, loafing, running, shouting, rejoicing, visiting, playing harps, waving palm branches, and doing whatever other harmless and sinless thing their hearts may desire.

But let us understand what it really means to actually be BORN into the very family of GOD. I prefer to turn the phrase “the family of God” around, in order to better grasp its significance. Instead of saying that we are born into the family of God, it is just as correct to say that we are born into the GOD FAMILY! I may say, by way of illustration, that I was by natural birth born into the family of Eby. But this also means that I was born into the EBY FAMILY. It is merely two ways of stating the same fact. I am of the EBY KIND. I AM EBY. Not only are men born into the family of God, they are born into the GOD FAMILY — the family that is God. Not only are we birthed into the Kingdom of God, we are birthed into the GOD KINGDOM — the Kingdom which is God. We are of the GOD KIND. And startling as it may be, this GOD KINGDOM, or GOD FAMILY, is the ELOHIM of the scriptures! And to be born into THIS FAMILY means that we have the potential to become ALL THAT HE IS!

The new birth is nothing less than the birth of a God-being, the birth of a Christ-creature, who becomes “Christ IN YOU the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). There is no new birth outside of the actual birthing of an actual Spirit Being who becomes the “inner man,” the new “me.” It is my spirit quickened by His Spirit, God birthing of His own divine life into me thus making me alive from the dead, a new creature on the Celestial Plane. So many Christians glibly talk about a born again “experience,” or a “change of heart,” being wholly ignorant as to what must transpire to effect this change, to implement this reality. Our Lord said, “Ye must be BORN,” not now of the flesh, but of the Spirit. Religionists, both then and now, are incapable of grasping this greatest of all truths and its astounding implications. And so they fail to understand that as a woman gives birth to a son, bringing an actual child into the world as a living, breathing personality with an individual identity, nature, mind and will, so does GOD GIVE BIRTH, delivering out of His own loins the offspring of Himself, of His own kind, of the divine nature, of the GOD SPECIES, to grow up into the fullness of His own divine Being.

This is exactly what the apostle John was explaining when he wrote, “He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” This is a divine reality, but is also a parable, illustration or analogy. It is the picture of a babe, who has been conceived, developed in the darkness of a womb until the fullness of time, and then born into the light of the world. The members of its body are fully developed. A matured child is born into the world, the exact replica of its parents. That is the parable.

Whenever the word “born” is used it presupposes the whole analogy of conception, months of waiting for the life to develop, and the final thrust of the new being into a new world. The new birth is nothing less than the birth of an actual divine, heavenly Being, a son of the Father, who is as ageless and deathless as is his immortal Parent, differing only in development and rank.

How wonderful are these things! They are far beyond our expression or the ability of the most eloquent to describe! It is a marvelous fact that the very life of God is communicated to the believing heart via the new birth. But what is the life of God? It is the content of God and God Himself. All that is in God and all that God Himself is are in the life of God. All the fullness of the Godhead is hidden in the life of God. The nature of God is contained in the life of God, and His wisdom, knowledge, will, power, and glory. Every facet of what God is and can do, is included in the life of God. With any kind of living thing, all that it is rests within its life. All of its capabilities and functions issue out of its life, and all of its outward activities and expressions originate from its life. It is that kind of living thing because it has that kind of life. Its being rests in its life. God is the supreme living Being, and all that He is, of course, is in His life. All that He is — whether truth, holiness, light or love — is derived from His life. All His expressions — whether goodness, righteousness, mercy or forgiveness — are derived from His life. All His divine capabilities, powers and actions are inherent in His life. The reason that He is such a glorious and powerful God is that He has such a glorious and powerful life. Hence, His being God rests in His life. And all that is in the life is transmitted through the seed of that life and reproduced in the offspring of that life. Think of it!

I am impressed to share the following from the writings of the late Douglas Wilson. “Not long ago we were reading from chapter twelve of Hebrews concerning the true sons and the bastard. We had often meditated on the fact that the child known as a bastard could in no wise help or change the circumstances of his birth. We knew well there was a stigma attached to the child, under the Old Testament especially. We were never quite able to reconcile all that we were told concerning such children, until just recently the Lord put a thought in our minds that settled the whole question. We quote now from Hebrews 12:5-10. ‘And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh to you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all (sons) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He FOR OUR PROFIT, that we MIGHT BE PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS.’

“In the above quotation we find two kinds of sons. At least in one sense of the word they are sons. There is the son that receives chastening of the Lord, and there is the bastard son that does not. In one sense of the word, the bastard, or as some translations put it, the spurious son, is as much a son as the true son. It can make no difference whether the spurious son knows who his father is or not, HE HAS ONE, just the same as the legitimate son. In some cases it is the very same father. We have come to see there is something in this and related passages that we need to understand. Let us first examine some reasons why children are brought into the world. We must remember always that the child itself has absolutely nothing to say about being brought into this life. It has

nothing to say about its color, nationality, place of birth, sex, or anything else. We may say that at least some of these things are determined by the laws of nature, but we would rather say they are determined by the laws of God working ALL things according to the counsel of His own will, and that applies to all people.

“The first and basic reason for the birth of children is for the preservation and increase of humanity. Humanity has no other way of perpetuating itself except through the birth of children. Whatever other reasons there may be, and there are several, they will all rest upon this basic one, the inherent instinct for self-preservation in humans. The savage in the jungle, or the highly educated and refined person in the highest strata of society, must return to this basic principle in order to perpetuate himself and the rest of the human race.

“We suppose that the greatest natural reason for bringing children into the world is because they are desired and wanted for themselves. The love of husband and wife, combined with the father and mother nature, is designed and given to humanity to cause them to want and desire to bring children into being, simply because they DO LOVE AND DESIRE THEM. The principal desire in the lives of parents is to have a family, to provide well for that family, and to see that each member of that family is initiated into his or her life with the best possible preparation and advantage that the family can provide. Some children are very fortunate and blessed, for they enter into a loving family circle and have parents who desire the best for them. The atmosphere is conducive to the best development of the children, and in that love and care there runs the vein of discipline, wisely administered to cause the children to develop into the kind of men and women that are a credit to the community, the nation, and the world.

“Another group of children are brought into the world through ignorance. Many of these children are unwanted and the care they receive is minimal. Sometimes they are abandoned or given away. In one segment of this class we find those who are born into this world only because of the sexual desire of the parents, often unmarried, and these children are unplanned for and unwanted. These are illegitimate children, humanly speaking, the children without a true father and often deserted by the mother. Some of them are resented or even hated and they become the shame of the family into which they are born. The stigma of their illegitimate birth follows them continually. These children are the victims of the uncontrolled passions of their parents and these are children that are born entirely WITHOUT A PURPOSE. These children are often looked down upon by society and yet, they CAN IN NO WISE HELP THEIR CONDITION OR THEIR BIRTH.

“Now let us look at the group we are most concerned with. In this last group we want to consider those children who ARE BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Their birth is not in any sense “accidental.” The conception and birth are the result of planning by the parents to bring a child into the world to accomplish a certain purpose. There is the knowledge of a need, a work that must be done, and the child is deliberately brought into the world to do that specific thing. Even before the birth, the child may be given by the parent over to that work, as Samuel was given to the Lord by Hannah, and all efforts are made to bring that child to the very highest capabilities to accomplish this purpose. THIS IS A CHILD BORN FOR A PURPOSE and trained for it. SUCH HAVE BEEN THE KINGS OF NATIONS AND THE PRIESTS OF THE ORDER OF AARON. Such ones stand out from others and their lives are different than the lives of their fellows. Some know from their

early childhood that they are destined for a major role in the life of this world. These are children BORN FOR A PURPOSE even in the flesh.

“But let us see something about the CHILDREN OF GOD. How loosely we have used that term! Any church member or religious person calls himself a child of God. Yet we can observe that there is ABSOLUTELY NO SPIRITUAL PURPOSE IN THEIR LIVES. We find multitudes of religious children, brought forth in one manner or another, filling the churches, but we can discern no spiritual purpose or destiny in their lives. They believe they are saved from hell and the devil and someday will fly away to heaven, but now they have nothing to do but go to church, obey the church rules, and wait for the coming of the Lord. And in heaven they will have nothing to do, no responsibility, no constructive ministry, no outreach to creation, just eternity to dance, sing and shout — an eternal ‘party’. Yet these have no conception of eternity, nor yet of the great plans and wonderful purposes of God for His creation. They are children BORN ENTIRELY WITHOUT A PURPOSE, or in the language of this article, they are bastard children.

“These children cannot help their condition, neither can they do anything about it. The church system that was responsible for bringing them forth, took no forethought as to why they would bring these children into being. In all probability it was to increase the population of the church and benefit the church budget. But for the most part they ‘just happened.’ What we missed in the past, but are now beginning to see, is that the true child of God IS A CHILD BORN FOR A PURPOSE, and trained to the highest degree of ability to fulfill that purpose. We emphasize again that even the bastard has a father, but he is a child born without a ‘father purpose.’ He is just brought into the world to make out the best he can. He receives no chastening (training) for any specific purpose, but just grows up into whatever may come his way. But behold the wonder, the thrill, the glory, the expectancy of a CHILD BORN TO FULFILL A PURPOSE! A true son, fulfilling the purpose of the Father’s heart in the great work that is yet to be done throughout the ages to come.

“We think of Jesus the Christ in this particular. Surely none will deny that JESUS WAS A SON BORN FOR A PURPOSE. He was the Lamb of God SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. He came to fulfill the words of all the holy prophets who prophesied of His coming. He came to reveal the glory of the Father to the world. He gave Himself by the eternal Spirit to fulfill the purpose of God in the work of redemption and recreation of the world. God has a plan. He always has had a plan, even from before the beginning. And just as God had a Lamb, a Firstborn, a Forerunner, a Captain of our salvation, from the beginning, BORN FOR THE PURPOSE of fulfilling His mission on our behalf, so does God have other sons BORN FOR THE PURPOSE OF GOD in their mission and work. Just as Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered, so do all the other sons learn obedience by the same means, for there is a world to come that will be under the jurisdiction of those sons as Kings and Priests, and they must be trained.

“Now we can begin to see this passage about bastards and sons in a far different light than ever before. Now we see the bastard, not as one condemned forever from the presence of God, but simply as one BORN WITHOUT A PURPOSE, yet one who in due time will be cared for by those sons BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Surely this makes a division in God’s people, it elevates some above the rest, but is that not how it is in all the world and in all of nature? ALL CANNOT BE KINGS AND PRIESTS, anymore than all in our nation can be President or in the government. But there does rest upon the

Kings and Priests a great and awesome responsibility, and for that responsibility the sons MUST BE CHASTENED, having already been BORN FOR A PURPOSE. Please keep always in mind that this chastening is training for the place prepared for the son” — end quote.

CITIZENSHIP IN THE KINGDOM

It is almost impossible to imagine what it would mean to be a man without a native land or home, destined to wander from place to place throughout life with neither rights nor privileges of citizenship. Sir Walter Scott alludes to the lonely frustration of such a predicament in the immortal words of his Lay of the Last Minstrel:

“Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said, —
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burn’d,
As home his footsteps he hath turn’d,
From wandering on a foreign strand!”

If this depicts the worth of the country a man claims for his own, I know of nothing more wonderful than discovering one’s citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. Pride of citizenship in a nation is wholly justifiable under the administration of men. With the Roman Empire, everyone living in territory controlled by Rome was considered part of “the Roman Empire,” whether they were a slave or a citizen. But only free-born men were naturally citizens. It was a cherished thing to be a citizen of Rome. The apostle Paul sometimes used his Roman citizenship as a badge of credibility and power (Acts 22:25-29). But how much more glorious it is to find citizenship in the everlasting and incorruptible Kingdom of God! The name of the man who has been born of God, appears therefore, in the census of the heavenlies. His home or citizenship is in heaven, even though he lives outwardly upon the earth.

There is at this present time a Kingdom scattered abroad over all the face of the earth; mixed and mingled among the peoples of all the kingdoms of the world: a people who are separate and apart from all the other kingdoms. They are not recognized by the world as a kingdom, they have no formal consulates in Rome, London, Paris or Moscow and no ambassador at the United Nations. They have no boundary lines separating their territory from any of the other nations of the world, and they do not have a visible king as some other nations have. They are the Kingdom of God on earth, scattered all over the earth among all the peoples of the world. God calls them, “A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (I Pet. 2:9).

They are a people who have been drawn out of the other nations of the world, redeemed by the blood of Jesus out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation and filled with the divine nature and Holy Spirit of God. These have been born again, giving them a new identity, a new life, a new allegiance, a new hope, a new destiny, and a new heritage. They are citizens of a new land, a heavenly country, and their King lives and rules within their hearts and minds and bodies. The world does not know them as a nation, for it cannot see their birth certificate, their true manhood, their land or their King. Wherever they are in this world they are strangers and pilgrims in a strange land. They were once citizens of the nations of the world, but being now born of God they have a new parentage and have been translated out of the kingdom of the darkness of this world

into the Kingdom of the Son of God. They were one time in the flesh, without Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, and without God or hope in the world.

So we have today a great and glorious Nation — a Nation of Kings and Priests unto God, scattered abroad over all the whole earth, in and among the nations of the earth, in and among the kingdoms of the world, but not any part of those kingdoms. While they are maintaining their separation from the world, they are growing up into Christ, so that when He shall appear, they shall be like Him and come into their full inheritance. They are constantly being changed, and as time goes on, they shall put off more and more of the things of the old world they have left, until they become matured sons of God in the Kingdom of their Father. But they are strategically placed among all the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations for a divine purpose — there shall be a conquest of all these territories until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and forever! God will give the nations to His sons as their inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth as their possession and they shall rule them with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:7-9). The stage is now being set for this glorious victory, and all nations shall come and worship before the Lord. The Lord shall be King over all the earth and all kindreds shall serve Him. His throne shall be manifested through His sons and His authority shall be over all. The Holy Spirit has witnessed through all His holy prophets in every city and every place throughout the past generation that THE TIME IS AT HAND. The sons of God are ready to be manifested, the purpose for which the body of the Christ has been so meticulously prepared is ready to be revealed before the face of all nations, and God will do His strange new work to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption, from the tyranny of sin and sorrow and pain and death.

Ah, beloved, do you not sense in the depths of your ransomed spirit a sense of divine destiny — that you were indeed BORN FOR A PURPOSE? Have you heard the sound of the trumpet thundering out the message: YE SHALL BE UNTO ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS! God doesn't need Kings and Priests in heaven, although that is the realm from whence they rule. HE NEEDS KINGS AND PRIESTS ON EARTH. "And they shall reign over the earth" (Rev. 5:10). The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of this divine government (Rev. 21:24). Truly we have received the call to sonship, to kingship, to priesthood, and the plan of God overwhelms my spirit and my soul rejoices in His unfailing purpose!

Chapter 5

Birtherd Into The Kingdom

(continued)

As I begin this message I acknowledge my indebtedness to Henry Drummond's wonderful book NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD for some of the thoughts shared in the following pages. May the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God seize upon our hearts and impress indelibly upon our minds the wonderful truth that all things that are seen in the Natural World are but pictures and images of the GREATER REALITIES in the Spiritual World. And in the understanding of the impassable gulf that exists in the Natural World between the inanimate and the animate, the dead and the living, lies the revelation that in the Spiritual Realm there is also a great uncrossable gulf between the worlds of Spiritual Death and Spiritual Life, between the carnal mind and the spiritual mind.

There is a wonderful law known to men of science that is called the Law of Biogenesis. This Law demonstrates that during all of recorded history life has only come from pre-existing life. No human power has ever been able to produce life out of inorganic chemical substances, nor has such a phenomenon ever been observed by human eye. We know that life is not now being originated on earth and that all the life forms today spring from pre-existing life forms of some kind. The inorganic world is staked off from the living world by barriers that have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, no chemistry, no electricity, nor any form of energy, nor any evolution can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. Only by the bending down into this dead world of some living form can these dead atoms be gifted with the properties of life; without this direct contact with life they remain fixed in the inorganic sphere forever. It is a very mysterious Law which guards in this way the portals of the living world. And if there is one thing in nature worth pondering for its strangeness it is the spectacle of this vast helpless world of the dead cut off from the living by the Law of Biogenesis and denied forever the possibility of resurrection within itself. Here we stand in the presence of the uncrossable gulf — the gulf of all gulfs — the gulf between DEATH and LIFE.

The Word of God contains an explicit and original statement of the Law of Biogenesis as it applies to the spiritual life. In the vision of the spiritual world presented in the scriptures, the first thing that draws the attention is a great gulf fixed. The passage from the natural world to the spiritual world is hermetically sealed on the natural side. In the natural world the door from the inorganic to the organic is shut, no mineral can open it; so, the door from the natural to the spiritual is shut, and no man can open it; the door from the earthly to the heavenly is shut, and no power of earth can open it. This world of natural men, of carnal minds and mortal bodies, is staked off from the spiritual world of God by barriers that have never been crossed from within. No organic change, no modification of environment, no vitamin, hormone or chemical substance, no meditation or mental energy, no moral effort, no improvement of character, no religious exercise, no

ritual or ceremony or tradition, can endow any single human soul with the attributes of spiritual life, immortality, or incorruption. The spiritual world of God and His sons is guarded from the world next in order beneath it, the world of the carnal mind, by a Law of Biogenesis — “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God...except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3-7).

It is not said, in this statement of the Law, that if the condition be not fulfilled the natural man will not enter the Kingdom of God. The word is, cannot. It is not that God arbitrarily shuts out the spiritually dead from the kingdom of the spiritually living. There is a great Law involved here. Paul by inspiration pointed out this Law: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2:14). It is not simply that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, but he cannot. It is as utterly impossible for the carnal mind to know spiritual things as it is for a stone to spontaneously generate life. The entrance of the natural man into the world of the Spirit of God is simply a scientific impossibility!

The Law of nature is: Except a mineral be born “from above” — from the kingdom just above it — it cannot enter the kingdom just above it. And except a man be born “from above,” he cannot enter the Kingdom just above him. There being no passage from the lower kingdom to the higher, whether from inorganic or organic, or from natural to spiritual, the injection of a LIFE is a necessity if a stone or a plant or an animal or a man is to pass from a lower sphere to a higher sphere. The earth will never possess (lay hold upon) the Kingdom of God so long as eternity shall endure. It must be the other way about. The Kingdom of God, the higher Kingdom, must possess the earth. Though the Kingdom of God is within me, yet I cannot possess it. It must possess me, or it will never be known. If I try to possess Christ, I will be as barren in the future as I have been in the past, but if CHRIST POSSESSES ME, then I will be hid with Christ in God and God will raise me up to find my existence in the realm of His divine life and glory.

As we consider these thoughts may God Almighty grant us that His Spirit may instruct us in the way of truth and understanding. Let us open wide our hearts and minds before the Lord that He may reveal the eternal truth of this subject to our hearts. The principle by which, in nature, the inorganic is raised up into the organic, and, in like manner, in God’s economy, the natural man is raised up out of the death realm into the life of the Kingdom of God, is stated simply by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 13:31-32: “Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs.” Let us UNDERSTAND! How are the inorganic, non-living mineral elements of the earth raised up into the organic kingdom of living things? Within the seed is a germ of life. The seed containing the life is planted in the earth, in the lifeless mineral world, in the kingdom of the dead.

Once buried in the earth, with all the right amounts of water and air, and the right temperatures, the seed germinates and the life within the seed begins to grow. Finally the shell of the seed bursts and there takes place a release of the life from the seed. As the life is released it immediately SEIZES UPON the chemical elements in the earth, converts them into food, and then builds up living tissue out of matter that never lived! The inorganic chemicals become organic tissue! The dead is converted into the living! The lifeless elements of the earth are transformed into the living substance of the plant.

This is one of the most amazing facts in nature, though it is happening every minute all around us! Now we can see clearly what the Lord Jesus meant when He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, but when it is sowed in the field, and becomes grown, it is the greatest of herbs. The plant stretches down to the dead world beneath it, touches its minerals and gases with its mystery of life, and brings them up ennobled and transformed to the living sphere. In like manner, the breath of God, blowing where it listeth, touches with its mystery of divine life the dead souls of men, bears them across the bridgeless gulf between the natural and the spiritual, endows them with its own holy and eternal and divine qualities, and produces within them these new and marvelous faculties, by which those who are born of the Spirit are said to SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD and ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

How futile in the face of such truth as this is any form of self reformation! How worthless and unprofitable the empty rituals, the static creeds, and the vain and lifeless traditions of the carnal religious systems! Place a lifeless rock in the dead earth and nothing will happen. Administer lifeless ceremonies and dead doctrines to a man dead in trespasses and sins and likewise nothing will happen. However thorough the self reformation may be, however beautiful the traditions and doctrines of religion, however impressive and inspiring to the soulish nature of man the pleasing platitudes of sermons, the harmony of music and the pageantry of programs, it leaves us without life and hopelessly dead to the glorious realities of the Spirit of God. Well did faithful Paul bear witness to the life-giving work of the Spirit in the lives of the Ephesians when he said, "You hath HE QUICKENED, who were dead in trespasses and sins...but GOD, who is rich in mercy, even when we were dead in sins, HATH QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST...and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:1-5).

With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the truth of Christ's indwelling life to be a living, transforming reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you. Nevertheless, I can certainly assure you that, the moment the grand and glorious fact of His indwelling life grips your heart and fills your mind, the reality of His divine indwelling will immediately begin to transform your life. Yea, and I shall further add that the quickening power of His abiding life will also begin to change your mind, transform your emotions, and renew your body as well. It is the Law of Life.

To bring a dead natural man with his carnal mind of death up into the higher Kingdom of divine life necessitates the implantation of the incorruptible seed of God into man's earthiness. The point I want to make very clear is that the New Creation is more than the eternal and incorruptible life of God from heaven. The New Creation is that life planted in the earth, seizing upon the earth, changing and transforming the earth, raising it up to find its existence in the higher Kingdom of divine life. Jesus is Himself the pattern. We know how the Word, who had from eternity dwelt in the bosom of the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended up into the Father from whence He had come, He was still the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of man, the first begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself. In His resurrection and ascension He was no longer only the Mighty God, but He was the Mighty God whose divine life and nature had laid hold upon the humanity of man and had raised it up into identification with Himself. He is still a MAN, for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the MAN

CHRIST JESUS. The Son of man became the Son of God. The whole wonderful work of Christ in redemption was not merely to deliver man from the law and its curse of death, but to BRING HUMAN NATURE ITSELF UP INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DIVINE LIFE, TO MAKE US PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field."

Even now at this very moment the life that we live in this body of flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God; and that faith assures us fully that the incorruptible seed, sown by the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit, shall issue forth in incorruption, immortality and eternal life. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Death is corruption and life is incorruption. As the rush cannot grow without mire, as the seed cannot grow without water, as the mustard seed cannot grow without earth, so, in a manner wonderfully illustrated by these marvels, the incorruptible Christ seed, planted in the corruptible earth which we are, bears its fruit in immortality, incorruption and eternal life — the New Creation. The seed cannot become a tree without the earth, and the earth cannot become a tree without the seed. The tree is neither the life in the seed nor the elements of the earth. The tree is an entirely new creation, something that did not exist before, not life or earth, but life and earth! It is the commingling and restructuring of the two into a union, making of the twain one new thing. The tree is the elements of the earth QUICKENED AND MADE ALIVE by the transforming power of the life in the seed! Such is the New Creation. The New Creation is neither the eternal God (pure spirit) nor is it man (physical). The New Creation is CHRIST, the God-man, humanity admitted into the full glory of the Divine, human nature transformed and received up into union with the eternal Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is composed of redeemed men who are putting on the divine nature and the incorruptible life of God. That is why we must have the redemption of the body as Paul has said, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11). Even now at this very moment the divine life of God is at work within the elect, changing, transforming, lifting us up into the higher Kingdom.

I would say to you again that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven and that we can stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which many babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is in every plant and tree, every beast and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and substance, and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism. Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the spiritual life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of the being. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a...seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field." The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus when He "passes this way," nor from the weekly reviving or refreshing that comes to weary souls as they gather together in church meetings. Thank God for the fellowship, encouragement and blessing of those of like precious faith, but I declare to you today that the life of sonship can only be known as we become sensitive to the reality of the

ABIDING CHRIST WITHIN, conscious of His speaking, guiding, governing, and His power continually transforming the spirit, the mind, and the body into the image of Him who created them.

As speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are the evidences of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, so the redemption of our bodies from the power of decay and death is the evidence of the manifestation of the sons of God. “We ourselves too, who have and enjoy the firstfruits of the Spirit — a foretaste of the blissful things to come — groan inwardly as we wait for the redemption of our bodies from sensuality and the grave, which will reveal our adoption, our manifestation as God’s sons” (Rom. 8:23, Amplified Bible). This change in our bodies shall not come by the mighty working of Christ crashing down through the clouds, but by the DIVINE INWORKING OF HIS INDWELLING LIFE as Paul by inspiration said, “He shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

SEEING THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God means many things to many different people, according to their understanding. This is only natural, because of the many figures under which the idea was presented by Jesus, and also because people are at different stages in their progress along the way to the Kingdom, which means that they have attained different degrees of growth as children of God in the family of God. Jesus said that one must be born again in order to “see” or “enter” the Kingdom. Here we find Jesus laying down the preliminary requirement for an understanding of the Kingdom, as well as entrance into the Kingdom. But He does not say that upon being born again one would immediately fully see or completely enter into the Kingdom. But spiritual birth is the prerequisite. Understanding the Kingdom spiritually and laying hold upon its reality can only follow the new birth — not precede it. Until you are born from above you have neither the ability to see nor the potential to enter into the Kingdom of God.

First of all, then, the Kingdom is not a natural state, for it must be entered following a new birth. And a man can no more bring about his second birth — the birth into the spiritual world — than he could have brought about his first birth — the birth into the physical world. It comes to one from another world. He is given birth from a higher realm. It is the work of God alone. It is a new order that one enters into under entirely new conditions. It becomes accessible by the experience of a new life, a new identity, a new citizenship, a new spirit, a new nature, a new will, a new attitude, a new ability, a new objective.

When men come into the world, they are born outside of the Kingdom of God, and they cannot see into it. They may go round and round it, and examine it from the outside, and pass an opinion on it. But they are no judges. They are not seeing what they are speaking about. For that which is born of spirit is spirit, and that which is born of flesh is flesh; and fleshly men can only give an uninformed and unenlightened criticism about something spiritual that they do not and cannot understand. Therefore the critical value of a natural man’s opinion on spiritual matters is nothing. His opinion is simply ludicrous — he is talking about a thing that he has never seen.

So far as one’s experience of the Kingdom of God goes, regeneration makes all the difference. It is as if someone had been standing outside some great cathedral. He has heard that its windows are of stained glass and exceeding beautiful. He walks all around

it and sees nothing but dull, unimpressive and unintelligible colors. There is nothing worth seeing there. Its beauty must be highly exaggerated and over-rated, he concludes. But let him go in. Let him see things from the inside. And his eye is dazzled with the gorgeous display of colors and detail. The miracles and parables are glowing upon the glass; and the figure of Jesus is there, and the story of His love is told on every pane: and there are choirs of angels, and cherubim and seraphim and glory everywhere.

So let a man enter the Kingdom of Heaven — let a man be born again and enter — and he will SEE the Kingdom of God. He will see the glory of Christ and the King in His beauty, and beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord he is changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. Marvel not if it is necessary, to see all this, that he must be born again. Within this great world there are a number of little worlds, to which entrance is only attainable by birth. There is the intellectual world, for instance, which requires the birth of brains; and the artistic world, which requires the birth of taste; and the dramatic world, which requires the birth of talent; and the musical world, which requires the birth of harmony and ear. A man cannot enter the intellectual world except he have brains, or the artistic world except he have taste. And he cannot make or find brains or taste. They must be born in him. A man cannot make a poetical mind for himself. It must be created in him. Hence “the poet is born — not made.”

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3). What does this word “see” mean here? Everyone with spiritual understanding knows that the words “see” and “know” are identical in their spiritual meaning. When I tell a friend something he did not see before, and I am trying to get him to see it, all at once there passes over his face the illumination that indicates understanding. He says, “Preston, I see it.” What does he mean? He does not mean that he sees anything with the eye of flesh. He means that he “understands” or “knows” it. I talk to a blind man who has no eyes to see at all. I explain something to him and presently he says, “I see it!” Does he see anything? Not with his physical eyes — but he knows it. How many times a day do you say, “I see!” So Jesus is telling us that apart from the new birth a man cannot understand, comprehend, or know the Kingdom of God. It is better to know the Kingdom of God by the spirit than to see with physical eyes any “age” or “external government” that might be called the Kingdom of God.

If the Kingdom is external then any drunkard, prostitute, rapist, murderer or atheist can see it. There were many who saw Jesus with their physical eyes but they never once saw the Son of God. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him, despised Him and hated Him, while they looked upon Him. You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless your eyes were opened as were the eyes of the men of Emmaus, you would not know Him to be the Christ. Millions of people today see God’s Christ — His many-membered body on earth — and know Him not! “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not” (I Jn. 3:1). They see us but they don’t see us — they do not know us by the Spirit. But when you are born of the Spirit you see what other eyes cannot see. You see the unseen and the eternal. You know the things that are divine. You see God and you see the Kingdom of God.

I suppose if we could hear angleworms arguing, some learned angleworm might try to tell the illiterate ones about a race of beings called humans. He would tell how they were divided into two sexes, men and women. Now, that would be a strange thing to an

angleworm, for angleworms have both sexes within the one individual. Then this angleworm would tell how humans had legs to walk with, and arms and hands to use, how they had eyes to see with, a tongue to talk with, and lungs to breathe with. All these things would be utterly beyond the ability of an angleworm to comprehend, and I imagine the unlearned angleworms would say to the one who tried to tell them about the vast world of humanity, "Nuts! Did you ever see a human?" He, of course, would have to say that he never had, since angleworms have no eyes!

Almost all men are dreadfully devoid of the understanding of spiritual things. They are as blind to the world of the Kingdom of Heaven as angleworms are to the world of humans. The pulpits today are filled with preachers who are blind leaders of the blind. Blind men do not see. If you are blind I could talk to you about the beauties of the rainbow, about the spectrum of colors, about rays, reflections, optics, but such discussions as this would be utterly futile. I could continue them for forty years and you still would know nothing more about sight. You might roll your blinded orbs at that place from whence you have been told that light is coming, but all to no avail. Though there be beautiful sights all around you, there is but one problem; there is but one thing that is lacking: sight. You are blind. Jesus told the religious leaders of His day, "Ye have eyes and see not." Blind! Gropping in darkness. These cannot know the true nature of things. And nothing has changed in the religious world in the past two thousand years. They cannot see the Christ who walks in their midst nor can they see the glories of the Kingdom of God.

You do not understand a thing by memorizing it. You may memorize the whole Constitution of the United States or the whole Bible and not understand any of it. You do not understand a thing by hearing it, by seeing it, by reading it, or by any representation that can be made of it. You only understand by knowing, the knowing that comes by experience. Understanding is knowledge — personal, real, conscious possession. That insight into a thing that gives the true knowledge of it is what it means to "see." What depth this gives to the words of Jesus to His disciples: "And I'll tell you something else and this is the truth, that there are some of you right here standing in front of me who will not die before you have had a dramatic insight into the Kingdom of God and how it comes with power" (Mat. 16:28; Mk. 1:9; Lk. 9:27). It is not to see it outwardly with the eyes, it is to see it inwardly with the understanding. It is not to hear it outwardly with the ears, but to hear it inwardly with the comprehension. It is not merely to repeat, or be able to tell about it, but to know it. If I know the Kingdom of God I see the Kingdom of God.

"It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mat. 13:11). "...I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:25-27). Until you have experienced that mysterious transformation that we call the new birth, you cannot understand any of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. The word "mystery" in scripture comes from the Greek root word MUO which means "a sacred secret." It was that which in the ancient mystery religions could be known only by the initiates — those initiated into the mysteries. Only members of the spiritual family of God, which is His body, can be initiated into and know and experience the sacred secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The natural man is dead. He is dumb, deaf, and blind to the spiritual world of God. To be blind simply means to have no vision of what the Father desires. The natural mind is

very dark and without understanding. Only the Holy Spirit can awaken it. Human efforts to enlighten men to the deep spiritual things of God will always fail. ONLY TO CHRIST IS POWER GIVEN TO OPEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND even as the scales fell from the vision of Saul of Tarsus when Jesus purged them away. This explains why the Bible remains to a great degree a closed book to the most educated but unconverted or unanointed man, while it is an open book to many of the most simple and ignorant of believers. This explains why a man may be educated and trained to hold all the theological degrees that all the theological seminaries in the world can bestow upon him, and yet be utterly blind to the great spiritual revelations of infinite depths and eternal glory within the pages of this blessed Book of Books. This explains why carnally minded men who have read the Bible and have studied it through and through, and know the Hebrew and Greek, will yet fail to find the living Christ or the transforming power of the Holy Spirit or the glories of the Kingdom of God or the wonderful hope of sonship or the ultimate restitution of all things within its pages. It seems strange that with an open Bible before them they do not see these truths which to us are perfectly clear. But, after all, it is not strange, for these things are mysteries known only to those who know the spiritual code and have been initiated into the fraternity of God's family by the miracle of the new birth. Jesus said that these things were hidden from the wise and the prudent and that they were revealed to babes. A babe is one that is born, and so, until you are born from above into the Kingdom of God you cannot receive these things into your heart. Spiritual truths are for spiritual people, and must be spiritually discerned. If you have tried to share the wondrous things God is speaking to His elect in this Day with some carnal, unspiritual Christian, and have found them dense of understanding and disinterested, then know that you must first pray for their birth from above and then patiently wait for the Father to bring them to that birth, before you can hope that they will receive anything from your hand out of the treasure house of the Kingdom of Heaven. At the same time, the most humble and unlearned saint who abandons all to God has no difficulty finding all these glorious truths, and a thousand more, as plain as the noonday sun in the Word of God.

We are told in the wonderful parable of our Lord that in this, our day, the Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins. These ten virgins took their lamps (understanding-enlightenment) and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. But five of these were foolish, and five were wise. It is my determined conviction that these ten virgins, in one application, represent the senses of man — the five foolish senses of the outer man, and the five wise senses of the inner man. The five foolish virgins are the five soulical senses of the outer-man-body. A mind that judges everything by the outward appearance as perceived by the external senses IS FOOLISH! To every outer sense you have an inner spiritual counterpart.

Our mind is that part of us that thinks and is the seat of consciousness; it is our intellect and in it dwells our ability to reason. When we are born of the flesh, we are born with a natural mind. We enter this world with five senses: sight, hearing, smelling, taste and touch. These are natural physiological and psychological senses, and feed information to our natural mind. Paul writes about our new birth in I Peter 1:23. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." This new birth is by an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, even that Word that was from the beginning which is Jesus Christ. This incorruptible seed is the life of the Christ by which we are made alive unto God. He is the author of eternal life. When we are born of the Spirit, God gives us a corresponding set of these same senses which operate in our spiritual nature, in the inner-man body.

In the natural no one has ever been able to see in this world unless they have been born. So it is in the spiritual realm. Just as there are five natural senses in the natural realm, so also there are five spiritual senses in the spiritual realm. The five senses of the outer man are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell natural things; but these same five senses in the world of the spirit are able to see, hear, taste, touch and smell all spiritual things which are invisible and incorruptible, as the apostle explains, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him — but God HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US BY THE SPIRIT; for the spirit searcheth (out) all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:9-14). When we are born from above the FIVE SENSES OF THE SPIRIT WORLD become resident and operative within the inner-man body. Gradually, as this inner man grows and we are quickened to become aware of these senses, the EYES of our understanding open wider and wider to the things not seen by the natural eye; by degrees the HEARING of faith increases until every good promise of God is established as truth within and we learn to know the voice of the Father, and to distinguish between His voice and all other voices — "My sheep hear my voice, and a stranger they will not follow" and "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith"; in time we come into TOUCH with the Lord in His invisible presence and powers; little by little we TASTE and see that the Lord is gracious, and we eat and drink heavenly food with Him at His table in the Kingdom; after a time we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense-prayers and praises which are a SWEET ODOR to the Lord, and we are able to discern every spiritual fragrance that is or is not of Him, and the stench of the flesh. As the natural senses can be cultivated, so can the spiritual; and the cultivation of these spiritual senses constitute marks indicating our growth in the Kingdom, our development as sons of God, to the completeness of our new selves in the glory, honor, and immortality of the divine nature.

The sons of God have eyes within that see on a level that is not seen by the eyes of the outer-man body. You can have 20/20 vision with your physical eyes and never see what you see with the "eyes of your understanding" (Eph. 1:18). It must forever be settled in our hearts that there is no true reality in any of the things that are SEEN, for how can we say that things that are always changing and passing away are realities? The only eternal things in the whole universe are the things that are NOT SEEN by the outer eye, and yet it is not that they are really invisible, for they are merely invisible to the kinds of eyes we have in our outer-man body. Eternal things are only inaudible to the ears of the natural and can be perceived only beyond the senses of the soulish man. The Holy Spirit has faithfully recorded of Moses, that grand hero of faith and spiritual vision, that "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE" (Heb. 11:27).

Here is the mighty power of the New Creation: it sees what others cannot see! It sees, amid the thousand things natural men see and are guided by, something infinitely greater and more real — it SEES GOD. No wonder it leads a man to think and act differently from other men. On everything it looks at, the bright light of eternity is shining. The depths it perceives are infinite. The heights it beholds are immeasurable. The truth it understands is without flaw or error and is eternal. No wonder that under the inspiration of that vision it can do mighty deeds, for it sees God its helper and strength. Let me here say to every saint of God that just as, in any pursuit, the eye can be trained to see what others cannot see, so the spiritual eyes of the new creation inner-man body can be trained to see God everywhere and in all things. Abide in His presence until the heart is filled with it. You will begin to recognize HIM in everything that happens, when to others there is only mystery, perplexity, or tragedy. Seek to walk in the light of His countenance.

Seeing the INVISIBLE will make it easy to forsake this world and do the will of God! The heavens are shut up from the natural man. He cannot see eternal things. He hears only the lower sounds of earth. But you see beyond all this into the very heart of God, into the depths of His great plans and purposes, and the “whys” and “wherefores” of all things since the creation of the world and unto the consummation of all ages. You see the Kingdom of God!

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

Far away in the depths of my spirit the perfumed breezes of the Kingdom of Heaven sweep over my being until my very soul weeps for joy and laughs for gladness. I write to you today of a realm of reality that is wonderfully real, solid, and awesome. It is called the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ intends for us to actually enter into the Kingdom of God here and now, and to begin exploring it in its height and depth and length and breadth. “Get thee out of thy country...unto a land that I will show thee,” the Lord commanded Abraham. Just as on any earthly adventure, we must be willing to be surprised. And we will be, for “eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard,” what God has prepared for us.

We must expect to encounter some strange and exotic new realities. We will also find ourselves faced with some rather confusing and sometimes upsetting situations. We may at times be discouraged and hindered by unexpected storms and difficulties which are part of the processing of God and the necessary trial of our faith. Some of our most cherished opinions and long-held beliefs will be upset, but we will fear no evil, for the Chief Shepherd will be with us all the way. But unlike earthly adventures we have embarked upon the most essential and profound journey a person can ever take. Our soul is blossoming in the light of His face, as His flower coming into its own, and the vast glory of God is flooding upon us like a breath of clear air. There is a place that flesh and blood have never seen, nor even imagined. This is an adventure that makes the word adventure sound profane, and yet that is exactly what it is. It will pierce eternity and transcend time itself. This is not a religious exercise — it is an attainment in the Spirit.

To “enter into” the Kingdom is, as we should readily understand, more than to “see” it. Moses stood on the heights of mount Nebo and saw the Promised Land, but he never got into it. God kept him on the other side of Jordan, although he was the leader of God’s people, because of his disobedience. We also make a great mistake in assuming that we are called upon to “build” the Kingdom of God. That is a humanistic heresy. We have thought that we were called to create a new order. But this is not so. The Kingdom of God is. It is the way things are. It is a realm of reality, of life, of activity, of power and glory. We do not build it — we enter it. We become citizens and members of God’s government by a mighty birth into a new reality and our subsequent entrance into and appropriation of the reality.

Some people think that the Kingdom cannot be entered until some future time called “the Kingdom Age” or “the Millennium.” Nowhere does the Bible teach such an idea. Jesus taught that entering into the Kingdom is a present reality. He said, “The tax collectors and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you,” the rebellious priests and elders of Israel (Mat. 21:31). To the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus said, “You shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in” (Mat. 23:13). A similar saying is found in Luke 11:52, “Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves,

and you hindered those who were entering.” This same idea appears in the words of Jesus to a scribe who responded to Jesus’ teaching, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God” (Mk. 12:34). And in Matthew 11:11 Jesus says that the one who is now in the Kingdom of Heaven, even the least of those now in the Kingdom, are greater than John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets. People were already entering the Kingdom in Jesus’ day, and we, too, have been “translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son” (Col. 1:13). John the Revelator said that he was a brother and companion to the saints of his day in tribulation, and “in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9).

Entering the Kingdom is directly related to the new birth, for in speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus said that unless one is born anew he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Jesus never said that in order to be saved one has to be born anew. Neither did He ever say that the saved person is already in the Kingdom. To the dying thief’s request, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom,” Jesus replied, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” The Lord did not say, “Today you will be with me in my Kingdom.” Admission to the Kingdom of God goes beyond one’s salvation experience. Forgiveness of sins is not entrance into the Kingdom. Justification is not entrance into the Kingdom. Reconciliation is not entrance into the Kingdom. Sanctification is not entrance into the Kingdom. To enter the Kingdom one must first be born from above. Alas, it is a sad fact that of the vast millions of believers claiming to be saved, very few see or enter into the Kingdom Realm of God. The reason is that while they have received Jesus as their Saviour, they refuse to accept Him as their King. It is only the born again person, quickened to Celestial Realities, who realizes that to share the glory of Christ he must surrender his rights to himself and place himself under the absolute lordship of Jesus. He knows that to enter the Kingdom in the here and now, he must be governed from above and live on earth as a son of God, just as Jesus lived, doing always and only the Father’s will. Throughout the entire time that Jesus was on this earth, He, as man, was the living personification of the Kingdom of God. It is birth into that very realm of HIS SONSHIP that enables us to see and enter the Kingdom of God. It has nothing to do with “salvation” and “going to heaven.” It has everything to do with the nature, the wisdom, the knowledge, the power, and the glory of sonship.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of lawlessness” (Mat. 7:21-23). We do not enter the Kingdom by confessing with our mouth the Lord Jesus unto salvation; by prophesying in His name, by casting out devils and doing many wonderful works in His name. No matter how righteous or capable a person may be, no matter how faithful in the church realm or gifted in the spirit; no matter how honorable or humble, it remains true that he or she cannot enter into the Kingdom of God on that basis. The Kingdom of God is union with God in the fullness of His divine life and requires a “following on” to KNOW the Lord.

When the Lord says to all the healing and deliverance preachers, the miracle workers, the revival crowd, the faith and word people, “I never knew you,” He doesn’t mean that they weren’t saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, or that they were impostors and fakers, or that He was not acquainted with them. To “know” a person in this way speaks of the most intimate association and union as when we read, “And Adam knew his wife, and

she conceived.” “I never knew you” means He did not know you in that intimacy of fellowship and vital union that characterizes the Kingdom Realm. One can only become a partaker of the life of Christ, which is the life of sonship, which is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God, by virtue of coming to KNOW HIM. This is why Jesus said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” Though Paul had been converted through his supernatural encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road; though he was forgiven, reconciled, cleansed, justified, Spirit-filled, called to be an apostle, mighty in word and deed, yet with what travail of soul did he cry out: “That I may KNOW HIM!” And he associated this “knowing” of the Christ with his own apprehension of that unto which he was apprehended of Christ Jesus. He did not count himself as already having apprehended. He knew that he must still know Christ in the fullness of the power of His resurrection and in the complete fellowship of His sufferings that in that fuller and deeper experience of KNOWING CHRIST he might be CONFORMED UNTO HIS LIKENESS, and thus have an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God.

The eternal purpose of God for man has been that man would know Him. God delights in man knowing Him and therefore declares, “For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD more than burnt offerings. Then shall we know, if we FOLLOW ON TO KNOW THE LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain” (Hos. 6:6,3). All that God has done and shall yet do in His redemptive purposes is in order that we may know Him. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for ALL SHALL KNOW ME, from the least to the greatest” (Heb. 8:10-11).

When we are regenerated the Spirit of God, containing God’s eternal and divine life, enters into us that we may have the capability of knowing Him from within. Therefore the knowing of God constantly increases with the inward growth of His life. It is only because God has given us His life that we can know Him. This can be understood by the fact that every creature in the universe can only fully relate to another being with the same kind of life. What bird can understand the ways of a man? What man can understand the language of a dog, or why he marks his territory and sniffs the way he does? To man all dogs bark essentially alike and one dog’s bark is much the same as another dog’s bark. However, animal behaviorists have demonstrated that dogs “talk” in their barks and growls, actually communicating with one another in definite patterns of dog “speech”. This ability is inherent in their nature.

Man likes to think of himself as the only “social” being on earth. However, every created life form in the whole world is what we call “social”. “Social” means that there is definite relationship, understanding and communication between beings. This social aspect is rooted in the ability of a being to “know” another being, thus sharing with that being a common inherent understanding, communication, and relationship, all of which is due to the oneness of their life and nature. The social aspect is only realized within a species — between beings of the same “kind”. Why does a cat bow its back and “spit” when a strange dog passes by? Why will a dog chase a cat but will “sniff” another dog? This is because the cat fully relates as a social being to another cat and the dog relates to another dog as a social being.

The simplest aspect of social behavior among animals is seen in the “herding” of cattle, the “schooling” of fish, and the “flocking” of birds. However, social animals do more than just stay together — they do things together. A family of ducklings in the park goes through a common rhythm. Chapter of the day they will feed, keeping close together wherever they go. On other occasions they will bathe together, and after a bath they swim to the shore together and spend half an hour or so preening, standing next to each other. Then they fall asleep, side by side. But notice! These are all ducks, sharing a common life and nature. There are no dogs with them following the same routine. Why? Because one can only understand, relate to, communicate with, fellowship and work together with beings of the same quality of life. Therefore, one can only truly KNOW another being of the same kind!

Some animals express themselves to others of their kind through a simple posture, or a change of color, or by giving off a particular scent, and some, such as porpoises, are highly intelligent and lead extremely complex social lives. But what bird can understand the language of a porpoise, or what duck would comprehend the intentions of a cichlid fish when it sets its fins in a certain position and changes its color pattern to say that it is protecting its territory? What beast of the field can comprehend the actions or intentions, the desires or aspirations of men? And what natural man, made a little lower than the angels, can perceive the things pertaining to the angelic realm; and what heavenly angel, marvelously created by the skillful hand of God, but not begotten of God’s own divine life, can understand those glorious things appointed to the sons of God who are born of God’s Spirit, the offspring of His divine life, and called to share even His throne and to inherit all things? I have cited these illustrations to point out the unmistakable truth that every being in the entire universe of God can only “know” those other beings that share their own common life and nature.

This explains the vast importance of our birth into the very Family of God. God has given us HIS LIFE, and it is because we are “His kind” of creatures, that we are able to KNOW HIM! If we were not of the God species there would be no possibility of ever knowing God, no matter how dramatic His efforts to convey Himself unto us. When we are born of God, His Spirit, His seed, containing His life, enters into us that we may have the capability of knowing Him from within. This knowing of God gradually increases as His life develops and matures within us. The more His life grows within, the better we know Him. The better we know Him, the more we will experience Him, enjoy Him, understand His ways, act according to His nature, express His ability, and allow Him to live out through us in our whole being. Thus we may say that all the growth of our spiritual life depends upon OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, and our knowledge of God depends upon the increase of His life within. This gives us an accurate understanding of the absolute truth of Jesus’ declaration: “And this is life eternal, that they might KNOW THEE the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

Those who teach that saints who die are dead like a dog, unconscious, and non-existent, obviously do not understand either the miracle or the mystery of the new birth. Eternal life is here now, for “we know that we have passed from death unto life.” “And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins.” The Kingdom of God and of Heaven is here now, waiting to be possessed by those who esteem it of enough worth to lay aside all else and press into it. No one can find true righteousness, absolute perfection, spiritual maturity, unshakable peace, infinite love, fullness of joy, eternal purpose, incorruptible life, unlimited power and heavenly glory until he or she obtains it in the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom call has gone forth, multitudes have heard the

sounding of the trumpet. God's intention is to lift us out of the limitations of the flesh realm and the immaturity of our babyhood walk in God, and lift us up into His likeness and His incredible wisdom, power and glory. We not only cannot earn such treasure, we scarcely can believe it! Yet the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. The testimony is immutably confirmed in our deepest hearts and we are responding to the call in this our day of visitation. Praise His name!

Along this line brother Paul Mueller has penned these challenging words. "Jesus said, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' And Jesus prefaced this remark by saying, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' It is impossible just to see the Kingdom of God, to view that Promised Land of love, peace, life and blessings abundant, unless we have been born again. Moses is an example of one who saw the Promised Land, which is typical of the Kingdom of God, but was not permitted to enter into that new land. Just before his death, Moses went up 'unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land...and said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither' (Deut. 34:1-4). Moses was a godly man who served the Lord in strict obedience, except for one transgression that kept him from entering the promised land (Num. 20:7-13; Deut. 32:48-52).

"There is a vast difference between seeing the Kingdom of God, and entering into it. Moses only saw the Promised Land, but Joshua and Caleb entered into that land and partook of the abundance it provided. Jesus also made a clear distinction between seeing the Kingdom of God and entering into it. Were it not for the fact that the realms of seeing and of entering the Kingdom are mentioned both in the experience of Moses, and in the words of Jesus, we might overlook the distinction. However, the point is made in both instances and is worthy of our sincere and prayerful consideration. I do not want to be one of those who merely sees the Kingdom of God, but who fails to enter into it. To have the initial experience by which we may see the Kingdom of God is only the earnest of our salvation, the down payment on our full inheritance. But to be saved in fullness is to enter the Kingdom of God, being active participants in the administration of that Kingdom. It is my prayerful desire to partake of the glories of the abundant life of Christ that is freely provided all who will persevere and cross this mighty Jordan, even though it be at flood stage.

"Of course, it is not our choice that determines whether we will cross over, but is a calling given of the Father. If we have been faithful to Him all through our wilderness journey, obediently receiving the corrective chastisements of His rod, we are then undoubtedly among that chosen remnant who shall cross this Jordan of death in triumphant and overcoming victory. Multitudes of Christians will be content to climb Mt. Nebo with Moses and view the Promised Land with longing hearts and wistful eyes. They will dream on in their sleepy bewilderment, desiring the fruits of that new land. However, many are unaware of the truth that the more glorious spiritual appearing of Christ is necessary to enable us to enter that new land of abundant life.

"The ministry of yesterday only brought us out of the world and took us into the wilderness of testing. The leadership of yesterday, the best of them, could only lead us up to the Jordan. Christ is here now, in a new and living way, to lead us beyond the Jordan and into the Promised Land. Contrary to all outward appearances, the house of

the Lord, which house we are, is not going to fall and go the way of all flesh, but we shall arise out of this realm of sin and death, by the glory of the incorruptible Son of God, to walk in the high places of His abundant life.

“The remnant the Lord has called unto Himself are the pioneers of the Kingdom of God. They are walking out into uncharted spiritual territory very much like Israel of old on their march to that first promised land in Palestine. This is a way no one has walked before. Some of the principles of the past we thought were proper and right seem to have no relevance today. The Lord is doing strange, new things with His chosen ones as He leads them by His Spirit. Through the tests and trials of the wilderness of this worldly order, we are being prepared for another phase in our pioneering walk. As we have been obedient to the Lord through the present ordeals, following the leading of His Spirit, we are then prepared for the next segment of our walk on this new path to the fullness of His Kingdom” end quote.

Chapter 6

Birthed Into The Kingdom

(continued)

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:5).

Scripture abounds in figures, and Jesus always spoke in symbolic terms. When He said, “Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you,” He certainly was not advocating cannibalism! He was using a natural figure to illustrate a spiritual truth. So when He says one must be “born of water” do not understand water to mean what we are accustomed to think of as the natural water that men drink or wash in. It is a figure of THE LIVING WORD OF GOD. New birth ever, and only, is by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God. These are the only two agents directly involved in the new birth throughout the scriptures. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (I Pet. 1:23). Some have thought the water to mean baptism. But there is no mention of baptism in chapter three of John, nor is baptism ever connected anywhere in the New Testament with the new birth. A man can no more be born again by coming up out of natural water than he can be born again by entering the second time into his mother’s womb. Both are physical, natural, earthly, temporal and corruptible things. They are not agents of the spiritual world at all.

Others have thought the water referred to physical birth — the water in which the babe is encased in the womb of the mother. That would make the scripture read, “Except a man be born physically and spiritually, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” But the subject on the lips of Jesus has nothing to do with physical birth at all — He is talking about being born again. That is the only birth that qualifies a man for entrance into the Kingdom of God. Natural birth brings man into the physical world, but has not one whit of power to usher a man into the Kingdom of God. What Jesus was calling for had nothing to do with human origin, even if it was Abraham. That had been given to Nicodemus by his parents. The life Jesus spoke of had to be given by God. God’s Kingdom is not a matter of descent, or national blood. Jesus was saying that no one can be born naturally into God’s Kingdom. The only entrance to this Kingdom was to be born of the Word and the Spirit; in fact, it could only be seen by being born of the Spirit. The citizens of God’s Kingdom were Spirit-born. No, my friend, Jesus is not speaking of either water baptism or physical birth — He is saying that unless a man is born again of both the Word of God and the Spirit of God, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

The traditions of the past have so dimmed our understanding that every truth is side-tracked and diminished by the shallowness of the carnal mind. Thus it is with the truth of the agency of the Word and the Spirit in the new birth. The great truth is that when Jesus announces the awesome reality of the new birth He presents to us THE

TWO NEW PARENTS. The Spirit of God is the new spiritual Father; the Word of God is the new Mother.

Let us understand exactly how the conception of a new life takes place. Human life begins when a sperm cell from the father enters and fertilizes an egg cell of the mother. The joining of these two cells is called fertilization or conception. Together, the sperm and egg create one single human cell. Every human life begins as one single cell. This one cell contains 46 chromosomes. Twenty three of the chromosomes are from the sperm of the father, and 23 are from the egg of the mother. All heredity is dictated by the 46 chromosomes. They determine whether the new human will be tall or short, have small or large bones, have blue eyes or brown eyes, even whether it will be susceptible to certain diseases or not. At the moment of conception the chromosomes of the sperm cell and the egg cell come together, and the traits that the child will inherit from his parents are determined. Both mother and father contribute equally to the child's heredity — with only one exception. It is the father's sperm that determines whether the baby will be a girl or a boy.

This brings us to a mystery understood by very few of the Lord's people, but it is the truth. It is evident that God contains within Himself both the masculine nature of the father and the feminine nature of the mother. Was it not when God created Adam male and female that he was said to be in the image of God? (Gen. 1:26). God's masculine nature is manifested as SPIRIT, whereas His feminine nature is expressed as WORD. Now, as I have previously pointed out, there are two elements involved in our begetting as children of God — the Spirit and the Word. "Except a man be born of Water (Word) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Peter tells us that we are "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). It is significant to note that when Peter tells us that we are being born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, the word for "seed" in the Greek is not SPERMA, or sperm, as from the Father, but the word SPORA which simply means a seed as that which contains the origin of life or the characteristics of nature.

We are born of the Word and we are born of the Spirit. It is only when the Word is quickened or fertilized by the Spirit that divine life is generated within. Just as it requires the male sperm and the female ovum to beget a human child, so it takes the union of the Spirit and the Word within the believing heart to beget a child of God. And each contributes equally to the child's heredity — the kind of child he is. The Word contributes, as it were, 23 spiritual chromosomes, and the Spirit likewise contributes 23 spiritual chromosomes. Let us see how this works.

The SPIRIT OF LIFE is dispensed into us directly from our heavenly Father. "Behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father...for truly John baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:4-5). "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son (sonship) into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). The Spirit is the sperm of God. Sinlessness is one of the hereditary characteristics passed on to a son of God from the seed of the Spirit. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed (Greek: sperma, sperm) remaineth in him (as

inherited characteristics): and he cannot sin because he is born of God” (I Jn. 3:9). Your outer man may through the weakness of the flesh fall into sin, but it is impossible for your new creation inner man to sin, for he is born of God.

The WORD OF LIFE, on the other hand, is dispensed into us through the church which is His body. This true church is the Jerusalem that is above “which is the mother of us all” (Gal. 4:26). That God’s motherhood nature is revealed through the church as the bride of Christ is clearly shown in Ephesians 5:23-32. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious church (as a bride), not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

The Spirit of sonship is given to us as the sperm of God directly from our heavenly Father. But the Word by which we are begotten again is ministered to us via the ministry of the church. The following verses make this very plain. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever...and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (I Pet. 1:23-25). Again, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (I Thes. 2:13).

This brings us to a truth which is at the same time both wonderful and dreadful. When children of God are conceived by the joining of the sperm of the Holy Ghost with the ovum of the pure and incorruptible Word of God, the result is a perfect child of God that will be able in all respects to grow up as a son or daughter of God into the very image of God. If you pause to think, however, you will become fully aware that the whole church system today and of many ages is filled with pathetically deformed children of God. This is not due to any fault on God’s part — the work of the Spirit in every man and woman who has believed has been a perfect work. The sperm of God has absolutely no defect in it. It cannot pass any spiritual defect on to its offspring. But there is a great and damning fault in the church world that seems to be past explanation. It is a fault that has developed and grown more grotesque as the years have come and gone. The word that is ministered through the church mother has become an inconceivably perverted word, a polluted word, a defective word, and the defects within that word are passed on as congenital anomalies — birth defects — to the children born of that word. The children of God born of an impure word come into God’s spiritual world bearing genetic defects, flaws, weaknesses and abnormalities.

The Baptists preach one word, the Catholics preach another word, the Pentecostals preach a different word, the Mormons preach something else, and so on throughout Christendom. Two thousand years ago the same beloved apostle John who wrote so extensively of God’s marvelous love also left us this solemn warning, “Little children, keep yourselves from IDOLS (that is, false gods, or false ideas and representations of the true God)” (I Jn. 5:21). “Little children, keep yourselves from false ideas about

God!" Do we have false ideas about God? I fear we do. How the world and the church are filled with them! Many people view God as a schoolboy did: "...the sort of person who is always snooping around to see if anyone is enjoying himself and then trying to stop it." Then others make God out to be a tyrant, or a vengeful, wrath-filled fiend. Some paint a God so weak that the will of man is stronger than the will of God. Others speak of God as always trying to do this and that, but the devil is ever hindering and thwarting God's purposes, getting the upper hand, defeating God's best laid plans, tripping up and overcoming the saints, until it would seem that the devil is himself the omniscient and omnipotent one. Some have a God so capricious that He will only save you if the correct formula is repeated over you in water baptism. Vast numbers blaspheme the Holy Ghost by attributing the works of the Holy Spirit to the devil, contending that if you speak in tongues, prophesy, heal the sick, or do miracles you are of the devil, and dispense that perverted word into their offspring who do truly trust Jesus as their Saviour. Some say that Christ can only be ministered to you through the sacraments, or a particular ritual, or the ministry of their denomination, or membership in their movement, or by believing only the doctrines of their church and listening to no one else. Others teach their people that they cannot go to heaven if they use tobacco, drink wine, wear jewelry, put on make-up, cut their hair, go to movies, or wear or not wear certain kinds of clothing. We could pile error upon error, with pagan holidays, customs, and philosophies that have been introduced into the church realm and have become such an established part of her practice and teaching until the whole world believes that these things are surely taught somewhere in the scriptures or were established by the apostles or by Jesus Himself!

A dear brother in Christ has penned these valuable words of admonition: "The opinions we form by hearing about people are usually found to be wrong after we have come to know them personally and intimately. This is also true concerning God. When you come to know Him as He really is, you will find Him very unlike the description given by theologians. You will come to know that much that they teach is only rubbish because it is contrary to the nature of God. It certainly was so with the Jewish theologians and doctors of the law. When Jesus came He smashed their theories to bits and tore the robes of their ecclesiasticism to ribbons. He ate with sinners, cast the devil out of the Syrophenician, let a sinful woman of the street wash His feet, forgave a thief, healed on the Sabbath, ate with unwashed hands, called the most esteemed religionists of His day liars, hypocrites, children of the devil, whited sepulchers, and a generation of snakes. They thought that they knew God, but they didn't. He was more pleased with the sincerity of sinners than with the ritualism of scribes and Pharisees. When you come to know Him, you will find that it is the same now as it was then.

"Furthermore, to know Him who is truth empowers one to immediately recognize all that is error. The more you come to know Christ, the more you come to recognize the flagrant error of so much that is taught in the name of truth. If the doctrines that men try so hard to prove run contrary to the very nature of Christ, then know that all that is contrary to His gracious Spirit is error. For years without number the evangelicals in their missionary fervor have taught that all heathen men will be condemned forever to groan in eternal flames in unremitting torment because they did not accept Christ, their ignorance of His existence being no excuse whatever. I have no hesitation whatsoever in calling this a lie, because everything about it is contrary to the very nature of the blessed Christ I know. It is contrary to His love,

contrary to His kindness and mercy, contrary to His foreknowledge, contrary to His immutable wisdom, and contrary to His great and all-inclusive redemption, of which it is stated that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” — end quote

While preparing this message for the printer, a word arrived in the mail from Bob Torango, a word so powerful and anointed, and so in accord with the burden of my own heart, that I would be remiss if I failed to share a portion with you. He wrote: “Why, you may ask, doesn’t the world follow after the message of the church? The answer is that the message is one of a God that is a dictator instead of a God that is a Father. The message of the church is tainted with words of judgment promising harsh punishment for sins, delivered without a voice of love. This nullifies the true reason for God’s judgment, which is to bring us to correction and joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the same scenario that is played out every day in an abusive home where the parents lash out at their children in a fit of rage, striking them with physical blows meant to bring them into submission but accomplishing the direct opposite. There can be no substitute for love. A hug will accomplish more correction than a blow to a child’s body.

“I am not suggesting that a child should never be reprimanded, for I realize that any child will continue to mis-behave if given a free reign, but I do believe that the parent is responsible for punishment that exceeds the transgression. This happens more times than we want to think. The parent has a bad day at work, the car breaks down, the air conditioner goes out, and the frustration over these matters is unleashed upon the children, which, by the way, can’t do anything right in the eyes of the enraged judge of the house. The result is a beating that is more therapeutic for the parent in venting their frustrations than it is for correction of the child’s behavior. Judgment of any kind should never be administered in a spirit of rage or loss of sensibility. The result is much worse than if there were no punishment at all.

“The church, enraged over the continued rejection of their version of the gospel story becomes more and more abusive toward anyone that does not see things their way. Instead of being the magnet of God’s love to creation, the church has become a judge of God’s wrath that cannot be approached by anyone except those who have lost all hope of love in their life, and they commit to the stranglehold of religion just to belong to a group that will give them a sense of security. This, dear ones, is the standard definition of a child that is abused. Some of us that have never been found in an abusive relationship have doubts whether or not the relationship is truly abusive. Why don’t the abused children tell someone about their beatings, if they are truly abused? Why don’t they run away from home? The saddest truth of all in an abusive situation is that the abused individual, especially a child, is convinced that they deserve this treatment. Added to this is the reinforcement that is given to this submissive behavior by our societal mores that continuously drill into our children that their parents are the judges of their life and have the moral and legal authority to administer beatings whenever they see fit. The child is reinforced to never question the judgment of their parents by teachers, who are surrogate judges when at school, or by their playmates who are in ordinary relationships with their parents. The abused child is cut off, quite literally, from any hope of escape or explaining their situation to others. The result is a child that grows up to be either withdrawn, extremely low in confidence and self-esteem, or else one that acts out the acts of

senseless violence upon society that were acted out upon them in this abusive environment.

“The world mirrors this same stereotypical attitude within the church. They are either scared to death of the church, or they are violently opposed to it. What a tragedy it is to see the church in this shape. Whereas the church has been ordained to be the mother of the world’s lost children, opening her arms with grace and love to all that are in need, she has instead been seen as an abusive judge in the earth, spitting out statements of eternal damnation and unthinkable horrors on all that do not follow her commands. No wonder the Lord is preparing another church! The church that is known as “mainstream” is a fake, dear ones! She is a wicked stepmother that has no bond of love with the world at all. This wicked church loves the world in word only, and that only because the Bible says she must! The lost children of the world are only her lawful responsibility, and by God, if they don’t shape up she is threatening to throw them all into eternal hell fire. Raise up your Jerusalem, O Lord! Raise up the true Mother of us all, bring her to us and let her lay her cool, soft hand upon the wounds that have been inflicted by the abusive, counterfeit church of religious dictators. Let her sweet kisses fall upon our head and let them take away the fear and anguish that has been perpetrated upon the world’s lost children. Oh, dear friends, can’t you just envision the power that will be unleashed when the true, nurturing nature of the New Jerusalem, the beautiful Bride of Christ, the loving, compassionate Mother of us all wraps her arms around us and holds us until the crying stops and cleans the dirt from us as she takes the filthy rags off of us that religion put upon us and she covers us in clean, silky linen made up of the righteousness of our Father.

“Even now, as we speak out against the tyranny of an out of control religious mother of Babylon, we see the damage that has been done and the scars that remain in the hearts of the people of God. Some will flinch and pull away when the hand of Christ is stretched out to them. For some, the message of a loving God that asks nothing of us but to believe in His love and come to Him to live with Him in peace and grace is too good to be true. For them, the abused offspring of a wicked guardian, beaten without reason, locked up in cult-like communities of religious bondage, forbidden to question the teachings and rules of their overseers, psychologically brainwashed into testifying to the goodness of their tormentors in order to stay in good graces and not be publicly humiliated, for them the message of unconditional love is foreign and suspicious. In their world of abuse, everyone has an angle, an ulterior motive, a con. Nothing is truly free in their relationship with the wicked mother. Yes, they have programs for the adults, a big gymnasium for the children, a beautiful building to gather in, but only if they continue to give their money to the wicked mother. In fact, they have come to the awful truth that mother only loves them if they support her with their money.

“The wicked mother especially enjoys telling her forced child laborers the tales of what will happen if they think they could ever leave her domain. She goes into great sickening detail in describing the terror that awaits them outside the walls of her prison. Giant scorpions with tails that sting and torment you, dragons that eat little children, starving children that cannot buy any food and will watch each other starve to death without having the mark of the beast. She tells them of devils lurking behind every door, waiting to jump on them and make them slaves of evil. These are the bed time stories that the mainstream church puts her children to rest by. The fake

church tells her young children that they are hopelessly evil and that all their lives they will have to serve the wicked mother in order to earn their way to heaven. The abused are told that God can't even look upon them, that He never heard their prayers before they came to live with the wicked mother, that God turned away from them in their sorrow, because He is too holy to look upon sin! Whereas, the opposite is true. God always hears groaning creation, and not one word intended for His ears goes by the wayside. Indeed, God has moved for us even when we were sinners, and countless times saved us from destruction with or without our asking Him to. He has moved heaven and earth to keep us in this world and is constantly working on our behalf" — end quote.

It is a mystery too deep to fathom, but God in His great mercy honors His Word on whatever level it is preached, and in spite of the character of those who preach it. It is a fact that multitudes of men have been turned to seek and find God even by words that are pitiful mixtures of truth and error and preached by men and systems of reprobate minds. Their children are born of mixed natures as was Ishmael, truly born of God by the Spirit, yet born of Hagar, the Egyptian bondwoman, through the fleshly word, the Word of God mingled with the ideas of men. The many and varied erroneous ideas about God and His Kingdom, contorted representations of truth and reality, each bring forth spiritual expressions of their religious lineage. Some of these unfortunate children are born completely paralyzed spiritually and others are still-born, conceived by a totally dead word. Those who preach the Word of God as a dead letter of literalism, legalism, and carnality, void of spiritual understanding or the breath of life, fill the earth with children of God having inherited weaknesses, deformities, and pathetic imperfections.

I do not doubt for one moment that many who read these lines were first conceived in their spiritual life by a defective word! Only as each of us is miraculously and supernaturally healed can we hope to come into the image and likeness of God as His sons. How precious the knowledge that regardless of the poor and wretched condition of our early conception, GOD IS A GREAT HEALER! He can heal the embryo in the womb, or He can heal the child of tragic birth. As this great healing work takes place in our lives, through the gracious dealings and faithful processings of the Lord, we are dramatically and gloriously transformed in our spiritual lives. Gone are those "religious" spirits, bondages, customs, speech, mannerisms, methods, practices, fleshly efforts, false doctrines, static creeds, empty rituals and ceremonies, lifeless programs, dead works and denominational hype which once characterized all our understanding, attitudes and activities. All the marks of Babylon were upon us — not impressed merely from without, but genetically reproduced within us by the very Word that conceived us.

Have the flaws in your own character, my beloved, been magnified in your eyes until you despair of ever attaining to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus? Today, dear one, I point you to CHRIST THE HEALER. Think not for one moment that Jesus Christ is the healer only of diseases of the body. He has come to cleanse His church, to sanctify and purify His people, to purge and refine and make every whit whole His children called to be sons. I declare to you today that HE IS THE HEALER AND RESTORER OF HIS FAMILY. He purges out of His Kingdom all things that defile and offend. Listen! The great and wonderful mercy of the Christ receives those who have blemishes, and His power heals all who humbly bow before Him, calling upon the name of the Lord. Have you received the call to sonship? Then get

rid of the blemishes! The Holy Ghost is closely examining candidates for this ministry. The qualifying time is NOW. The “in part” ministries of the church age may get by with blemishes and defects, but the King-Priest ministry destined to deliver the whole creation from its bondage to corruption must itself first be freed from every vestige of carnality, weakness, limitation, sin and death, transformed into the image of God. How is this thing done? “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved BLAMELESS (without blemish) unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thes. 5:23). If you are to be cleansed, healed, made whole and preserved without blemish there is only one way, and that is shown in the verse that immediately follows the one quoted above: “Faithful is HE that calleth you, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT.” What a word!

THE KINGDOM FAMILY OF GOD

The Kingdom of God is that Kingdom which is God. As with all kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel was a family of the children of Israel — the family descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which became one of earth’s nations. Nearly all kingdoms originated as an ethnic entity, a racial group, developed from a clan or family. Thus, the Kingdom of God comprises the Family of God — a family into which man may be born, and which is being formed into a RULING OR GOVERNING family that shall have jurisdiction over all nations, that is, the whole earth, and, eventually, the entire universe!

For almost two thousand years there has raged a theological battle over the Godhead. Some have contended that God is one Person in three manifestations, and that Jesus is that one Person of God manifested in the flesh. Others believe in the trinity — that God is eternally three distinct Persons, co-equal, co-eternal, and con-substantial, united together as one God. There is yet a third school of thought known historically as Arianism which views God as a duality — the one eternal and almighty God together with His Son whom He begat at some point in time, and by whom He created all other things. Now, I have my own view of these things, but far away in the depths of my spirit lies the secret, sacred knowledge that God is greater than all of man’s puny definitions. It is no embarrassment to me to admit that I know nothing yet as I ought to know, but the spirit of truth within me today bears witness that the truth lies far beyond the limitation of any of man’s concepts.

None of the above views grasp the fuller truth set forth in the scriptures and now revealed by the Holy Spirit. The wonderful truth is — God is ultimately not one Person, nor is God two Persons, nor yet is He three Persons. God is a FAMILY, for we are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, and the sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God. We are the citizens of the Kingdom of God founded upon the family of God. God is a KINGDOM! God is reproducing, expanding, increasing HIMSELF! Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God — or the GOD KINGDOM — human beings have to be born again. He patiently explained to this inquiring ruler of the Jews that it was not a physical re-birth into the human plane that He was talking about, but a newborn spirit being on the spirit plane. The apostle John elaborated on this birth when he wrote, “But to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons (children, offspring) of God, even to them that believe on His name” (Jn. 1:12). The word “sons” in this passage is from the Greek TEKNON which means “one born” or a “child”. That a birth as the offspring of God is what John intended is made clear as he continues in

the next verse: “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

This is not a mere conception as some say, for the Holy Spirit testifies to every man, saying, “And I cannot speak unto you as spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto BABES IN CHRIST. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat” (I Cor. 3:1-2). Again, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: FOR HE IS A BABE” (Heb. 5:12-13). Yet again, “As NEWBORN BABES, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (I Pet. 2:2). Then John tells us, “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth IS BORN OF GOD, and knoweth God...for whatsoever IS BORN OF GOD overcometh the world” (I Jn. 4:7; 5:1,4). Regenerated believers are called the children of God all through the New Testament. Nowhere does God call us divine fetuses or embryos! Children are born ones. Embryos and fetuses do not drink milk, neither do they love or do the will of God! Nor are they chastened. How beautifully does J. B. Phillips translate the meaningful words of the apostle John: “Consider the incredible love that the Father has shown us in allowing us to be called children of God — and that is not just what we are called, but what we are. Our heredity on the Godward side is NO MERE FIGURE OF SPEECH — which explains why the world will no more recognize us than it recognized Christ” (I Jn. 3:1).

The way into the Kingdom is so narrow that only one can enter into it at a time. It is the way of life in everything else. One baby is born at a time. One flower bursts into bloom at a time, and yet it seems as if they all come together. I am thankful that there are seasons of God’s moving in which great multitudes are born, but it is one at a time, and each one has an independent spiritual life. That is the way of sonship. God is not the Father of a great conglomerate of spiritual life. He is the Father of spirits — independent, original, unique, and absolutely independently constituted spirits. Paul says of this Fatherhood of spirits, “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the FATHER OF SPIRITS, and live?” (Heb. 12:9). God is the Father of spirits — not angels or demons or fairies — He is the Father of our spirits. The only spirits in the whole vast universe that are born spirits are the children of God! Each one must be born of God by the distinct operation of the Spirit of God. You may be as great a Rabbi as Nicodemus, and know nothing about these things. You may have to be told as Jesus told Nicodemus, “Art thou a Rabbi, a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?”

The Greek word Jesus used which is translated “born,” is GENNAO. It refers to the entire birth cycle — from conception to entrance into the world. Vast multitudes today do not know the difference between being born of man and being born of God. And almost as many do not know the difference between such terms as forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, salvation and the new birth. They repeat the sinner’s prayer and confess faith in Jesus and then are informed by the preacher that they have been “born again.” But it is a lie. It is a delusion. It is a deception. It is a monstrous heresy. Error cloaked in Biblical terms is still error. In the case of the current evangelical “born again” movement, scriptural terminology is being used to teach just the opposite of its original meaning. Stated simply the error is this — that men are born again as a result of something they do. This something may be “going

forward” at the close of an evangelistic message, praying the “sinner’s prayer,” making a “decision” for Christ, or “repenting” and “believing” the gospel.

The sad results of such a teaching can be seen all around us. Evangelists who believe that men dead in sin can and will be born again if the right kind of emotional and psychological inducement is presented, push and pressure lost people into making “decisions”. Whatever is necessary to get people to come forward, or raise their hand, or pray a prayer, or sign a card, is tried by today’s “soul winners.” Highly emotional meetings, prolonged appeals, repeated musical choruses, and even the deceitful tactic of having counselors strategically placed in the audience to come forward at the time of the “appeal” to make it appear others are responding — all smack of the techniques of crowd psychology. Those who do come forward are then rushed through a process, a formula, and coached into believing that they are now born again. Deep down, though, the vast majority know that nothing so dramatic has really happened. The evangelist has done something, the sinner has done something, but God has done nothing. There has been no miracle. The heavens have not been opened to them. That some people are brought into an experience with God in these situations is no doubt true. You may even be one of them. But it is in spite of these methods, not because of them.

Men are not born again because of any action on their part. What effort did you exert to be born into this world? What contribution did you make? Jesus said nothing of any action or decision that Nicodemus must make, nor did He quote him the four spiritual laws, or have him repeat a prayer, nor did He even tell him to repent and believe the gospel. As a matter of fact, Jesus was not telling Nicodemus to do anything! “You must be born again” was not a command Nicodemus was to obey, it was simply a statement of fact. He was talking about God doing something, coming and sovereignly and miraculously generating life in man. I never chose the family I was born to. When I stop to think about it, I have had very little choices in life. I certainly didn’t choose to be born! I didn’t pick the chromosomes that make up the genetic structure called Preston Eby. To a marvelous and beautiful degree there is a destiny that put us here, the way we are, where we are, when we are, and what we are. “Of His own will begat He us.” The new birth is something more than having your sins forgiven, or being reconciled, or being justified, or being saved, as wonderful as all those things are. It is the birth of a new and glorious life which thrusts one into a new and dynamic reality — the Kingdom of Heaven. In the new birth God does not become your Forgiver, your Reconciler, your Justifier, or your Saviour — He becomes your FATHER in a most real and glorious way!

In that far away beginning the Almighty Creator proclaimed, “Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.” God made cattle “after their kind,” after the cattle kind. He made “every winged fowl after his kind,” after the bird kind. But it is abundantly evident that God purposed to make man AFTER THE GOD KIND. Now, incredible as it may seem to those who do not understand the mystery of God, God is a FAMILY. This does not mean that there are many gods. There is only one God, just as there is only one Adam and one Christ. Adam is a many-membered man, Christ is a many-membered son, and God is a many-membered Godhead! The Person of God is expressed through a variety of manifestations of Himself as He reproduces Himself after His own “KIND”. It is in man that God is reproducing His kind. Man is God’s idea, God’s image, God’s likeness, God’s expression, God’s revelation, God’s manifestation. Man, out of all the infinite creation of God, has the supreme

potentiality of being born into the very divine family of God, of which divine family Jesus Christ is the firstborn among many brethren. Jesus Christ is the first perfect representation of God, and Jesus was and is a MAN. He is the express image of God's Person.

Do you realize what this means? It means far more than having an immortal body. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Christ is "the express image of God's person" (Heb. 1:3). The word "express" is from the Greek word CHARAKTER from which we get our English word "character." It means that Christ is the CHARACTER IMAGE of God. The transcendent essential factor is that God is PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER. It is the supreme intelligence, combined with holy and righteous character, that most importantly distinguishes God from every other life form. Of course God, too, possesses supreme and omnipotent power and eternal, incorruptible existence. But without right CHARACTER, such power and perpetuity would be destructive and dangerous. A monster would be in control of the universe! And should any one of us acquire an immortal body prior to having developed a holy and incorruptible character, a devil would surely be born!

Come now, and let us reason together. Character springs from nature. Understand this and you will understand a great truth: NATURE is inherited; CHARACTER is developed! No one is born possessing character. Every child of Adam is born into this world with a sinful (flesh) nature. But that precious little infant does not yet have a sinful character. As the child grows its character is formed progressively out of its nature. The nature gradually manifests itself through the actions of the child as character. In the same way we have by regeneration been made partakers of the divine nature. And while this new birth is the most astounding miracle of the ages, it is, nonetheless, merely the birth of a spiritual infant possessing divine nature but not divine character. Now divine character must be developed from the divine nature — God manifesting His nature outwardly through our attitudes, words, behavior and actions. The character is formed in the crucible of experience, as we learn in every situation and circumstance to yield our vessel to the Holy Spirit who is the active agent in our divine nature.

We tread softly here. With bated breath we read Ephesians 3:14-15. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the WHOLE FAMILY in heaven and in earth is named." Through the new birth we become bona fide members of the original cosmic family, actual generated sons of God. Thus through the new birth we truly become God's very own offspring, His kin, His family, His clan, His kingdom, a kind of "extension" of His Godhead. That this group outranks all other orders of beings in the universe is attested by Paul's dramatic questions in I Corinthians 6:2-3. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

In a recent meeting Bob Torango said, "We are citizens of the true Israel, not those who are born after the flesh, but those who are born of the Spirit. The citizens of the Kingdom of God are from every nation, tongue, tribe and people. It is that citizenship that holds us steady on course. It is that citizenship that has brought us this far. We cannot deny the genes of our natural body. I can say that I'm not from my mom and dad, I can get angry with my parents and accuse them and say, 'I'll bet you just found

me out on a tree stump somewhere,' but that doesn't make it so. That's what my brother used to tell me. My brother, when he wanted to get even with me because of something I had done to him, would tell me, 'Well, you don't know it, but mom and dad found you out on a tree stump in the woods, and they brought you home.' But I can't deny them. And they can't deny me, because it's in the genes. If I've been born of someone, I have their genes. I can move out of their house, I can change my name, I can alter my appearance, I can do anything I want, but my genes will remain the same. I am a child of the loins of my parents. You can do anything in the spirit, or in your flesh; you can get all kinds of titles such as "Doctor," "Reverend," "Bishop," etc., but that doesn't make you anything more or less than what you are in God. You are the offspring of God, the fruit of His loins, the product of His Spirit. Men can call you garbage, liars, wine-bibbers, wolves, heretics, Beelzebub, antichrist or any other title they might lay upon you — all is absolutely meaningless — the reality is in your genes! It's in your spiritual lineage that goes beyond Adam — it goes right into the Father. Adam isn't the root of my tree. The root of my tree is God, the I AM. The Alpha and the Omega is the root of my tree" — end quote.

Here is an entirely new, unique and exclusive order of beings which may be classified as a "NEW SPECIES". There is nothing like it in all the kingdoms of infinity. This is the order of beings that Paul called "the new man," the "new humanity," destined through citizenship in the God Family Kingdom to be the aristocracy of the universe. They form a new and exclusive royalty, a divine ruling hierarchy who are called "the sons of God." It is an organic family relationship. How wonderful are these things! They are far beyond our expression or the ability of the most eloquent to describe. Oh, to be able to grasp the greatness of our calling! We have been born again of the very life of God! When we have matured and God has brought us experientially to the full potential of His life in us, there will be nothing impossible to us. We will even have creative powers. Like Father, like son. We will be creators! Can your faith go this far? If we are born of God we are born of the life of the almighty Creator. This is the life that Jesus lived and demonstrated. Twice out of a few rolls of bread and a couple fish, He created enough food to feed five thousands of people, and He said we would do the same. "The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do..." I want to know the life of this God! I want to know experientially the power He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. I want to know and experience all His holiness, righteousness, love, power and goodness. To this end I seek to completely surrender myself to Him and I am asking Him for grace to be able to do this. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God.

Gracious Son of God, reveal the Father to us in a way we have not known before! Make us overcomers, that you may be able to write the name of your God, the Father's name, the name of the city of your God, and your new name, on our foreheads. God is in the process of preparing a people FOR HIS NAME — a company that will bear His name, that will be called by His name, those who know His name because they are born of His seed. To these the Son reveals the name of His Father, He reveals the Father unto them. They will bear the name of Yahweh for they will be filled with His fullness and they will do His works, for the fullness of His power and understanding and nature will be in them. He will be in each of them in the measure that He was and is in Jesus, and will speak His words and do His works through them. They will be like His first-begotten Son, they will be conformed to His image, the express image of His Person.

Jesus, the Son, knew the Father and He was the only one in His day who did. The Lord said to the religious, as He undoubtedly says to the religious today, "...ye say that He is your God; yet ye have not known Him; but I KNOW HIM and keep His saying" (Jn. 8:55-56). "As the Father knoweth me, even so KNOW I THE FATHER" (Jn. 10:15). The first-begotten Son knew the Father and it is this knowledge His spirit of sonship imparts to the rest of His brethren, that they also may know the Father, and knowing Him, shall reveal Him unto creation. All creation waits for this manifestation of the sons of God. For two thousand years creation has continued to wait for this manifestation, but the time of their waiting is fast drawing to a close. The hour is at hand. The Spirit has spoken this from one end of the earth to the other through the mouths of His holy prophets in this our generation. It is a sure word. It has been attended by mighty dealings and processings of God in the lives of those who have received the call to sonship. In the fullness of time, "...the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32). We will be this people "...if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. 6:3).

From earliest times there has been a thirst for the new and undiscovered. Astronaut Michael Collins remarked in *The Home Planet*: "It's human nature to stretch, to go, to see, to understand. Exploration is not a choice, it's an imperative." Very few will probably ever have the opportunity to travel to the moon, and yet we can all take the most rewarding journey of all. This is the spiritual exploration that reaches into the realm of infinite Spirit — the present reality of God's Kingdom on earth. In the Bible we find stories of people who took such journeys in obedience to God's bidding. Abraham was certainly a spiritual explorer. The book of Hebrews records: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went...for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Those who are willing to obey God and follow the Spirit's leading in any age find themselves embarking on a spiritual quest in which the human heart reaches out for a larger sense of home. Obedience to God's leading and faith in God's provision inspire many today to seek a stronger foundation on which to build their lives than material ambition and human prestige. It takes courage and vision to be a spiritual pioneer, to follow the road of spiritual insight that signposts greater attainments and accomplishments for the sons of God.

Captain James Cook was a famous English explorer who lived about two hundred years ago. His adventurous life began when he joined the British navy at the age of 27. He surveyed the St. Lawrence Channel and the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador before he was given his own ship, the *Endeavor*, to command. He sailed this ship all the way around the world, exploring the coasts of eastern Australia and New Zealand in that way. After returning to England he set out again for the South Pacific with two ships, and explored the icy Antarctic Ocean. He explored the New Hebrides Islands and discovered the island of New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean off Australia. Captain Cook is recorded to have made the statement, "I have no desire to merely go where other men have not gone — I want to go as far as it is possible for man to go." His dream, for all practical considerations, was realized in geographical terms. He had no idea, of course, of the vast new frontiers yet to be opened to man by the advent of the space age.

Today I make Captain Cook's dream my own — but on a different and higher plane. I do not idolize Peter or Paul or John. I do not follow St. Augustine, Martin Luther,

John Calvin, Menno Simons, John Wesley, George Fox, John Alexander Dowie, John G. Lake, the Pentecostal movement or the Latter Rain. I have no desire to merely go where other men have gone in God or to do what they have done in God, however great and glorious that may have been. As I write these things and meditate upon them I am keenly aware of the momentous Day to which we are come. As George Hawtin once wrote, "The things belonging to the old order of the dispensation of grace have waxed old and are ready to vanish away. But sadly and with deep regret we find that everywhere men and women are clinging to those old things that are passing away as drowning men cling to a straw. To them these precious antiques must be kept at all costs. They love their sects, their crowds, their endless and wearisome meetings, their sermons, song services and special numbers, their revival meetings and their missionary programs and all the other paraphernalia that has belonged to an age now passing away.

"We have become like the priests of the Old Testament whose greatest fear of Christ and His apostles was that they would change their beloved laws and customs (Acts 6:14). They cared not about God's purpose for the world and the universe. That was not important in the least. The important thing to them was that the old system be maintained and that there be no change. Tradition has it that, when the great veil in the temple was rent in twain at the death of Christ, opening the way into the holiest of all, the priests had it sown together again that all things might remain as they had always been. When Jesus was buried, they took every imaginable precaution to make sure He did not rise, but He arose in spite of their care and ever lives on high and in the hearts of His people" — end quote.

It is time, beloved children of God, to arise from the mists of yesterday and press onward and upward into the Kingdom of God. "The fullness of God," "the image of the Son," "we shall be like Him," "I will grant him to sit with me in my throne," "the manifestation of the sons of God," — these are but a few of the wonderful phrases that speak powerfully of HOW FAR IT IS POSSIBLE FOR MAN TO GO IN GOD. Jesus Christ is the trailblazer on this heavenly road. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The Lord is actually inviting mankind to take a spiritual journey that breaks through all physical and mental limitations into the spiritual realm of the Kingdom of Heaven.

A certain man told his sons and daughters this story over and over as they grew up:

There was a calf that made a trail.
The trail turned into a path.
Dogs and sheep walked in the calf's foot steps,
Followed by men, complaining of winding trails;

But came along day by day any way.
The path became a lane
Then a road, then a village street,
Then a thoroughfare,
Then the central street of a renowned metropolis.

Some centuries and a half
Trode in the footprints of that calf.

A hundred thousand men were led
By one calf near three centuries dead.

For men are prone to go it blind
Along the calf paths of the mind;
And work away from sun to sun,
And do what other men have done!

Beaten paths are for beaten men;
They blindly follow where others trod;
But men of faith search long for God;
So they set sail where none have been.

They sail on uncharted sea,
Fearing not what men before have done.
Their soul's desire is just to BE
The express image of the Son!

There is a people in the land
That follows God and God alone,
Refusing beaten paths of man,
They will not rest till they reach home.

When the sons of God for joy did shout,
We were there, and our hearts cried out
For realms in Spirit to set us free
We are the people sailing uncharted seas!

Chapter 7

The Beginning Of The Kingdom

“Mankind does not understand the longing that is within him and we may be sure that all the inanimate creation is also blind and in the dark. We have become like babies who sometimes cry for reasons they know not, refusing to be comforted. Our souls often deplore the awful conditions that are in the world — the rebellion, anarchy, delinquency, self-assertion, and war — yet if we could look deeper than the surface, we would understand that all these things actually spring from man’s hatred and rebellion against the bondage he is in. In his darkness and bondage he imagines that could he but throw off his restraints he would be happy, that could he have all he wants, he could be content, but he does not know that his discontent lies far deeper than his outward life. While he thus seeks liberty from without, he does not know that the inner man is seeking for freedom from the bondage of corruption and all the wretchedness into which the carnal mind has brought him. Man is longing for freedom from the slavish thralldom he is in but, not knowing God, he seeks freedom by rebellion only to find that his new-found freedom is even a greater and more hateful bondage than the one from which he escaped. But those to whom Christ the King has revealed Himself know that true freedom is found only when Christ is crowned King. When He comes into the life, the snares of the fowler are broken, the tears of sorrow turn to pearls of praise, sins of years are washed away by His blood” — The Page.

According to the good pleasure of His will, and to the praise of His glory, the plans of God from the creation of the world focused on the Kingdom. From age to age God lead mankind, in each age setting the stage for that fullness of time when He would establish His Kingdom in power over the earth. The glory of God was revealed through all His works from that awe-filled moment when the almighty Creator first uttered those omnipotent words, “Let there be!” All the works and institutions of the early ages, however, were to become but chaff and refuse in the light of the transcendent grandeur of Christ’s Kingdom. Ears had heard God’s own voice thundering the law from mount Sinai, but no ears had heard the message of compassion, grace, mercy and power from the lips of heaven’s King. Eyes had seen the golden glitter of the temple built by man, but no eye had seen the reign of God’s love and power in the hearts of transformed men. Hearts had dreamed of God’s future for men, but human hearts had not the power to imagine the glories God had in store.

At the time of Abraham all nations had fallen into idolatry. The knowledge of God was merely a flickering candle in some remote corner of darkness. To Abraham God was pleased to make Himself known, and to promise that of him He would make a great nation and a company of nations, and in him and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. To accomplish this purpose God selected the spot in which he and his posterity were to be placed; and no spot on earth could have been better suited for the purpose. God said of it, “This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her” (Eze. 5:5). Many mapmakers in the

Middle Ages placed Jerusalem in the center of their maps with the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa arranged around this center like blades of a pinwheel. The land of Canaan — a tract of country situated about midway between the three great divisions of earth — Asia, Africa, and Europe — on the great highway of nations, and in the very path of conquest, commerce, and travel, was equally accessible to all parts of the known world.

There were four specific items that set the stage for the coming of Christ and the rapid spread of the gospel of the Kingdom. First, the Roman Empire provided a highly efficient and comprehensive system of roads, facilitating ease of travel throughout all provinces controlled by Rome. Just a century before Jesus' day the world was intensely localized and subdivided and broken up into separate little nations, with their separate religions and customs and laws, their jealousies and suspicions, their constant wars, their bristling frontiers barring communication. But after the setting up of the Roman Empire the conditions changed rapidly. When Jesus came, instead of frontieraed nations separated and suspicious, He found a leveled world with the fences down. The Roman roads traversed the civilized world, the iron power of the Caesars kept universal peace. Good news could spread easily. The highway was open for the coming of the King!

Second, because of the Pax Romana, or Peace of Rome, travelers could move from one province to another with little concern for anything such as a passport or visa. The general spirit of peace provided a fit medium for the dissemination of new ideas across borders.

Third, prior to the Roman conquest, Alexander the Great had brought Greek to his empire. By the time of the Roman Empire, Koine Greek had become the world language. This was a common form of Greek spoken by the masses and the language in which the New Testament was written. Not only could the apostles and evangelists travel safely throughout the vast Roman Empire; they could preach in the same language everywhere they went. Such a situation has never existed before or since that day. If one were to try to preach the gospel in the same area now he would have to know Greek, Italian, Spanish, Slavic, Turkish, Hebrew, and Arabic. Paul preached in Greek from Damascus to Rome.

Fourth, the penetration of the Jewish religion in all the civilized world of that day set the stage and served as a springboard for the gospel of the Kingdom. The whole world was intensely pagan, but into that pagan world went the Jew with his worship of the One God. It was a new message. For centuries the Jews had been scattered throughout all the nations of the world. There was a Jewish community, sometimes numbering thousands, in every city. At the time of the Babylonian captivity a new institution arose. It was the synagogue, or "gathering together," a term which first signified the congregation and then the place where the congregation worshipped. By the time of Christ there were Jewish synagogues in every major city of the Roman Empire. The apostle James could say to the Jerusalem Conference, "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath" (Acts 15:21). The reading of the Mosaic law was heard in the synagogues each Sabbath not only by Jews, but also by Gentile proselytes (converts to Judaism) and a still larger group of "devout men" who attended but did not join. Thus the Jews spread among the nations not only the worship of God and the synagogue, but also the MESSIANIC HOPE. People's minds

and hearts were thus being prepared for the coming of the Messiah. And come He did — “in the fullness of time.” Just when the stage was set for Him by the overruling wisdom and power of God, He stepped into history announcing, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news!” (Mk. 1:15).

THE FORERUNNER

John the Baptist performed the word of the Lord as revealed by Isaiah the prophet which was a preparatory ministry in advance of the coming of Christ. It is constructive to observe how God’s new revelation of the Kingdom takes up exactly where the last words of the Old Testament leave off. The very last words from heaven, preceding the interval of silence that lasted for four hundred years after Malachi laid down his pen, were these: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (Mal. 4:5-6).

The very next words reveal the fulfillment of this promise in a striking way, and the significance of the fact is awesome. In the angel Gabriel’s message to Zacharias, we have a direct continuation of the subject of the last words spoken by God through Malachi. For Gabriel’s words to Zacharias, while he, a priest, was exercising his office in the temple were the next words sent from heaven to earth. This is the record: “And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Lk. 1:11-17). It is abundantly clear that the purpose of Gabriel’s message was to announce the great person promised in the last words of Malachi, who should perform the Elijah-ministry of “turning the hearts to the Lord their God” thus making ready a people “prepared for the Lord.”

Some time ago Paul Mueller wrote: “Much of the preparation necessary for the coming of the Lord took place in John’s life while he was in the desert. John was about six months older than Jesus and about thirty years old when his ministry began. He ministered for a year or a year and a half, then spent another year or more in prison before he was beheaded. John’s preparation amounted to perhaps the greater part of thirty years in the wilderness without schools, colleges, universities or teachers. In our modern world of knowledge and education, John would have been considered a fool. However, he was anything but. John the Baptist was constantly ministered to by the Holy Spirit as the way of the Lord was being prepared in his own life. He remained in the desert for most of those thirty years and was not bothered by the many distractions in the world about him, for he daily communed with the Lord. All during those years of preparation, John grew in the knowledge of the Lord and became the way for the coming of Him who was to

introduce His kingdom of peace and righteousness. And when John came out of the wilderness, he did not consult with the learned elders of Jerusalem. Rather, he went right to work in the spirit and power of Elijah, preaching repentance and calling all Jerusalem and Judea to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord. Not only was the way prepared in his life, but he also set about to prepare the way of the Lord in the lives of others.”

Knowing that someone important was coming to stay in your home would mean, of course, that you would make things as presentable as possible. Should your guest be a president or a prime minister, you might even do some quick redecorating, buy a new mattress for the guest room, or whatever. But you would get ready! Two thousand years ago the world heard a startling announcement. The great King of the universe, the Lord of glory, is Himself coming to this world that He created, loves and cares for. GET READY! When Christ came the preaching of His gospel did not begin with His own preaching. That was not the first preaching of the gospel. Mark’s Gospel says, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord...John came and preached...” Therefore, the scriptures themselves declare that “the beginning of the gospel” was not the preaching of Jesus Christ, but was the preaching of John the Baptist. There is no question about that. That is the beginning of the good news of the Kingdom. The gospel began when John came announcing the approach of both the King and the Kingdom.

Let me illustrate. If Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain should die tonight you would see a very strange scene. Before more than a very few minutes had passed, the declaration would be made solemnly in the chamber of death that the Queen was dead. In a moment the high officers of state would turn about and salute the King. The heir apparent would become the monarch in a moment, but before he had ever assumed the reins of power; before he had ever issued a proclamation of any kind; before he had committed a single royal act as the successor of his mother as the King of Great Britain and the Commonwealth; before he had ever done one thing as the great ruler of hundreds of millions of people, a strange thing would happen.

There would issue from the Royal Palace, in peculiar garments, a number of men called Heralds. The Chief Herald would march at the head, and they would go into the street in a historic part of London. They would stand there with their long silver trumpets, and the Garter King at Arms would cause them to blow seven times. Then he would declare: “The Queen is dead. Long live the King.” His proclamation would be the first legal proclamation of the reign of Charles Philip the present Prince of Wales, as the King and Emperor of all of Great Britain and the Commonwealth of nations over all the lands and seas. It would not be because the Garter King at Arms was greater than the King, but because the law of England demands that his proclamation shall be set forth in a particular way. Only one man in all the kingdom can do it, and only certain Heralds under his command can accompany him. That man is the man appointed by law and by centuries of custom as the Announcer of the death of the Queen and the reign of the new King.

At a definite time appointed by God, a man of strange habits and appearance began to preach in a remote desert part of Judea, near the river Jordan. “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” he thundered. This man was of the priestly tribe,

and had been consecrated to God from his infancy by the vow of the Nazarite. He was not clothed in soft raiment, but in a coarse tunic of camel's hair; he had no craving for sumptuous food, but was content with the simplest fare of dried locusts and honey from the rock; he was no reed shaken by the wind, but a gnarled oak that the wind could neither bend nor break. He was literally the Voice of one crying the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!" He professed to be raised up by the Spirit of God to announce the immediate appearance of the Messiah. Like the prophets of old he had a message directly from God for the people of Israel. His message consisted of the announcement that God was about to act. God would again visit His people. The Kingdom of God was at hand, and the King was already in their midst!

The effect of John's ministry was instantaneous and electric. Israel was moved as Israel had not been moved for centuries. His voice reached from the Jordan to the capital city, and awed its heart. Pharisees and Sadducees, priests and scribes, publicans and sinners, went forth to listen. East and west, north and south, the tidings spread that the silence of centuries was broken, and that God's voice was to be heard. Publicans, like Zaccheus, left their ill-gotten gains; Pharisees, like Nicodemus, left their phylacteries; soldiers of Roman or Herodian armies who were on the march, the common people in their myriads — all left their homes and occupations and hurried to the Jordan, till the river banks were black with the crowds of penitents. "There went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." Beneath his burning words thousands repented, turned from their old ways, and began to climb toward the heavenly life.

Some thought that John was the Messiah. His fame soon reached the government and priesthood in Jerusalem. The Jewish authorities sent a deputation of priests to inquire who he was. He told them that he was not the Christ, but was sent to introduce Him. "I came to point Him out to Israel." He was raised up by God to prepare their hearts for the great revelation of God they were about to receive, to shape their thinking for the new and glorious age about to dawn.

We can readily see by the teaching of Jesus that He never spoke of the Kingdom of God as previously existing. To Him the Kingdom is something entirely new, first to be realized. Even of John the Baptist He says that he was not in the Kingdom of God, because his whole style of ministry identified him with the preceding dispensation of the law. "The law and the prophets were until John, but since that time the Kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it" (Lk. 16:16; Mat. 11:13). According to Jesus the Kingdom involved such altogether new forces and such unparalleled blessings and realities, that all the works and provisions of former moves of God on earth paled by comparison. They were the words of God, but not the reign of God. They were the works of God, but not the rule of God. They brought men into contact with God, but not under the dominion of God.

Jesus made a startling declaration. "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he" (Mat. 11:11). Many wonderful men had lived before John the Baptist. Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel, and many other powerful men of God had been born and had done exploits in the name of the Lord. But Jesus said that no one that had been born up to that time was greater than John

the Baptist. In saying this, He was putting John the Baptist in a very high position. But then He said something even more astonishing. He said that even the least of us who are in this heavenly Kingdom is greater than John the Baptist! What an exalted position He has reserved for the members of His body, the citizens of His Kingdom! This means that even the least of the called out, the apprehended, the elect, whether a child, a day-laborer, a janitor, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, when we are born from above, birthed into the spiritual world of God, transformed in nature, renewed in mind, regenerated in heart, and invested with the power of the Holy Spirit, we are in a superior position among God's people than John the Baptist and all the other men of God that went before.

The words of Jesus are clear: John the Baptist is the greatest man that ever lived — outside the Kingdom of God! Those who enter the Kingdom have the potential to become ministers of a SUPERIOR DISPENSATION, even that which by the Spirit of God shall subdue all things unto God and make all things new. In Matthew 5:19 there is another significant word. Here we find the story of a man who disobeyed one of the Lord's commandments and even taught others his disobedience. The scripture says that he will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven. At first this may not seem very encouraging. Who wants to be the least in the Kingdom? But the good thing about it is that this man was still found in the Kingdom! He may be the least, perhaps, but nevertheless he is there. And even this one, the very least in the Kingdom of Heaven, IS GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST! Think of it!

A greater than Solomon is here, beloved, a greater than Moses, a greater than John. The greater is now realized in the Christ of God, and I declare that those whom God is bringing forth in conformity to HIS IMAGE shall be a part of the greatest dimension of the Kingdom ever revealed. Consider, in light of the fact that John was the greatest man that ever lived before Christ, and the very least in the Kingdom is greater than he — how unspeakably awesome is the greatness of those elect sons who qualify as THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

PROCLAIMING THE KINGDOM

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all the sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them” (Mat. 4:23-24). The ministry of Jesus began in a manner which is the essence of simplicity. Note the words again, “teaching,” “preaching,” and “healing.” That means there was enunciation, application, and demonstration. First, He taught. Now, first of all He did not heal people. He did not preach to people, but, first of all, He was the great Teacher. He went about teaching — preaching — healing. Teaching is the first thing He did, preaching is the next, and healing is the last.

The Word of God is the power of God unto salvation. Hence, the necessity of teaching, first of all. That is why in this hour just before the manifestation of the sons of God, as God prepares to do a new thing and usher in a new age, teaching is the first thing He is doing. Teaching is more important than preaching. We have had the idea that if a minister got very emotional and loud he is preaching. Preaching,

technically, is only the proclamation of an ascertained truth. The proclamation by the Herald, "The Queen is dead, long live the King!" is preaching. There is no argument about it. It should be short, sharp, and to the point. Proclamation is not teaching. Preaching is not teaching. When Jesus went to a place, His disciples went before Him and said, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." There was no teaching about that. They simply preached, proclaimed.

You will notice that this order — teaching, preaching, healing — is not accidental. The same statement is made in other parts of the Gospels. For instance, in Matthew 9:35, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." Then in the eleventh chapter we read, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and preach in their cities." The teaching came first and the preaching next, and the healing last.

In the "teaching" of Jesus the old ideas of the Kingdom of God were charged with divine and heavenly meaning; it was NEW LIGHT. What did He teach? I want to tell you what He taught. I know. There are things I do not know by the million, but there are some things I do know, and I know what Jesus taught. I know, but I know it not yet in all its fullness. I have been sitting at His feet for more than fifty years. To me the Christ has filled my life, and for me there is no life, no reality, no love, no power apart from Him. He has been to me, all. He is more to me now than ever, and I know Him. I know something of the power of His resurrection and I know something of the fellowship of His sufferings, and I have trod somewhat in His footsteps, and I love to speak His Name. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! My Christ, my Lord, and my God! The name that charms our fears, quickens life within, and gives peace, love and immortality. He taught only one thing — the Kingdom of God. That is not a doctrine or creed — the Kingdom is life and power and reality and glory unspeakable. He preached deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, the setting at liberty of them that are bruised, and the acceptable year of the Lord — the day of blessing and release for all men.

Then He came preaching. What a word is this! It is the cry of the Herald. We call him a preacher who delivers his well-prepared sermons to his select and cultured audience on Sunday morning; but the preacher is a herald, whose voice rings out on the quiet air, suddenly, startlingly, "Prepare! Prepare! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" The Greek word here translated "preaching" was commonly used of a special event in the Roman Empire of Jesus' day. It was the announcement — the proclamation — that a son and heir had been born to the Emperor. This proclamation also went out when the heir came of age and when he ascended to the throne to become the next Emperor. John the Baptist came preaching, announcing, heralding the coming of Jesus, the King of glory. But Jesus came announcing a far greater and much more enduring inheritance, beyond His days on earth. God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, was ready to restrain men no longer by law. He was ready to do a new thing — to bring men into His Kingdom, into His own realm, into His own state of being as His very own sons and daughters. God was ready to make ordinary men royal citizens of His Spiritual Domain, His Divine World, the Kingdom Realm. First He would make them citizens. Then from among those citizens He would select an elect company and form them into a divine government, kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, overcomers, the manifested sons of

God, to administer His Kingdom and reign over all things after the power of incorruptible life.

The healing was the evidence, the supernatural proof that the “Sun of Righteousness” had indeed arisen “with healing in His wings.” “It was never so seen in Israel” (Mat. 9:33). Go back with me in thought two millenniums ago in Capernaum, in the land of Israel, and see what a manifested son of God is like. Jesus is the firstborn, the elder brother of this sonship order and His voice rang loud and clear across the green Galilean hills as He cried, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” And they came from every direction bringing victims of every type of disorder — lame, blind, deaf, mute, fevered, epileptic, lunatic, demonized — until it seemed as if the whole of Galilee gathered at His feet.

Come, see a little girl whom He healed. It was yesterday, only God’s yesterday, that this happened. Come, I want to lead you along the streets of Capernaum, and take you into this house. See that little daughter, but twelve years of age, lying there. See the father, who is a rabbi, bending over her, and the little maid is whispering, “Father, go and get Jesus to come and heal me.” “I dare not, my daughter, if I do the rabbis of the Great Council in Jerusalem will strike my name from the roll of rabbis; they will curse me in the temple of my God. Oh, daughter, I dare not do it.” And the maid replies, “Then I shall die; no doctor can heal me.” Said the rabbi, “Daughter, you shall not die.” “Yes, my father, I shall; for you cannot get Him to come and heal me unless you go to Him and beseech Him.” And the rabbi cries, “Then I shall worship Him; you shall not die.” Away speeds the rabbi, and he searches through the streets of Capernaum for Jesus, and cannot find Him. Then he is told that He has gone to Gadara, but is coming back today.

He watches for Him beside the sea, and the moment that Jesus appears he falls at His feet and worships Him, and cries, “Lord, my little daughter lies at the point of death; come and lay Thy hands upon her and she shall live.” Jesus says He will go. Away through the streets He goes with the rabbi. On the way a woman touches the hem of His garment and is immediately healed. He turns around and addresses words of comfort to her. Then they go on. Suddenly a messenger comes to the rabbi, and says, “Your little daughter is dead; do not trouble the Master.” But Jesus said, “Be not afraid, only believe. Did I not say I was going to heal her?” “Yes.” “Then I am going to do it.” They go into the house and into the room and there they find the beautiful little girl dead! Oh, she is dead! But the hand of the Christ is laid on the head of the child and He says, “Talitha cumi! Maid arise!” In a moment the spirit has come back into the body and the maid arises and looks into the face of Jesus. She lives! She is well! “Blessed Jesus! That was done by Thee yesterday, and Thou art just the same today! Thou art raising up Thy life within Thy many brethren that Thy glory may be revealed to all creation, from the highest heaven unto the lowest hell, in this Thy greater and more glorious day!”

We have not yet witnessed the magnitude of the ministry that shall be revealed through the manifested sons of God. God is preparing His perfected and matured body, anointed with the seven-fold Spirit of God, and this enChristed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history with the suddenness with which Jesus of Nazareth appeared two millenniums ago and with ten thousand times more power than a Luther, a St. Patrick, a Wesley, a Whitfield, a Finney, a Moody, a Billy Sunday,

or any of the revival showers of this century. God has moved deeply upon my heart to prophesy to God's elect that there is approaching a grand and glorious MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a fresh revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is going to come in the midst of a people who truly love His appearing, and I see and hear signs that already He is beginning to come. We are standing on the threshold of a new and fresh and transcendental manifestation of our Lord. Not this time through apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This time it will be through SONS. It will be like tens of thousands of Jesus' turned loose in the streets of the cities of the world. These things are burning like a furnace inside of me. I am being quickened by these things. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a part of this manifestation that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself IN ALL HIS LOVE, GRACE, POWER AND MAJESTY TO ALL CREATION.

Jesus did not theorize about the Kingdom, but He taught, preached, practiced, and set the powers of the Kingdom in operation. For three and a half years Jesus manifested sonship full and complete, not the in part and by measure we have known through the Church age. Jesus did mighty works and spoke the words of the Kingdom among the people of Israel. He also ordained twelve and seventy and sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of God and demonstrate its power. It was not the design of Jesus to keep His power within Himself. Rather it was His delight to share with His own. After His ascension He gave of this power by measure to men and women within His body, gifted ones in the Church. And now, in the end of the age, out of this Church He is bringing many sons to glory, exact copies and replicas of Himself, His brethren. To these shall be given the fullness of the power of His resurrection within each one to deliver creation not only from sin and sickness, but from the bondage of corruption — the very power of death in spirit, soul, and body.

Christ appeared just when the cosmos was ready for the revelation. Paul says that "when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4). The Kingdom was the supreme concern and purpose in the heart of Jesus, as it now is in those who have received the call to sonship. The Kingdom was His dearest dream, the one consuming passion of His life. As a child, when He studied the holy scriptures and communed with His heavenly Father, the reality of the Kingdom of God was birthed in His life and set the fires of expectation burning in His soul. As He fulfilled His daily responsibilities, as He strolled in the solitude of the peaceful Galilean hills, the hope that constantly throbbed within His breast and would not let Him go was that of the Kingdom of God. It was upon the Kingdom that He meditated when He went to worship at the synagogue. It was of the Kingdom that He spoke to His Father in the secret place of prayer. In the soul of Jesus the reign of God was supreme.

When Jesus turned aside from the carpenter shop that day, He set out to proclaim the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom was ever His dominant theme. By deed and by example, no less than by word, He toiled to expound it. With divine motivation He set out to bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth. The world of His day was mad — pagan, vicious, violent, wicked, and intolerant beyond description. His was the most impossible task of which we can conceive. But He was convinced that by the power of His Father all things are possible. He was absolutely sure that God was stronger than the devil. He was absolutely certain that sin and death in their every

ghastly and hideous form should at last be driven out of the world and that God should reign in every human breast from the rivers to the ends of the earth. He longed, and bade us pray, that this glorious consciousness of, and obedience to, God's reign should be shared by every man, woman, and child that lives or has ever lived. That, surely, is what we ask when we pray as He taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come!"

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

When Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, He called on the people to repent and believe the good news. By repentance the people would be delivered of the past with all its dead religious forms and ceremonies, law and regulations, and would be free to embrace the new gospel of the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus. When I think of the radical change Jesus brought into the world at that time, it is not surprising that many rejected Him and refused to believe His message. This was especially true of the tradition-bound religious people, such as the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. It will not be different in the day of the manifestation of the sons, but they will triumph over all until God is truly "all in all."

The message of the sons of God is the same message proclaimed by the first Son of God. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel..." What gospel? "...the gospel of the kingdom of God..." That is the gospel Christ proclaimed. The message He brought was about the Kingdom of God. It was not about the Church, for the Church is only an aspect of the Kingdom, a part of the process. It was the gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus wanted proclaimed AS A WITNESS to all nations! Jesus said, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Lk. 4:43). Jesus commissioned His disciples to teach the Kingdom of God. "Then He called the twelve disciples together, and...He sent them to preach the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:1-2). "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom..." (Mat. 4:23).

Jesus' parables concerned the Kingdom of God.. To His disciples, in explaining the parable of the sower, He said: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God" and then explained to them the parable. Again, "Then said He, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?" (Lk. 13:18) — and then came a parable. "And again He said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven..." and then follows the parable of the leaven.

After Christ's resurrection, the disciples were with Him forty days. Of their conversations during this time we read, "...until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God..." (Acts 1:2-3). After the day of Pentecost "Philip went down to the city of Samaria...when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). The apostle Paul spoke boldly at Ephesus for three months "disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God." On a later trip, at Miletus, Paul called for the elders of the Church at Ephesus. Saying his farewell to them, he said, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among

whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more” (Acts 20:25). Then at Rome, “there came many to Paul, into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God...” (Acts 28:3). Again at Rome, “Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God...” (Acts 28:30).

The churches — the apostasies would be a better word for the most part — are always talking about “the Gospel.” Why do they not go on? Why do they not conclude the words? The gospel of what? The word gospel is incomplete. Gospel means “glad tidings,” or “good news.” But the good news of what? What is the good message about? That is a legitimate question, because the full meaning is not presented in the word “gospel”. It is presented in the Bible, yes, as “the gospel of the Kingdom of God,” the good news of the Kingdom of God. The good news is that God has a Kingdom and that He is establishing it in individual lives, in homes, in cities, in nations, and in the world. The good news of the Kingdom of God — that is the gospel. It is not the gospel of the Baptist Church, or the gospel of the Presbyterian Church, or the gospel of the Lutheran Church, or the gospel of the Roman Catholic Church, or the gospel of the Pentecostal Church. It is not the gospel of any church, movement, nation or man. It is the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

You hear the different expressions brought forth by preachers, “I preach the gospel of the New Testament”; “I preach the gospel of salvation”; “I preach the gospel of grace”; “I preach the gospel of Christ”; “I preach the gospel of God”; “I preach the gospel of eternal life”; “I preach the everlasting gospel”; “I preach Paul’s gospel”; “I preach the Foursquare gospel”; “I preach the old-fashioned gospel”; etc. These expressions may be well and good, a couple of them appear a time or two in the scriptures, but just what do the masses of people conclude from them? Many people think there are several different gospels. I heard a preacher say that we have no business preaching the gospel of the Kingdom at this time. He said, “I only preach Paul’s gospel and that is the only gospel for us to preach.” But the gospel Paul preached was the same gospel the Lord gave the other apostles to preach — the gospel of the Kingdom. When Paul called the elders from Ephesus to talk to them for the last time, some of His words were these, “And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, shall see my face no more” (Acts 20:25). What gospel did Paul preach? The same as Jesus told His disciples to preach when He sent them out to the villages of Israel; he preached the Kingdom of God. Grace is a part of that gospel. Salvation is a part of that gospel. But none of those aspects are the gospel. They are merely parts or segments of the gospel of the Kingdom. Some people say, “We preach the FULL GOSPEL!” Indeed? The only “full gospel” in the whole world is the gospel of the Kingdom! It is the all-inclusive gospel. It contains all the plenitude of God’s rule by the Spirit. It will carry you all the way from your elementary walk in God to maturity in the mind of Christ and the image of the Father. As far as the scriptures and the Lord are concerned there is only one gospel — the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

This truth of the Kingdom is missing from the popular preaching of our day. Our long years of captivity in Babylon have erased the knowledge of the Kingdom from our minds. The Kingdom has become a future hope rather than a present reality. The term “kingdom” is mostly absent from the evangelism you hear from the churches, television preachers, and crusades. The sad fact is that the popular gospel of the

church systems is not fully rooted in the Word of God, nor does it correspond to the heart of God or the eternal purpose of God.

As I scanned the morning paper, I noticed that every article reported “old” news: a prominent sports figure arrested for drunkenness, a man charged with conspiracy, a government policy criticized, wars and rumors of wars, and a riot in the Middle East. There is really nothing new about such stories. They’re simply modern versions of what people have been doing since Adam and Eve disobeyed God. The news headlines from three millenniums ago would read the same as this morning’s paper. A humorous columnist wrote a bit on the news printed in daily newspapers. It is actually NOT news, he insisted, since it is a reporting of events that already have happened. Therefore it is no longer new, but old when printed. He insisted that it really ought to be called OLDS!

So what is real news? It isn’t about the kind of conduct that comes naturally, that repeats out of human nature again and again, but behavior that takes more courage and strength than we’re capable of. When someone acts in ways that are holy, righteous, loving, and for the good of creation — now that’s news! How many know today, that Jesus’ gospel was a sensational, never-before proclaimed NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT? Jesus was a NEWSCASTER. His news was something absolutely NEW — never before proclaimed to mankind. It was the most wonderful NEWS ever reported. Actually almost too wonderful for humans to believe. It was the news of the utterly transcendent potential of man. It was the news of the Kingdom of God within. It was the news of a realm of life, a dimension of reality, where sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, ignorance, poverty, limitation, fear and death can all be overcome and man can know and think with the mind of Christ and live in the abundant life of God. The word “gospel” means GOOD NEWS and that is the only news this poor old world needs to hear — the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD! It is the good news concerning the reign of Christ. It is the good news about salvation, deliverance, healing, blessing, provision, a new mind, a new nature, and the dominion given to the sons of God. It is the good news of manifested sonship. Jesus was HIMSELF the revelation of what the Kingdom is for all men.

The following words by Paul Mueller are encouraging. “Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old’ (Mat. 13:52). Notice Jesus’ reference to those who are ‘instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven.’ All manner of teaching has gone forth and is still going forth, but much of it has to do with the church order of the past. Much of it is useless in this new Day! But Jesus taught the truths of the Kingdom of God. It is only the blessed truths of the Kingdom of God that shall enable us to withstand the great shakings of this time. All other teachings and instructions shall fail the test of time. But the Kingdom of God and all related truths shall prevail when all else fails. Therefore, the Lord would instruct us in those truths of the past, present, and future, which pertain to the coming of the Kingdom of God to the earth!

“The coming of the power, the authority and the throne of the Kingdom of God to the earth was not a surprise to those instructed unto the Kingdom. The truth of it was proclaimed by Jesus, as well as His apostles and prophets of that day and this. It is the hope of all mankind! It is only that the church system and its leaders have lost the blessed truths of the Kingdom of God. Multitudes in the church system turned

away from the truths of the Kingdom and embraced instead the narrow, restricted and confined teachings of man regarding church order. All those who are thus involved with the things of the past age are blinded to the reality of the Kingdom of God and the blessed throne of that Kingdom, which is a positive influence now in the earth. Only by repentance, which is deep and complete, can anyone see the narrowness of the past age and embrace with joy the glories of the Kingdom of God in the earth.

“The gospel of the Kingdom includes not only the promises of Luke 4:18-19, but all the promises of the original prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3 as well. The gospel of the Kingdom is indeed the gospel for the whole person. It truly is the good news of the sovereign dominion of our almighty God! It is the Jubilee message for every person of every nation and tongue. The gospel of the Kingdom includes the fullness of salvation, the removal of the curse, the restoration of all things, and prosperity for all. It is a message of the Christ-Life for every person! And we are the firstfruits; we are the seed of the beginning of the restoration and reconciliation of all things, which marks the blessed reality of the Kingdom of God on earth. But to get here, we marched ever onward and forward at our Lord’s bidding. Our Father never allowed us to camp and remain at any of the road-markers of the past!” — end quote.

The gospel of the Kingdom includes the whole purpose of God and if we wish to inherit the Kingdom we must embrace the whole purpose of God. We have known many people who have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and they are quite satisfied with that level of experience. They get saved, live a few years and die and go to heaven. To be with Christ after one dies is a wonderful hope, but God wants us to enter in to all He has for us. Others have learned what it is to consecrate their lives to God and desire to serve Him with all of their hearts. Others desire a holy life that is set apart for God. Others seek to be filled with the Spirit of God and desire to be led by the Spirit. Others long to receive spiritual gifts and enter into a spiritual ministry, and still others desire to go on and become manifested sons. They long to overcome, to be conformed into the image of God, to put on the mind of Christ, and sit with Christ in His throne (Rev. 3:20-21), not because they are power-mad, but because there is a deep and compelling desire to minister to the whole need of the whole creation.

We have the record of the revelation of God’s Kingdom purpose in I Cor. 15:22-28. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith that all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL.”

GOD ALL IN ALL — this will be the grand conclusion of the great drama of the world’s history and the conquest of the Kingdom of God. There will come a day — the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we cannot realize it — when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that God gave Him and which He won with His own blood and established and perfected from the throne of His

glory. ALL IN ALL — such is the grand goal of our God. He will yet be everything to everyone of His creatures, as it is fitting He should be. Nothing less will satisfy His heart for “He has created all things, and for HIS PLEASURE they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). Nothing less will vindicate His love or form a fit conclusion for the sin and sorrow and death of the ages. Let us with joy believe it! Let us exult as we receive it! Let us be “laborers together with God” to accomplish it! May this simple phrase, that the smallest child can utter, become the very basis of our being, the background of every act, the key to every occurrence, a light in every darkness, a balm for every wound, and our ages-lasting consolation and good hope. Let us awake from the terrifying nightmare of Babylon’s delusions and let us wing our spirits to God’s glorious consummation. Here is a vision worthy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ — GOD ALL IN ALL. God help everyone who reads these lines, God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, that we may be in the fullest sense the FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS REDEMPTION. This is realized when HE IS ALL IN US for we have appropriated the fullness of Himself. Amen!

While we praise God for every moving of His Spirit and each step of His all-wise plan, the fact remains that none of the revivals of history has ever once-for-all defeated satan, sin, and death. No revival in any land has turned the whole world to God! No dealing of God with humanity has ever brought to pass the TOTAL TRIUMPH of His Kingdom in all realms! Sin and death still stalk across the earth, the vast masses of humanity held tight in their terrible clutches, with sorrows beyond description. Is there no deliverance for these? How truly the whole creation groans and travails in pain together, waiting, not for another Luther, nor another Paul, nor another Finney, nor another Peter, nor another Moody; waiting not for another Pentecost, nor for another healing campaign, nor for another prophet, nor for the rapture. “For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD” (Rom. 8:19). And why does all creation stand in the wings waiting with bated breath, crowding the door and standing on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God’s sons coming into their own? “For the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered...INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD!” (Rom. 8:21). Praise God!

Thank God, Daniel 7:27 is really true! “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE HIM!” Thank God, Ephesians 1:10 is actually the fully inspired word of God! “And this is in harmony with God’s merciful purpose for the GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD when the times are ripe for it — the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head IN HIM” (Weymouth).

If God had no such plan for the world, what kind of a God would He be? An African tribe has this notion: “God is good and wishes good for everybody, but unfortunately He has a half-witted brother who is always interfering with what He does. The half-witted brother keeps on intruding himself and does not give God a chance.” This quaint conception of God is interesting since it conforms precisely to the modern “gospel” of the church system! Their version goes like this: God is good and wishes good for everybody, but unfortunately there is a cosmic accident. One of God’s highest creations, one of the protectors of His throne, one of God’s own body-guards,

the singing, musical archangel Lucifer, rebelled and became the devil, and he mischievously and maliciously goes about everywhere interfering with what God does. The devil keeps on intruding himself and doesn't give God a chance.

The good God, according to the common testimony of church goers, is ever trying to do this and that, while the devil is continually interfering with His plans, frustrating His purposes, usurping His instruments and defeating the issue. On some good days the good God wins, on some bad days He loses. They go about continually talking to the devil, praying to the Devil (though they call it commanding and rebuking), and giving place to him over and over again. They "bind" him in this meeting and in that situation, but, like Samson breaking the cords of Delilah, he bounces right back in full regalia at the next meeting or occasion. These "devil-worshippers" ever beat the air against him and do, occasionally, they claim, win a battle against him, but the war rages on. If they do not get an immediate answer to their prayer, they are sure the devil is hindering. If everything does not go according to plan, the devil is interfering. If obstacles appear along the way, the devil is fighting them. They live out their lives in a constant state of paranoid devil-consciousness. The churches are literally filled with these devil-worshippers. They do not intentionally plan their worship this way, but it develops into that form, nevertheless. These go on and on about the devil, attributing so much power and mischief to his cause, and inadvertently sing his praises, because they truly believe in the devil. I have been in meetings where the people spent more time talking to the devil than they did talking to God. What faith they have in him! What power and wisdom they ascribe to him! With what cunning does he, to hear them tell it, repeatedly "out-fox" the good God! In their minds he is HIS MAJESTY THE DEVIL!

I do not hesitate to tell you that that is NOT the gospel, it has absolutely nothing in common with the "good news" of the KINGDOM OF GOD! Such teaching is no compliment or credit to the dominion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, it is a monstrous heresy, a wicked blasphemy. If God allows Himself to be "out-smarted" or "hindered" or "defeated" by the devil, then God is Himself the half-witted brother, if I may say so reverently. You cannot have a half-God ruling over a half-realm without implying a half-wit as God.

The King of the Kingdom has said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Mat. 12:28). In other words, when Jesus cast out demons He was representing what the Kingdom of God will do. When you get the rule of God in your life there is no devil anymore. We have the same illustration when Jesus cleansed the temple. He went into that natural temple in His physical body and chased out all the animals and the money changers and all who merchandised the bestial realm in the temple of God. How He cast them out! He was illustrating that greater temple which we are, and when the Christ comes in, when the rule of God is raised up within, when the Kingdom of God is come, all that has occupied and usurped this temple, contaminated this temple, controlled this temple has to go. At the recognition of His presence and at the power of His Word they all march out. Anyone with one spiritual eye and half spiritual sense should know that Christ does not co-habit with devils. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

The gospel of the Kingdom is yet to be preached in power to the inhabitants of the world in our generation. The gospel of grace has gone into most of the world, the gospel of salvation has penetrated nearly everywhere, but not the gospel of the

Kingdom. God is raising up His sons in this day to again proclaim that very gospel to every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Jesus was the firstborn of the Kingdom realm in His day. Now many sons are being brought to His glory. Many who read these lines are being processed and matured, as Jesus was for thirty years in Nazareth before His sonship ministry began, to be shown to the world as the sons of the living God. A new move of God is at hand — not another church revival, but **THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL BE SEEN IN POWER**. God has let us into the secret of His counsels. He has granted us wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a message of the utmost importance to deliver to His people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending — the manifestation of the sons of God. A new order looms bright upon the horizon. A new Day is dawning. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are coming down, the present order is about to end, and the dominion is now given to the saints of the Most High. Praise the name of the Lord!

Chapter 8

The Beginning Of The Kingdom

(continued)

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, ye, and believe the gospel” (Mk. 1:14-15).

Great controversy has raged over the precise meaning of the Greek word ENGIKEN, here translated “is at hand.” The simple Greek word from which it is formed (ENGIZO) means “draw near”, but ENGIKEN is the perfect tense of this verb. This is a significant tense in Greek for which we have no exact equivalent in English. It indicates an action that has taken place in the past, but which also has a continuing effect in the present. Here, if we labored it, we could say that the perfect tense means, “It has drawn near and is now very near.” It certainly means very much more than just an ordinary present tense that would be translated “is drawing near.” The New English Bible seeks to do justice to this Greek perfect tense by translating it, “The kingdom of God is upon you.” The verb could also be translated, “The kingdom of God has arrived,” that is, it is a present reality now, not just a future eventuality.

The essence of the message of Jesus was that God’s chosen time had arrived — NOW. His Kingdom was already breaking into the world of men. This was no longer a promise for some distant future for which men must wait with a hope so fragile that it soon dwindles into disillusionment. God’s action had begun. Men must awaken to the truth of it, and respond eagerly and actively. Satan’s realm was already threatened, invaded and about to be conquered. The ancient hope was already being swallowed up in present reality. NOW was the moment of God’s action, and the time for man to act in response. Men were summoned to identify themselves with this arrival of God’s Kingdom, and to make themselves God’s instruments in its coming. Their response is demanded urgently, without delay, without hesitation, without misgiving. The fact that God is actively breaking into the life of the world is expressed in such terms as these: The Kingdom “has drawn near”, “is coming”, “will come”, “has burst upon”, “is forcing itself into”, and “men are pressing into it”.

When Jesus said the Kingdom was at hand, He surely didn’t mean that it would not appear for hundreds or thousands of years! Two positive and incontrovertible facts are written of the Kingdom. It is said that the Kingdom of Heaven is “within you” (Lk. 17:21) and that it is “at hand” (Mat. 4:17). Where is your hand located? Is your hand not right before you? Is it not accessible for your every command? And are not all things reachable by your hand said to be “at hand”? If you were to ask me where my Bible is, because it is here on the desk before me, I might answer, “It is right here — at hand.” On the other hand, if my Bible were at home I would say, “I’m sorry, it is not at hand right now.” To be at hand means to be near, present, reachable, attainable! At hand bespeaks of something that is within our grasp, not something

that is away out in the future; but something that is now. Not the Kingdom that was, not the Kingdom that is to come, but the Kingdom that IS, that is NOW. If the Kingdom of God was not to be established on earth until the millennium two thousand years later, how could Jesus have said, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the good news!" So it is that when Jesus came two thousand years ago declaring that the Kingdom was then at hand, He was saying that the reality of the Kingdom — GOD'S INTERNAL RULE BY THE SPIRIT — was even then accessible and attainable by all who would receive it. How could Jesus say that the Kingdom was at hand, that men had entered it, that it had come upon them, if it was not to appear for ages? How could an event be said to be near, or even present, if it was actually further off than the whole period of the history of Israel from Moses to Christ!

There comes the time in the life of every son of God when he claims the Kingdom as a present tense reality in his life. The Kingdom of Heaven is here just as much as it will be there in some indefinable and indefinite future. It is not a matter of "here" or "there", nor a matter of "now" or "then" at all — for "neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, Lo, there!, for, behold, the Kingdom of God IS..." This realization of the "is-ness" of the Kingdom is the first step to Kingdom reality. What blessed instruction we receive in the words of Jesus, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye (change your mind) and believe the good news." When a man or woman is quickened by the spirit of truth to say, "The time is fulfilled for me, right now," he enters into a new relationship with the Father and the present and the future merge into oneness. What is the good news of the Kingdom? IT IS HERE! One cannot have God without His expression, His realm, His rule. It is within you because God is within you.

The Kingdom is not an antiquated Jewish dream, dusty with the history of centuries. It touches us at all vital points — if we are sons of God. It is an immediate and personal concern. It is God's unfolding plan of the ages, His time-abiding strategy for redeeming us from ourselves and the vanity of the flesh and the world. It is God's way of conforming us into the image of His Son and making us one in Him. We are faced then with the solemn truth that when we pray for the coming of the Kingdom we are not praying for the advent of some great world-wide political or economic program. We are not praying for the end of the world, or for the rapture, or for the millennium, or blessing upon the state of Israel, or the exaltation of the United States and Great Britain. It is far more personal than that. This is a prayer that storms the gates of my own little kingdom, and breaks down the barriers between the will of God and me. It brings the rule of the Spirit in mind, heart and body until the glory of God arises upon me and His glory is seen upon me, bringing blessing and transformation to all He touches.

I'm sure most of those who read these lines have read the following by an unknown author. "Nearly two thousand years ago in an obscure village, a child was born of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village where He worked as a carpenter until He was thirty. Then for three years He became an itinerant preacher. This Man never went to college or seminary. He never wrote a book. He never held a public office. He never had a family nor owned a home. He never put His foot inside a big city nor traveled even 200 miles from His birthplace. And though He never did any of the things that usually accompany greatness, throngs of people followed Him. HE HAD NO CREDENTIALS BUT HIMSELF."

On what mission was Jesus sent? We already know the answer to this question. Jesus began His work in Galilee as the messenger of the Kingdom of God. He testified by acts of power that the Kingdom was close at hand, and sought to effect in men the “change of mind” that would make them worthy to receive it. His mission was to usher in the beginning of the Kingdom, making its blessings, benefits, privileges, and supernatural powers a present possession for all who by faith would use them — to usher it in as a living reality which would grow and grow until, by a final crisis, it passed into the perfect and all-consuming Kingdom of God.

In the third chapter of Matthew, when Jesus began to preach that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, He was preaching that there were three things being brought into this earthly realm and they came in at the same time as the Kingdom, for they are the Kingdom. One of them was the ROYALTY OF HEAVEN. THE ROYALTY of heaven had moved into the earth and was tabernacling with men, abiding in flesh. And though Jesus was the royalty of heaven, yet He took a house made of flesh just like we live in, and walked upon earth. The royalty of heaven went about touching the lepers, commanding demons to go, lifting up the sick and afflicted, forgiving sins, and teaching men the ways of the Kingdom. The royalty of heaven raised the dead, showed many signs and wonders, and moved through this earth which had now become the realm of heaven. The second thing was that the RULE OF HEAVEN had been injected right into the earth. The third thing was that the REALM OF HEAVEN had been moved into the earth. We no longer need to think that we must go some place in order to get to heaven. IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO US. Jesus brought the rulership, the realm, and the wonderful royalty of heaven into the earth to take over the dominion from mankind. It is even so today. This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God on earth!

In Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son, the new age of the Kingdom had arrived. Its privileges and powers were available, and He used them freely and fully. Although the priests and other leaders of the static religious system of the day were busy with their time-worn routines of the dead past, and the slumbering world was doing business as usual, nevertheless, a new day had come and Jesus came forth in the life of the Kingdom. Now the Son of God had to reveal Himself personally to all Israel, thereby establishing a new order providing the necessary guidance for all who believe and follow Him.

After the Lord announced that the time for the beginning of the Kingdom had come, He went into the synagogue at Capernaum and began to teach. Immediately, the people noticed something very different about this man. There was an authority in His teaching that the scribes did not have. Furthermore, a man in the synagogue in which resided an unclean spirit began to cry out. The evil spirit could not withstand His presence nor the power of His authority. When Jesus rebuked the demon, commanding it to come out of the man, the demon cried out with a loud voice. When the people saw this happen before their eyes, they were greatly astonished. Never before had they seen an evil spirit come out of anyone by the direct command of a man. None of their religious leaders, nor even the prophets had such power. They questioned among themselves about what new doctrine or power this was (Mk. 1:21-28).

It was true. A new power had come into operation among men. All through the Old Testament times, though the prophets had power to perform miracles and do

exploits, not one person had cast a demon out of anyone by means of a direct command. What was this new power that was operating among men? Our Lord Jesus, Himself, explained it this way. He said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come..." (Mat. 12:28). This new authority which He was exercising over demons and over all things was the sign and proof that the Kingdom of God had begun. When He first began to preach, He had said that the Kingdom of God was drawing near, but now, after He had started to cast out demons by the power of His Word, He declared, "The Kingdom of God IS COME." It was no longer future, but had become a present reality.

That same Jesus has now been made Lord and has absolute power over all nations and all mankind so that the course of history is altered. The coming of Christ to the earth was a mighty manifestation of omnipotent power. By the power of His coming the whole nation of Israel was changed. The course and destiny of many lives was completely transformed as men and women repented of their sins and the empty religious realm in which they had served, and were brought into harmony with the Kingdom. Multitudes who lived in subsequent times, all through the past age, have also experienced the transforming power of Christ. This is the power of the Kingdom of God. Christ was the seed, the firstborn, the pioneer, the proto-type, the author and the beginning of all that the Kingdom is. Those days of the Son of man were sample days of the Kingdom in the blessings bestowed. All the mighty works done by Jesus were but a taste of the Kingdom.

Jesus came into the world in the time of the Roman Empire. His ministry was carried forth under the rule of the Roman government. He was crucified on a Roman cross, pierced with a Roman spear, and sealed in His sepulcher under a Roman seal. But praise God! He burst the bands of death, shattered the seal of mighty Rome, and arose the conquering Christ. And not only that — He ascended Victor over all the powers of darkness, having brought to naught the prince of this world, having brought in eternal redemption for a lost world and redeemed all back unto Himself. He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high and poured out upon the first few citizens of His Kingdom the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Kingdom of God was birthed, and gathered from Jew and Gentile alike a vast multitude into its bosom. What a flood of light and glory and power fell upon the world in the ministry of the humble followers of the Lamb!

And what glorious days those were! How God blessed His people! Mighty signs and wonders were performed as God confirmed His Word with signs following. The Word of God, anointed by the Holy Spirit, swept the world like a prairie fire. It encircled the mountains and crossed the oceans. It made kings to tremble and tyrants to fear. It was said of those early Christians that they had turned the world upside down! — so powerful was their message and spirit. In spite of persecution, in spite of untold thousands of saints impaled upon crosses, burnt at the stake, and fed to hungry lions to the thunderous applause of wild spectators, it grew and multiplied, for God dwelt mightily in the midst of His people. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord covered the earth as the waters cover the sea. Paganism fell. The mighty Roman Empire shut up its idol temples, all the gods of the ancient world perished from the face of the earth forever, and multitudes of many nations sat down as disciples at the feet of Christ and His apostles. That, like the ministry of Jesus Himself, was but a sample, a demonstration of the Kingdom, but not the fullness of that Kingdom when it has grown and developed in the hearts of an elect people who shall establish it in the

fullness of God over all nations and peoples and realms. The words of Jesus and His apostles reveal that “ages” are required to carry the Kingdom through its various stages of progress and development and finally deliver it up to the Father with all things subjected and God “all in all.”

Frequently one hears the opinion voiced that the only thing that will save the world of our day from utter ruin, and the race itself from destruction, is a beneficent SUPERMAN, an authoritative one who would be wise enough to map out a new and better course for the people, order his plans put into effect, and have power to enforce his edicts. Convince the world that such a ruler is on hand and he would probably be universally proclaimed! Not a single one of the kings of all the nations, past or present, ever possessed these qualities. A king qualified to take over this chaotic world of today would need to fulfill the prophetic picture given to us by King David, “Give the King Thy judgment, O God, and Thy righteousness...He shall judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, Thy righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor...in His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth” (Ps. 72:1-8).

The One of whom these words speak is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord our God is the King, and His Kingdom shall rule over ALL. And praise His name, He is even now bringing forth in the earth a KINGDOM PEOPLE — the harvest of the Christ-life sown into the earth — who are discovering His Lordship over all of their lives. When all hell assails us, when the power of death all around crowds in upon us, when the pressures of this world would frustrate and vex and suffocate us, when our own passions and emotions and self-will would drown us in a sea of carnality and ungodliness, then HE STANDS UP WITHIN US AS KING — in Kingly authority. When the world, and our own flesh, would tear us apart and smash our lives and our hope of sonship upon the rocks, HE IS THERE, the still small Voice, the deep inner consciousness that all is well, that He, the Lord of glory is the Mighty One in the midst of us, and all is secure in His loving hands, for He ordained our path and made provision for the hour. He is Himself the provision, the indwelling Christ, the anointing, the authority inherent in the Spirit moving in our lives. Through all these testings and processings we are being prepared for our “showing unto the world” in the righteousness, power, and glory of the Kingdom of God. Press on, O sons of God!

Jesus is the beginning of the Kingdom of God and Jesus is a Sign. His life is a Sign pointing to, and a pattern for, His anointed body. Those who make up His body shall follow in His steps and be conformed into His image. This thing of which Jesus is a Sign is a SON COMPANY, born from above, filled with His Spirit, possessed of His glorious mind, caught up into the purposes of God, processed through Father’s faithful dealings, and anointed for rulership...to sit on the throne with Him. This body of people, though composed of a multitude of saints throughout the world, and gathered out of the ages, yet is seen in the scriptures as ONE BODY, also spoken of as ONE PERFECT MAN, the OVERCOMER, and the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD. How this elect body comes into existence and what happens to it and through it can be learned by studying the Pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. And although there will be unnumbered multitudes of people saved by the grace of God through the precious

blood of Jesus, and we certainly thank God for these dear ones, still the high purposes of God are tied up in that company of saints who press their way toward the mark for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Consider now what is next in order for the people of God today! Would you like to have a true prophetic insight into God's purposes and plans? Then consider the Pattern Son. See how the baby Jesus began to grow up into mature manhood. Except for one brief glimpse of the boy Jesus at the tender age of twelve, we know nothing of how He grew from babyhood to manhood. Yet we know that He did. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52). And though the growth of His body in this hour may appear to be imperceptible from day to day, just as with the growth of a natural child, its progress is sure, and in the Father's appointed time it will come to the full maturity of the Christ Man. Let us look at the boy Jesus. When we do see Him, where was He? What was He doing? See Him there, He is in the temple, His mind upon the things of God, astounding the lawyers and the revered doctors of the law with His knowledge of God and the depth of His revelation, while the other children are playing their religious games in the market-place. The doctors of the law cannot understand this lad, nor the source of His wisdom, who someday will be God's Man; neither can they answer His searching questions. See how He is about His Father's business, recognizing at least in a measure who He is and the magnitude of His divine calling.

See Him at Jordan laying down His life and giving Himself into the hands of His Father in such a way that He became a vehicle for the expression of God. God reveals His might in the storm and His power in the lightning. He has expressed His creative ability in the majesty of the universe. But only in Jesus, His Son, could He truly reveal and express His divine nature. So the Son, as a man, laid down His own rights, His own thoughts, His own will and ways, and became a visible means of expressing that which was divine, that which was invisible. No man can see the invisible God. But He has One to truly represent Him to creation, One to express His love, His grace, His goodness, His knowledge, His wisdom, His glory, His authority and dominion in heaven and in earth. He has One like Himself, in His own image, a human-divine One, and at Jordan He placed this One publicly as HIS SON. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," declared the Father's voice out of the heavens.

From His anointing at Jordan, Jesus entered a ministry for three and a half years that destroyed the powers of hell, and shook this world to its very foundations. HE IS THE PATTERN. Looking unto Him, we see our course set before us. "Be of good cheer," He said, "I have overcome the world." Never once was anyone turned away that came to Him. There was no disease too strong or too advanced, there was no limb too crooked, there was no eye too blind, there was no storm too violent, there was no demon too powerful, there was no corpse too dead, there was no sinner too wicked, there was no situation too helpless or hopeless. He was victorious over every devil, over the elements of nature as the winds and the waves obeyed His mighty Voice, over every evil force. He had entered into that realm that the enemy had usurped from Adam, and had won it back, step by step as He walked for thirty years with His heavenly Father. Glory to God! THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH.

What does this mean to you and me, my brother, my sister, who have received the call to follow the Lamb? We don't yet see all things under the feet of God's CORPORATE SON (Heb. 2:8), but (verse 9), "we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor." We see the Head, the Firstborn of this body supremely victorious, waiting until the body comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that His enemies become His footstool. The Head is victorious, triumphant and crowned! But this glorious work that He began shall be carried forth until His whole body, even the feet, shall rise to the place of authority that He has. "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom. 16:20). Now in these appointed days there is coming forth a body of people, raised up by the Holy Spirit of God, who are not content to let Satan and the carnal mind and the curse rule here on this earth. They are crying out for deliverance and interceding for the Kingdom of God on earth. They know not how this can be done, for it truly looks impossible! But having heard from heaven they gladly embrace the hope. The Spirit of God is now revealing truths that have been hidden from ages and from generations. Hope is springing up in the hearts of the saints, God's "called out ones," and they are beginning to see that we can follow Jesus into that which is beyond the veil, into the Holiest of all, into the fullness of God. These are looking not to be ordinary Christians, but extraordinary. These are not looking to die, but to live; not for eventual victory in heaven, but for victory right here on this earth.

Can our finite minds comprehend even in a measure what this shall mean, to walk in the STATE OF BEING Jesus lived in? To have dominion over everything within our own hearts, wills, minds, desires, emotions, intents and passions, so that we express only and always the Spirit of our Father? To have dominion over the elements, the beasts, the birds, over the worse diseases and the most powerful devils. Yes, even victory over death itself, the last enemy to be conquered. Some claim now to have already conquered physical death, while they still fear a mad dog, still fasten their seatbelts on the highways, and still eat three meals a day to sustain their life. Precious friend of mine, death is the last enemy to be destroyed! But fall it must, before the mighty power of God working within the enChristed. Jesus said that the works He did, we would do also, and even much GREATER WORKS (Jn. 14:12). This power is not given for us to gratify our carnal appetites with bread made from stones, nor for sensationalism, nor to build a kingdom for ourselves, nor for financial reward, nor to make a name. Jesus was tempted with all these things, and He overcame every one of them. And so will those who follow His pattern. Praise God! What a destiny! How marvelous the plan of God! How glorious the path of those who walk with God!

"The life which Jesus lived on earth was the greatest parable ever known. It was a parable of the KINGDOM OF GOD. He fully demonstrated by His divine life and power all the blessings that were to follow in His Kingdom. The evil things that we have learned to live with and accept as part of our very existence He conquered, putting them beneath His feet. Behold this King as He delivers those who believe from every sickness known to man! The word of His mouth makes the lame man to leap as an hart. Hear Him as He commands deaf ears to be unstopped and blind eyes to see. Listen with bated breath as His wisdom puts all His enemies to silence, causing them to say, 'Never man spake like this man!' Stand in awe beside the tomb of the dead while He Who is the resurrection and the life calls, 'Lazarus, come forth!' Weep with the forgiven woman to whom He said, 'Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.' Feast as He feeds the hungry multitude with enough and to spare.

Rejoice as He preaches, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' Stand in awe as He stills the raging storm even as He stilled the fevered brow. Weep with His friends as He died. Shout for joy that He liveth again to reign, no more in humility and rejection in tiny Palestine but in power and wonderful glory OVER ALL THE EARTH" — The Page.

THE MANIFESTATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF THE KINGDOM

The wandering Nazarene, who a short time before had been denounced, condemned, and cast out as a deluded dreamer and dangerous heretic by the synagogue at Nazareth, and deserted by His own people, soon became acclaimed throughout Galilee and all Israel. He found favor with God and men. He was no longer Jesus of Nazareth; no more the shepherd and carpenter; no longer the son of Joseph and Mary. He was Christ, the Son of the living God; not of this world, but of the other world. The secrets of the universe were no longer hidden from Him. The deceptive dazzle and glittering tinsel of this world held no attraction for Him. The barrier which separated this earth from the heavens had vanished. He feared no criticism, no hostility, no man, no demon, no weapon, not even death. His heart overflowed with the infinite love of His Father for creation. The broken hearts of His countrymen were comforted.

New hope, new faith, new courage, new understanding, new victory, new joy, new peace, new righteousness, a new law of life, new power and glory were revealed to all who hungered and thirsted after righteousness and sought for the Kingdom. He forgave men their sins, He cast out the evil spirits with His word, He healed the sick and raised the dead. Instead of the implacable law which Moses inscribed on hard granite, the law of God's own nature began to be written into the hearts of men. A new chapter in the history of the world began to be written. The God who hitherto had revealed Himself only through prophets was now to dwell in transforming power in the hearts of the humble. What a victory for an obscure preacher who had sprung from poverty into notoriety and prominence, and who fearlessly denounced the priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees! "Verily, I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

Jesus the Christ came into this world as the second Man, the last Adam, the new Federal Head of Adam's ancient race — redeemed and restored. He stood in all the dignity and splendor and wisdom and power and dominion given to man in the beginning ere sin and limitation and death passed upon him. What a Man! Sinless man. Perfect man. Diseaseless man. Unlimited man. Anointed man. Crowned man. Man in the image of God. God-man. Man the revelation of God to creation. Deathless man. What a specimen! What a Man! And yet — don't forget this — He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, even Adam's benighted race. What infinite strength out of incredible weakness! He was EVERY INCH A MAN!

Can we imagine what Jesus might have accomplished had He elected to use the wisdom and knowledge and power resident in His PERFECT MANHOOD for His own ends? He could have used His power for wealth and become the richest man in the world. He could have used His talents for worldly power, usurped the thrones of the rulers of this world and become Himself Emperor of the mighty Roman Empire. He

might have used His power for sensual gratification, attracting the fairest women of the world to Him, building the largest harem of the most beautiful women ever possessed by a man. He could have become the world's greatest general and military tactician, or the most famous artist, or the most acclaimed orator, or the most accomplished musician, or the most brilliant scientist, or the most articulate philosopher, or the most important, distinguished, eminent, exalted, renowned, or noble of a thousand different vocations and positions, or all of them put together! But He didn't. He could have rallied the masses and marshaled an army before which the name of Alexander the Great would pale into oblivion. He could have built great hospitals, magnificent schools of learning, and gold-domed cathedrals. He could have initiated wonderful programs to better society and save the world from disease, poverty and trouble. But He didn't! He said, simply, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I can do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things...for I do always those things that PLEASE HIM" (Jn. 8:28-29). This is the simplicity and the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

When Jesus trod the pathways of this earth two thousand years ago He came forth as the LIVING MANIFESTATION AND DEMONSTRATION of the Kingdom of God. When He gave testimony to the presence of the Kingdom, He was the only one experiencing it. He was in the realm of God, under the rule of God, and the dominion of God was working in Him exactly as it should be in all men. In every aspect of His life He was completely submitted to God's reigning and ruling. For the first time since the sin of Adam there was a MAN walking the earth who perfectly expressed the nature, will, power and purpose of God. Through Jesus' life, words, and ministry the Kingdom of God was declared to men. He was the unique manifestation of God's Kingdom. He was God's message to mankind, not a message merely in words, but a message in BEING. He came to demonstrate what a citizen of the Kingdom is and must be. He was Himself the first citizen of the Kingdom; He was the founder of the Kingdom; in Him the Kingdom was embodied.

Look at Jesus, my beloved, and you will see at once what the Kingdom means and how a citizen of the Kingdom lives. Oh, the wonder of it! The child of God is a man or woman who is born a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. In this world citizens of different countries behave in different ways. We would not be likely to mistake a Frenchman for a Chinaman, or a Nigerian for an Eskimo or a person of our own country for either. Therefore it is quite clear that the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven must be different from people who are merely citizens of this world. The New Testament over and over again insists that the sons of God must live a life worthy of their sonship, that the citizens of the Kingdom must live according to the laws of the Kingdom. They must live a divine and heavenly life-style. They express the nature of the Kingdom and manifest the power and glory of the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit.

"But all of us have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into His own image, and this is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18, Phillips translation). You may have seen a room, the walls covered with mirrors at different angles, and when you stood in the midst you were reflected at every point: you were seen here, and seen there, and there again, and yonder again, and so every part of you was reflected; so is the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is the center, and all the sons of God like mirrors reflect

His glory. Is He a man? So are they! Is He the Son of God? So are they the sons of God! Is He perfect? So are they! Is He exalted? So are they! Is He a prophet? So are they, making known unto principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. Is He a priest? So are they, priests forever after the Order of Melchizedek. Is He a King? So are they, for He has made us priestly kings unto God, and we shall reign unto ages of ages. Look where you will along the ranks of the family of the Most High, this one thing shall be seen, the glory of Christ Jesus in His saints, even to the surprise and wonder of all creation.

“When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day” (II Thes. 1:10). The crowning honor of Christ shall be seen in His many brethren, the manifested sons of God. All who grow up into His fullness shall shine like the sun in its brilliance in the Kingdom of their Father. Today we are like vessels on the potter’s wheel, but half fashioned, yet even now somewhat of His divine skill is seen in us of His handiwork. Still the unformed clay is in part seen, and much remains to be done; how much more of the great Potter’s creating wisdom and transforming power will be displayed when we shall be the perfect products of His hands! In the bud and germ our new nature brings honor to its Author; it will do far more when its perfection manifests the Finisher. Then shall Jesus be glorified and admired in every one of us when the days of processing are ended and we are manifested in the full glory of the Kingdom of Heaven. Then shall thousands upon thousands of ones like Jesus of Nazareth walk the pathways of this world and the harvest of the Christ-seed shall bring a new and mighty dimension of the Kingdom of God to all creation.

Behold, and see, ye who laughed at His Kingdom, see how the little one has become a thousand — yea, thousands! Now look ye, ye foes of Christ, who saw the handful of corn on the top of the mountains; see how the fruit thereof doth shake like Lebanon, and they of the city do flourish like grass of the earth. Who can reckon the drops of the dew or the sands of the seashore? When they have counted these then shall they not have guessed at the multitude of the many sons Christ brings to His glory! And all this harvest from one grain of wheat, which except it had fallen into the earth and died, would have remained alone! The church of the past two thousand years is not the fruit of that original seed planted in the earth; it has been first the blade, then the stalk, and then the ear — that is how the Kingdom of God develops. The “full corn in the ear”, the final fruit and harvest of that seed is THE MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD, those conformed precisely to the image of that firstborn Son and filled with the fullness of His divine life. The life flows through the blade and the stalk and the ear — but the life settles in the grain in the ear and there incorporates all its fullness and likeness. The full corn in the ear is the only complete reproduction of the original seed and the only stage of development of that life capable of reproducing that life. Ah, my beloved, what a harvest from that lone Man of Nazareth! What fruit from that glorious Man — the firstborn Son of God!

Do you have a ministry? Do you have a gift? Have you a talent? Have you an ability? Is there an expression and fragrance of Christ through your life? Know this, precious one, it is not God’s eternal purpose in your life but merely an instrument by which the Father is perfecting within you His nature, His righteousness, His faithfulness, His grace, His wisdom, His power and His glory. This present time is a practice session, a trial run, a proving ground, a small sample of the glory yet to be revealed. We are mere apprentices of the Christ to learn the ministry of sonship.

You must not think, as do the babes in the church systems, that when you are done working here that the Master will say, "You have finished your course, I have discharged you from your responsibilities. Go and sit on a heavenly mount and sing and dance yourselves away for ever and ever." Not at all! I am only learning how to preach now; I shall be able to preach in the age and the ages to come. You are only learning to teach now; you will be able to teach when Christ is fully revealed in His saints.

You are learning the ways of His wisdom, righteousness, love, power, authority and glory now; yes, to angels, and principalities, and powers, and worlds, you shall make known the manifold wisdom of God throughout ages yet unborn. All those stars, those worlds of light, who knows how many of them are inhabited? I believe there are regions beyond our imagination to which every son of God shall become an everlasting illumination, a living expression of the infinite love of the omnipotent Creator. Remember how the Lord will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Mat. 25:21). He is to keep on doing something, you see. There is no stagnation in God's great and eternal Kingdom, and there is no end to the increase of His government and peace. Instead of having a home and family, or a Sunday School class, or a bit of a community, or a small or vast ministry to govern, the overcomer is to be made ruler over some VAST PROVINCE. Read the forty-fourth verse of Matthew chapter twenty-five: "Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." What a word is that! That is nothing short of UNIVERSAL DOMINION.

Do you know how it used to be in the ancient times in the Spartan army? Here is a man who has fought well, and has been a splendid soldier. He is covered with wounds on his chest. The next time that there is a war, they say, "Poor fellow, we will reward him! He shall lead the way in the first battle. He fought so well before, when he fought one hundred with a little troop behind him; now he shall engage ten thousand with a larger troop." "Oh!" you say, "that is giving him more work; he should be honored with rest." But that is God's way in the development of His sons in His Kingdom. That shall be our heaven — not a mansion over the hilltop or a cabin in the corner of glory land — but to be always in the battle, forever working and increasing and winning in the everlasting and unbounded Kingdom of our God! I have fought the devil in my own life, I have fought the devil in my home, I have fought the devil in the church, I have fought the devil in the world, and God has given wonderful victories. I shall continue the warfare against sin, sickness, sorrow, fear, torment, limitation and death in all the hells of this world, in that hell in the underworld, and in all the worlds and all the hells in all the realms of God's vast creation until there is no sin nor death nor devil anywhere and God is all in all. That is my hope, that is my vision, that is my call and my destiny. And that is the hope, vision, call and destiny of all the sons of God.

In God's blessed Book numerous ages are visible, stretching in a vast panorama from the first ray of light in chapter one of Genesis to the end of the dispensation of the fullness of times when all shall be subdued unto God and God becomes all in all. As the years have gone by the Holy Spirit has convinced me more and more that it is intensely important to the spiritual growth and understanding of every son of God to know the intention of God in each successive age as it unfolds. Some precious saints have in ignorance stated, "I am not concerned about what God may do away

out there in the ages to come; it is enough to know what He wants me to be doing right now!" That sounds very wise and spiritual, and it gives me pain to say it, but the truth cannot be denied that such a statement is really an excuse, a "cop out" to absolve these dear ones from searching the scriptures or exposing themselves to the revelation of God's beautiful plan of the ages. Furthermore, it saves them the trouble of getting involved in some controversy! What spiritual cowards we are!

The Kingdom came when the King came. Nothing can be clearer than that. In His battle with evil Jesus saw the foretaste of the ultimate triumph of God in the earth. Because He came preaching the Kingdom of God, He was demonstrating the glory and the power of that Kingdom and showing us the wealth of its glory by doing for the few what will eventually be done for the all when the light of His Kingdom shall cover all the earth as the waters cover the sea and every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall sing praise and glory to the Lamb of God. In His death He engaged in mortal combat with him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and conquered. Jesus was declared by the Father to be the Son of God with power because of His resurrection from the dead. At the right hand of God He continues to reign through His body on earth and shall continue to reign from stage to stage, from victory to victory, and from glory to glory, until "He hath put all enemies under His feet" (I Cor. 15:25).

Here is God's Kingdom plan in a nut shell. In Christ's incarnation, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension we see the initial victory. Through His people during this dispensation of the church, we see His continuing and increasing victory. And in the manifestation of the sons of God we see His ultimate victory. The Kingdom spans all generations and ages from the advent of the firstborn Son into the world to the manifestation of the sons of God. FINAL VICTORY SHALL THEN BE ACHIEVED. Then shall the Kingdom be delivered up to God, even the Father, "that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).

God has a wonderful Kingdom plan! Failure to understand God's plan of the ages will leave us on the rocks of ignorance and unbelief and we will spend our lives in the shallows, chatting aimlessly about God's acts and blessings, but never knowing or embracing His purposes. I am convinced that those who reject or deliberately sidestep the great truth of God's plan of the ages and the reconciliation of all things to God will never be a part of that blessed company of sons who are destined to set creation free! How can anyone be God's instrument to bring deliverance to the whole creation while he closes his eyes and stops his ears and shuts up his heart to the beautiful revelation of His purposes?

There is nothing that opens the wellspring of love, of faith and understanding, in the human heart like the knowledge of His purpose. What infinite joy, what satisfaction and assurance floods our souls when for the first time in our lives our great and wonderful Father is seen to be a God of purpose, knowing the end from the beginning because He planned the beginning and planned the end! He created all things and made all things and brought all things into being that His glorious purpose might be fulfilled. It was this triumphant knowledge that gripped the heart of the apostle Paul when writing to the Romans, he drew aside the veil to give the saints a clearer view into the mysteries that lay hidden in God's mind from the foundation of the ages. This is what he plainly stated: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For the earnest

expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Now take particular notice of the words that follow: “For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him (God) who has subjected the same in hope. Because the creation itself ALSO shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:18-21).

Frankly, I never cease to be amazed at those who profess to yearn for the sons of God to be manifested, who continually quote the scripture about the WHOLE CREATION GROANING, WAITING for the manifestation of the sons of God, because THE CREATION ITSELF SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD — and then when you tell them that the sons of God shall really, truly, actually, factually, completely SET ALL CREATION FREE they get bent all out of shape and call you a heretic, or ask foolish questions like, “What good is it to believe that?” If God isn’t going to do what He said; if the Christ isn’t going to actually draw all men unto Himself; if the whole creation is not going to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; if God will not make all men alive in the Christ; if the last enemy, death, and hell shall never be destroyed; if the devil is going to possess the souls of the vast majority of men forever, and thus be the victor; if God is never going to become “all in all” or “everything to everyone everywhere”; then I fail to see what is the purpose in all this qualifying for sonship, for a glorious ministry in the age and the ages to come, for THERE IS NO MINISTRY FOR THE SONS, and NO TRIUMPH FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD. We may as well forget about sonship, forget about being kings and priests unto God, forget about setting creation free, content ourselves with the current church program, and be satisfied that while untold billions are damned to the flames of hell forever God shall have His sweet little handful of saints to dance and shout with Him over the hilltops of heaven!

This is not the end-time. Every generation and age has its end-time. One day Jesus’ disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. As they observed its magnificence Jesus told them, “Truly I say to you, by no means will a stone be left here upon a stone and not be thrown down.” While He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples approached Him privately, asking, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and the end of the age?” (Mat. 24:1-3). All three of those questions have been fulfilled historically. Jesus came in an end-time, the end of the age of the law and all previous ages that pointed forward to His coming. He came at the end of a Judaistic world, at the end of the Old Covenant, and when the Spirit was poured out, when the church was established, when the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the nation and the whole Old Testament economy was destroyed in A. D. 70, the end came. He came at the end of those ages. “...but now once in the end of the ages hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26).

If you will take your concordance and run every reference in the Bible concerning “last days” you will have to conclude that it is referencing the last days of the dispensation of the law and Judaism. You can say we are living in the last days, the last of the last days, or the end-time, matters not what term you use, but you are wrong on all counts. It’s a lie, it misleads, injures and confuses the Lord’s people. Ah, yes, we are living in “last days,” but not in “the last days” generally referred to in the scriptures.

But according to the word of the Lord there is yet an age and ages to come! “That in the ages to come He might put on display the exceeding riches of His grace in...us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7). This is an end-time, but not the end time. The true and final “end time” the Bible presents speaks of the final consummation of all ages, the climax and end of all times and dispensations, when God’s plan of the ages is fully fulfilled. All words about THE END-TIME close with Jesus reigning supreme over everything everywhere. “Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. And when all things shall have been subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” (I Cor. 15:24-25,28). The word “subdued” means “to line up as a troop or an army in subordination or surrender.” This verb appears three times in verse 28. Literally it reads, “Now when the universe shall be lined up as a troop in subordination to Him, then also Himself the Son shall be lined up as a troop in subordination to the One lining up a troop in subordination to Him, in order that God may be all in all.” What a word!

What love! What wondrous love! What victory! What a glorious consummation! The might of God’s strength which operated in Christ, raising Him from the dead, was sufficient to exalt Him to the highest pinnacle of the universe, thus ensuring that all His enemies would be reconciled to Him, that every opposing power would be made subordinate to Him, that all sin and death in every realm and in every man and in every creature throughout all the unbounded heavens would be so swallowed up of HIS LIFE until God would be ALL IN ALL, bless His glorious name! The gospel of the grace of God! Truly it is not just for this age, but extends to all ages and realms. May it flood our hearts that they may, indeed, be illuminated with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

This kind of total subjugation to God is that which is being wrought in the “firstfruit company” in this hour. Have you totally surrendered yourself to God? This is what God demands. In numerous places, in various ways, in different words, God says the same thing over and over again. And yet, sometimes it seems that we fail to get the message: Yield yourselves to God! Submit yourselves to Christ! Offer your bodies as living sacrifices! Lay down your life! Present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead! Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness but as instruments of righteousness unto God! Put off the old man! Put on the mind of Christ! Come out of the harlot Babylon! Walk in the Spirit! Again and again, God says the same thing. And what He now requires of us, His firstfruits, He ultimately requires of the whole creation!

It seems that, usually, we are ready to do almost anything but surrender ourselves to God. I recall the time when the British general came to surrender to Washington. The general began with a flowery speech in which he praised Washington for his magnificent military tactics and the way he had conducted the campaigns. He was eloquently praising Washington when Washington suddenly interrupted him with these words: “Your sword, sir!” Similarly, we come to offer God the flattery of our lips, the praise of our hymns. And God is saying to us, “Your sword, sir!” Surrender is what God wants! Total surrender of all our will, our ways, and our lives!

The following words by George D. Watson will help us see the unsurpassable beauty and majesty of what it really means to be SUBDUED UNTO GOD. “Before God can launch us out into the breadth and sweetness of His service, and entrust to us great things for Himself, we must be perfectly subdued in every part of our nature to His will and disposition of His mind. We must be subdued in our hearts, in our wills, in our words, in our tempers, in our manners; subdued through and through so thoroughly that we will be flexible to all His purposes and plans. We must be subdued that harshness, severity, criticism, sluggishness, laziness, impetuosity, and all wanting our way, even in religious matters, must be subdued out of us. Conversion will not finish this work.

“We must be subdued, not merely in our own opinion, not merely think ourselves subdued, not only subdued in the esteem of our friends and fellow workers, but subdued so perfectly that the all-seeing eye of God can look us through, and the omniscient One knows that we are subdued. God must conquer the man that He can trust with His great thoughts and plans. The Holy Ghost must saturate us with a divine conquest, before He can use us to conquer other souls. The Lord will begin to subdue us with gentle means; and if we sink lovingly and promptly into His mind, the work will be done; but if we have flint or iron in our nature, and it is necessary, He will use heroic means and put us between the millstones and grind us to powder, until He can mold us without any resistance to His purpose. We must be so subdued that we can hold our tongues, and walk softly with God, keep our eyes upon Jesus, attend to our own work, and do God’s will promptly and lovingly, glad to have a place in His Kingdom.

“Oh! it is grand to be absolutely conquered by the Holy Ghost, and swing out a thousand miles from everybody and everything into the ocean of God’s presence. When we are subdued in the sight of God, He will work miracles in us, and power in experience, in healing, in finance, in service, in gentleness, and in sweetness of the inner heart life; miracles of grace that will astonish us and surprise our friends, and utterly amaze our enemies, when they come to know the magnitude of what God has wrought. Let us get subdued in every way, in everything!” — end quote.

Oh, the ineffable glory to be revealed when ALL RULE AND ALL AUTHORITY AND ALL POWER AND ALL ENEMIES AND ALL THINGS SHALL BE SUBDUED UNTO CHRIST AND GOD SHALL BE ALL IN ALL! What expectation this evokes in our hearts!

A little seed is the beginning of a great tree. A mustard seed becomes a tree in which the birds of the air can nestle. That great day of which our text speaks, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, and God shall be All in All — that is the great tree of the Kingdom of God reaching its perfect consummation and glory. Ah, beloved, let us take the seed of that glory into our hearts and let us bow in lowly surrender and humble submission, saying with a broken heart and contrite spirit, “Amen, Lord; this be my one thought, this be my life — to yield myself to the unutterable yearnings of the Holy Spirit that I may not rest, but ever keep my vision set on that day — the day of surpassing glory, when in very deed God shall be ALL IN ALL.” God help everyone who reads these lines, God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, that we may be in the fullest and total sense the FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS KINGDOM. This is the beginning, and the power, and the glory, of the Kingdom of God! Amen!

Chapter 9

The Beginning Of The Kingdom

(continued)

We are all sailing the sea of life. All are mariners, spiritual voyagers. We might profitably use the following illustration. Tom Smith and John Jones both presumably own sailing vessels. They agree to race to a certain point in the Pacific Ocean one hundred miles due west from Los Angeles harbor. The first few hours out all goes well. Fair and constant winds enable them to keep their course at a steady rate of speed. But then foul winds are encountered, and a storm drives them far off their course and separates them from each other. The following morning breaks with each one alone on a vast ocean on which there are no road signs and no mileposts. There is nothing as far as the eye can see but blue water. Somewhere on that ocean is a spot which is exactly one hundred miles due west from Los Angeles harbor. But in which direction is it? Both boats have lost their bearings. They know not how far they have sailed, nor in which direction. In other words, they have no knowledge of where they are. So, until they take their bearings, and learn their exact positions, it is positively impossible for them to know in which direction or how far away their destination is. They might be one hundred miles from it, or it might be only five miles distant. And so, until they learn exactly where they are now, it is impossible for them to know what the next mile will be.

Each and every son of Adam is a navigator on the sea of life. And the voyage upon which we all embarked at birth is one for which none of us was fully prepared or equipped; we were thrust out upon a tempestuous sea, there to maneuver our tiny bark to another shore. Winds, tides, and currents swept us out to sea, and carried us on alone. Humanity, at present, is divided into a thousand fragments both individually and collectively. We are fragmented, separated — LOST! But I have good news for you, my friend — it is possible to discover exactly where we are now — and how to get back on course to that bright and beckoning harbor ahead — for our heavenly Father has sent One to search for us and SHOW THE WAY!

JESUS PERSONIFIED THE KINGDOM

We have centered the Kingdom around the King. And that is truth that is off-center unless we understand what it is that makes Him King. Jesus didn't preach Himself as King — He ran from it! He preached the Kingdom, in His magnificent parables He defines the Kingdom, He tells us what the Kingdom is like; and in the Sermon on the Mount He enunciates the great principles or laws of the Kingdom. In this world there are various kingdoms — the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom. Each of these kingdoms is a sphere of existence, a plane of being. Yet none of these kingdoms has a KING! Each kingdom has certain inherent characteristics and specific manifestations. Each is part of a "kind," a "realm," a "domain," — that is what makes them a kingdom.

“King” is from the old Anglo-Saxon word “cynn” pronounced “kin.” Our modern word “kin” is from the same root denoting kindred, kinfolk, kinship, kinsmen, kind, people, race. King actually meant “one of noble birth,” one who was born or came out of, and thus was the “kin” of, nobility. It didn’t mean that he was the ruler, but that he was from that “class,” the class of those who had power and wealth. The king was simply one who bore the characteristics of that order. If the animal kingdom, or the vegetable kingdom, or the mineral kingdom should have a king it would be one of that order par excellence, beyond comparison, the one whose every characteristic is in full splendor, the perfect specimen, the representative one, the epitome of all the order is. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Can we not see by this that Jesus Christ is THE KING of God’s Kingdom just because He is the One who came and exhibited the full splendor, majesty, power and glory of the realm of God intended for man. He came as the man par excellence, the One of greatest excellence, the representative One, beyond comparison, the perfect specimen, the epitome of all man was ordained of God to be. In His very person He defined for fallen and sinful men a NEW KINGDOM, a new sphere of existence, a new plane of being, a new dimension of consciousness — the kingdom of men in the image and likeness of God!

More than a century ago Johann Blumhardt wrote, “True man is missing...False men with a false spirit, with false desires and false aims, think that they are real men. The false man is the world’s undoing. True man is still missing until Jesus comes and does away with the false man. Yet now we do have the fortune to know that there is One in whom the world is God’s again, in whom all that is created is again placed into the light of the first creation. This One is Jesus. Jesus, the Son of man, is more real than any other man, more childlike than all other children. He lives among men, and He is the Kingdom of God. He does not make it, or bring it; He is the Kingdom! Why? Because He is God and man. When God created the world He founded His Kingdom on earth. The earth was His Kingdom. And who was to reign, to rule, and to care for it as His representative? Man. God’s Kingdom was in paradise through man. God’s Kingdom is on earth through one upright man, no matter what men are like otherwise. One True Man — and God’s Kingdom is here!”

There is one image that is perfect: the blessed Son of God, the visible manifestation of the Father, the only one who has ever walked upon this planet who sums up the totality of DIVINE HUMANITY. He is the only whole, united, balanced, UNFRAGMENTED MAN! In Jesus Christ a Man stepped forth who came from God without any lack, so that in Him was expressed the fullness of the image of God in man. Jesus is man as he was created in Genesis 1:26. He is man in the image and likeness of God. That is the true man. Man today is lost. He knows not from whence he came, he knows not what manner of man he is, he knows not where he is, nor where he is going. He is lost in his separation from God and from the godhood that is his in the likeness and image of God. Jesus Christ is the One who shows us just where we are — and opens up the way for our return into the Kingdom of God. In order to know the power of the Kingdom of Heaven, the anchor of hope must be cast beyond the veil of this carnal, dying realm into the Shekinah into which Jesus has passed before us, as by faith we are led to prove for ourselves and demonstrate for those about the authority of the SPIRIT OF LIFE WITHIN over the law of sin and death in the flesh.

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus taught and demonstrated so wonderfully through His sonship ministry. He spoke the words of compassion and power into the souls of all marred creatures and called them beloved children of God. He didn't call them sinners, or condemn them. He saw them as they were meant to be, as they are in the eyes of the heavenly Father. That was the value of their lives. He healed their diseases, forgave their sins, raised their dead and lifted them up from the mire and defilement and set them on the pathway to holiness and restoration to their lost estate that they might live again as sons and daughters of the Most High.

The great Italian sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, told of receiving a block of marble with one flaw. Because of this flaw, no artist would submit a design — except one. In the public square of Florence a fence was built around that piece of marble, and a little shack was erected for the artist. For two years the sculptor labored. Then on a certain day a vast multitude of the citizens of Florence assembled in the public square; the fence was torn down, and the shack was taken away. At this unveiling all of Florence beheld the result and marveled. Since then Italy and all the world have marveled at Michelangelo's "David". I have seen it with my own eyes in the museum in Florence, and there are no words to describe its magnificence. In that block of marble was a statue, others did not see it, but Michelangelo did. And, precious friend of mine, in that lump of clay which is you, the almighty Father sees an image too — the image of Jesus Christ! And God is working unceasingly and tirelessly to form the image of His Son in you. No truth has come with more soul-gripping force and power to the elect of the Lord than the beautiful hope of sonship to God. Well indeed may we yield ourselves into the hands of heaven's skilled sculptor that HE may form His Son in us. All it takes is to chip away that portion that conceals the image. The image is there if only it can be uncovered, brought forth out of our innermost being. The outer veil of the carnal mind and the obscurity of the flesh are all that the sculptor must chip away in order to reveal the image of God within. It is for sonship that the whole creation groans in a sort of universal travail while it eagerly waits to see the glorious sight of God's sons coming into their own (Rom. 8:22-23). It is the Son in the sons — the revelation of Jesus Christ! There is coming a day when all the glories of the Son of God will be revealed and manifested in the sons of God. With a heart of understanding and a spirit bright with the hope of God's eternal purpose the apostle penned these meaningful words: "...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to REVEAL (apokalupto: to uncover, unveil) HIS SON IN ME" (Gal. 1:15-16).

George Hawtin once wrote: "Did you ever stand in awe and marvel at the work of the great artists on earth? Perhaps expressions failed and words became inadequate as you gazed with wonder at the faces of the presidents carved in the heights of Mt. Rushmore. Wonderful as these things are, it must be that, ere the sculptor placed his chisel upon the stone to chip it away, he beheld in the uncut rock the very image of that which he by toil and skill would bring into being. Thus it was that God, the mighty architect of the universe, beholding in His own Spirit the glorious image of things to come, set the forces of His own will in motion to bring forth with unerring exactness the image of His pleasure in the very likeness of Himself. God with omniscient wisdom planned with unerring and immutable accuracy every blow of the hammer that would in the end bring forth from the uncut rock a race of sons in the image of Himself."

What was fully manifested and seen in Jesus is potential in every man. Something of that same divine spirit that was expressed in Him in all fullness is also in us. Something of the same divine likeness in which we were created is hidden in all men. Concealed and corroded by sin the resemblance is not evident save to the penetrating search of love, but there is something of God-life in every man. Our spirit must indeed be quickened by His Spirit before it can be made evident and recognized. To be “dead” does not mean to be non-existent, but to be unresponsive to the realm of spiritual life. The body in the casket is not non-existent, otherwise there would be no point in attending the viewing. But it is certainly unresponsive to the world about it! This is what Paul meant when he wrote: “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past ye walked (dead men walked!) according to the course of this world...among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus...for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:1-6,10).

It has been said that in Jesus Christ the divine and the human meet, but this is also true of everyone of us. He is the true humanity who is the Son of God. It is not that He is super-human, but that we are sub-human. But inasmuch as we are human at all we are akin to Him. The first man and the second man are both man. The first Adam and the last Adam are both Adam. Those in the first man are in part what the second man is in perfection. The whole purpose of our lives is to become human in the sense in which He was human; to be changed into the same likeness from one glorious conversion to another, even by the Lord who is the Spirit — PERFECT MANHOOD. Christ is to grow up in us, and the whole process of life is one in which “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Paul said it so well, “It pleased God to reveal HIS SON in me,” which precisely describes the life of sonship, for the Son of God is the PERFECT MAN IN GOD’S IMAGE. It is as the Spirit of Christ becomes manifest within us that we approach nearer and nearer to the true humanity as it was seen in Jesus, “till we all come to a perfect manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). His possession of our lives will grow, until we are fully “strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inward humanity,” being “filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:16,19).

Now, the best way to promote an idea is to wrap it up in a personality. The Maytag repairman is an example. Always sitting with nothing to do, he personifies the idea that Maytag washers never break down. That is what God did in Jesus Christ. He wrapped up all His nature, character, glory, grace, wisdom, knowledge, love, and power in a man and stood Him up in the earth. This man was God’s Idea — the Word! And Jesus Christ is the ideal of all mankind, the second man, the last Adam, the example and pattern and proto-type of God’s will and purpose for all men. What Jesus is is what God meant when He said in that long ago beginning, “Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). That is GOD’S IDEA! That is GOD’S WORD! That is the glory and majesty of man AS HE WAS INTENDED TO BE!

The people of God today have no greater need than the need to know the power and glory of CHRIST WITHIN. CHRIST is the image of God, the scripture says. I know these words may seem to be incredible, but they are truth — the very first mention of the “image of God” is applied, not to Jesus Christ, but to our forefather ADAM (Gen. 1:26). As we consider the wonderful advent of man created “in the image of God” we can only conclude that this is a spiritual man brought forth out of the very spirit-substance of God Almighty, and bearing His own divine nature, character, power and attributes. The image of God is the nature of God reproduced in man. Thus, man is the true image of God. And Jesus Christ is the image of God because He is the true man, man as he was meant to be. Jesus revealed to “lost” men their true origin, heritage and destiny. He came to show man what man really is, was intended to be, and through redemption (buying back to the original) shall be — THE IMAGE OF GOD. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, man as he was and man as he shall be. In Jesus Christ you see man as he was in the beginning and as he ever shall be world without end — THE IMAGE OF GOD. Of Him it is written, “He is the expression of the glory of God — the Light-being, the out-raying of the divine — and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God’s nature” (Heb. 1:3, Amplified). Christ, and humanity in Christ, is like a ray of light that comes from the sun — man, the extension of God, emanates God.

When the Lord lowered man into this gross material realm man possessed, by the spirit, the divine potential to overcome the flesh, sanctify it, transform it, preserve it, infusing it with the qualities of life — holiness and incorruption. Jesus, the last Adam, the Ideal Man, came and demonstrated for us this very principle. This potential in man to rule the natural by the spirit is shed forth in Jesus’ mighty works — by His healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, forgiving sins, doing miracles, and raising the dead — He transcended by His life, words, and actions all the so-called laws of the material, mortal realm. The great significance of Jesus’ mighty works will never ring clear in our spirits until we understand that He did not perform as a unique, different, higher kind of man — all His wonderful works were the example and teaching of what is NORMAL FOR MAN IN HIS TRUE STATE AS THE IMAGE OF GOD. As the last Adam Jesus demonstrated all that the first Adam lost — mankind’s heritage as the sons and daughters of the Most High. Little wonder, then, that He confidently and joyfully proclaimed to His disciples, “The works that I do shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do” (Jn. 14:12).

By His resurrection Jesus proved the spirit within to be OMNIPOTENT, all-conquering, all-sufficient. He met and mastered death itself by the law of the spirit of life. He took no drugs to fight infection or inflammation. He did not depend upon health food or pure air or vitamins or herbs to renew depleted energies. He did not require the skill of a surgeon to heal the torn palms and bind up the wounded side and nail pierced feet, that He might use those hands to remove the napkin and the grave clothes, so that He might walk as before. Jesus vanquished every material obstacle, overcame every law of matter, and stepped forth from His gloomy grave, crowned with the glory of a sublime success, and everlasting victory — the role-model for each and every man and woman of Adam’s race! Jesus’ victory over sin, sickness, pain, limitation, death and the grave was for the enlightenment of all men and the salvation of the whole world. Paul writes, “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved BY HIS LIFE (within)” (Rom. 5:10). Glory be to God and peace to the fainting hearts! Christ hath rolled away the stone from the door of human hope and

faith, through the revelation and demonstration of Life in God, the life resident in the SPIRITUAL MAN. Hallelujah!

We are never told how long Adam lived in that wonderful Garden where the glory of God was revealed through him in dominion and blessing to creation, but that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image of God was but a dim figure of the day when a whole company of sons in God's image would reign in splendor over all things in all realms throughout all worlds and all things in heaven and in earth would be gathered together into union with God in His life and purpose. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the first and Head of this glorious company, and as typified and shadowed by the first man Adam He is the connecting link between God and creation — the revelation of the invisible Father to the visible worlds. A God who is unseen and unknown, or who is only the product of inferences from creation, or providence, or the mysteries of history, or the wonders of my own inner life, the creature of logic or reflection, is very powerless to sway and influence men or to affect creation. The limitations of our physical faculties and the boundlessness of our hearts both cry out for a God that is nearer to us than that, whom we can see and love and know. The whole world wants the making visible of Divinity as its deepest desire.

Christ meets this need. How can you make wisdom visible? How can a creature see love or purity? How do I see your spirit? By the expression and deeds of your body! And the only way by which God can come near enough to the natural creation to be a constant power of eternal life and light and love is by creation seeing Him at work in a man who is His image and revelation. Christ's whole life is the making visible of the invisible God. He is the manifestation to the world of the unseen Father. Jesus Christ in all His words and in all His works is the perfect instrument of the heavenly Father, so that His words are God's words, and His works are God's works; so that, when He speaks, His gentle wisdom, His loving sympathy, His melting tenderness, His authoritative commands, His prophetic threatenings, are the speech of God, and that when He acts, whether it be by miracle, by wonder, by transforming grace, by creative energy, what we see is God working before our eyes as we never see Him in any other creature or thing anywhere in the whole vast universe.

E. Stanley Jones said of this Man who is the revelation of God to creation, "He did not argue that life was a growth and character an attainment — He 'grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.' He did not speculate on why temptation should be in this world — He met it, and after forty days' struggle with it in the wilderness He conquered, and 'returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.' He did not discourse of the dignity of labor — He worked at a carpenter's bench and His hands were hard with the toil of making yokes and plows, and this forever makes the toil of the hands honorable. As He came among men He did not try to prove the existence of God — He brought Him. He lived in God, and men looking upon His face could not find it within themselves to doubt God. He did not argue about whether or not there was a resurrection, for the Pharisees believed there was and the Sadducees believed there wasn't — He raised the dead.

"He did not teach in a didactic way about the worth of children — He put His hands upon them and blessed them, and setting one in their midst said, 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' He did not argue that God answers prayer — He prayed, sometimes all night, and in the morning 'the power of the Lord was present to heal.'

He did not teach in the schoolroom manner the necessity of humility — He girded Himself with a towel and kneeled down and washed His disciples' feet. He did not discuss the question of the worth of personality — He loved and served all men from the least to the greatest. He did not discourse on the 'equality' of men — He went to the poor and the outcast and ate with them. He did not try to prove how pain and sorrow in the universe could be compatible with the love of God — He took on Himself at the cross everything that spoke against the love of God, and through that pain and tragedy and sin showed the very love of God. He did not discourse on how the weakest human material can be changed and empowered to change the world — He called to Him a set of weak men, ignorant and temperamental Galilean fishermen, transformed them and sent them out to begin the mightiest movement for uplift and redemption the world has ever seen.

“He wrote no books — only once are we told that He wrote and that was in the sand — but He wrote upon the hearts and consciences of people about Him and it has become the world's most precious writing. He did not paint a Utopia, far off and unrealizable — He announced that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, and is 'at hand' and can be realized here and now. He did not discourse on the beauty of love — He loved. We do not find Him arguing that the spiritual life should conquer matter — He walked on water and fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. He did not argue the possibility of sinlessness— He presented Himself and said, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' He did not merely ask men to turn the other cheek when smitten on the one, to go the second mile when compelled to go one, to give the cloak also when sued at the law and the coat was taken away, to love our enemies and to bless them — He Himself did these very things, and in the agony of the cruel torture of the cross He prayed for His enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

“He did not merely tell us that death may be conquered — He rose from the dead, and lo, the tomb now glows with light. Many teachers of the world have tried to explain everything — they have changed little or nothing. Jesus explained little and changed everything. Many teachers have tried to diagnose the disease of humanity — Jesus cures it. Many philosophers speculate on how evil entered the world — Jesus presents Himself as the way by which it shall leave” — end quote.

The grand fact is that this Jesus of Nazareth, by the sheer force of His personality, has so impressed Himself upon mankind, and upon human history, and upon principalities and powers in the heavens, and upon spirits in the darkest underworld, and continues to impress Himself, that the only adequate description we can give of Him is EMMANUEL — God with us; that in the Man Jesus dwelt and dwells the fullness of the Godhead, under bodily conditions. In Him all we can ever know of the invisible Creator becomes concrete, and therefore becomes powerful to save. And if all this has been effected by one son of God revealing the Father to creation, what, I ask, shall be the result when A VAST COMPANY OF SONS SHALL BE BROUGHT TO RULE AND REIGN in His glorious image and likeness over all the earth and throughout the vastnesses of infinity forevermore. Ah! What an Eden of God's glory it shall be when judgment is given TO THE SAINTS of the Most High, when all the OVERCOMERS out of all the ages SIT WITH THE CHRIST OF GOD IN HIS THRONE even as He overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne; when SAVIOURS shall come up on MOUNT ZION to judge the house of Esau (flesh) and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 21). Then shall the earth be filled with the

knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then shall all things in heaven and in earth be gathered together into one in Christ. Then shall God be All-in-all.

The firstborn Son said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on the earth: and now, O Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (Jn. 17:1-5). To "glorify" God means that man's total expression of life would emit the very presence and effulgence of God. An illustration of what it means to glorify God can be seen in the simple incandescent light bulb. Screw it into the socket and the invisible electrons flowing through it are transformed into the light and heat energy that causes the halo of light. The bulb is glorifying the invisible electricity making it visible and beneficent to mankind. The sons of God are thus ordained to glorify the Father, emitting His presence, revealing His character, manifesting in a visible way His invisible reality.

I have shared the following story once before, not so very long ago, but am constrained to share it again. John Wesley, it is recorded, was one day preaching in a rough neighborhood of London, where raucous and vulgar sensualities were in command, when two ruffians appeared at the edge of the crowd. "Who is this preacher?" they asked, roughly. "What right has he to come here spoiling our fun? We'll show him!" A moment or two later, each with a stone in hand, they began elbowing their belligerent way through the throng. But just when they were ready to "let fly" at Wesley's face, he began talking about the power of Christ to change the lives of sinful men. In that instant something dramatic happened. Even as he was speaking a serene beauty, a celestial glow spread over his face. The two men, obviously quite overcome by this unusual radiance of glory, stood there momentarily, their arms poised in mid-air. Then one turned to the other, and said, "He ain't a man, Bill; he ain't a man." Their arms came down. The stones dropped from their hands. As Wesley continued to preach, the altered expressions on their countenances spoke of the softness that had stolen into their hearts. The sermon over, Mr. Wesley began making his way through the crowd. The path that the people respectfully opened for him brought him within arms length of where these tough boys were standing. One of them, almost tenderly, reached out and touched the evangelist's coat. At that, Mr. Wesley paused, placed his hands on the heads of the lads, and said, "God bless you, my boys!" As he passed on, one of the ruffians turned to the other, and said, "He is a man, Bill; he is a man. He's a man like God!" This is the heritage of the people of the Lord.

BEHOLD THE KING!

Kings are not in great demand these days. When we think of kings, we imagine powerful rulers who meddle in people's lives. They require huge sums of money to keep their expensive homes and palaces running. And they have the nasty habit of requiring us to do things we don't really want to do. Most of the nations of the world have discarded the rule of kings. They prefer either democracy or communism, with governmental systems involving congresses, parliaments, presidents and prime ministers. The order of kingship has almost disappeared, but the people are no better off and no more satisfied with their present governments than they were with their kings. Most are not really free nor truly happy. Now, in the United States we talk of creeping socialism. The nasty kings of the past have turned into nasty "big government." The world stays in a state of constant turmoil and confusion, with

revolutions, riots, wars, carnage, hostage situations, political prisoners, violation of human rights, persecution, economic failures, gangs, drugs, moral breakdown, hijackings, crime, racism, poverty, fear and hatred everywhere.

There is no doubt about it — the kings of this world have failed, and it is abundantly evident that the governments which have taken their places are quite unsatisfactory. And it is just this very condition that cries out for a new world order. It is surprising to many to hear the Bible say that true joy is found, not in democracy and freedom, but with a king in charge! Even in the world many hold the opinion that the only thing that can save the world from utter chaos and destruction is some great SUPERMAN, one who would be wise enough, good enough, and strong enough to create an entirely new order for the nations of mankind, and have the power to put his plans into effect and enforce his edicts. Convince the world that such a ruler is at hand and he would probably be universally acclaimed!

I have news for you — there will indeed arise such a ruler. He has, in fact, already come into the world, but only a few have been aware of His presence. Only a small number of people, out of earth's teeming billions, now truly know Him or have experienced the genius of His rule. Two millenniums ago a man walked the dusty pathways of the land of Israel whom His disciples and followers believed was destined to be the world ruler that all the prophets of ancient times had foretold. This man was raised as a boy in the town of Nazareth in Galilee of the Gentiles. Today, Nazareth is a noisy city, with a population of about 200,000. But in Jesus' day, Nazareth was a small town on a ridge. That does not mean that it was an isolated village, because it was located on one of the primary trade routes connecting the empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Rome, Assyria, and Babylonia. Day and night foreigners marched the highway and brought their life-styles into the streets of Nazareth. As a boy and as a young man Jesus gazed upon the occupying Roman soldiers, sailors, merchant men, and the trade caravans that brought goods from far-off lands. He saw harlots, zealots, rebels, philosophers, thieves, and priests and priestesses of the pagan religions. The people who passed by His tiny town of Nazareth brought news of events from great cities around the vast Roman Empire. The town provided a young man with a window to the world.

Jesus did not grow up behind a window of obscurity, but saw face to face in all its stark reality all the world had to offer — its best and its worst. He saw the flowers that bloomed on the hillside in the spring, and the majesty and solitude of the green Galilean mountains. But He also saw the sensual lust and crudeness of the surrounding cultures. He felt the Roman's hate of His people. He saw violence, sin, death and destruction. He saw drunkenness, revelry, debauchery, and heard every filthy gutter word in the languages of His day. Childhood impressions leave an indelible impact on any evolving mind, and it was no exception with Jesus. With all the negative faces and fears to which He was exposed, He could have grown up to become a negative reactionary, a wild, ruthless, militant revolutionary. But with the aid of His heavenly Father the view He had of life as it really is was a part of the preparation necessary for His sonship ministry and the kingship to follow.

Jesus was the only man alive who not only saw life as it really is — He saw God as He really is! And there you have the perfect catalyst for the Kingdom of God! Out of His relationship with His Father grew a mighty faith that the power of God in man could change the course of history and bring redemption and restoration to the fallen

race. Jesus saw fabulous possibilities in the worst person. He saw fantastic potential in the most unlikely personality. He saw the triumph of the spirit. He saw victory over sin, sorrow, limitation, fear, bondage and death. As the Kingdom was raised up in His own life He saw that the roadways carrying merchant men out of Nazareth, and the highways that brought conquering armies in, could be used to carry the gospel of peace, joy, righteousness, love, power and hope to the whole world.

When Jesus stepped forth in Galilee proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom of God He had no formal education, He had no list of academic credentials. He could claim no politicians as His friends. Never had He courted or dined with power people in industry, commerce, politics, the military or religion. He couldn't have been a name dropper if His life depended upon it. He had no organization and no supporters. He was a total unknown. He had no money and no natural means. He had no name recognition anywhere. Even after thousands flocked to Him and multitudes sat at His feet, He founded no movement, He had no army, He never enforced His will on the people. He didn't exalt himself or live apart in isolation, or in splendor and luxury. He was known only for His kindness, His gentleness, His approachability, His unconditional love, His unmitigated mercy, His unfailing goodness, His surpassing wisdom, His spiritual power and His wonderful compassion. He loved everybody and was merciful and sympathetic even to the most wretched sinner. He healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, caused the blind to see out of obscurity and the lame to leap as an hart, raised the dead to life again, and cast out the devils with His word.

Have you ever wondered why in Jesus' day there seemed to be so many people who were crippled or blind or deaf or terminally ill? It is because Galilee is part of a massive volcanic fault line, stretching from Syria through the Jordan River valley, across the Red Sea, all the way down to Lake Victoria in Africa. Beneath this fault, fissures of molten lava heat the springs around the Sea of Galilee. People traveled great distances because they believed they could be healed by the water and minerals in the hot springs. Astute investors built cities near these pools and erected beautiful marble bathhouses with inlaid mosaic. Businessmen and physicians charged high fees for the ill to sit in these baths. I do not doubt for one moment that that is one of the reasons God selected Galilee as the location for Jesus' sonship ministry. The hurting, the sick and the dying were there, Christ was always finding a hurt and healing it, showing how they could overcome all things and turn their scars into stars. One of the most revealing observations made concerning Him states, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).

But the world was too evil to appreciate so noble a character. He was hated and despised by those in authority, and charges were brought against Him. One of the charges was of sedition — that He claimed to be a king. He was brought before the Roman governor, Pilate, for trial, and was questioned. "Art thou a king?" He was asked, to which He replied, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world" (Jn. 18:37). This confession became His death warrant — for the angry rulers of Judea who wanted Him put to death chanted, "We have no king but Caesar!" In the night madness Pilate finally realized he could do no more to save this man's life, so he permitted a crown of thorns to be pressed upon His brow, and showing Him to

the mob, he cried, "Behold your king!" But they shouted back, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

It is interesting to observe Pontius Pilate's perception of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus informed Pilate that He is indeed a king. Pilate was an officer of the Roman Empire. He appeared to know little of the Hebrew prophets. He was seeing only the carpenter's son who stood before him. Pilate's conception of a king was defined by Caesar and Herod. A king is a person of supreme authority over a nation. A king lives in a palace and is attended by a variety of lesser authorities and powers. The king should be a person of integrity, knowledge, wisdom and personal magnetism. Pilate "sized up" this man before him and he discerned the character and nobility of a king. Pilate was not talking "religious" talk. He weighed his words in the light of his professional perception of a king when he wrote the title and nailed it to the cross: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. They crucified Jesus, but He told His disciples that He would rise again. And He did. He arose the conquering Christ and from that day to this He has been patiently, consistently, and methodically forming and establishing His Kingdom in the earth, in the hearts and lives of His elect. And it shall yet triumph over all!

There is yet to be a revelation of His person and power in an unprecedented measure before the face of all nations. The fullness of God's glory was once manifested in the firstborn Son of God, and it shall ultimately be manifested in all His "many brethren." This night of sin and death and darkness is stormy, but the light of His presence and the power of His Kingdom will soon become manifest, and the sorrows of earth will give way to the brightness of the new day of deliverance and release for all mankind. All peoples shall yet bow before Him in this Day, and all nations shall obey Him and serve Him. Thus it is written and thus shall it be. This One is GOD'S KING. You see, my beloved, God's government is a KINGDOM — not a democracy, not a military government, nor any other form of government. God has not raised up Jesus to be president or prime minister or military dictator. God is not forming His sons into a company of congressmen, senators, parliamentarians, cabinet members, or secretaries of departments of government. No! Jesus has been anointed KING and He "has made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS, and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:13-14,27). "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:30-33).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God,

The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7).

Ah, yes, Jesus has real power — “power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him” (Jn. 17:2). Other men spoke and their words died with their echo: Jesus spoke and His words shook the world. Other men died martyr deaths and were not long remembered; He died and His cross now stands against every skyline. He is the True King, the Real Man. He has power — like dawn’s banners, like the unseen constraint of tides, like a fragrance, like great music, like buried seed, like that spirit in history which litters time with the debris of proud empires and wills that “the meek shall inherit the earth.”

The gospel that we have in the Bible is the gospel of the Kingdom of God. The gospel that presents Jesus as King, as Lord, as First One, as the Maximum Authority. Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” What does this mean? I am the king of my life; I am seated on the throne; I make the decisions; I glory in the fact that I do it “my way.” But when the Lord Jesus comes I must abdicate my throne and let Him sit on the throne. Now everything must be done HIS WAY. The testimony of those who are really in the Kingdom of God is all the same: “Till I met the Lord Jesus, I was the commander of my life. Since I met Him, He commands.”

Most people are Christians because they want to escape hell and go to heaven. If all the preachers and teachers one day called a press conference and told their people, “We have discovered that there is no heaven or hell,” how many would stay in the church after that? Most of the people would ask, “Why are we coming then?” They were coming for heaven, not because JESUS IS LORD AND EVERYBODY MUST SUBMIT TO HIM. You see, they have missed the idea of the Kingdom altogether. In the hour in which we live the vast majority of Christians are more miserable than most other people in the world. They are only enduring this life in order to eventually get to heaven where they imagine they will spend the next billion trillion years or so singing, playing harps, shouting, and dancing over the hill tops of glory. I am quite sure that if such people would admit the truth, they would admit that even a thousand years of singing, shouting, playing harp music and dancing about in white robes would become quite monotonous and very boring, to say the least. I find that most of these people can’t endure five hours in a church meeting even if the glory is falling all around! Most of them start watching their watches about noon on Sunday morning! The problem is that their theology leaves them with nothing constructive to do and all eternity to do it in! They know nothing about the KINGDOM OF GOD. A kingdom denotes rulership and advancement of all kinds. It means WORK and RESPONSIBILITY and a place of ministry and power to bless. God has a purpose and a great plan for this earth and for the whole vast universe. His Kingdom purposes have nothing to do with dancing on the streets of gold — they have everything to do with redemption, restoration, and creation involving the earth and all the boundless endlessness of infinity! This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

Then there are those who are Christians for a fire escape out of hell, not because Jesus is King and they truly hunger and thirst after the righteousness, peace and joy

of His Kingdom. I do not believe that it is an understatement when I say there are untold millions of Christian believers who have no true love for God, no intimate relationship with Jesus, no vital union with the Lord, but are going through the motions of serving Him out of fear of going to hell, as a slave in fear of a tyrant! If such persons had the fear of hell removed from them it is obvious that they would promptly tell God to go to hell and then proceed to drown themselves in devilish pleasures and fleshly pursuits. If the wages of sin were removed, they would immediately go out and live it up in the world, serving both the flesh and the devil. That is where their hearts are now, but they cannot risk hell, so they “serve” the Lord. Such have no love for God at all, their eyes have never beheld the King in His beauty, they have never seen the Lord high and lifted up with His train filling the temple, their hearts have never been touched by the altogether loveliness of the all-glorious Lord and King of the universe, their heart-strings have never been touched by the beautiful melody of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Jesus is the great King of kings and Lord of lords. He is not the soon coming King as the citizens of Babylon are trained to say, denying by the very words that Christ has any Kingdom on earth at this present time. Such ignorant statements always leave me cold. What could be further from the truth, which teaches us that Christ now sits with His Father in His throne and that all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. We are already citizens of that Kingdom and have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God’s dear son. Already it has taken place, already Christ has a Kingdom and is its King. From the barrenness of Patmos the beloved apostle John wrote that he was our brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:9).

Christ is the great King right now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible. He shall yet arise in power and glory in His completed and perfected body — the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD — revealing Himself as the great conquering King, bringing deliverance to every man and all creation, reconciling all things unto Himself, on earth and throughout all the unbounded heavens. Every son is finding his place in this Day and the hour of manifestation is nigh at hand.

Not long ago we received these words from the pen of Paul Mueller. “The kingdom of God is the only hope for the world! May God give us all a vision of Christ the King and Lord of all. He is high and lifted up, far above all other powers. His train, or the skirts of His priestly garment, fills this temple, which we are. His train or priestly robe covers, protects, enables and empowers us with His royal, priestly, Melchizedek authority. Jesus Christ is the Head, and we are the body. His robe of royal, priestly authority and power covers the entire body, which we are, making us one in Him (Ps. 133). He rules from His throne in the realm of Spirit. God grant that we shall see Christ in His ascended glory, seated on His throne and ruling in all the earth, and we with Him. When we see Him, we shall indeed cease from man. Then we will stop regarding man and esteeming him as the hope of the world. The truth is, we also are the hope of the world, for we are hidden in Christ, who is the King and Lord of all. We are becoming one with Him and are being made a kingdom of kings and priests unto God and His Father (Rev. 1:6). A vision of this Christ and His glorious, all encompassing kingdom will deliver us from looking to man. Then we will put all our hope and trust in Him who reigns in life forevermore.”

George Wylie wrote a precious word about the reverence of the sons for the Son, the esteem of the kings for the King, and the devotion of the lords to the Lord. "It is a marvelous thing to belong to the family of God. I'm so glad I belong to the God family, that God is my Father, and that we, the sons of God, have such a wonderful elder brother. But just because He is one of the family, and we are one in Him, doesn't mean we should treat Him as just another member. Let us never forget that He is Lord, and that our Father is God. 'But to us there is but one God and He is our Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him' (I Cor. 8:6).

"When the last king of England died, the family was gathered around his bedside waiting. As soon as the king had breathed his last breath, and it was evident he was gone, the first thing the Queen did was to turn to her eldest son, bow before him, and say, 'Your Majesty.' He was her son, but he was now more than that; he was her king. And as her king she gave him the reverence and respect due to his position. She didn't say, 'My son Edward, you are now king.' No, she addressed him with respect in reverence to his position, bowed in submission to him, and said, 'Your Majesty.' What she was really meaning was, 'My King.'

"The rest of the family did the same; they bowed to their brother, as Joseph's brothers bowed to him in Egypt, and also said, 'Your majesty.' I suppose up until this time they treated him as a brother; they likely played with him, argued with him, and perhaps sometimes fought with him. No longer! From now on he would not be treated as just a brother, but as a king — their king! We have a wonderful Father and He is God and Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things; and we have a wonderful brother, and He is the Head of all principalities and powers, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has all power in heaven and in earth. His name is above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. Before His majesty every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. All realms and all worlds and all dominions and all nations and all men shall worship and adore Him and pledge their eternal allegiance to Him. He is Lord of all. Next to our Father He holds the highest position in the universe; so let us reverence them and their names in humility and undying devotion and exaltation" — end quote. Amen and amen!

Chapter 10

The Nature Of The Kingdom

Speculation about, or inquiry into, the future are favorite pass-times of both saints and sinners. Among Christians it often takes the form of a fascination with, and search for, the “signs of the times” — signs of the approach of the end of the age or the dawn of the Millennium. These signs are often of a political, social, or judgmental kind — events in the State of Israel, the struggle between the so-called Christian nations and world Communism, New Age religion, the New World Order, conspiracy theories, natural disasters, and the decay of public morals in Western society. Popular books which claim to recognize and to interpret the signs, to identify the Antichrist, or to unveil the date of Christ’s second coming, sell in great numbers today. Other people become excited with each passing comet, or every natural disaster, seeing in each some mystical omen portending the imminence of the “rapture”, the beginning of the Great Tribulation, the end of the world, or something else.

The church world is literally filled with SIGN-WATCHERS, though I dare say most of them have missed the meaning of the signs altogether, for they read with the carnal mind, having the understanding darkened. We can be so taken up with the natural signs of wars and rumors of wars, violence, political intrigues, of earthquakes and disasters, until we totally miss the real thing that is happening in the realm of SPIRIT, or hearing His voice within, that He might bring us into complete union with Himself, that we might BECOME His salvation unto the ends of the earth. We watch the evening news, and suppose that we are watching for His coming. We hear of the storms, the floods, drought, crime, wars, AIDS, the rise and fall of governments, and our perspective becomes distorted, and fear and doubt seize hold of our souls, until we become more conscious of the darkness of “this world,” than we are of the light and glory and triumph of the INDWELLING CHRIST. Any time we are troubled by, or anxious about, the things coming to pass upon the earth, it is obvious that we are WATCHING THE REALM OF DARKNESS rather than LOOKING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD; we are of those who “dwell upon the earth” instead of those “raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places.” The Kingdom of God can only be discerned by the spirit — it does not come by such outward observations!

“And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Lk. 17:20-21). These words are illuminating indeed. First, our Lord was answering what was in the hearts of those Pharisees who put the question to Him. The doctrine of the rabbis was that the Kingdom of God would come with the accompaniment of great signs and outward displays of divine power, whereby the enemies of Israel would be miraculously overwhelmed, and they themselves be swept triumphantly into, and securely established in, the coveted place of world supremacy. I would be remiss should I fail to point out that modern day dispensationalism is practically identical with first century rabbinism! What the

Pharisees were expecting two millenniums ago is precisely what most Fundamentalist, Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians are expecting today. Only Jesus has a different idea!

Jesus corrected their error by saying that the Kingdom of God comes not with ocular evidence, which is the literal meaning of the word rendered “observation”. It does not come with outward show that can be seen with the eye. In other words, it was not the sort of Kingdom they were expecting. There would be nothing of such a startling or sensational character in outward cataclysmic and apocalyptic events that would cause the spectator to say, “Look here! Look yonder! The Kingdom of God is coming! There is the Kingdom!” Then He utters an impressive word — “for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.”

Have you ever noticed how things you’ve eagerly anticipated, yearned for, even determinedly pursued, often seem to fall short of your expectations? And how rich and meaningful those unexpected moments of happiness can be — an especially beautiful sunset that occurs during your drive home from work or the smile of a child you pass on the street? The difference isn’t in the experiences so much as it is within us. That is what happens when we discover the truth of the words Jesus spoke — that the Kingdom of God is not what we have expected and yearned for, it isn’t up in the sky or “out there” to be found in some situation, circumstance, person, location, time, event or possession. The Kingdom isn’t the “Millennium”, or some particular “church” or “movement”, or a date on the calendar, or Jesus reigning over in Jerusalem — it does not come by observation and it can never be said of it that it is either “here” or “there”. The righteousness, peace and joy we experience in the Kingdom stem from our relationship with God, whenever or wherever we are. But these realities are apt to be overlooked if one is seeking for the Kingdom in external things, events and time periods. Could there be any more glorious truth than this — the Kingdom of God is within you!

Let us look again at the words of Jesus in Luke 17:20-21. “And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” The word “demand” in English is a strong word. It’s not a request, it’s not a petition, it’s not an inquiry. It means to ask for urgently and with authority — requiring a response. The Pharisees were demanding of Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come. Man is always concerned about the time of things. In America, especially, we are extremely time conscious. We want to know when — right to the minute. The Pharisees were of this same spirit. They weren’t asking what the Kingdom is, or how it comes, or what they could do to prepare for it. They wanted to know when it would come.

They were not unlike some in our generation who have searched out “dates” and made predictions about the time of the Lord’s coming, the end of the age, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the manifestation of the sons of God. The date on the calendar when these events are supposed to happen is of supreme importance to carnal minds. It is interesting to note that Jesus did not answer the Pharisee’s question. And, may I add, neither does He dignify men’s carnal date-setting by doing anything on that particular day or hour. His silence is deafening! Jesus told the Pharisees how the Kingdom does not come. He didn’t tell them when. He said they should not be asking about its sequence in time or its visible manifestation. They should not be

looking for it externally. He didn't say a word about when. He told them where it already was — "behold, the kingdom of God is within you." He told them it doesn't come by observation, with outward show. You can't see it coming. But He didn't tell them when. Why didn't He tell them when? Because the Kingdom is not something external — it exists in the realm of the spirit. The Kingdom is always "at hand," available, accessible, and its coming is relative to your consciousness of it and relation to it. In spirit there is no time. In spirit there is no physical location. There is no geographical point of reference in spirit.

The Day of the Lord is not a date on the calendar. It doesn't begin one day and end another. It's not a twenty-four hour day, neither is it a thousand year day. The Day of the Lord IS. "God IS LIGHT, and in Him there is no darkness." That is the Day of the Lord. It is the illumination of the light of God. The Day of the Lord is a condition that takes place within a people. It is the light, the understanding that begins to dawn in our consciousness that elevates our awareness of God and the dimension of spirit. It is the understanding of the Almighty. It is the revelation of God's glory, majesty, will and purpose. In Genesis God called the light "day" and Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). Then He said, "Ye are the light of the world" (Mat. 5:14). And the apostle Paul by revelation added, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thes. 5:4-5). What is happening is that understanding is coming to us. Understanding is light. Paul prayed for the Ephesian saints that "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18). We're getting understanding. We're understanding God. We're understanding His Spirit, His ways, His truth, His plan, His purpose, His heart — so the Day of the Lord is dawning in us. The Day Star is arising in our hearts and the shadows and darkness are fleeing away in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Just as day and night co-exist on earth side by side, so the Day of the Lord and the gross darkness that covers the people co-exist side by side. Just as Americans walk in the brightness of the noon-day sun at the same time that Chinamen slumber in mid-night darkness, so there are both children of the Day and children of the night in the world today. Some men walk in darkness while other men walk in light. Some men abide in darkness while other men abide in light.

The Day of the Lord neither begins nor ends. It simply IS. God has never known anything but the Day that He is. It begins for us at that blessed moment when, quickened by the Spirit of God, we consciously step into it, just as the natural day begins for us when we arise and greet the dawn. The fact is, it has been day somewhere on earth all the while the veil of darkness hung over you as a shroud. Day has nothing to do with time. It has nothing to do with dates. It has nothing to do with the calendar. It has nothing to do with the ages. It only has to do with your relationship to it. If someone asks when the Day of the Lord begins I cannot answer. The Day of the Lord IS. In like manner, the Kingdom of God IS. "The Kingdom of God IS within you." "The Kingdom of God IS righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The Kingdom of Heaven IS like unto..." It is not a matter of "when" at all. Jesus always taught about what the Kingdom is, never about when it is. The disciples and the Pharisees were always asking when, and never once did Jesus answer them. Yet, almost all Christians in the church systems today are talking

about when the Kingdom of God is going to come, and show very little interest, if any, in what the Kingdom is.

May the blessed Spirit of truth give all who read these lines eyes to see that the Kingdom of God does not come by observation. It is not something you can see with your physical eye. The Pharisees looked on Jesus and said, "Is not this Joseph's son? Was His father not a carpenter?" They didn't see the Kingdom of God. Yet Jesus standing before them was the very personification and embodiment of the Kingdom. But they couldn't see it. They knew Him not. They knew not the day of their visitation. Only when the Father revealed Him did any man know the King of the Kingdom. Jesus said that in order for a man to see the Kingdom of God he must be born from above. Some people think that Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God. My friend, you are deceived. If Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God then any harlot, thief, murderer, liar, drunkard, or any sinner can see the Kingdom. Any member of Adam's race can see it. Any child born of the flesh can see it. Any carnal minded church member can see it. If Great Britain and America are the Kingdom of God then it also can be entered by natural birth. All who have been born of the correct genetic and genealogical heritage are automatically citizens of the Kingdom by physical birth. If the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples constitute the Kingdom of God Jesus lied and is a deceiver of the first magnitude.

Furthermore, if Jesus must return to planet earth in a visible, physical form and sit on a great throne in Jerusalem, Israel or in London, England then the Kingdom of God does come by observation and you can say, "Lo here! or, lo there! because the Kingdom of God is in London." The whole church world is looking for Jesus to ride out of the skies on a white steed with a sword coming out of His mouth to smite the nations. His feet will land on the mount of Olives and the mountain will split asunder. He will fight in the valley of Megiddo and defeat all His enemies; then He will set up His Kingdom in Jerusalem and rule over the Jews and the whole earth. But you see, precious friend of mine, there is something dreadfully wrong with this scenario. The Kingdom of God comes not with observation. Hear it! The Kingdom does not come with outward show. It doesn't come by sudden apocalyptic events that shake the earth and startle the nations. I tell you the truth — it doesn't come that way. It never has. It never will. There is no abrupt butting into a wall of time when suddenly everything will be changed by climatic outward events. That is not how the Kingdom comes. I have this on the authority of the King. But that is what the religious crowd thought then, and that is what the religious crowd still thinks today. The Kingdom is not coming, it's at hand — today.

That is precisely what Jesus taught. That's the problem with religion, they think that the Kingdom of God is someplace else or at another time. They cannot believe that the Kingdom is happening right now. But that is the reality of the Kingdom. It is true — of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. It shall yet break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms and shall rule over all and stand forever. But right now the Kingdom of God IS WITHIN YOU. And right now the Kingdom of God IS AT HAND. And right now men can both see the Kingdom and enter the Kingdom by being born again, born from above, as the Greek puts it, birthed out of a higher dimension — the realm of the spirit. You will never know or partake of the glories of the Kingdom until there is a quickening, an enlightenment that takes place within your consciousness on a spiritual level.

Some people think that the Kingdom of God has been held in abeyance, it has been held up in heaven somewhere, until Jesus comes back and establishes it in the earth. Why, my beloved friend, you are just about two thousand years behind time. Don't you know Jesus already came and established the Kingdom in the earth? "Now after that John was put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good news" (Mk. 1:14-15). "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man is pressing into it" (Lk. 16:16). You say, "Well, we're waiting for Jesus to come back and make the Kingdom take over." Well, my beloved, He has to come back in you in His fullness to make it take over! "...that you may be accounted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven...when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:5-10). That's how it's going to take over. There will be no other take over of the Kingdom of God except it comes in and through you who are hearing the Word of the Kingdom, who are entering into the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom comes not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you. These are the profoundest of words. These words define for us in the grandest way the nature of the Kingdom and the truth about its location. A number of times in my life I have encountered people who were all enthused about great meetings or crusades or revivals that were happening in certain places, and they encouraged me to attend. They told me, "That is where God is working. That is where the action is." They may as well have said, "That's where the Kingdom of God is in evidence." This is an hour when God's little children are running to and fro, seeking signs and wonders. When men and women are saying to one another, "Have you heard evangelist...? Have you heard prophet...? Have you seen what God is doing through brother...?"

They run from city to city, from crusade to crusade, from seminar to seminar, from meeting to meeting, seeking to see a miracle or hear some new thing. While it is good to "go and see" if we are seeking something from God, this mad rush from "here" to "there" is a sign that we have not yet discovered the reality and power of the Kingdom of God within. We still believe that if we can run fast enough, travel far enough, see enough miracles, hear enough preachers, healers, and teachers, we will get "healed," get "faith," get "peace," get "power," get "victory," become "like Christ," or get whatever it is we lack within ourselves. That is what the Pharisees were trying to do. I have gone on occasion to the meetings where the Kingdom of God was supposed in manifestation in power. There was action there all right. It seemed as though some were being healed of sicknesses, and demons were being cast out, and there was a large crowd of people there and great excitement. But it was difficult to tell where the showmanship ended and the power of God began. There was a fine line between what some of the people may have been receiving out of their own great expectation in faith, and how much of what was going on was the result of crowd manipulation and mass psychology. There was a great stage show put on by professional musicians and a speaker dripping with charisma who held the audience spellbound. The people seemed quite sure that it was the very power of God.

Men chase back and forth to these spectacular events seeking signs to strengthen their faith, to re-charge their weak characters, to liven their jaded spiritual appetites,

because of their refusal to seek these things in the only place where they can be found — “behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” The Kingdom of God is not localized, either in a single person or place. There is no need to purchase an airline ticket for the next great healing and miracle crusade, or to Canada to witness the so-called “holy laughter,” or to Florida to see the “Brownsville Revival,” or to some other state to become part of a group and their preacher who claim they alone have the message of the hour, and if you want to come into sonship and escape death into immortality you must be joined unto them — for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within YOU! The God of miracles and power and eternal life and victory is closer to you than the very air you breathe, closer even than the blood coursing through your veins. He is nigh you, even in your mouth and in your heart. He is there where you are today, in the midst of all your pressures and testings. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. The God of the Kingdom lives within your own spirit and can do more for you today right where you are than all the great claims and grand events “here” and “there.”

Well has a dear brother written: “Jesus said we, like the Pharisees, are seeking in the wrong place. We are seeking the kingdom, the faith, the power, from without, at the hand of some man. But the kingdom is not outside — it is ‘within you.’ ‘But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly’ (Mat. 6:6). Of course there is a blessing that comes when saints get together to enjoy fellowship, prayer, singing, and anointed preaching of the Word. But the real, lasting strength of God that sustains us day by day, comes not from these periodic ‘feasts,’ but from the steady diet of daily secret prayer, praise, and feeding on the bread of life. Jesus was right when He said, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink’ (Jn. 7:37). And He was correct when He instructed the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well, ‘But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up (from within) into everlasting life’ (Jn. 4:14). And He did not miss the mark when He told the multitude, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst’ (Jn. 6:35).

“When the disciples walked the shores of Galilee with Jesus, they looked to Him for their strength, their faith, their inspiration. When He was not with them, they were inadequate to meet the needs that arose. When He was asleep on the boat, they were terrified by the storm and came running to Him for help. When Jesus was on the mount of Transfiguration with Peter, James, and John, the other disciples at the foot of the mountain were helpless before a devil-possessed boy (Mat. 17:14-21). But, before Jesus left the earth, He reassured His disciples that He would send another Comforter to take His place. And this other Comforter would not be, like Jesus, ‘with them,’ but ‘within them’ — inside them. This other Comforter was truly Jesus Himself returning to them as the Indwelling Spirit. ‘And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you (as Jesus), and shall be in you (as the Holy Spirit)’ (Jn. 14:16-17). Thereafter, their courage, guidance, victory, power and growth were not to come to them from without, but from within; not from someone else, but from the Holy Spirit which dwelt within their own body-temples.

“Why all this running to and fro? This is a restless, surface-thinking age. We are accustomed to having everything done up in packages and handed to us, with little effort on our part. No longer do we go into the restaurant and wait for the waiter to take and prepare our order. We pull through the drive-up, roll down the window and expect a nice looking girl to shove the food out the window to us. No longer do we spend hours in a hot kitchen, mixing, broiling, baking; we simply pick up a few fast-foods on the way home from work and have an instant meal. In our spiritual lives, no longer do we feel the necessity of spending hours on our knees, or faithful trysts with the Word of God. We run over to a church service and expect to take home a week’s supply of spiritual nourishment, all done up in a neat package, at a bargain price. But Jesus, unlike our modern streamlined civilization, does not promise any ready-made, ready-mixed, pre-cooked, and quick-rising Bread of Life. He still says, ‘Be still and know that I am God.’ ‘And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall seek for me with all of your heart.’ ‘Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.’

“When we run to and fro seeking blessing, inspiration, strength and faith from another, we are really trying to sponge off someone else’s prayer, ride on someone else’s ticket. For had he not spent hours on his knees with the Father, had he not fasted and prayed and paid the price, he would have nothing worthwhile for us when we came. We are trying to ride into the Kingdom on his coattails. Children may get by with that, but that will never bring you to sonship! You may get into the church that way, but it will never usher you into the Kingdom!”

THE KINGDOM — LITERAL OR SPIRITUAL?

Carl Schwing once wrote: “How little we have known in the past of the Kingdom of God. About all we knew was how to spell it and argue over it and naturalize it. But now the Spirit of understanding is being poured out upon us and we are beginning to look into the Open Kingdom...no longer hidden in the shadows of types and figures, rather, brought into the sphere of reality. The Kingdom of God is the very mind and heart of the Everlasting Father. It is the center of all things. And wonder of wonders, it is in you and in me, by brother-sister-sons!”

Many Bible teachers speak of a “Spiritual Kingdom of God” and a “Literal Kingdom of God.” These are both carnal, man-made terms and are entirely extra-biblical and unscriptural. Nowhere do the scriptures speak of a “Spiritual” Kingdom as contrasted with a “Literal” Kingdom. God does not have TWO Kingdoms. He has only ONE. That ONE KINGDOM is, however, both Spiritual and Literal. It is a spiritual rule of God wrought by the Spirit of God in the lives of literal people, in literal places and affecting very literal circumstances. Man, as well as the whole earth, is now literally impacted by the rule of God in and through His chosen ones. And the nations and rulers of earth shall yet in a total sense become affected literally by God’s Kingdom-dominion in the earth.

But carnal religious tradition has falsely interpreted the Kingdom of God in its present reality during this age as a “Spiritual Kingdom,” and the Kingdom of God in its future reality during the “Millennium” as a “Literal Kingdom.” This notion arises from a misunderstanding or lack of understanding of the meaning of words. According to Webster “literal” means “real — not figurative or metaphorical.” That which is literal is simply something real. I submit to you that GOD IS REAL. Now, God is not

physical, material or tangible, but He is very, very real! God is neither figurative nor metaphorical. In like manner, SPIRIT IS REAL. Spirit is not physical, material or tangible, but Spirit is very, very real! Spirit is neither figurative nor metaphorical. When the Spirit of God moves or comes upon a person tremendous things happen. Like the wind, you know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth, but you hear the sound thereof and you see the mighty effect of its power. Spiritual things are, in fact, the MOST REAL of all realities in the universe for they are unchangeable and eternal, whereas earthly things are temporal and passing. So to say that the Kingdom of God is at one time “spiritual” and at another time “literal” is a confusion of terms. The contrast should not be between literal and spiritual but between natural and spiritual. The Kingdom is not natural or earthly but is at all times and in all stages both spiritual and literal. It is only literal because it is spiritual! The Kingdom is never figurative or metaphorical. It is real — very, very, real! The great truth is that the Kingdom of God has never been any more or any less spiritual than it is RIGHT NOW! And it shall never in the future be any more or any less spiritual than it now is. By the same token, the Kingdom has never been any more or any less literal than it is right now, and it shall never in the future be any more or any less literal than it now is!

The Kingdom of God is concerned with eternal and spiritual realities. God’s Kingdom is spiritual in its essence and in its operation. In comparison with the economy of Moses the Kingdom is inward instead of outward. Some would like to establish the Kingdom along Old Testament lines so as to re-assert the outward political, judicial and legislative and to smother the inward and spiritual. A number of our Anglo-Israel friends, strangely fascinated by an Old Testament economy that has forever passed away, have a great deal to say about the Israel nations coming under the laws of Moses during the Millennium, but precious little about the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But in an age when the Kingdom has come with power, and been unveiled in the hearts of God’s elect, this hankering after the Old Covenant is an outmoded and discredited concept. It is not unlike the case of the children of Israel in the wilderness who preferred their Egyptian existence to the new level of blessing to which God had brought them.

Thousands of years ago God made a covenant with Abraham. “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great...for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee” (Gen. 12:1-2; 13:15-17). We see at once that the great feature of this covenant is a multiplicity of seed for a man that hitherto had been childless; and that this multitude of people is to become a great nation, and that they were to be given the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. The covenant specifically deeds a PIECE OF NATURAL REAL ESTATE TO THE PHYSICAL OFFSPRING OF AN EARTHLY MAN!

While there are many beautiful spiritual types in Israel’s entrance into and possession of the promised land, the fact remains that throughout the Old Testament one reads the history of a physical people receiving natural blessings in an earthly land. In the Old Testament the Lord always referred to an earthly land. You can recall how many times from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the end of Malachi the Lord stressed the

land again and again. The land...the land...the land I promised to thy fathers; the land I promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the land I promised you; I will bring you into the land; I will give you the land; I will bless you in the land. It was the land, the land, always the LAND!

The center of the Old Testament economy is the temple within the city within the land. The temple was a natural temple within a material city built upon the physical land. You read how God brought His people into the promised land, and His people remained there and enjoyed all its riches, a land “flowing with milk and honey.” They ate and drank from the land — all their living came out of the land, the land was everything to them. But the blessings of this land were mere temporal blessings lavishly bestowed upon a fleshly and mortal people. Notice the kinds of blessings promised! “But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven...and it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day...that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season...that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Deut. 11:11, 13-15; 28:3-5, 8).

The Old Covenant was a carnal covenant made with an unregenerated race of earthly men. This covenant, we are informed, “had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary...which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect...which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them UNTIL THE TIME OF REFORMATION” (Heb. 9:1, 9-10).

There is a wonderful order which God has established relative to creation, the progression of truth, and the unfolding of His purposes in the earth, and it is this: “Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual” (I Cor. 15:46). The principle is evident everywhere in the scriptures. First the old creation, then the new. First darkness, then light. First Abram, the natural man, and his seed, the fleshly Israel, and their inheritance, the earthly land of Canaan; then Abraham, the spiritual man, and his seed, the enChristed, and their inheritance, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. First Adam, formed of the dust of the ground, a living soul; then the second man, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit. First the law of Moses, then the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. First the manna in the wilderness sustaining physical life, then the true bread come down from heaven that if a man eat of it he shall never die. First the water refreshing the land of Canaan, then the water Christ gives which is a well of water springing up unto eternal life. First the temple of stones from Solomon’s mines, then the temple of living stones, a spiritual house, the habitation of God through the spirit. First the lamb from among a man’s flock, offered in sacrifice, then the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and the spiritual sacrifices offered unto God by Him. First the natural body, then the spiritual body. And the wonder of it all is this — that the end of the Old is

the beginning of the New; and out of that which forever passes away there comes forth that which is eternal and destined to remain. It is imperative, therefore, that we should always observe that which is first, that from it we may discern that which follows — the spiritual, the heavenly, the incorruptible, the TRUE which the first typifies.

If we know the scriptures and have light from God, we will realize what is meant by “the land.” The land is but a figure of Christ as our all in all. In the Old Testament the descendants of Abraham were brought into the land; in the New Covenant those born of the Spirit are brought into Christ. Have you ever realized that Christ is now the territory of your life? Christ is the land! You may feel that day to day you are living on this earth, compassed about, hedged in, and shut up by the myriad problems, pressures, and frustrations of THIS WORLD. But you must realize that this earth, nor any part of it, including the land of Israel, Great Britain, America, or any other place, is not your real land, this world is not the sphere of your living. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:1-3). The land is but a type of Christ as everything to us. By virtue of the new birth we now have the ground to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ! God gave us this ground. This ground is our land and we may enter in and fully possess all its glories by faith.

I deeply feel that most of the Lord’s people are still living in the old land — the “shadow” — and have discovered but little of the true land, the substance of which is Christ. What a vast difference there is between the shadow of an object and the object itself! Shadows can be beautiful, as when, for instance, a day draws toward late afternoon and the mountains cast long shadows, transformed into purple, greatly enhancing the scene. But the shadows are at best only shadows, creating wonderful illusions, but with no substance to them. It is my conviction after forty-five years of ministry that multitudes of Christians are today contenting themselves with the shadow instead of the substance. I think we can look upon the shadow and the substance as picturing two sorts of lives lived by God’s people. There is a life, if we can indeed call it such, which is just a shadow of the real thing; things spiritual are not real to the one living it; the whole thing reeks of the scent of the “earthiness” of the old natural land. These folk, though religious, church going people, may even sing choruses, clap their hands, speak in tongues and prophesy, but in most aspects of their daily lives MIND EARTHLY THINGS. They preach a lot of frothy discourses concerning the abundant life, but the abundant life of which they speak is not the abundant life of Christ Himself, but mere external blessings of answered prayers, healing, health, jobs, houses, bank accounts, automobiles, clothes, and a thousand other earthly things which they imagine represent the “abundant life”. It is not the abundant life of “those who dwell in heaven” but “those who dwell upon the earth.”

Ah, dear ones, the best of all this world has to offer — the best jobs, the highest salaries, the finest homes, the choicest automobiles, beautiful clothes, good and luxurious furniture and an abundance of the amenities of life have nothing whatever to do with the abundant life of which Jesus spoke when He said, “I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly.” The abundant life is experienced in CHRIST THE SUBSTANCE, not in the shadow. A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth, saith the Lord. If God has favored you with temporal things, then you may accept them, but do not deceive yourself by supposing

that these temporal things are a sign of God's favor or your spirituality, for such is not the case. The fleshly Israel of old enjoyed all these earthly things for which men seek, but they did not have the abundant life Jesus came to bring.

Hear now the exhortation of the firstborn Son of God. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. But rather SEEK YE THE KINGDOM OF GOD; fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom...provide yourselves with bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens (the realm of the spirit) that faileth not...for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The national Israel with its promises of physical blessings is but the shadow — Christ is the substance. Yet many Christians choose to live in the earthlies in place of the heavenlies!

Only the Holy Spirit can make this real to us, but one of the most significant utterances ever made by the apostle Paul is found in Ephesians 1:3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST." The source of all blessing is God who is Spirit. "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). All blessings, temporal and spiritual, come from the gracious hand of our heavenly Father. However, the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God are not primarily temporal, physical, or natural blessings for the outer-earth-man. They are not creature comforts. They are spiritual blessings bestowed upon the inner-new-creation-man. These spiritual blessings are received and experienced only "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." They are in Him and are communicated from the high and holy realm in which He dwells. These are the blessings of the life of sonship, and when you have appropriated all the blessing of this new and heavenly land which is Christ, you will be a manifested son of God. That is the richness of this land! This glorious land is the realm of incorruption which lies beyond the power of temptation, sin, limitation, sickness, sorrow and death. It is filled with blessings which God has covenanted with all who dwell in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, blessings of wisdom and knowledge, of joy and peace, of love and faith, of grace and glory, of righteousness and power, of the mind of Christ and the image of God. The mark of a son is when he asks most often for spiritual blessings instead of temporal blessings. One will know that he is no longer numbered among the lusty throng who "dwell upon the earth" when, in all his seeking, he seeks only and always those things which are "above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God."

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews" (Jn. 18:36). "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50).

The Kingdom of God is not local, national, or international. It is not physical or temporal. It is spiritual, universal, and eternal. Jesus said that His Kingdom is not of this world, but it is to function in the world. To the woman at the well He imparted the deep and wonderful knowledge that neither mount Gerizim nor Jerusalem play any role in the Kingdom of God, for God is not to be worshipped in either of those places nor in any other physical locality. Those who now worship the Father must worship

Him in spirit and in truth. Just as earthly kings rule in temporal and material realms, so God, the King of His Kingdom, rules in the realm of the spiritual and eternal. The spiritual and eternal transcend this world, though they may be known, entered and experienced in this world. That which is physical and temporal must eventually pass away; that which is spiritual and eternal will abide forever.

Since the spiritual and eternal are higher and more abiding, it follows that the temporal and material are ultimately to be ruled and guided by them. There should be no conflict between the two, for just as soul and body are subjected to the spirit in the perfect man, so the natural creation is to be ruled by the spiritual that God's Kingdom may come and God's will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Temporal affairs should always be permeated, shaped and controlled by spiritual powers. That very principle is what makes us the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Our outer man expresses the inner man of righteousness, joy, and peace, revealing the glory of Christ unto creation. The whole ministry of Jesus was filled to the full with teaching concerning great Kingdom principles. He did not concern Himself with petty rules and regulations governing the outer, every day life of the people. He laid down great abiding spiritual principles that worked from the inside out. If men grasped the principles by which their lives were to be guided, their every day conduct would take care of itself. These principles are the New Testament written not upon stone, but upon the fleshy tablets of the heart by the Holy Spirit.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that the Kingdom of God is neither temporal nor material. If it were temporal, it would have needed to be changed from time to time. All the temporal kingdoms of the world have been almost revolutionized within the last sixty years. Things temporal must be changed to suit the changing ages. Things that are spiritual remain permanent throughout the centuries and eons of existence. Temporal kingdoms must be visible, exercise force, collect taxes, legislate laws, punish offenders, and maintain armies. The spiritual Kingdom by its very nature can do none of these things, since its operations are only in the realm of the spiritual and eternal. Can we not see by this that, since the Kingdom is spiritual in its nature, only those who have been transformed by the washing of regeneration can ever hope to enter. But because the Kingdom is spiritual in nature, we must not assume that it has nothing to do with man's social, political, and economic relationships. That is a fallacy into which it is easy to fall. There would be no reason for a Kingdom of God at all, if it is to be entirely divorced from practical life. This is the greatest value of the Kingdom. While not being temporal in nature, it enters definitely into the lives of people and directs them in the paths of righteousness and blessing in all their human relationships. Just as the Kingdom of God in a man's life will make him an honest, loving, caring, just and wise man in his home and business, so the Kingdom of God in the lives of the rulers of nations will make their governments honest, loving, caring, just and full of wisdom on behalf of their people. That in no way makes their governments the Kingdom of God, but their governments are brought under the sway, influence, guidance and power of the Kingdom. In just this way the Kingdom of God must come to our homes, to our schools, to our churches, to our businesses, to our charities, to our governments from the top to the bottom. The inner must rule the outer, but the outer can never be the inner. "For, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

The Kingdom of God is spiritual, a spiritual dimension presently available to men upon this earth. You will need a measure of God's Spirit to see God's Kingdom.

Christ is that measure. Since the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, it is obvious the Spirit of Christ is needed to see or discern the Kingdom. Is it possible to be filled with heavenly joy today in the midst of earth's sorrows? Yes, it is! Is it possible to receive the peace of God today in the face of the myriad conflicts and pressures of this world? Certainly it is! Is it possible to walk in the righteousness of God in the world right now? Absolutely! If this is all possible then it is possible for you to enter into the Kingdom of God today in this present world. The Kingdom of God is a spiritual dimension that we can walk in, live in, and abide in while on the earth today. As you walk in the Spirit, you are walking in the power of the Kingdom of Heaven. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:17). As we let the Holy Spirit rule us, what other son could we be? If we are the sons of God, what other Kingdom could we be living in than God's Kingdom?

We are called to manifest the will of God through our life. When the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, the Kingdom of God has come. As sons of God we want to heal, bless, create, and bring life because the life-giver is within us. We are the sons of the Kingdom. We are the expression of the Lord's will. Christ the King is in us, ruling through us. He has given us His peace so that we can impart peace to others. He has given us His joy so that we can impart joy to others. He has given us His love so that we can manifest love to the world. The sons of the Kingdom have no fear. They trust and fear God only, so they walk in peace, they walk in meekness, they walk in love, they walk in His likeness. When we allow the Christ to rule us, reign through us, work through us, there will be a manifestation of God's Kingdom through us to the world. The world will become influenced by, and subjected to, the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is not a place to which we can go. The Kingdom of God does not comprise "saved" flesh and blood, forgiven and justified natural, mortal men. The Kingdom of God comprises new creatures, creatures which are of the substance of eternal life. The Kingdom is within you as your inner man. The outer man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed day by day. Only as we pass from being flesh and blood descendants of Adam, to being life-giving spirits descended from our heavenly Father, do we enter the reality of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is not a theological stance, a creed, a doctrine, a message, or a movement. The Kingdom of God is the germinating, growing, developing and coming to maturity of the Divine Seed planted in the earth of every man, now quickened by the Spirit of God. It is the raising up of the life and substance of God within us. When the seed grows to maturity there exists a great tree of life from which all the creation of God can draw nourishment, healing and restoration.

Many people still conceive of the Kingdom of God as some kind of outward, structured government with Jesus sitting on a throne somewhere in the world and all the sons of God sitting on thrones with Him. The Kingdom of God, however, is not established or fashioned by any external rule, but by the inward life and experience of Christ. It is the body of men redeemed by Christ and transformed into the image of God. Matters not whether it is the Kingdom in its present limited scope, or the Kingdom in its final consummation when every knee has bowed and every tongue confessed and all men of all ages have been gathered together into one in Christ and God is all in all (Eph. 1:10). It is the same. Nothing about the Kingdom changes.

The Kingdom is within and only comes as Christ is raised up in men's lives by the Spirit.

Suppose we should say, "Let us make a man in the image of such and such a person." Now we cannot make a living man by any external method, so we make an arm out of wax, a head out of marble, a torso with wood, and the legs and feet of some clay. Once these are assembled in the exact size and shape and painted in the exact color, we may have the true image of that man, but we do not have the reality of the man. The real man is not manufactured by outward manipulation, but born and nurtured by the growth of life. This true man was first conceived of a living seed, born of a living mother, and then grew by the nourishment of life. Ultimately he became a man with a certain image, perhaps the image of his father. If manufactured, there may be the image, but not a man.

You see, there are two ways of making things in this world. Many things are made by the works of men's hands. Other things are made by the power of life. Let us look closely at this. You may make a table, an automobile, a beautiful painting, or a masterful statue; you may build a house or raise up a skyscraper. No matter how many things you are skilled enough to make, all have one thing in common: they have no life. They may be very beautiful and extremely valuable, but not one of them is living. Whatever form they have, whatever resemblance to any other object, animate or inanimate, they are just things. The power of life can in no way be developed from without by the work of men's hands.

On the other hand, if you have a beautiful little child, you don't pay much attention to his image. You don't make a form to fit over his body as he grows and try to shape him day by day in a particular way. You don't use a chisel and work at fashioning his countenance with a certain appearance of nobility. The work of the hands avails nothing. First, he is conceived of life and born of his mother, then you nourish him with milk and good food. The child then grows and grows, assuming a certain shape and image. The ultimate image was already in the life when he was conceived. The image comes out of his birth and growth of life. Just as you could not form your child, so neither can you form the Kingdom of God. If we try to form it, all we have is an image without life. Bring back the laws of Moses, bring back Jesus with a sword coming out of His mouth, and let Him try to enforce His Kingdom on men with might from without, and men will be forced to obey, but their hearts will be unchanged. It will be an image without life.

We can manufacture a toy or a doll, but there is no way for us to manufacture a man. We can manufacture silk or paper flowers, but there is no way for us to manufacture a rose. It must be something of new birth in the spirit and growth of life in Christ. Just as the church is composed of people, so the Kingdom of God is made up of people. Jesus called these "the sons of the Kingdom" (Mat. 13:36-38). No king on a physical throne enforcing external laws can bring forth one single child of the Kingdom. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see...enter the Kingdom of God." That was true in Jesus' day. It is still true today. It will be just as true during the "Millennium" or any age or ages yet to come. It will be true in that glorious day when all things everywhere are gathered into Christ and all kindreds and tongues and nations and dominions serve Him. All the external miracles, all the outward blessings, all the lovely manifestations of the Spirit, even if put there by Christ Himself, do not change the heart. Jesus fed the five thousand by a miracle of

miracles, and the people walked away from Him. The Kingdom will not come through any external pressure or power, but only by the inward regeneration and actual transformation of each and every man into the image of God by the indwelling spirit of life. Ah, yes! “The Kingdom of God is within you.”

The sons of the Kingdom are the only true men on the face of the earth. The sons of the Kingdom have put on the mind of Christ and understand the true nature of all things. They are filled with heavenly wisdom and are strengthened by divine power. They are created in the image of God and reveal the glory of Jesus Christ. They have the ability to rise into the plane of the spirit. He who has in him the Kingdom of God and from this Kingdom looks down upon the kingdom of the world is moved by compassion and is ready to stand in his place in the hour of the manifestation of the sons of God. The hour is at hand. Blessed be HIS glorious name!

Chapter 11

My Kingdom Is Not Of This World

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence” (Jn. 18:36).

The Kingdom of God is not of this world. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). Jesus said that His disciples are IN the world, but not OF the world (Jn. 17:11-16). The Kingdom, likewise, is IN the world, but not OF it, not established by the world’s methods or operated by the world’s standards. It does not function by the politics of the world. The Kingdom of God does not contain a Republican or Democratic platform. It is established and maintained on a different basis from the kingdoms of this world. When we enter this Kingdom we are not taken out of these earthly realms, but we are rescued from the jurisdiction of darkness, the hateful spiritual world empire that energizes the governments of earth and enthralls mankind. We have been removed into that other spirit realm whose Monarch is God’s beloved Son and our Elder Brother.

What does Jesus mean when He says that His Kingdom is not of this world? One of the key words translated “world” in our English Bibles is the Greek word KOSMOS. It is worth taking time to examine this word in a good Greek Lexicon to see how wide is the range of meanings it has in scripture. The word originated in Classical Greek where we find it denoted principally one underlying thing: a harmonious order, system or arrangement. Out of this meaning it may be applied to the earth, the inhabitants of the earth, society, the whole race of men alienated from God and thus hostile to the ways of God, the universe, worldly affairs such as worldly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, customs, ways, methods, organizations, systems, institutions, governments, etc. The idea of orderly arrangement or organization lies behind all of the aforementioned categories. The earth, the solar system, the universe, society, government, commerce, education, social institutions, finance, entertainments — all these and many more operate by precise laws, order, arrangement, system, and method. Behind everything that exists and all that happens in the visible, material realm we meet a planned system; and in this system there is a harmonious functioning, an established order. That is the world. None of it is of the Spirit of God. None of it is established along the lines of God’s ways, God’s righteousness, God’s nature, God’s word, or God’s will. The Spirit has an altogether different standard and order out of the invisible realm. That is the Kingdom of God. Therefore every organized system of the visible realm is the “world” in contrast to, and set apart from, the Kingdom of God out of the invisible realm of God’s Spirit.

The Bible opens with God’s creation of the heavens and the earth. It does not say that God created the world at that time. God placed Adam in the garden of Eden, a place of light and beauty, and there was no world in relation to man. In that long ago beginning God proclaimed, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). This wonderful purpose of God to make man His very image had been settled in the divine councils of Elohim from eternity. The carnal minds of sin-cursed men

cannot even begin to imagine in their wildest dreams and hopes the ineffable glory that is determined for man in the image and likeness of God. This glory is fully seen in our Lord Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ Himself is “the outraying of God’s glory, the express image of His Person” (Heb. 3:1). Only in Jesus Christ today can be seen exactly what God had in mind when He said, “Let us make man in our image.”

Adam, the man in God’s image, walked amidst the fragrant mists of Eden in the living presence of God. He heard the voice of God in the spirit and lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. God Himself was his life and his every motivation and action sprang from the power of that life within. In that heaven blest realm the sounds he heard were spiritual sounds, the things he saw were spiritual things, the things he touched, smelled and tasted were spiritual realities. As yet there was no KOSMOS, no “world,” no organized system outside of himself that he related to, subscribed to, or was influenced by. There was no outward constituted order of any kind. There was only God and man. It is interesting to note that the word world does not appear anywhere in the story of creation and the fall. In fact, its first mention is not until the days of the prophet Samuel!

In his first epistle, the apostle John informs us that “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (I Jn. 5:19). “This present evil world (Gal. 1:4)” is now governed by those who obey the carnal nature, the serpent within them. The serpent mind rules through carnal individuals thus filling the world with the wickedness and corruption so evident everywhere. The result of the serpent nature in mankind is the conglomerate world system — economic, political, and religious — prophetically called Mystery Babylon. The most outstanding characteristic of the serpent is his ability to deceive. From the very opening chapters of the Bible, he is depicted as a liar and a deceiver. “The serpent beguiled me and I did eat,” was Eve’s sad lamentation, and in the closing chapters of the Bible, the fact and magnitude of his deceiving nature is further emphasized in the inspired words of the Revelator wherein he states that he is “that ancient serpent called the devil and Satan, which DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD” (Rev. 12:9).

Although Adam became corrupted by sin and expelled from the precincts of Eden, he was still living in the presence of God. It is not until the fourth chapter of Genesis that we read of Cain that he “went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden...and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch” (Gen. 4:16-17). This is most significant! “Nod” is the Hebrew word for exile or vagrancy. Thus, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, away from the influence of the Spirit, away from the life of the Kingdom of God, away from his inheritance in God, into exile, to walk totally independent from God and outside of God. This “land of Nod” or condition of exile is stated to be “on the east of Eden.” The garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, was westward, but Cain traveled eastward. Adam was banished from the tree of life, driven eastward (Gen. 3:24), and now Cain continues on yet farther in an eastward direction (as all the metaphysical religions do today!) away from the presence of God. Ah, what powerful realities lie concealed within these simple words of Holy Writ!

The Word of God clearly reveals that the route of spiritual progression is from east to west. Jesus Christ who is the wisdom of God, is pictured by the Psalmist as a bridegroom typified by the sun who comes out of his chamber to run a race through the heavens (Ps. 19:4-6). Malachi speaks of Christ as “the sun of righteousness,

arising" (Mal. 4:2). Everyone knows, of course, that the "race" of the sun is run from east to west. The lightning referred to in Matthew 24:27 is actually the sun, for the Greek word merely means a bright shining, and lightning, as we know, does not flash from east to west, having no specific design or direction. With this in mind the words of Jesus are clear, "For as the bright shining (sun) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Cain, had it not been for sin, would have been living in the garden of Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In spite of sin he was still able to know the presence of God, for it was from the presence of God that he departed when he went out. The presence of God is the anointing. But now Cain is rejecting even the presence or anointing of God upon his flesh, and moving in the opposite direction he goes further and further from the life of the Spirit. His final end is that of an exile, a vagrant, living on a territory not pertaining to him, not his true inheritance or possession. There, alienated from God, and severed from the anointing, the record states Cain dwelt. He settled there. He built there.

Happy is the man who clearly understands that the pathway of the anointing is ever from glory to glory, and as long as we are short of the image and incorruptible life of God we must never settle anywhere! The very condition of settling precludes our re-entrance into the Paradise of God. The man who settles is lost from the on-going purposes of God. Those blessed ones who in this hour hear and heed the call to sonship cannot settle in any zone until they stand in holy splendor with the Lamb upon the pinnacle of mount Zion in the heavenly sphere of life and glory and dominion. But men always settle when, following the spontaneous moving and revelation of God, they begin to organize and systematize it, building walls of formulated creeds and dogmas about it, endeavoring to preserve it, as though the almighty Spirit who gave the outpouring in the first place is somehow unable to carry it forward to its glorious consummation. Once the move of God is creedalized and organized, those within its walls are nevermore free to follow the course of the anointing, or to walk with God in the on-going unfolding of His glory. They have gone out from the presence of the Lord, and there they build a city (religious system, order) after the rudiments of the world, there they settle and there they dwell, exiles from the Kingdom of God, vagrants living on a territory not pertaining to them, not their true inheritance or possession.

Sin began with Adam in the Garden, for Adam sinned and was corrupted by sin and overcome by death, but he did not fall into the world at that point, neither was he possessed by the world then. The word "world," as I have pointed out, translates the Greek word KOSMOS meaning order, arrangement, system of things. The world is a negative thing in relation to God because it is a system organized outside of the anointing of God. James declares, "...the friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). The apostle John adds his instructive testimony, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I Jn. 2:15-16).

Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the world is the movie theater, the dance hall, ball games, stylish clothing, jewelry, and such like. Others confuse the world with the earth. But the world is the present system of things upon this earth conceived by the carnal mind and generated by the natural man. The world consists

of all that man has instituted that replaces God in his life. The present political, economic, educational and religious systems are not of God, but of the world. When people, activities or things — whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly — enslave man and usurp God, they comprise the world. Anything that causes man to disregard the Spirit, be removed from the anointing, stop making progress onward and upward, or be independent of God is the world. All that does not come from the Father, all that originates from any source other than the mind of Christ, all that man institutes by his own carnal wisdom and fleshly activity is of the world. It is not according to God's purpose for man to be subject to any system that he himself creates! Nor is according to God's purpose for His people to be subject to religious systems that they themselves create! All are contrary to the life, nature, word, and ways of God.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love” (Eph. 1:4). The word “foundation” translates the Greek word KATABOLE which is a compound word made up of BALLO meaning “to cast, to throw” and KATA meaning “down”. When man fell from his high and holy relationship with God and was cast down into the darkness of this gross material realm, the “foundation” of the world was laid in his heart. The “building” of the world was the fruit of his actions. But — blessed be God! The apostle Paul informs us that our heavenly Father elected some sons in Christ “before the foundation of the world.” The word “before” translates the Greek word PRO meaning “to go before, to precede”. Hence, the Father's act of choosing us in Christ preceded the fall of man and the establishment of the world system. We are not told how many days, years, or eons this choosing preceded the world, but methinks it was away back there when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy!

Since the world is in such opposition to God we must consider its origin and process of development. The world began with Cain. Cain built the first city — organized society, civilization — which typifies the worldly system of independence from the SPIRIT. The world did not exist when man was created (except in abstraction), but developed gradually after the fall, as man removed himself from the anointing and walked in his own carnal way. When man was brought forth from the formative hand of God there was already the universe, the heavens and the earth, and all created things; but the world did not exist. Following Adam's expulsion from the Garden, when carnal men began to multiply upon the earth the serpent in man gave direction and character to the “New World Order” of man, thus the scripture speaks of the natural man as walking “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

There are three primary requirements for man's existence and well-being on the earth: provision, protection, and pleasure. For a man to live an abundant and fulfilled life in the earth realm he needs the provision of food, clothing, shelter, etc., a means of defense to protect himself from adversaries, and a form of recreation and amusement for his happiness. Prior to Adam's transgression GOD WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THESE THREE NEEDS OF MAN, and they were supplied abundantly in the garden of Eden experience, albeit on a much higher level. After Cain's departure from the leading of the Spirit, the scripture describes him as

“of that Wicked One” (I Jn. 3:12). The preposition “of” is from the Greek EK meaning “out of”. “Cain was OUT OF that Wicked One” — the seed of the serpent! Cain’s father was Adam and his mother was Eve — nothing can be plainer than that in Genesis 4:1. This is the very first proof that the serpent is in man! Cain was born of Adam and Eve, but he was the seed of the serpent.

Out of the descendants of Cain were produced the founders of man’s own system of supply for these three great needs of life. These were the three sons of Lamech. Jabal was the father of tent dwellers and cattlemen (Gen. 4:20). Tents and cattle are for the supply of mortal man’s living and therefore belong to the category of provision. In the beginning God revealed Himself to man as his provision, making Himself available to man in the tree of life, that in union with Him we should have all things, even the supply of God Himself. Jabal represents man’s own efforts, apart from the life of God, to make provision for himself. Spiritually, this symbolizes the carnal religious systems with their rituals, ceremonies, ordinances and programs designed to “feed” God into man. All religion is the invention of man in his effort to meet man’s spiritual need — apart from the life-flow of God! Alas! the multitudes of men within these systems understand not that the reality of God’s life is not contained in, nor ministered through, creeds, programs, rituals, ceremonies, or ordinances. Those who live in that realm know nothing of the wonder of the Christ within. Man’s religion is of the world, for it is outside of God, being not of the Spirit, nor by the anointing.

Another of Cain’s sons, Jubal, was the father of all that handle the harp and organ. Playing harp and organ is for pleasure and inspiration and thus pertains to the category of pleasure. This worldly aspect is fulfilled spiritually in the maze of social activity in religion, as well as in much of the music, programs, and sermonizing, all of which is designed to be pleasant, acceptable and entertaining to the people. I do not think that any spiritually-minded person could disagree with me when I say that nearly all the concerts, programs, and pulpit showmanship that constitute most of the so-called “ministry” among God’s people today are without doubt very appealing to the carnal mind which is ever wont to feed upon soulish entertainment rather than with reverential awe and holy brokenness to drink at the eternal fountains of living water that flow from the throne of God. I am convinced that our faithful Father has given the ministry of the blessed spirit of Truth, and that that spirit of Truth abides within all who receive of Him. There is abundant supply! While God has given spiritual ministry for the perfecting of the saints, the worldly church system has given us a veritable smorgasbord of religious shows for the entertaining of the saints. Most solemnly do I declare unto you that all such ARE OF THE WORLD, and not of the Father, for their methods and means lie outside of the anointing of the Spirit and can never lead God’s people beyond the husks of man’s own vanity. Thank God! a people is arising who are finding their way out of Cain’s pleasure land of entertainment and sentimentality, back to the Paradise of God, back to the tree of life, back to the Kingdom of Heaven where they drink deeply of this sublime truth: “...in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore!” (Ps. 16:11).

The third son, Tubal-Cain, was the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron instruments. These instruments were formed for the purpose of defense, thus referring to the category of protection. All the armaments of all the nations of the world today are the result of the spirit of Tubal-Cain. All the martial arts, hand guns, mace, and every other offensive device used for self-protection pertain to this

category. On the spiritual side, ignorant of the power and sufficiency of the indwelling Spirit, with what pompousness do the religious systems construct about them their walls and implements of defense! Church history is replete with examples of revival after revival in which men were sovereignly caught up into heavenly places of revelation, glory, and power, only to have man put his hand of flesh on the workings of God, to control, protect, and preserve it as though the omnipotent Spirit needed man's useless wisdom and regulations to preserve His mighty work! Out there in Cain's world you must have the brass and iron implements of Tubal-Cain — implements of organization, denomination, fellowships, coverings, creeds, rules, regulations, boards, lawsuits, etc., to defend and preserve the work; but, praise God! as one moves westward back into the anointing of God's life the omnipotence of the indwelling Spirit Himself becomes our fortress and exceeding strong tower. With what deep comprehension of the ways and power of the Lord did the Psalmist pen the words of faith in the ability of God alone when he wrote, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. For THOU art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor shall our horn be exalted. For THE LORD IS OUR DEFENSE; the Holy One of Israel is our King" (Ps. 89:15-18).

In these three important inventions of the sons of Cain man found within himself the answer to his need of supply, defense and amusement. Man found no need of God, of His presence, life or power, for he set about to establish his own world, independent of God. This was the civilization produced after mankind departed from the presence of God — a godless life created by men. This present world system of things is patterned after the order of Cain. It is all outside of God. That does not mean that it is all evil. It simply is not of the Spirit! How clear that in this earth the politics, economics, education, entertainment, commerce and religion are outside of God! When we have learned how the world was formed, it is easy to define the world. Originally, man was in the family of God, lived by God, relied entirely upon Him, and had at his disposal ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD. Now the serpent, through subtlety, sophistry, the carnal mind, the wisdom of this world, has systematized the world to replace God in being all to man. Man, having forsaken his inheritance, having departed from the presence, and having lost His life relied upon the world and was overcome by the world. Therefore, the world consists of everything that replaces God and possesses man.

Cain built a city — as did Nimrod after him. "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he (Cain) builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch" (Gen. 4:17). There was no city in Eden, no fleshly system, no external order, no carnal arrangement of things. Not system, but LIFE! He who makes God's house of living stones depend on mere outward forms; he who confounds Truth with the shibboleths of sects and denominations, or the usurpation of preachers, builds upon the baseless and shifting sands. The true and eternal Church depends solely on the presence, life and power of Christ. If you treasure the beautiful hope of sonship to God, sweep away from your spiritual walk as much as you can the infinite cobwebs which the ambition and ignorance of men have spun for centuries over the Lord's heritage. Fling to the four winds the voluntary submission and all the vain deceits, traditions, and ordinances, which, like those of the Pharisees, are but "weak and beggarly elements".

It is not the form but the essence which constitutes true religion. Christ knew nothing of external paraphernalia, and those who follow the Lamb know nothing of it either. Distinguish between the flickering shadows of outward symbols and the verities of incorruptible life. Distinguish between the valueless injunctions of touch not, taste not, handle not, and the divine nature that produces love, joy, peace, righteousness of heart, and all the fruit of the Spirit. The Kingdom of God standeth not on food and drink, or any other outward thing, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. You will not find Christ by following the sects and self-promoting ministries who shout with anathemas, "Lo, He is here!" or, "lo, He is there!" but if you faithfully walk with the Christ you will discover that He is within you. He is right there within you in all the power and might of His Kingdom rule and glory.

Seek truth and you will find it, because God is the God of truth. Truth is not far from you, for Christ is the truth and He is within you. If you desire heaven you must win it; for heaven is the realm of the Spirit and a state of being, not a place. God is in heaven and God is in you, therefore heaven is within you if you can find it. No preacher can give it to you; no ritual can give it to you; no creed or message can give it to you; no mere ordinances or ministrations of men can open its doors for you so much as a single inch. You must find it by forsaking the world and self, and all the carnal religious exercises and activities of the world, to hear the quickening voice of the Spirit, to walk after the Spirit, to live in the Spirit. The home and heaven of God is within you, precious friend of mine, for you are the temple of the living God, as God hath said. Apart from this all else is but fringes and phylacteries. If, by the aid of God's Holy Spirit, you have discovered the King and the Kingdom which is within you, though all parties excommunicate you, and all priests and preachers anathematize you, nothing can harm you; and when you pass from the babble of the world's malediction, and the falsehoods of erring religion, and have passed westward through the portals of Eden, and scaled the heights of mount Zion, clear and high for you shall peal the eternal verdict, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased!"

The world today has its own religious dictionary of definitions of "God" and "Spirit" and "Church" and "Heaven" and "Hell" and a hundred other things, and they speak and think within the framework of those definitions. But GOD SPEAKS A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE and has a different dictionary of definitions by which He speaks to His people and according to which He works. If all the multiplied practices and methods employed by the churches today were suddenly swept away, it would in all probability cease to function. If the churches had to drop all their rituals, forms, programs and ceremonies; all their confirmations, baptisms, and communion services; all their special singing, organ music, and altar calls; all their organization, titles, and church buildings, they would feel as though they had been stripped naked and could not serve God in any way. All this simply demonstrates the terrible fact that the faith and dependence of the churches is not in God, but is in the trappings they have accumulated to themselves through the centuries. Lest someone accuse me of being brash, vindictive or extreme, let me remind you that when the early apostles went out and turned the world upside down for God THEY HAD ABSOLUTELY NONE OF THE THINGS MENTIONED ABOVE. All they had was God — the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! But today, the thought that God is perfectly able and fully willing to run His Church without the aid of anything in the way of fleshly contributions, is found to be abhorrent to the average church member, and even more shocking to the average preacher! When the sons of God

are manifested for the deliverance of all creation they will have none of the world's instruments, and that is just the reason God is dealing with His elect so severely in this hour to come unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.

God's true Church, in contrast to the false religious systems of Babylon, has never been contaminated by the world. You may be assured, my beloved, that the Father has faithfully answered the prayer of Jesus, "And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify (separate) them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:13-17). There is a little flock, there is a remnant, there is a body of Christ, but its members are scattered abroad and almost invisible to the great Babylon. They are the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and they are the called and chosen and faithful who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They are those who have turned to God, the eternal Spirit, and to wait for the glory that is revealed as the sons of God come into their own.

These are they who have not the form, but the power of god-likeness, those who keep themselves unspotted from the world, and overcome all things by the faith of the Son of God within. Its ministers are not robed in material robes of scarlet and gold; they are robed in the righteousness of Christ. They are not trained in the seminaries and teachings of men, but by the spirit of grace and wisdom and revelation from God on High. They are not busy interpreting or parroting the doctrines of the church systems or employing the theological terms of religion; their very lives are the interpretation of the Christ enthroned within their hearts. They have no interest in persuading people of what they believe; their whole ministry is to bring people into intimacy of fellowship and vital union with GOD and His CHRIST. In other words, GOD IS SUFFICIENT for this Church He has placed in the world of men! Because God is sufficient, because the Christ within is all-in-all, this Church is left entirely free from all carnal encumbrances to pursue the work God has given it of bringing His elect unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that the Church may be the revelation of God's manifold wisdom to all the principalities and powers in the celestial realms, and the hope of all creation for deliverance and restoration to the Kingdom of God. Let all who have received the call to sonship know once and for all that CHRIST WITHIN IS SUFFICIENT! All else is — the world!

DELIVERANCE FROM THIS WORLD

Consider with me the depth of meaning in the words of the apostle Paul wherein he says of the Lord Jesus, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD" (Gal. 1:4). The description of this present world declares it to be evil, and Paul asserts that we are being delivered or saved out of it through Jesus who gave Himself for us. One cannot read these words without a feeling of utmost wonder at the revelation that just as it was the ark that saved Noah from the world of his day, so it is Christ who saves us from this present evil world. Noah was saved from his world by a ship, whereas we are saved from our world by a glorious Person! Let no one imagine that to be delivered from this present evil world means to be "raptured" off to some "beautiful isle of somewhere" any more than Noah was removed to another planet when he was "saved" from the world that then was.

Of Noah's blessed deliverance we read, "For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were SAVED BY WATER" (I Pet. 3:18-20).

Yes, my friend, Noah was saved by water — the very same water that destroyed the world! He was saved from a world, but the wonderful truth is that he had been "saved" from that "world" a long time before the waters of the flood arrived! For even as the scripture declares of Jesus, that He was "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," so the Word also testifies of Noah that he was "a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Noah was saved. From the world of his day. He was no part of it, though it was all around him. Noah was different. He danced to a different tune. He lived out his life by a different set of standards. He walked with God while all the rest of mankind wallowed in the filth of the lusts of their flesh. And now, in this our day, God has sent forth His Son Jesus to save us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD!

Vast multitudes of men and women all about us walk through this life with their minds closed, their hearts centered in this old world. How men's hearts and lives are tied to this world! The man who is living in this world is forever worrying about earthly things — how he can provide more in the bank for old age, how he can provide more to see and hear and taste and feel and smell — the pleasures of this world, how he can be sure he will never want for food, clothing or shelter. His concern is that the outer physical man will never be in need, never be unsatisfied or dissatisfied. He is always mindful of the comfort, entertainment, protection and provision of the natural man. However much we may elaborate on this point, we will not express it more aptly than did the apostle Paul when he declared, "For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh." On the other hand, there is a small minority who spend their lives minding the things of the spirit. The welfare of the inner man, the spiritual man, the new creature, the heavenly man is uppermost in their thoughts, for they seek the mind of Christ. They, like Paul, "die daily" to this present evil world, counting it as a passing thing that is destined for destruction.

The child of God stands out as the revelation of the divine power of Jesus Christ to come into the spirit of man, and change it and make it lovely and pure and wise and powerful like God Himself. To come into the mind of man, and take possession of all its faculties, infusing the mind of Christ until that man esteems the fashions and fantasies of this world as less than nothing, seeking always to be one with the Father. To come into the nature of man and transform it by the power of God until his thoughts and desires and actions are filled with wisdom and understanding, manifesting the life and glory of the world to come, the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. These, being after the spirit, mind the things of the spirit. These are putting on immortality and incorruption, for the Christ shall come into even our diseased and mortal bodies until the action of the Holy Spirit revolutionizes every cell and our bodies are quickened by the spirit that dwells in them (Rom. 8:11). This, my beloved, is what it means to be SAVED FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD!

I know of nothing that will so thoroughly awaken the fathomless depths of wisdom and understanding than the blessed knowledge of the sacred mystery that Christ saves men right now from this present evil world. And while you, dear reader, may be one of those waiting with rapturous expectation to be whisked away and “evacuated” off this earth to spend eternity in some far-off heaven somewhere, Peter expresses with urgent and profound aspiration the true desire of all sons of God who groan for the deliverance of creation and the triumph of the Kingdom of God, saying, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise look for NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found in Him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (II Pet. 3:13-14). It is an incontrovertible fact that the average Christian today is not looking for the same thing Peter was looking for — new heavens and a new earth.

Did Jesus teach us to pray, “Come quickly Lord Jesus, and take us to heaven,” or did He teach us to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven?” To be saved from this present evil world doesn’t mean to be taken anywhere. It means to be transformed, it means to be in a different condition, or state of being, than the world. It means to be holy instead of vile, spiritual instead of carnal, heavenly minded instead of earthly minded, peaceful instead of agitated, full of wisdom and understanding instead of ignorant and foolish, full of faith instead of fear and frustration, living instead of dying. With what holy understanding did our Lord beseech the Father, “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (Jn. 17:15-17). This was Noah’s condition too, his state of being, in his corrupt world. He was perfect with God. And now it is our turn to be perfect with God, to walk with God, and be completely delivered out of this present evil world into the life and power and glory of the Kingdom of God — the new age, the new condition, the new state of being — the NEW WORLD ORDER, the WORLD TO COME! People are always looking for the “end of the world,” but most sincerely do I say to you today that this is where the world ends — it ends within yourself. The new heavens (spirit) and the new earth (soul and body) are glorious and eternal realities right now upon this earth for each and every man and woman who has been delivered from this present evil world. The new age has dawned within our hearts, the new world has come into our reality, old things are passed away and, behold, all things are now made new. Hallelujah-yah!

It is very essential that those who press forward into God should always keep in mind that “world” means an order, system, or arrangement of things. This involves a way of life, social structure, culture, philosophies, political ideologies, religion, economics — all products of the carnal mind. How enlightening the words of scripture, “And we know that we are of God, and the WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS.” A number of translations render the latter part of this passage, “the whole world lieth in THE WICKED ONE.” This whole world system has not only made its bed in wickedness, but it is under the control of a cosmic wicked mind — the satanic spirit incarnate in man’s fleshly nature. How few truly comprehend the magnitude of this! How many precious saints are yet deceived into believing that there is at least something of God in the politics of this world, in the educational programs of this world, in the economic system of this world, in the laws of this world, in the fashions of this world, in the philosophies of this world, and in the culture of this world. Somehow it does not sink in that these institutions are, one and all, completely and

forever, without any exceptions whatsoever, UNRIGHTEOUS PRODUCTS OF THE CARNAL MINDS OF NATURAL MEN!

I do not hesitate to tell you that practically all, if not indeed all, of the men and women who fill the smoke-filled rooms where the ideas are birthed and the decisions made concerning all of these affairs are indeed carnal minded men, sold under sin, dominated by the master spirit that controls this evil age. Oh! how we have wanted to believe that our nation, with its laws and liberties and godly heritage is somehow an expression of the Kingdom of God because it was given to us by noble and religious men. We have reasoned that “democracy” is the best and highest form of government because of the liberties it gives to the religious community and the guarantee of civil rights to its citizens. We have even imagined that “capitalism” is somehow a God-ordained economic system because it brings material blessings to so many people. But the word of the Almighty is against that! The immutable testimony of the spirit of Truth is that “the WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN THE WICKED ONE.” And while we have “Christian activists” busily trying to either preserve or Christianize a passing order, the carnal institutions they are bestowing their fervent labors upon are steadily disintegrating and sinking into demonic chaos before their very eyes, as God demonstrates for all to see the incontrovertible truth that even our cherished systems and institutions are OF THIS WORLD “which passeth away.”

The seeds of destruction were planted in the very foundations of our nation. When you give men “freedom of speech” and “liberty” you must give it across the board. It is given to saints and equally given to devils! It is given to righteousness and equally given to carnality and corruption. When you have the “rule of the people” you can never have a government any better than the people. If the people are good you will have good government. If the people are bad you will have bad government. The majority always rule. The only thing that can save America and the world is the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God transforms men. That is what the world needs — a new breed of humanity! The Kingdom of God is not of this world system. It doesn't rule by legislation, committees, agencies, courts, police, or military might. It rules only by the inward power of the Holy Spirit that regenerates and transforms men into the image of God. And yet, some still entertain the notion that out of our present government will come the integrity and wisdom to solve the immense problems facing our increasingly weakening and depraved society and explosive world situation. Surely one of our political parties will come up with the answer! Perhaps God will raise up a godly President to lead our nation out of its political, economic and moral morass! I prophesy to you today — no President either can or will lead America to righteousness unless he does so along lines and through agencies other than our constitutional system. HE WOULD HAVE TO BE EITHER A FLAMING EVANGELIST OR A MANIFESTED SON OF GOD! Nothing else will do. How many Christians have swarmed to the polls like herded cattle to cast their vote for some candidate they were propagandized into believing was a Christian, or godly, or honest, or Conservative, or religious, or something else; only to awaken later to the unvarnished fact that in spite of all the shrewdly managed image-building and propaganda he was, in truth, just another politician like all politicians, a specimen of the system that spawned him, controlled by the spirit of the age of this world system, which, as truly as the word of God has taught us, “is under the power of the wicked one.”

There is a simple, but sure, test by which one may discern whether anything pertains to the Kingdom of God or is of "this world". "For all that is in the world...IS NOT OF THE FATHER, but of the world" (I Jn. 2:16). The truth is that all that belongs to the Kingdom of God originates in and proceeds forth from the SPIRIT OF THE FATHER. Whatever is of the Father is not of the world. Whatever is of the world is not of the Father. That is the law of the Kingdom. Every thought, word, desire, action, activity, method, system, movement, or institution that flows from the life of the Father is an expression of the Kingdom of God. Conversely, all that is of the world originates in and springs forth from the carnal mind. It takes no spirituality at all to walk after the order of the world, but it takes a true commitment to the Holy Spirit to walk in the order of the Kingdom of God, which is the order of the Spirit.

This world is not for us. Its methods are not for us. Its fashions are not for us. Its institutions are not for us. Its ways are not for us. Its life style is not for us. Its mentality is not for us. Its spirit is not for us. We are different. We are of God. We are called to higher things. We are led by the Spirit, the sons of God. God is saving us out of this world. Those apprehended to sonship are overcoming this world even as Jesus said, "I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33). John wrote, "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I Jn. 5:4). Peter admonishes, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakes of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Pet. 1:4). And finally, the apostle James entreats us, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God!" (James 4:4). And thank God! the world is passing away. Not the earth that we live on, not our solar system, but the world — this present carnal system of things. And with it, all the chaos, sin, war, crime, poverty, pain, pride, deceit, death; yea, all that is not of the Father shall pass away. We have God's word for it!

Even now as we learn to rise up in God, to put on His mind, to walk in His ways, to know His voice, to be led by His Spirit, to be conformed to His image, the nature, glory and authority of that NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH is being formed within us. There has been released from heaven in the last several years a great and wonderful expectancy. It is the expectancy that all heaven is about to break loose in the midst of the Lord's people on a world-wide basis. Do you identify with that expectancy? God is raising up voices throughout the length and breadth of the land to say, "The earth is about to see the glory of God in an unprecedented way." A host of heavenly messengers has been released to every corner of the globe bearing the message, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind together will see it, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 40:5). I have heard that message from every quarter of the earth, and it is the word of the Lord for this day. Those who think all things are going to continue on as they are, are deceived. Even as I write, this planet is in the greatest spiritual, political, and economic change since World War II. The century and the millennium will soon change. History's "odometer" will turn up to 7000 — the beginning of the seventh day since Adam was banished in sorrow from Eden's fair garden. But that means nothing to me except that I have heard the voice of the Lord announcing that He is about to do a new and wonderful thing in the earth. The manifestation of the sons of God is at hand. God is about to accelerate His Kingdom program in the earth. There will be a great change. Deliverance will come. The Day of the Lord will shine brighter than ever before. Whole nations will be

impacted by the power of the Kingdom of God. Immortality and incorruption will begin to spring forth in a people. God shall roar out of Zion. The Lord Jesus shall come in His people in all His glorious fullness. Mercy and judgment shall kiss each other in the midst of the earth. Great and terrible shall be the Day of the Lord! I can assure you that a new age is on the horizon, a new dispensation of His working, and we cry out to be ready, and a partaker of that life-flow.

“I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (Jn. 17:14). If Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it, and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed realm from whence He came? The answer is, the Father sent Him into the world to redeem the world. In these two expressions, “in the world,” and “not of the world,” we find the whole secret to His work as the manifested Son of God in the earth, and the King of the Kingdom.

He was “in the world” to face the powers that rule the world, to learn obedience, and to overcome the world. He was “not of the world” to bring men the life from above, that which man lost from his consciousness in sin, that men might see it and long for it and have it quickened again within them. He was “in the world” witnessing against its sin and shame, its static religion and corrupt government, its impotence to know and please God. He was “not of the world” founding a Kingdom entirely spiritual in nature and heavenly in origin, entirely independent from all that the world cherishes, promotes, and imposes, with principles and laws and a spirit the very opposite of those that rule the world.

Ray Prinzing’s comments are enlightening. “Came a day when Jesus was brought into custody before Pilate, and in submission to this man’s rule, He did not seek to defend Himself. In fact, He stated, ‘My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not of hence.’ This world had its kingships, various authorities in varying degrees of rulership prevailed. Jesus was not competing with them on that level of kingship. If He was, it would be necessary for Him to rally His forces and fight to defend His kingdom. But He did not belong to the world, He was in it, but not of it, and therefore did not try to exercise its form of kingship. He had no contest with these men, He was not fighting flesh and blood. HIS KINGSHIP RIGHTS DID NOT PERTAIN TO THIS NATURAL REALM. His obedience to the will of the Father placed Him at their disposal, to do as they willed, even to the death of the cross. Full well He knew that there would come a day when the Father would give all judgment into His hand, and all earth shall bow before Him, for the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord. Blessed be His wonderful name!”

There is nothing ordinary about our Christ. Everything about Him is superlative. His perfection is far beyond all question. Our Christ is the most powerful among the powerful, the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty. With His nail-pierced hands He has lifted empires off their hinges. With the same nail-pierced hands He has lifted prodigals out of the hog pen. Our superlative Christ has turned the stream of time into new channels. HE MAKETH ALL THINGS NEW! Whatsoever He touches, whatsoever touches HIM, becomes new. Our Christ governs the ages,

and when we LOOK UNTO HIM we are changed from glory to glory into the very same image.

None of Adam's race shall ever enter this new world. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50). Adam must die, as was spoken in the beginning. Adam's nature and life cannot inherit this Kingdom. Not that God is vindictive or unforgiving. It's just that the Adamic nature cannot stand in that glorious light unto which no man can approach. So God is creating a new man. "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which SHALL BE CREATED shall praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18). This creation or world of which I speak was never in existence until Jesus came. He was the beginning of this new creation Man. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega. So through Jesus Christ, something new came into existence. And He is the Door, so none can enter this realm except through Him. He is the Head, so once in this realm you cannot move or operate in His divine principles except as He directs you. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, so no one ever had this without Him, and you will never get past Him or surpass Him; no matter how far you go in God, you will find that Jesus is there, too! He is truly the GOD-MAN. And in union with Him we become GOD-MEN. As it is written, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the GODS!" Oh, the wonder of it! This is the power and the glory of the Kingdom of God!

This is the Kingdom about which Jesus talked to Pilate standing on the portico above the court yard in Jerusalem when Simon Peter was warming his hands around the enemies' fire. Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth," and "Are you the king of the Jews?" And it was to Pilate that Jesus replied with those significant words, "Thou sayest it; but my kingdom is not of this world else would my servants fight; but my kingdom is not from hence." There are not words to express all the fullness in that superb statement but it is obvious that Jesus was not talking about an earthly rulership nor a politically structured kingdom like the kingdom of Great Britain. Jesus said that the Kingdom of which He is King is a Kingdom that is not of this world. Jesus was saying, "The kingdoms of this world maintain their sovereignty and power by military might. My Kingdom does not operate that way. When my servants are under the impression that my Kingdom is of this world, then they will fight." And that accounts for much of the fighting in the world throughout the past seventeen centuries, as the Roman Church conquered by the sword in the name of the Lord and the Protestant Churches have done the same. No one can dispute that most of the wars since the collapse of the pagan Roman Empire have been religious wars. Most often the so-called Christian nations have been engaged in these wars, fighting the enemies of God with carnal warfare, and just as often fighting among themselves, as they are still doing to this day in the country of Ireland.

As long as we believe that the Kingdom of God is of this world our warfare will be with flesh and blood. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God," saith the Lord. Our warfare is not to be with flesh and blood on any level. If you see me battling with flesh and blood you can conclude that I have a misconception of the Kingdom of God. I demonstrate that I think it is a kingdom of the earth and not a Kingdom of Heaven, a kingdom of the natural and not a Kingdom of the Spiritual. When I have a true revelation and a true perception of the Kingdom of God in the heavenlies, my battle has ceased with flesh and blood, with natural men and by natural means. My warfare has begun and continues in the unseen realm of

the spirit. Jesus called it "Kingdom of Heaven". Had He meant "kingdom of earth" He would have stated it thus. As long as we believe it to be kingdom of earth, we are going to contend and war with one another. We will insist that our creed is that Kingdom, or our organization is that Kingdom, or our group is that Kingdom, or our race is that Kingdom, or our nation is that Kingdom, and other creeds, organizations, churches, races, or nationalities not in our circle of friends have no part in that Kingdom, and we will fight for it.

There is no greater truth than the truth that our Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom, our King is a spiritual King, its citizens are a spiritual people, born of the Spirit, its ministry is a spiritual ministry, its authority is a spiritual authority, its dominion is a spiritual dominion, its laws are spiritual laws, its weapons are spiritual weapons, its priesthood is a spiritual priesthood, its sovereignty is a spiritual sovereignty and its power is spiritual power, blessed be God!

Chapter 12

The Kingdom Within

Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God cannot be fully appreciated until there is put by its side the conception that was held by the Jews of His day. The Jews are still looking for their Messiah. When Jesus came they were expecting a powerful military leader who would deliver them from the tyranny of Rome. They therefore rejected the humble Nazarene even though they saw His mighty works and heard His wonderful words of life. They wanted a military genius who would save them from the Roman yoke, and they were not interested in a Saviour who would save them from sin. These men wanted a king of nations — God sent a King of hearts; men wanted a mighty deliverer — God sent the Son of His love; men wanted temporal, political power — God sent His Christ to lead them into spiritual power; men wanted to hear the clash of arms and the swish of swords — but God sent a Teacher and Healer and Miracle Worker.

The Kingdom was the one hope of the nation, the bright millennium for which every one waited; its establishment would bring in the golden age, whose glory would outvie all the splendors of their past history. It spoke to them of an exalted nation, a restored people, a perfected society; of the time when their wrongs should be redressed. This was the Kingdom the Jews expected: a display of divine sovereignty that would overthrow Rome, sweep the godless Gentiles away, purge the earth of unrighteousness and evil, and exalt God's people, Israel, in their own land over all the nations of the earth. Then the treasures of the nations should be at their disposal; the Gentiles should come to their light, and kings to the brightness of their rising; strangers (foreign hired workers and slaves) should stand and feed their flocks, and the sons of the alien be their plowmen and vinedressers; and in plenty, prosperity and glory, their Messiah King should rule over them. The national imagination was fired with the thought of this Kingdom. The minds of the people were full of it, their patriotism yearned for it. To them the signs of the times pointed powerfully to the imminence of its arrival.

The people of Israel had expectations about an earthly, political kingdom. Jesus came doing miracles and preaching powerful sermons. As His fame spread He gained thousands of followers and soon He began to fit their expectations. Who could better deal with the Romans than a man who could walk on water, feed thousands with a handful of food, cast out devils, heal the sick and raise the dead? But from prison John the Baptist sent two messengers to inquire of Jesus, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" John, like many of his fellow Jews, had expected God to send someone to oppose the powerful authorities, both Jewish and Roman. When Jesus came on the scene he trusted that He was the one who would confront the established order and bring it down. Yet there were things that troubled John...Jesus didn't seem to be fulfilling all of his expectations.

Jesus claimed that the new order of the Kingdom of God had arrived, but there was no visible change in the political order of the day. Jesus didn't stir up the crowds with fiery political speeches; He was not recruiting bands of fighters; He was not passing

out swords; He urged no one to practice civil disobedience; and He was not organizing any resistance movement. So John wondered — Is Jesus really the One, after all? As Jesus entered Jerusalem riding upon a donkey, the vast crowds that had gathered felt a surge of patriotism, and in their excitement they waved palm branches and sang, “Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the King of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!” They were eager to raise up Jesus as their King to sit on David’s throne. But Jesus cried. He climbed up the mount of Olives and wept. He could see the folly of seeking a deliverance and peace on the outside instead of in the heart. Gazing sorrowfully over Jerusalem He said, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes” (Lk. 19:42).

The corruption of the human heart is incredible beyond words to express and it would have been completely useless had the Lord sent His Son to be the deliverer of His people from enemies without, while leaving their wicked hearts unchanged and their carnal natures uncrucified. The men of Israel could have believed in Jesus as their Saviour from the Romans. As their Saviour from their sins they could not believe in Him, for they loved their sins. The King of Heaven came to offer them a share in His Kingdom; but they were not poor in spirit, and the Kingdom of Heaven was not for them. Gladly would they have inherited the earth; but they were not meek, and the earth was for the humble children of the perfect Father. The whole problem with the kingdom of Judah as a nation in the days of Christ was that they were unconverted. There was no birth from above. There was no new heart and no new spirit placed within by which men are transformed into new creatures and conformed into the image of God. They wanted Christ to come and rule from without over their external enemies, but they had no desire for Him to march triumphantly into their inner life to deliver them from the kings of corruption and idolatry that ruled upon the throne of their hearts.

The persistent, perverse, unholy disposition in the natural man and the carnal mind does not change itself. Refinement will not change it. Education will not change it. Social and rehabilitation programs will not change it. Prison will not change it. Evolution will not change it. Society will not change it. Religious creeds, ceremonies and programs will not change it. “Deliverance meetings” will not change it. The perfidious hearts and lives of unregenerated men can no more be changed by these means than an Ethiopian can change his skin or a leopard his spots. The only way a change can be brought about is by being “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:10). In all the ages past the only permanent reformations have been those which were wrought of God in INDIVIDUALS. All national reformations and improvements have ended in degeneracy and revolt. All ecclesiastical reformations, after they have run their course, have ended in backsliding and apostasy.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mat. 6:10). So then the Kingdom of God originates in the realm of Spirit (heaven) and finds expression in the physical realm (earth). It is set up in the believer’s heart. He takes unto Himself His mighty power and subdues all things unto Himself. He goes into the soul, conquering and to conquer, until He has put all things under His feet. We are praying for the time when God will give every unbeliever in the universe to Jesus Christ for His inheritance. We pray for the day when the uttermost parts of the earth will come under His dominion and possession. We pray

for the day when all kingdoms will bow before Him and all nations shall serve Him. We pray for the day when the mountain of the house of the Lord, His government of kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek, the many-membered Christ of God, shall be established everywhere. We pray for that day when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in and all Israel shall be saved. In that day it shall be seen that Christ is King over the whole earth. He will appear to every soul on earth, in heaven, and in hell as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. It is proper for those who love Him and seek His appearing, to pray that He would haste the time. Everyone should pray that His Kingdom, the Kingdom of grace and glory and righteousness and power, would come quickly and swallow up the kingdoms of the earth.

Men need not a King to straighten out the mess in the outer world, in Washington, D.C., in Moscow, in the Middle East or in Bosnia — they need a King to change the inside of every man! “Please come Lord Jesus,” I found myself saying the other day, after reading the gory news. Killings and muggings, and violent jail-breaks; endless marriage disputes; child abuse; the video tape muck and mire sewerage through our cities and homes; drunkenness with its toll of broken homes and killings and destroyed lives; mass killings of innocents by terrorism and in bloody strife in countries all over the earth; and last but not least, what kind of human beings have we that could push the red button, sending the whole race into oblivion? **THY KINGDOM COME!**

The truth is, not very much has changed in two thousand years. The vast majority of Christians today think exactly like the Jews of Jesus’ day! The same crowd is all about us today. They want deliverance from the government, from persecution, from abortion, from communism, from the antichrist, from the tri-lateral commission and the council on foreign relations, from the banking system, from the vast political conspiracies that are steadily pushing the world toward a nightmare of tyranny. Most people are aware of the world’s need for salvation. In these troubled days there is an almost universal longing for a better world. But our tragedy is in seeking it from the wrong source. Like the Jews, we cannot believe that what we need to be saved from is **OURSELVES!**

THE KINGDOM WITHIN

You remember that when the Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation...for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.” The Pharisees were treating as future what was already present. The Kingdom of God was right there within them if they could have understood it. “But,” someone objects, “surely the Kingdom of God was not within those carnal, hateful, legalistic, Christ-rejecting Pharisees!” Some say that the correct translation should be: “For the kingdom of God is in your midst,” or “among you,” meaning that the Kingdom was present in their midst in the person of Jesus, “among” them but not “within” them. It cannot be denied — the Kingdom was indeed present among them in the very life of the Son of God, the King of glory! But that is not the meaning of this passage.

The clearest meaning of the Greek can always be ascertained by usage. The way a word is used reveals its true meaning — the meaning that the Holy Spirit of inspiration puts upon it, not the meaning our English translators give it. It is a thing of wonder — the Holy Spirit has faithfully, powerfully, wisely and indisputably recorded

for us the precise meaning of the word here translated “within”. The Greek word is ENTOS meaning simply, according to Strong’s Concordance, “inside; within”. The word is used in only one other place in the New Testament, in Matthew 23:26. It is the Lord Jesus Himself that uses the word on both occasions, and notice what He says. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within (entos) the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” No one can argue that ENTOS means “in the midst” or “among” in this place — it clearly means “within”. “Within” is contrasted with the “outside” of the cup and platter and plainly speaks of the pollution within the hearts of men, not in their midst or among them. The evil in men is not something apart from them or outside of them but something rooted deeply in the inward nature.

The question follows — how could Jesus say to the same Pharisees that both corruption was within them and the Kingdom of God was within them! It sounds like an obvious contradiction. But it isn’t. Paul spoke of a dual reality within man when he said, “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my (spiritual) mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom. 7:22-23). Little wonder that in desperation he cried out, “O wretched man that I am!” It is really very simple. The carnal, soulish heart of man is the seat of all uncleanness, just as the deeper spirit of man is the root of all godliness. So it is not surprising that the Pharisees failed to discover the presence of the Kingdom within them, for they were not walking after the spirit, but after the flesh. Yet they were potentially capable of either.

I am absolutely certain that the statement Jesus made to the scribes and Pharisees that day is very true. “The kingdom of God is within you.” I totally believe that statement to be accurate. The Kingdom of God is within you, it is within me, it is within each member of your family, it is within all your relatives, your friends, even within your enemies. It is within the lowliest citizen of the most backward country, it is within the greatest of the ruling monarchs, presidents, or prime ministers. It is within mankind, it is within every man — even the scribes and Pharisees. This is the true light “that lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (Jn. 1:9). When the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God should come He did not tell them when, but He did answer them. And on various occasions when Jesus’ own disciples asked when the Kingdom would come He never once told them when. You can’t really say “when” the Kingdom of God is coming because it always is. There is no “when” to it. It’s just that we must know what it is and where it is and how it comes, to become conscious of that indwelling Kingdom. We must “enter in” to it within ourselves, experientially, for the Kingdom is even now “at hand”. The church world has taught us that the Kingdom is something that came into the earth when Jesus came, but because the Jews refused to receive it, after Jesus died and rose and ascended into heaven it was withheld and deferred until He comes back again, postponed until a coming “Millennium”. But I have good news for you today. Every one who reads these lines now receives the good news — the Kingdom of God is within you! YOU! It is now within you. It doesn’t have to get within you, it doesn’t have to come from without to enter into you, it is already right there on the inside of you.

So note — not to the disciples who followed Him and kept His sayings, but to the Pharisees in their spiritual blindness Jesus spoke these amazing words: “The

kingdom of God is within you.” Again, some would say, surely the Kingdom of God could not be found IN these Pharisees, within them, for they were against the King. But, think again, for the territory is HIS regardless, whether He was actively ruling from within their hearts or not. The Pharisees were part of His Kingdom, only they were in rebellion against the King, their hearts were filled with treason, and there was a need to dethrone the usurped rulership of the flesh, that the true King might be enthroned. Where is the King’s domain? WITHIN YOU! Yes, the Kingdom of God was indeed “within them” as a bright and radiant possibility. This appeals to me, in a sense, as the most beautiful thing Jesus ever said. Consider what the Kingdom of Heaven was in His thought — the most pure and perfect and heavenly of all existing realities; then consider that He said this to His implacable enemies, and to the men, who, in their lives, exemplified the exact opposite of what He had come to reveal and establish. Within these men — religious intellectuals and scholars, hypocrites, hateful — there slumbered this lovely and lovable thing — the Kingdom of the spirit. They were possible members of that Kingdom; in their spirits were all the materials necessary for the development of the Kingdom of God. I cannot emphasize too strongly that the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of the spirit, for God is spirit. Buried deep within every man is the spirit that has come from God, for every man is body, soul, and spirit.

The Bible says that “God is the Father of the spirits of all flesh” (Num. 27:16; Heb. 12:9). We might ask, “Who, really, is entitled to think of God as Father?” God is the Father of all men. Some men walk as children of the devil, for they walk after the flesh, after the serpent nature. But God is still the Father of their spirit. God is the Father of all and He is the Saviour of all. He is the Saviour of all because He is the Father of all. There is a special sense in which God is the Father only of those who are reborn of Him through the Holy Spirit of regeneration. To these He gives, in a blessedly unique sense, the “spirit of adoption” or the revelation of their sonship, whereby they cry, “Abba, Father!” The Holy Spirit quickens their spirit to know that they are sons of God and to enable them to walk in that realm. Nevertheless, the fact remains, universal and unalterable, that God is the Father of the spirits of all men. If we had no spirit from God, the Holy Spirit would be unable to quicken our spirit and make it alive unto Him.

Father Adam is declared by the Spirit of inspiration to be “the son of God” (Lk. 3:38). He is indeed a “prodigal son.” But notwithstanding his disobedience and banishment from Father’s house, he has never ceased to be a son; the Father, notwithstanding His anger and punishment, has never ceased to be a Father. And He is a loving and tender and gracious Father who waits patiently for every prodigal to come home. And they will come home! Blessed be His name. He has built within the heart of every prodigal the capacity to return. How precious beyond words to express is the blessed truth that God-life abides within every man down in the depths of his spirit, although most men walk not after the spirit, but after the flesh. It is there, within man’s spirit, that the Kingdom of Heaven is to be found. There is the root, the base, the seed, the fountainhead of God’s life and God’s rule. The Kingdom of God is truly within every man — but he knows it not, and therefore walks unheeding its claims and powers. But if ever he discovers that Kingdom of Life and Light and Love he discovers it within as his spirit is quickened by God’s Spirit, his consciousness awakened to the Kingdom of the spirit within. The day comes for all, every man in his own order, when it can be said, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...” (Eph. 2:1).

While the Kingdom of God is thus present, it is also still future. Its full realization has yet to come. So long as there is in this world one man who has not surrendered to the spirit of Christ, so long as there is a single area of life that has not been brought into subjection to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, so long will the Kingdom remain unrealized, so long shall we need to pray the prayer, "Thy kingdom come!" All the misery of this world is due to the fact that there are still multitudes of men and women walking after the flesh, there are whole areas of human activity that are not birthed out of, or controlled by, the Spirit. The Kingdom is still imperfect, incomplete. Its full establishment lies in the future somewhere, as the apostle has taught, "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (I Cor. 15:24-25). Until that full establishment takes place, until God is experientially King everywhere and over everybody and every thing in the union of love, the world's "golden age" will not have arrived. For the elect of God the Day has dawned! The Sun of Righteousness has arisen within our hearts! Our old heavens and our old earth have passed away. We live now in a New World, we sing now a New Song, our night has turned to Day. Darkness has flown away, sin and sorrow and death are swallowed up, God has wiped all tears from off our faces, we are living stones in the City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and all things are made new! This is the present glorious and eternal reality of the sons of God in this wonderful Day of the Lord! This is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory of God within His chosen ones.

If I did not believe in the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God in all realms and everywhere and over every thing throughout the vastnesses of infinity, and if I believed that this world was to continue to be misruled and misgoverned as it is; if I believed that sin and sorrow and death and wicked men and vile institutions were to continue unto the end, I should despair of humanity and God, and I should certainly tear I Corinthians 15:20-28 out of my Bible and burn it in the stove. But God never gives up. God reigns! The good news which our Lord Jesus Christ came to preach is "good news of great joy to all people." Praise God for the good news! God reigns! — that is the good news. God shall be Victor! God shall put every enemy under His feet and our feet! He is Lord of ALL!

THE WORLD WITHIN

It is a blessed day for any man when he discovers that what the Bible calls "heaven" is in fact and in truth the REALM OF THE SPIRIT. It is not a place on some far-away planet, nor a figment of man's imagination, but a realm of reality where saints of God may dwell here and now. "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavens in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). These things are hard to utter, because the vast majority of Christians cling tenaciously to the dark understanding of the carnal mind, and it is almost impossible for them to believe that heaven is an abiding and eternal reality. It is even harder for them to comprehend that the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN MAN, and that in spirit we possess the fullness of its more excellent glory. To most of the Lord's people the outer, physical, and natural realm, including the supposed golden streets of that great "city in the sky," is the realm of REALITY while the spiritual realm, the unseen Kingdom within, is the realm of shadows, mists, visions, dreams and UNREALITY. At best it is of only minor importance. But just the opposite is the truth. The natural man (and most believers

are pathetically natural) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.

If you would understand the scope and magnificence of the mighty working of God in your life, my beloved, consider the message of the radiant constellations of the illimitable heavens above and know that all the power and glory and wisdom and working so marvelously illustrated in their shining configurations is in fact and in truth wrought out in the deepest recesses of your own being. If you will give prayerful consideration to the statement of our Lord that the Kingdom of the Heavens is within you, you cannot avoid the conclusion that man is a copy in miniature of the universe, and every thing that exists or takes place in the vast expanses of the cosmos, also exists and takes place in the inner constitution of man. The powers and forces and laws that make up the nature and constitution of man are the same as the powers and forces and laws that on an infinitely larger scale are called the universe, and every reality in the heavens expresses itself in the consciousness of man, and reflects itself in the experience of man, enabling man to know the universe by himself, and himself by the universe.

Scientists are probing into two unseen worlds. One is a world too vast and far away to be seen by the eye, and the other is a world too small to be observed by the eye. I want to give you three words in this connection, together with their meanings. First, we find the word MICROCOSM. This word means a little world: any thing regarded as a world in miniature: man, viewed as an epitome of the universe. This word comes from two words in the Greek. One is MIKROS which means little or miniature. The other is KOSMOS meaning world, in the sense of an orderly arrangement. Thus we have the meaning of LITTLE WORLD. The word MACROCOSM, on the other hand, means the great world, or the universe. It also comes from two words. One is MACROS meaning great, and the other is KOSMOS meaning world. We noted above that the word MIKROS carried the meaning of "man viewed as an epitome of the universe." This word EPITOME means, among other things, a condensed representation of something. The word MACROCOSM then gives us the meaning that man is a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE! Thus, man is the CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of all the universe, or man is all the universe in miniature.

After the original creation, God then began to move to bring the whole vast creation into fellowship and harmony with Himself. In order to accomplish this God made man in the image of the creation, but also in the image of Himself. Man is therefore the bridge or connecting link between God in His spiritual existence and the creation in its visible and material constitution. God put both Himself and the whole universe into man in miniature — a microcosm of the macrocosm! His purpose is that by and through man all things shall be brought into subjection to the mind of the Lord. We read in Hebrews that all things were placed under man, but we do not as yet see all things put in subjection to man, but WE DO SEE JESUS who was, we may safely say, as the second man and the last Adam, a CONDENSED REPRESENTATION of God, the universe, and all mankind. In other words, what was done in and through the singular Man, Jesus the Christ, will also be done in and through the corporate man, but on an enlarged scale, for Jesus said we would do even greater works than He did. There is no stagnation in God, for He continually moves ahead. And as He moves, we move with Him, advancing according to His pre-determined plan. What wonders lie ahead of us in this majestic pathway!

The seventeenth century German mystic, the simple shoe cobbler from Golitz, Jacob Boehme, penned the following words which are just as revolutionary and up-to-date as the space age. “Now, dear reader, observe: If you want to know about Heaven and what Heaven is and where it is, you do not need to cast your thoughts many thousands of miles off, for that place, that heaven thousands of miles away, is not your Heaven. The true Heaven is not a created place but an uncreated place, and it is not found in a particular place but everywhere, even in the very place where you are standing and going. For when your spirit within yourself is able to penetrate inward through and beyond your own flesh and life, and is able to catch hold upon the innermost moving of God, then you are clearly in Heaven.

“I urge you to open the eyes of your spirits and your hearts, for I want earnestly to show you the true and proper way to the gates of God’s Heaven. Behold! God is the True, the One, the only Being out of whom you yourselves were created, and within whose Life you are living even now. Therefore, Oh child of man, when you behold in your flesh the depths of the universe, the stars and the complexity of the earth, and all that is in heaven and earth, you are in fact truly in the presence of God. For He is All, and in him you live and have your being; and that same God reigns and rules over you as well, because He is your King and Creator. It is from this God that you receive even your senses and your ability to have consciousness and to know and think and express yourself. Don’t you see? You are a part of Him, and your entire being is a derivative of Him. You are His offspring, you came from Him, and you truly exist in Him. If this were not true, you would never have been, for you are the image of God.

“And so, little children, if you now want and desire to draw near by faith to the Life of God, Listen! You must enter inward to the depths within yourselves wherein Christ dwells — not without. For within you there exists an eternity, even as there is an eternity within Him. So you must go in to the depths of the hidden secret place within you, to the very depths of the Eternal Willing in the Father. For it is within this Will or Desire that Wrath and Love eternally struggle against each other, and in which Love is the eternal victor out of the fiery dark wheel of selfishness, through the eternal cross in God’s Heart, into regeneration bursting forth as the eternal glorious light of God’s nature. His nature is Light, Gentleness, Mercy, Wisdom and Love forever, and it is expressed to us by His Voice, the Word, the Son, our Lord, Saviour, and God. And out of this eternally immense depth of God’s Desire, there forever streams forth the Light and Love which is the uncreated glory. And this is the true Heaven.

“For in this depth within you, God eternally rules in Holiness in His uncreated Heaven. And His Willing within you expresses itself as the willing to all goodness, not wrath, and this willing ever reigns in everlasting dominion, the Sovereign God of Love in victory through the eternal cross on which was slain the Lamb of God before ever a single atom was created. And when you comprehend this, that is, the tragedy which forever occurs in the eternal depths of the Heart of God, and when you know that our God is safe forever, True forever, Merciful forever, and the Being of Love forever (because He forever dies to Himself on the cross in His own heart to all wrath and selfish desire), then my brothers and sisters, you will have crossed through and penetrated into the very and holy heart of God” — end quote.

Our dear friend and brother, Charles Roby, recently sent us this illustrative story. There once was a little boy who wanted to meet GOD. He knew it was a long trip to

where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry, so he offered her a Twinkie. She accepted it and smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave. But before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old woman and gave her a big hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!" Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." But before her son responded, she added, "You know, He's much younger than I expected." To which brother Roby added: "As you know, the only way we know GOD or the things pertaining to the KINGDOM of GOD is by the SPIRIT of GOD! Our mind can't comprehend this great mystery of GOD IN US, but God who is our Father has revealed it unto us by His Spirit: that we are flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone. Jesus said, 'When you see me, you see MY FATHER.' Isn't that a wonderful truth that expresses what Paul wrote: 'He that is joined unto the LORD is ONE SPIRIT!'"

Our transition from the kingdom of the flesh to the Kingdom of God demands the new strength, day by day, of some Fountain springing up through all the bitter wastes of earth. Bitter wastes cannot make themselves sweet: fountains must spring up in sweetness from the ground of Life. In a hotel in a certain city in the Northeast there is a notice in each room that the water is drawn from deep artesian wells. The city is on a narrow strip of sandy land. On the East is the salty ocean, on the West a brackish marsh. Shallow wells are all filled with undrinkable salt water. But shafts sunk deep enough yield pure, sweet water. Ah, the flesh is a shallow well! When a man tries to live by the carnal thoughts, ideas, ways, understanding, wisdom, methods and strength of the flesh realm of the outer world, he tries to quench his thirst with salt. It is the realm of death. But when a man taps into the deep down inner resources of the SPIRIT he then lives by the freshness, sweetness, vitality and power of the Kingdom of God within.

I would say to you that the life of Christ, the life of sonship, is not something outside ourselves. The idea is not that Christ is in heaven, or standing by us, or worn as a garment, so that we stretch out some mysterious faculty and touch Him there. This is the vague form in which babes in Christ conceive the truth, but it is contrary to Christ's teaching and to the analogy of nature. Vegetable life is not contained in a reservoir somewhere in the skies, and measured out spasmodically at certain seasons. Animal life is not bottled up somewhere in the blue beyond and dropped down to earth now and then when it is time for an embryo to be formed. The life is IN every plant and tree, every animal and fish and fowl, inside its own tissue and cells,

and works there as a mighty power to form even that which is contained within the life. The life is permanently fixed and rooted in the organism.

Life is not one of the homeless forces which promiscuously inhabit space, or which can be gathered like electricity from the clouds and dissipated back again into space. Life is definite and resident; the Spiritual Life is not a visit from a force, but a resident tenant of Being. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a...seed, which a man took, and SOWED IN HIS FIELD." The life of sonship is not derived from the occasional touch of Jesus as He "passes this way," nor from the weekly refreshing that comes to our weary souls as we gather in meetings with others. Thank God for the opportunity to praise and worship the Lord together, and for the fellowship and encouragement of those of "like precious faith," but I declare to you that the life of sonship can only be known as we turn INWARD, to discover and know the living and eternal REALITY OF THE CHRIST WITHIN. Only in the consciousness of His voice speaking, His hand guiding, His power generating, His life producing, from within, is there infallible stability, undiminished strength, unfailing wisdom and knowledge, unlimited power, incorruptible nature and the unveiling of the image of God within. With my poor and puny ability I cannot make the potential of GOD'S INDWELLING LIFE to be a living, transforming, all-sufficient reality to your heart. None but the Spirit of God can perform this wonderful and divine act of illumination. He alone can take the things of God and show them unto you.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE KING WITHIN

The institutions of civilization find no place in God's program for the redemption of the world. The wisest and most powerful enterprises on the part of man cannot banish the evils of sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death. Thank God for humanitarian efforts for the alleviation of suffering and misery, the March of Dimes, the United Way, the Christian Children's Fund, airlifts to refugees fleeing war ravaged areas, welfare programs, rescue missions, and a thousand more. The heart of the child of God is a heart of compassion for the afflicted and needy on whatever level help can be rendered. I myself have contributed to such charitable causes. Yet we must not fail to point out that the root of social and national ills lies too deep for these agencies to eradicate. Sin, sorrow, sickness, limitation and death do not come merely by ignorance; therefore they cannot be removed by knowledge. They do not come merely by environment; therefore they cannot be expelled by improved circumstance. They do not come merely by poverty; therefore they cannot be annihilated by the infusion of money and programs.

The redemption of the race from the evils that afflict it, and work mischief and misery in it, must come about by the direct intervention of God. There is a valid reason why, as the scripture says, "Salvation is of THE LORD." It could not be otherwise! Since God drove man out from the Garden, from life, from the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, into a world of thorns and struggle and need and pain and death, it can only be GOD HIMSELF who brings man back into the blessedness of Eden. That is exactly why all the efforts of man to eliminate crime and poverty and sickness and bigotry and warfare and bloodshed have utterly failed. Only the mighty power of God within man can liberate man. That is the law of the Kingdom within. God Himself will bring victory as all men are drawn into Him, and the Kingdom of God is released within.

The character and procedures of the Kingdom of God are so entirely different from the ways of men, they do not compare. In far away Babylon the Holy Spirit witnessed through the prophet Daniel, “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (Dan. 2:44). Though many look for a “revived Roman Empire” to arise in Europe with “Antichrist” at its head, the ten-toed confederacy of the end-times, yet, praise God, “IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED.” That there may be a fulfillment in the outer world of appearances I would not deny, although it is my opinion that historically it has already been fulfilled. But the quickening of the Spirit upon the truth so vital for today bids me look beyond the letter of the word, beyond the outward manifestations, beyond the European Community and the Common Market, along with the religious Ecumenical Movement; and receiving of the spirit of the word, turning inwardly, we find that all that pertains to the kingdoms of this world lies within the heart of man, and there have been so many kings which have ruled within us, and as His Kingdom unfurls its banner over our lives, these kings are subdued and brought to naught.

There are kings of self-will, of worldly ambition, of fleshly zeal, of ruling thoughts, of compelling desires, of religious dogmas, creeds, and traditions and commandments of men, of soulish emotions and impulses spirited by the world, of fleshly appetites dominated by the five senses, of fears, doubts, anger, rebellions, weaknesses and sins. The still small voice speaks a word, and immediately carnal reason tries to argue us out of it. We sense His direction and leading to “stand still,” but human sympathy and sentiment tell us to get involved in things He has not led us to do. So we yield and obey these emotions and impulses, and wonder why we miss the joy and blessing of the Lord. But, praise God, in the days of these kings — while they flourish, control, and bear heavy in their rule — shall the God of heaven set up His Kingdom and all authority and power shall be subdued before it. Into the midst of these kings has rolled THE SONE, it is breaking in pieces, consuming all these, bringing all into submission to Him!

Ray Prinzing has beautifully expounded along this line — “Many a battle has been fought and won, though devils were not rebuked, and there was no writhing on the floor in intense travail, nor any challenge by an antagonist against the truth believed — it was all INTERNAL. Battles of the mind, battles of inner spirit conflict, a warfare against the vision, against the thing which God had personally revealed, but which the flesh was not ready to receive. And while we would ‘reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,’ yet only HE can complete this work in us and make it an experiential reality. So we surrender, and He works it out. ‘Now why dost thou cry aloud? IS THERE NO KING IN THEE? is thy counselor perished?...’ (Micah 4:9). Israel was desperate, she was in travail, in pain to bring forth, and was crying out in her distress. God answered back, ‘IS THERE NO KING IN THEE?’ Praise God, there is One in the midst of us who shall take the reins of the government, and He shall rule in righteousness, so that we eagerly await the emergence of His Kingdom.

“It is our own little INNER KINGDOM that needs The King, so it is to this realm that we ask the question, and praise God, can answer back positively, YES, THERE IS A KING WITHIN. Paul declared that ‘we must through much tribulation (Greek:

pressure) enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:22). As much as the flesh would desire an easier way into His Kingdom, there is no other way. If there was a list of special works to do, we'd struggle through, checking them off one by one, and lay claim to the glory. If a baptism would do it, we'd be baptized seven times face forward, or backwards, upside down, or however the requirement. BUT THIS IS GOD'S PROCESSING IN US, and He has purposed to do it through much pressure. If it isn't physical pressure, it will be a mental one, and if not mental, then a spiritual one — as we travail to enter through the straight gate, and receive of His fullness. There is no cause to view this negatively, for it is this very pressure that shall literally and gloriously PRESS US INTO GOD, as His life becomes a REALITY WITHIN. One might have doctrines, visions, dreams, revelations, and be able to recite it to all who pass by your way, but they are of little value when just a mere form of head-knowledge. They have to be worked into us experimentally through the nitty-gritty processings of the day, until self is conquered, and Christ reigns supreme within us, and the vision becomes LIFE, a firm foundation upon which we can stand to face the storms of the times.

“In some occupations a man with very little authority, limited in his power to make decisions and rule over others, is referred to as a straw boss. Yet betimes this individual gets carried away with his own sense of importance and tries to go beyond his rightful place, giving orders and bossing others. Seems like we have all had our share of straw bosses usurping authority, as they would assume control over that which they have no right. We'll pass very lightly over the fact that most of the so-called 'shepherding movement' falls into this classification, as they usurp the Headship which rightly belongs to CHRIST in every individual. At the moment we are more concerned with these internal straw bosses — our own will, our own desires, our own impulses, etc., which would like to hold control within us. But when we have been OVERCOME BY CHRIST, He shall be King within. Praise His name! In fact there is quite a bit of truth in the statement that we shall only become overcomers in Christ in proportion to how much we have been overcome by Christ. To partake of His victory He must first become Victor over all our inner kingdom” — end quote.

I do not hesitate to tell you that the sphere of the Kingdom is the individual heart. This is the end for which man was made, the final cause of his creation, that he might be a province and principality of God: the King eternal septering him throughout his whole nature, spirit, soul, and body. When I pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” I do not feel that I am praying solely for my city, my nation, the world, or the vast reaches of the cosmos. I do not think first or foremost about harlots, drunkards, drug addicts, criminals, atheists, Moslems, communists, or the masses of sinners throughout the world. When I pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” I am not content with adding to the thought my unpleasant neighbors, the Mafia, or Fidel Castro. No! When I utter the prayer it is with the deep conviction that I am praying for myself. I am praying that God's rule may come fully and powerfully in my own heart, mind, nature and life.

Oh, yes, this prayer has reference to ourselves. There is a problem and that is that we have our own kingdom, the kingdom of man. My business, my enterprise, my family, my ministry, my church, my elders, my people, my thing that I am doing, that we are concerned with. And over against all that, Jesus sets His “Thy.” “THY Kingdom come.” When we pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” we pray, “Father, come in Thy Lordship into my own heart; rule there; take Thy throne there; make me completely

Thine.” See what it means. It means that we are asking that every wicked way, every cherished sin and passion, every self-serving desire and ambition, every carnal thought, word and deed may be cast out of our hearts. It means that neither money nor pleasure nor prestige should have any power over us. It means that the Father’s will and not our own may dictate fully our lives. It means that the precious mind that was in Christ Jesus so possesses us until all death is swallowed up into HIS VICTORY. Oh, that is a great prayer!

I have known men that loved their sins too much, their pleasures, their money, their position, their religion, their traditions, their power, themselves too much, ever to be able to pray sincerely, “Thy Kingdom come!” The Kingdom is, first and foremost, the reign of God in the hearts and lives of men. Less than this it cannot be; more than this it will not be. There is no department of human life where the Kingdom can rule unless first God rules the heart. God cannot rule nations until first He rules in the hearts of the citizens of those nations from the king, president or prime minister all the way down to the garbage collector and the shoeshine boy. God cannot rule over things or institutions until first He rules the hearts of those who form, own and control those things and institutions. Imagine God trying to rule over an army without first winning the allegiance of the general who commands that army and the soldiers who fight in it!

Is it not a right thing and a possible thing, that all men should in their hearts yield allegiance to God? And were this allegiance yielded, would it not necessarily result that all our relations with one another would be transformed and hallowed by the law of His life within? Would it not necessarily result that the whole constitution of the world, in all its domestic, political, social, and economic arrangements, would be guided by the Spirit of God and would show in every situation and circumstance that God was ruling? You see, to bring the Kingdom of God to pass in the earth does not require that all forms of government and all institutions be replaced, though they may be — but that the spirit of those who administer them be changed! Capitalism or communism would either one work just fine if every person involved, from the top to the bottom, were guided and motivated by the spirit of love, generosity, faithfulness, honesty, goodness, brotherly concern, righteousness, meekness, and the mind of Christ. In order for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ it is not necessary for many employments or relations of life to be altered, but it is needful that WE OURSELVES BE ALTERED!

As brother Paul Mueller has aptly written: “Indeed, God does not change the world by man’s armies, or by any of man’s carnal systems of government. The Lord is beginning to change the world by first changing the hearts, souls and minds of mankind. People shall be changed, not by human agreements or by war, but by the operation of the Spirit of God in their lives. The Lord also is beginning to dispel the darkness in the world by imparting the greater Light of His presence into the hearts of His elect. This is the method by which the just and righteous rule of the Kingdom of God is coming to the earth. In this way alone, all the evil and darkness in all the earth shall be completely dispelled. Then the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God shall be fully manifested in all the earth for the glory and honor of our sovereign and omnipotent Father. And His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

“The Kingdom of God has been planted as a seed in the fertile garden of the hearts of His people. And His Kingdom has been growing in the hearts of His people ever since. His Kingdom began in His faithful sons as a word or seed that sprouts in the ground. The Kingdom seed is the very life of Christ that was planted within us. As a seed in the natural soil sprouts or explodes by its inherent life, so the seed of the Christ within us has burst forth with His life to manifest the fruit of the Kingdom of God. The seed is Christ, the Word of God and the word of His Kingdom. When we receive that seed/word, and it grows within us, the Kingdom of God will grow, and indeed has grown, to become the greatest tree on earth so that the birds of the air will find lodging in it. That seed/word within us has sprouted, bursting forth by the Life of Christ to manifest first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear, until its abundant fruit shall fill the whole earth.

“The Kingdom of God is within you, and is not seen by observation. Christ, the King, reigns within your life and mine. Within you is the seedbed of His Kingdom that will fill the whole earth and then the universe. The same Kingdom that began in us has burst forth as a germinated seed to become a tender plant. That plant is growing until the power and glory of the King who reigns within His elect begins to spread His influence far beyond into all the earth. As He continues to reign in us and in the earth, all things shall be gathered into the Kingdom of God and nothing will be left outside of it. With enlightened spiritual eyes, and the mind of Christ, we can see the Kingdom of God as a great tree that is filling the earth and the universe with His peace, justice, righteousness and life. His Kingdom has now grown so that He is beginning to swallow up the kingdoms of man and reign on this earth. The Kingdom of God that began within His faithful sons has grown from the original word or seed, then to the blade stage, and finally it has become the full corn in the ear.

“Our spiritual life is no longer to be seen as either a seed, or a mere blade, but we are now seen as the full corn in the ear. The natural earth brings forth fruit of herself when a seed is planted (Mk. 4:26-29). So also does the word/seed of Christ and His Kingdom grow within us, and of itself, to bring forth a Kingdom plant identical with the original seed. We cannot see its growth, but it is growing nevertheless. As long as we are feeding on Christ, nothing can stop the growth of the Kingdom seed within us. By virtue of the nature and life of the original seed planted within us, Christ must grow up within us to come forth with the same Life that He is. That is the law of natural seed-life! But the original seed grows within us by the power of the greater law and life of Christ and the Kingdom of God.

“If we have any questions regarding our present trials and tribulations, we should consider a reason for these trials. Within us is the seed life of the Kingdom of God. The planting of the Lord requires special care. As the farmer trims and prunes his crops to produce better plants resulting in a better harvest, so the great Husbandman and Lord of the vineyard dresses and cares for His Kingdom plantings. The harvest must go on! Nothing must be allowed in our lives that will curtail this harvest, either to reduce the quality and quantity of the harvest or to prevent it from taking place. So our wise Husbandman cuts and prunes us, removing everything in our lives that would affect the harvest. Christ is the Vine, and we are the branches. We are growing out of Him! His life is our life! As long as we abide in Him, this vine will grow to become that Kingdom tree which shall fill the whole earth with its abundant and life-giving fruit. Our Husbandman will see to it that we are always

trimmed and pruned, fit to abide as a branch within the great Vine that He is. And now, our time of fruit-bearing approaches.

“The seed that we are becoming shall be scattered abroad to reproduce after His kind, filling the earth with Kingdom sons just like us and, more importantly, just like Christ. Understanding this blessed truth as we do, is it not important then that our wise Husbandman should put His chosen ones to the test, that He might prove us and purge us from all that is not of the purity of Christ? It must be so, otherwise we would reproduce after the carnal nature and not after the wonderful, loving, restoring and redemptive nature of Christ. Thank God for the blessed truth in Christ that gives us understanding of our present life and its difficulties! His truth is also setting us free from the fears and weaknesses of the past and of man. And how blessed and privileged we are to see the truth as it is in Christ!

“Let it be established then that the Lord works with the hearts of mankind, and not with the external things of this worldly order. Jesus said, ‘When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. But he that receiveth seed into the good ground (of his heart) is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty’ (Mat. 13:19,23). So it is that the Lord sows the word of His Kingdom into the hearts of His elect, enabling them to bring forth Kingdom fruit. The seed-word of His Kingdom sown in our hearts will bring forth the fruit of transformed lives.

“In the fullness of time, when the Lord begins to restore mankind, He will do so by transforming the hearts of individuals. Just as He transformed us by sending His word into our hearts, so the Lord will transform others. What our nation needs is the impartation of the divine word resulting in the transforming power of the Spirit in the lives of individuals, not more legislation, or more money for more police or more prisons. We may be sure that when the Lord begins to restore our nation and people, He will do so by sending His word into the hearts of men, and not by any outward, literal, legalistic means.

“By the mind of Christ we can see that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The new order of the Kingdom of God is being established within us, and we are walking out the path of that new Kingdom Order. We are becoming the Lord’s new administrative order for the wonderful advance of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Kingdom of God is not of the status-quo; His Kingdom is the life-force of the creation which is ever progressive. The Kingdom of God is growing and shall never cease to expand until it fills everything in the universe with the very life that God is. The Kingdom of God reigns as the Christ within is coming forth from our lives. The power of the Kingdom of God, which is a spiritual power, is flowing out of Zion now to shake all things and overturn the governments and kingdoms of man” — end quote.

It is a great folly to conclude that we can pray the prayer, “Thy Kingdom come,” by rote, in cool detachment. The Kingdom is not an antiquated Jewish dream, dusty with the history of centuries. It touches us at all vital points — if we are sons of God. It is an immediate and personal concern. It is God’s plan of the ages, His time-abiding strategy for redeeming us from ourselves and the vanity of the flesh and the world. It is God’s way of conforming us into the image of His Son and making us one in Him. We are faced then with the solemn truth that when we pray for the coming of

the Kingdom we are not praying for the advent of some great world-wide political or economic program. We are not praying for the end of the world, or for the rapture, or for the millennium, or blessing upon the state of Israel, or the exaltation of the United States and Great Britain. It is far more personal than that. This is a prayer that storms the gates of my own little kingdom, and breaks down the barriers between the will of God and me. It brings the rule of the Spirit in mind, heart, and body until the glory of God arises upon me and His glory is seen upon me, bringing blessing and transformation to all He touches.

Chapter 13

The Kingdom Within

(continued)

The place to fight sin and lawlessness and corruption is in human hearts. All other victories will be only temporary unless we gain the triumph here of our King. The human heart is the real stronghold of lawlessness, rebellion and evil. If it is subdued and cleansed, and the King rules there, the other victories are easy. Forms of evil, strange, terrible and glaring, have prevailed in the world since the days of Cain and Abel. Legislation has been designed by all nations and societies to suppress iniquity, but evil has only become more sophisticated and survived every program to curb or eradicate it. Men have promoted education to reform the habits and propensities of men, but beneath the veneer of culture vulgar passions still possess the heart. Men have even tried to cast the evil out, to exorcise the unclean spirit, but sin only finds new refinements and assumes different forms. In despair of final victory men have come to believe that sin cannot be destroyed.

A brother related how that some years ago, when he was in Chicago, on the ground of some technicality, three hundred prisoners who had been convicted of crimes were released from prison. Three hundred men with criminal instincts were turned loose upon the community by a mere technicality of law! If the Governor of any state who had the power should go to the state prisons and pardon every criminal, he would be impeached. Why, the people would not stand for it. Criminals turned loose into the homes and into the streets would multiply criminals, and crime would be even more rampant. But suppose the Governor of Illinois, in which that prison I have mentioned was located, not only had the power to pardon and let them out, but had the power to take criminality out of their hearts, and make every one of them an honest, good man — then I would say, “Governor, turn them all loose, and if there are ten thousand of them, all the better.”

If we could find a man like that and place him in the jails and prisons of earth, among men who knew they were guilty of crime, and make them believe that he had the power not only to pardon, but to take the criminality out of their natures, with all the shame of their sin, and put them back in the place of honor they occupied before they committed crime, I tell you, he would be the most popular man, not only among the prison administrators and guards, but among the prisoners as well! They would be willing to build him a monument, giving him all the glory they could. Such a man would have a monument that would touch the stars. Jesus Christ is that Man. That is what Jesus Christ has done by making Himself King by His sacrificial love. He has gained for Himself the glory not only of removing guilt, but of removing defilement and uncleanness from every one who will trust Him. He is the Saviour of all men, and in due time shall win all hearts and purify all lives. That, my friend, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

The Kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God over all. The foundation of this Kingdom is in the human heart. The world has not yet witnessed anything like the total and absolute government of God, except in the life of Jesus. But there has been an increase of His Kingdom from generation to generation and from age to age. A new order is now coming forth in the earth! The hour of the completion of the body of Christ that has been forming in the earth for the past two millenniums is now at hand. The age of the reigning of Christ in and through the manifested sons of God is now ready to be revealed. The reign of Christ in our lives is being confirmed as Father changes us, renews our minds, increases our vision, strengthens our faith, and transforms our natures. When He removed all the old religious traditions and doctrines and ideas that were not of Him, our Father was preparing us for the pure and holy and righteous reign of God in us and through us. In this new Day the love of God and the power of God shall prevail. The elect of God who are beholding the face of the Lord and being changed into His likeness are the highest expression of the Kingdom of God in the earth. To them shall be given the Kingdom and the Dominion over all things that they may reign in love, mercy, goodness, power and righteousness, not forcing men to obey, but imparting to all men the transforming grace of God in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost without measure.

If every man's heart were pure all the evil and weaknesses and wrongs of society would be solved over night. No further movements, legislation, programs or enforcement would be necessary anywhere. Crime would disappear. Murders would cease. Violence would be heard no more in the land. The streets and schools and homes would be cleared of illegal drugs. Gangs would disband themselves. All streets would be safe twenty-four hours a day so that any young woman could safely walk about anywhere at any time. Wars would suddenly come to an end. Oppression and bigotry would no more raise their shameful standards. This one simple reality — Christ ruling as King in the human heart — brings to earth the power and glory of the Kingdom of God! Nothing else is needed. And nothing else will do.

The Indian mystic Sundar Singh related the following story. "A man of God saw in a vision that he had gone into a strange country. When he arrived there he was astonished that the people of that land came out and welcomed him with joy, as if he were a long-lost brother, or a friend who had just returned to them. He went into the city with them, and saw great mansions in which were all kinds of costly furniture and appliances, but their owners had gone out and left them open. He asked some of the men why this was, and they said, 'There are no thieves here. As long as men's hearts are locked up to God, so long do they need to lock their doors. But when the door of the heart is open to God, and He lives in it, then there is no need to put a lock on any door; for where the Kingdom of God is in the heart it is the Kingdom of love, where each serves the other in love and desires only his good.'

There would never be a broken home, a heartbroken wife or husband, or deserted and destitute children if the nature of God was written in all men's hearts. There would be no evil or trouble anywhere on earth if the nature of God was written on all men's hearts giving them a heart in the likeness of His own and a mind as the mind of Christ. From the redeemed and transformed heart the law (nature) of God flows forth as a river of life. We still have those among us who thunder the letter of the law from Sinai's mount — but all such will change their tune if ever they stand with the Lamb of God at Calvary's hill, for there they find God removing His law from the external tables of stone to write them upon the fleshy tables of the hearts of new born

men, who no longer keep the law because they cringe in fear, but because the spirit of that law has become their nature, the law of life within them. Can you imagine the United States' Government passing one sweeping law that says, "WE FORBID ANYMORE CRIME OF ANY KIND" — and it worked!. Impossible. Laws are on the outside; you read them, you think about them, but few fully obey them. So laws cannot change the inner man; nor can the best of natural men follow the totality of any laws laid down in his behalf. That is why there is such torment and slavery under the law, for we have become aware now of what God defines as sin, yet we struggle with it nonetheless. But when the law is written in the heart no longer do men try to love God contrary to nature, but now, because they possess the nature of God, love, joy and righteousness flow like a river from the heart.

Herein lies the wonderful significance of the great truth Jesus proclaimed when he said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (outward show): neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:20-21). There are still those among us who imagine that Jesus Christ is coming back to earth with literal armies to ENFORCE LAW AND ORDER. But should the Lord come in such a physical way to establish His Kingdom by force it could only result in a world full of immense prisons and unprecedented numbers of executions. Blood would flow in the streets of every city and village deeper than in any revolution or war of history. It would demand a tyranny surpassing that of either Hitler or Stalin. It is my deep conviction that social issues, economic issues, and political issues can be dealt with adequately only at the level of individual conversion. When the firstborn Son of God came into the world to reveal the salvation of God and the Kingdom of God, He did not engage directly in social welfare work, or attack directly the social structure of the existing society. Instead He gave Himself to the task of converting, remaking, transforming, and training twelve apparently unimportant men. These men, filled with the Holy Spirit of wisdom, holiness and power went forth converting, remaking and transforming the lives of countless multitudes of men and women in every nation under heaven.

The ministry of Jesus and that of the early Church is the proto type of the Kingdom of God. As the sons of God, destined to bring deliverance to the whole creation, dare we follow in the footsteps of HIS holy wisdom? The heart of any social, economic or political problem lies in the hearts of individual men and women. New social structures and systems, new laws, new judicial systems, new political systems, new economic systems can never solve the world's problems so long as the heart of man remains selfish. Only when men pass over by conversion from self-centeredness to God-centeredness can the Kingdom of God become a living reality on earth. All of our external problems — race, nationalism, war, crime, poverty, oppression, sickness, death — all of these are but the external symptoms of an internal, deep-seated disease — the sin of self-centeredness. The only strategy that will be victorious in the warfare against social and other problems is an offensive directed not at a nation, or its institutions, but against the human heart! The point of attack is the state of being of man himself. The objective of attack is the conversion and transformation of man with the law of God written in his heart. If every policeman in America were a godly, Spirit-filled evangelist, more would be accomplished for law and order than all the guns and jails in the whole world. If every soldier in the world were a missionary filled with the spirit of wisdom and power from God, more would be accomplished for world peace and the betterment of society than all the wars of history have wrought. I tell you the truth. Think of it! What incredible wisdom Jesus

revealed that day when He set forth the principle of the Kingdom — “Behold, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU!”

CROWNING THE KING WITHIN

Men would rather crown Jesus King in Jerusalem, Israel or in London, England than in their own hearts. Let us suppose that Jesus is crowned King in the city of Jerusalem — suppose He returned in that same nail-scarred body; suppose He sat upon a throne ruling over the Kingdom of God on earth in the Holy Land, at Jerusalem. I can tell you, dear ones, that every airplane flying to the Middle East would be loaded with people going to see Jesus. Every mail-bag would be full of letters from those sick and afflicted, those in difficulty and trial, and gifts of homage to manifest men’s gratitude and love. You yourself, let us say, are on one of those airplanes. And I do not doubt for one moment that even many who read these lines would be scrambling for tickets to Israel! The Ben-Gurion International Airport, when you arrive after your long flight, is blocked with planes from every nation.

After circling the airport for a dangerously long time you land, and board one of the multitude of tourist buses headed from Tel Aviv up to Jerusalem. Far as the eye can reach, the traffic creeps over the highways in an endless stream. You do not mind the scorching sun, the choking dust, the rude drivers, the elbowing crowds. You are in the Capital of the Kingdom of God on earth, and you will see Jesus! Yonder, at last, in the far distance, are the glittering spires of the Holy Hill, above the burnished temple dome beneath which He sits. But what is that dark seething mass stretching for miles and miles between you and the Holy City? They have come from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west, as you have, to look upon their King. They wish that His hands might be placed upon their head; that His arms might be thrown around them; that His eyes of compassion and love might be fixed upon them, and His voice of power fall into their ears. But it cannot be. You have come to have an audience with the King, but you will not see Him! They have been there for weeks, months, years, and have not seen Him. They are a meter or two nearer, and that is all. The thing is impossible. It is an anti-climax, and absurdity. It would be a social outrage; it would be a physical impossibility.

If there were only one hundred million saints of God in the whole world, gathered out of all ages, and each scheduled a personal interview with Jesus; should Jesus spend only ten minutes with each; it would be exactly 1901.3 years before your turn would come, and then another two thousand years before your next ten minute audience with the King! And during all that time Jesus would not have attended to any matters in the entire universe other than these interviews twenty-four hours a day, unceasingly for millenniums! It should be obvious to every thinking mind that knowing Christ and crowning Him King and communing with Him and walking with Him must be upon some basis other than His individual, physical, appearance upon a material throne somewhere in the world!

So He says to all today who would crown Him in Jerusalem or in London or in any other place where He might be found, “It is very kind and earnest of you to come so far, but you mistake. Go away back from the walls of the Holy City, over the sea, and you will find Me in your own home. You will find Me where the shepherds found Me, doing their ordinary work; where the woman of Samaria found Me, drawing the water for the noon meal; where the disciples found Me, mending nets in their work clothes;

where Mary found Me, among the commonplace household duties of a country village; where, since the day of Pentecost, all who have sought Me have found Me — within their very own hearts.” “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with Him. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that time ye shall know that I AM IN MY FATHER, AND YE IN ME, AND I IN YOU” (Jn. 14:19-20,23).

Would that I had language to express a truth so infinite! The visible incarnation of God in the physical man Jesus Christ must of necessity be brief. Only a small circle could enjoy His actual presence, but a great and glorious and universal kingdom like the Kingdom of God needed a risen and glorified King. “I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you...even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him: for He dwelleth with you (as Jesus), and shall be in you (as the Spirit). I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (Jn. 17:7; 14:17-18). It was expedient for the whole body of Kingdom subjects that He went away. He would be nearer man by apparently being further. The limitations of sense subjected Him while He stayed. He was subject to geography, locality, space, and time. But by going away in glorification He was able to return in mighty Spirit-power, the incorruptible river of God’s divine and eternal life, to flow and flow and flow, age after age, unceasingly, unlimitedly and untiringly into humanity as LIFE. My soul shouts a thousand hallelujahs that He went away! And He has come again. The King of glory has come to His temple of living stones and is crowned in the throne room in the hearts of redeemed men, new creation men, the sons and daughters of the Most High God! Should Jesus be crowned in the flesh, it would no more bring the Kingdom of God to earth than crowning any of the other kings of the world. We are to crown the Lord, the Spirit, as King in every place in our being, outer and inner.

It was the humiliation of France, in the fifteenth century, that her king Charles VII, was not crowned in the proper city, where former kings were crowned. Joan of Arc, burning with the high resolve to remove this dishonor, and have the king crowned in Rheims, emerged from obscurity, gathered an army, drove the enemy back from one point to another, until she dislodged him from Rheims. The king came then. The crown was placed upon His brow in the right place; and the fair maiden, Joan, bowed at the foot of the throne, the tears of joy streaming down her beautiful cheeks. Where are we to crown our King? We are to crown Him in the most sacred and authoritative chamber of our nature from whence proceed the impulses and propensities of our spiritual life. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” So then the Kingdom of God originates in the realm of spirit (heaven) and finds expression in the physical realm (earth). If you walk after the spirit you will live, you receive the crown of life, the crown which IS LIFE, the dominion of life out of your spirit. The authority of life is in the spirit, even the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. And this Spirit of Life is in YOUR SPIRIT, AND FROM THENCE HE WOULD BE CROWNED AND RULE IN LIFE OVER THE KINGDOM OF YOUR BEING. Ah, the thing of importance is that the King be crowned in the right place. We are to crown Christ as King in every place of authority in this earth, but first and foremost, in every human heart.

Many years ago a brother wrote of his visit to Westminster Abbey in London. “I remember how,” he recounted, “when in the Jerusalem Chamber attached to Westminster Abbey, where the last revision of the Bible took place, the verger conducted us through a door, and down a dismal, low-roofed, winding corridor, bare and unadorned. He told us that the heir, or heiress, to the crown of Great Britain, in former years, had to spend some time in the chamber, and then pass down this dark and forbidding passageway, to the place in the great cathedral where the crown was to be received.” So, precious friend of mine, when you conduct the King to the place of crowning in your nature, you may have to escort Him down a winding passageway, intricate with illusions, fears and wild distortions of the carnal mind, dismal with sin, sickness and weakness, bare and jagged with earthly consciousness and evil tendencies, on through the gloom and grime of corruption and death, to the most sacred altar of your heart. There crown the Omnipotent Ruler — the Spirit — and implore Him to arise and cleanse and purify all your entire nature every whit. Bid Him write His laws upon your very heart, so that it cannot beat unless it beat in conformity with the TRUTH and LOVE and RIGHTEOUSNESS and POWER and LIFE and VICTORY of the KINGDOM OF GOD’S GLORIOUS CHRIST! Then you will know the reality and dominion of the Kingdom of God within.

The word “kingdom” is derived from the two terms “king” and “dominion” — KING’S DOMINION. It exists wherever the dominion of the Christ rules and holds sway over the hearts of men. Christ is the great King right now, ruling all things for the well-being of His subjects and bringing absolute perfection and completion to His plans which He ordained before the foundation of the world. He is the King of the ages and invincible. He is establishing His Kingship in all its power within His elect in the earth. God’s elect are the seat of His Kingdom in the earth at this present time. Though He has all power in heaven and in earth, He is not ruling anywhere in the measure that He is ruling in the hearts of His beloved sons and daughters who are being called to His Kingdom and His glory. He shall yet arise in power and in glory from that throne in His completed and perfected body — the MANIFESTED SONS OF GOD — and reveal Himself as the great conquering King, initiating the mightiest of all campaigns, bringing deliverance to the whole creation, reconciling all things unto Himself, and then shall all know the glory of His Kingdom as every tongue confesses and every knee bows, and all in that day declare that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD. At the triumph of His Kingdom sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death all flee away to be remembered no more in the consciousness of creation.

He is the great King of kings and Lord of lords, crowned with glory and honor, and His Kingdom rules over ALL. And, praise His name, He is even now bringing forth in the earth a KINGDOM PEOPLE — the firstfruits of His redemption — who are discovering His Lordship over all of their lives. When all hell assails those who have been called in this day to His Kingdom, when the power of death all around crowds in upon us and would suffocate us, when the pressures of this world would frustrate and vex us, when our own soulish passions and emotions and self-will would drown us in a sea of carnality and ungodliness, HE THEN STANDS UP WITHIN US AS KING — in Kingly authority. When the outer man, the flesh, the carnal mind, mortal consciousness of this gross material realm, would tear us apart, frustrate our lives, suffocate our inner reality, and smash our sonship upon the rocks, HE IS THERE, the still small Voice, that deep, Inward Knowing. Let us learn of the real and eternal, and make way for the reign of the Spirit, the Kingdom of Heaven, the rule of His Truth and Love and Life within each one of us. Thank God, in every situation and circumstance

of life HE IS PRESENT TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF, thus reigning as King over our domain. Not in heaven, not during the millennium, but right now “we see Jesus...CROWNED with glory and honor” within our own experience. Hallelujah-yah!

HOW THE KINGDOM COMES TO EARTH

Yes — the Kingdom of God is within you. Do you yearn, as I do, to see the muck of television and the mire of movies cleaned up, politics made honest and honorable, sexual relationships sanctified, the divorce rate reduced to zero, education employed as an instrument to glorify God, and a thousand other glaring ills of society cured? There is only one way. The rule of God in the hearts of men will transform society in all its relations. The new order of the reign of God works from the inside outward for the renewal and transformation of every department of earthly existence. From the power of the Kingdom goes forth a regenerating power into art, culture, philosophy, politics, commerce, education, science, literature, economics and social programs, and when all these areas have been brought under the control of God’s nature reproduced in men, the Kingdom of God has come in the earth.

None of these objectives can be attained through legislation or coercion, but only by regeneration and transformation. The principle is as clear as it is certain — the Kingdom of God is within you! When God reigns in a man’s life, all of the relations of his life are brought within the sphere of the Kingdom. Your home should be a Kingdom home, with Christ influencing and controlling all its relationships and activities. Your business should be a Kingdom business, not conducted by the spirit and standards of the world, but after the spirit of divine love and righteousness. Your school should be a Kingdom school. Your church should be a Kingdom church, for the Kingdom is greater than the church. Your city should be a Kingdom city. Your state should be a Kingdom state. Your nation should be a Kingdom nation. Your government should be a Kingdom government. And planet earth must become a Kingdom planet. The outer, natural world must be brought under the dominion of the inner, spiritual world. If heaven doesn’t come to earth then the Lord’s prayer is never answered, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” That is happening to us right now as our bodies and souls are brought under the dominion of the life of the indwelling Spirit.

Out of the dominion of the spirit our souls are being saved and even this mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. The Holy Spirit is turning us inward. As we turn from the outer to seek the reality of the Christ within we discover that our goal in life is not to make money, accumulate things, or fulfill earthly ambitions and pleasures. If that is our goal, then we need to set our priorities straight. You see, in the world within, that world which you are, there is no money and there are no things. There is no need for money and there is no need for things. The only need for money and things is in the world on the outside. But if we go out and try to seek that which is on the outside, then we have left the Kingdom. “Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles (and the prosperity people) seek. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...” (Mat. 6:31-33). The Kingdom of God is within you. The world of the Kingdom is that inner world of the spirit. There are two dimensions of “you” — the outer you and the inner you. Paul refers to these as the “outward man” and the “inward man”. “Though our

outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (II Cor. 4:16). The outward man is the visible, tangible and fleshly. The inward man is the invisible man of spirit. The inward man is born of God. Some people hold the crude notion that should the outer man go by way of the grave the inner man would likewise perish — you would be gone, unconscious, non-existent, body, soul, and spirit, until the day of resurrection. No way! The outward man is of the earth, the inward man is from heaven. The outward man is from Adam, the inward man is from Christ. The outward man is born of the flesh, the inward man is born of the Spirit. God, Christ, and the Spirit would all have to be susceptible to death in order for the inward man to perish!

To choose or seek anything in the outer world, whether it be a job, money, relationships, or possessions, must be for the divine purpose of expressing the inward through the outward. Anything that does not fulfill that purpose has nothing eternal or of God-substance or life in it. It is void. It is vanity. It is temporal. It is death. So choosing a vocation is not for the purpose of making money, but to fulfill the will of God, to express His life and bless the world. The carnal mind says, “If I live for God and bless the world, then I get nothing for myself.” But that isn’t true — because the real world is not the one out there, it’s the one within. The world within is one of love, life, light, joy, peace, grace, faith, righteousness and blessing. Therefore the inner world delights to bless all men on whatever level they are, asking nothing in return. The outer world, on the other hand, is one of selfishness, ego, pride, avarice, greed, stinginess, corruption and meanness. The resources of the inner world are unlimited, for they draw out of God; the resources of the outer world are finite. People who live only in the outer world feel they have a right to cheat one another, take advantage of one another, use one another and oppress one another. You can hardly trust anyone in the business world today, everybody is out for himself. They are not for the people they serve, they are in it for what they can get out of it, and they will lie, misrepresent, cheat or steal to come out on top. Men will do that to you because they believe that when they do that to you they are not doing it to themselves, because that’s the way it is out in this world. They are living by the spirit of the world. They know nothing of the reality, power, purity, and glory of the inner world, so their perceptions in the outer world are distorted.

All our choices in the outer world should serve to extend the reality of what we are in the inner world. When we choose a job or any activity, we don’t choose on the basis of its value in the outer world, we choose that which will serve as a vehicle of expression for the inner man. That’s where peace is. That’s where joy is. That’s where fulfillment is. And that’s where success is! “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you!” That’s where the Kingdom is, that’s where life is, that’s where reality is, that’s where heaven is. So many people work on their job just to make money, just to pay the bills and put food on the table. They don’t really like the job and are miserable. That is what the outer world calls “making a living.” But making a living is more than making money, for “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Lk. 12:15). To make a living means, first and foremost, to LIVE! It’s making what you are live! It denotes quality of life, and the only life of quality is the inward man — Christ. “She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth,” saith the Lord. You will know true joy when your inward man lives through your outward man, your inner world is expressed through your outer world. Matters not what you do outwardly, where you live, what your job is, what your responsibilities are — when your inward

life is dominant all outer things are affected, sanctified, transformed, swallowed up. As sons of God we are not victims of either money, things, or circumstances. These are not able to take away our peace. They are unable to rob us of our joy. They cannot take our life. The Christ within is our peace, our stability, our reality, our substance. That, my beloved, is the power and glory of the Kingdom of God!

When the mind of Christ has mightily conquered, the state of things is called the Kingdom of God. Where hearts are transformed, where man's mistaken identity is replaced by the knowledge of his sonship to God, where communion with the Father is begun and deepened, there the Kingdom of God has come. The Kingdom of God brings a way of thinking and living that seems contrary to logic. It is not something you could have guessed. It breaks in. It startles. It overwhelms. It opens vistas so breathtaking that we can hardly stretch our minds and spirits to take it in. It is a new, vibrant, mysterious, revolutionary, dynamic, powerful life-style. Men and women today can experience the Kingdom of God in their lives. Anyone in this world who is willing to put on the mind of Christ and be joined in union with God can live in its power and glory everyday.

The seventeenth century English mystic, George Fox, penned these inspirational and instructive words. "The pearl of the Kingdom of God is hid in the field, and the field is the world, and the world is in your hearts, and there you must dig deep to find it; and when you have digged deep and found it, you must sell all to purchase and redeem this field. And there you shall know the merchant-man that makes the exchange, and there you shall know Christ in you the hope of glory, to save you and redeem you, the Immanuel, God with us. And there you shall know the woman that lost the piece of silver, and was seeking it without; but when the candle was lighted and the house swept, she found it in her own house, and then she did know the joy, and went and told her neighbors; and then she did know the day-star arise in her heart, and the day dawning, whereby the light shall be known that shines from the east to the west, and the word of faith in the mouth and heart, and the oil in thy lamp if thou enterest in with the bridegroom.

"The light shines in thine own heart to give thee the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, from whence it comes, and the anointing which abideth in thee shall teach thee, and as it doth teach thee, thou shalt continue in the Father and the Son, from whence this holy unction comes, and thou hast received it, and here thou shalt know that thou needest no man to teach thee, but as the same anointing doth teach thee, and the ingrafted word, able to save your souls, is in your hearts, and the hidden man of the heart which is renewed day by day is found there, and the meek and quiet spirit, which is with the Lord of great price, is found in thee, and the covenant of grace that brings salvation is in thy heart, and in thy mouth, to season it and thy words, and to teach thee to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and the heap of teachers set up by men's lusts in the world, that turn this grace into wantonness, and live wildly, and it will teach thee to live soberly.

"The pearl that hath been hid in the earth is found, the anointing within, the word within, the covenant within, the Christ within the inner man, and the morning star is risen, and the day is dawned, and the true light shines, and wisdom, which all the knowledge, understanding and wisdom that man hath cannot comprehend nor find, cries in the streets to the simple ones, that they may receive it, the wisdom of God, even the hidden wisdom within.

“The Kingdom of Heaven is seen, which is as a grain of mustard-seed which is within, and many have received it, and are become as little children, and they that be instructed to the Kingdom, they bring forth their things new, and their things old. And many are digging in the field, which is the world, which is set in their hearts, seeking for the pearl, and many have found it, and many merchant-men be exchanging, glory to God forever. So the pearl is within you. All people of the earth, come into yourselves, find the pearl in you, the precious pearl that has lain under the earth, and come out of your talk and profession in words, in which the Jews were, in whom the pearl was hid, that you may find the pearl in yourselves, and the Kingdom there within you. Though it be like a grain of mustard-seed, it is like leaven, it will leaven you up into a new lump; teachings, churches, notions without life shall wither, fade like flowers, wither like grass, be burnt up like stubble, sticks and chaff that has cumbered the ground. But the wheat is gathered into the garner, the lambs are leaping, the Father carries them in His hands, the babes born of the immortal seed by the word of God, the Father is known, and is worshipped in spirit and in truth. The word of wisdom will divide asunder your precious thoughts from your vile thoughts, your precious words from your vile words, and this word of wisdom will teach you in all your ways; the pearl in you come to know, the seed in you come to know, which seed is Christ, that inherits the promise and the Kingdom, which now is risen in thousands, who are come to be heirs of the promise, and heirs of God, and heirs of the world that has no end” — end quote.

Ah, yes, there lies buried within you the greatest of all treasures — the Kingdom of God. Discover that Kingdom today, my friend, draw from its wealth, suck from its life, receive from its power and you will become a new creation, transformed into the image of God. All that is true in God lies within that Kingdom, for it is the image of God created in man from the beginning, now buried deep beneath the debris of the carnal mind and fleshly life. It is there and it is yours, for the taking. Only the earth, the earthiness of your own outer self, your own soulish emotions, your own carnal consciousness, needs to be removed for the image of God to be seen. It is still there within you no matter how weak, sinful, or undone you may feel, or how miserably you may have failed.

Anthony Schuller related his personal experience which graphically brings this point home to our hearts. He said, “As a college student, I worked part time as a guide for a travel agency. I have enjoyed the privilege of traveling a great deal during the school breaks. One of the places that really captured my interest was Italy, where I toured many museums. While in Florence, Italy, I decided that I would make a distinct point of viewing the original statue of David, sculptured by Michelangelo, which I had seen in replica in southern California on numerous occasions. I really looked forward to seeing the authentic masterpiece. As the museum guide led us through the hallways of this fabulous place, I happened to glance down a corridor we were passing by. There stood a fabulous, huge chunk of crudely-shaped marble. It was an unfinished piece of sculpture which Michelangelo had, for some reason, never completed. Flanking the sides of the hallway were other incomplete works of Michelangelo. I found myself suddenly distracted. Instead of rushing to see the famous piece I’d come for, I was being captured by these abstract works of art. There was something strangely fascinating about the unfinished, the “yet to be.” The wonderment of the what if and the could this have been and the what might this yet become was intriguing. Suddenly the perfections that the statue David offered, the

details that were hewn in the finest degrees, were overshadowed by the embryonic potential that lay dormant in these chunks of rock.

“I had studied art history in college. I remembered reading about Michelangelo’s artful eye and how he could see the statue that he would create as he envisioned it, locked inside a piece of stone. Then he would begin to chisel away, embarking on his quest to unlock that piece of art from its cold and hard captor. That is what happened with that great piece called David. He simply released David who was entrapped within the giant piece of marble. And as I looked upon the unfinished pieces, they appeared bound and helpless and looked as if they were almost attempting their own escape. Some specifically looked as if they were trying to crawl out of the rock. Their shoulders were pressing forward and their chins and their heads were pressing outward, but at that point they were stuck. Only Michelangelo saw where the lines of the image ran; only he could release it. By chipping away the external, everything outside the image, the image could spring forth to be seen.

“That is how some of you may be feeling today. You may feel trapped in a cold, hard captivity of self and circumstance. But I have good news for you — God isn’t finished chiseling yet. He is still creating and drawing out of you the good and the beauty that you have as a son of God. And he will do it one little piece at a time. Only God knows what tomorrow holds, but in it all we can be confident in this: that in the process of living, He is chiseling out of us the person that He wishes us to be. That person is in there, and He is creating someone, a special someone with unique characteristics. This is the journey we call life as we are chiseled for a purpose. He has taken us on as projects of art. Jesus, with His artful eye, is able to see what lies locked within us. And He is busy chiseling away to make us not what WE want to be, but what HE wants us to be — the image that He sees, born out of His own divine image” — end quote.

Another beautiful illustration comes from the pen of a precious sister in the Lord, Lyn Gitchel — and I love it! She writes, “These are days of computers, and we’re going to refer to the computer a number of times in order to understand some of these things. So, for those who are not yet computer literate, here’s a word of explanation concerning them. A computer consists of the part that has the screen — that’s the part you can see what is going on. Then it has a printer of some sort or another, which is the part that puts the stuff down on paper. In between these is the hard disk, the ‘brain’ of the thing. The program that makes the rest of it work is loaded onto the hard disk. It’s very important to note that the program is complete in itself and the fact a person does not work the program properly is not the fault of the program. It is complete, whole, lacking nothing. Like the redemption Jesus bought.

“Jesus was the ‘format’ for the program, and now the program is the ‘Christ’ program — to be like Him. It’s important to see that the fact we are not functioning like Jesus now at this present time does not mean there’s something incomplete about the ‘Christ’ program. It was always complete from the start, and still is. On the computer I use, I have two basic programs I use for the work I do. One I am completely familiar with. I know every bit of it and can even work it instinctively while talking to someone else. This corresponds to the program of life you were raised with, the ‘human’ program. What you were taught by your parents, and what tendencies you inherited from them, coupled with how you were educated, join with your church background to form the program you are thoroughly familiar with living in. You know

how to function in it and you know how to deal with the experiences it brings to you. Each one of us has a different background, but, to God they all amount to the same — the 'human' program. He calls it the program (law) 'of sin and death' because it all ends in the same way — with your death. And all humans will die; be sure of that!

“But I have another program loaded which is the most fantastic program I know of. It turns text upside down, inside out, mirrors it, shadows it, does all sorts of graded shading and stuff that is fabulous. The only problem is I don't know how to use it! I have the manual, a big, thick volume of some 216 pages, but I've never had time to study it and learn it. Sometimes I go into the program and mess with it a bit, but I become very conscious of how ineffective it is because plainly I just don't know how to do it. There's nothing wrong with the program, though. The potential is always there.

“The one I am familiar with is like the human program. We are all comfortable with that. Very comfortable. When God sent Jesus into the world, He sent Him to turn us around; to format a new program, the program of life — God's kind of life. Jesus insisted on calling Himself the 'Son of Man.' He did it over and over. Take Matthew's gospel for example: the expression 'Son of God' is used of Him only eight times, and every time it was someone else who called Jesus that. He never used it of Himself. Only in the gospel of John is it ever recorded that Jesus used this expression of Himself, and even then it was only a very few times. In Matthew's gospel, by comparison, the expression 'Son of Man' is used thirty times and every time it is of Jesus speaking of Himself. It's almost as if He was trying to emphasize His humanity over and over; that He was a member of the same race as everyone else around Him.

“Born of the Holy Spirit by a miracle birth, Jesus was still effectively human. Although He was 'in the image of God,' He still was limited to human means. He could only be in one place at a time, could see only as far as the human eye and hear only what a human ear could hear. He still could only function within the limitations of His human form. He was truly man — and because of this He alone was able to format the new program for man. What it amounts to is this: if He could live that way, so could anyone of the same race once the problem of the inherited genes of the Adam race was effectively dealt with. At the transfiguration, God shone the spotlight of His perfect holiness upon Jesus, and because there was no flaw in Him it shone right through Him. God determined this was His ultimate program for man. He looked down at the transfigured Jesus and said, 'This is my beloved Son...' or, in other words, 'This is the pattern; this is what I intended for man. This is the program that He will now exchange with them by His death.' This is borne out by the fact that Jesus discussed His 'decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem' at that time. The transfiguration experience was the demonstration of the perfect man — the man in the image of God that God had first created in Adam. The cross was the transfer of that state of perfect manhood from Jesus, by the exchange of the covenant, to the rest of the race.

“Most people, and most churches, accept the fact that the ultimate goal for believers is to become like Jesus. The question is not if but when. Many relegate it to the future and assume that after we die we'll get to be like Him. Let's forget that concept! We need to see it as a total plan for now, in this life. It was a man that God created in His image and it was a man that caused the problem. When the Adamses did it

their way, they plunged the whole race into the sin problem. Jesus came along and, as a perfect man, exchanged His righteousness for our sin-programmed state. That was the covenant exchange He made through His blood as a sacrifice. The exchange has been made and His righteousness is now set to our account, just as our sin was to His. Now here's the question: Is it totally done or is there something God still has to do with us? Can we in fact ever expect to be as perfect as Jesus was? It seems a way-out goal for even the best human person, something our minds don't compute easily! Reason it logically for a moment. How much of your sin did Jesus take on the cross? All of it, or some of it? The answer is ALL, of course. So, if it was an exchange, how much of His righteousness did He make over to you? All of it, or part of it? The answer, believe it or not, is ALL, just as with the other.

“So the program of God that has been loaded on the computer disk of each of our lives is complete, perfect, entire, needing nothing. It is a program that potentially allows us to come into being ‘a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’ That’s what it’s all about — that we might become like Jesus. Exactly like Him. As human people, here and now, become like Him. If the completion was not to come until after death, then God would have failed in His plan. He created man in His image and intended him to be that way. Therefore, it is man that has to come into that image again to fulfill God’s intention for the human race. Only after that can the human race go on to the next step in God’s plan.

“Now, let’s get this straight. The ‘Christ’ program is a program that is already loaded on our hard disks. Jesus formatted it and got it loaded for us. It is a program of INFINITE POTENTIAL. ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him’ (I Cor. 2:9). I mean, Jesus could heal the sick, forgive sins, cast out devils, raise the dead, walk on water, pass through hostile crowds, appear and disappear, and is seated at the right hand of God, just to name a few things. The program has infinite possibilities. It comes with a manual, the scriptures. Sometimes the manual is a little hard to decipher, but that’s only because we are as yet unfamiliar with its terminology. If we stick with it, spend much time with it, work and work at understanding it, ultimately we will become familiar with it. But the fact that we are not there yet does not mean there is anything wrong with the program! It’s perfect!

“Just as it takes time to learn to work in a new computer program, it also takes time to learn to walk in the new program God has set in your life. Technically He has turned you around from working in the program that leads in the direction of death and showed you the new one that is His life program, but we are so used to functioning in the old one that it takes time to learn the new. It’s not necessary to get bent all out of shape when you feel you are not totally functioning in the way God wants you to. None of us learns to overnight. Each of us finds we revert to the old sin and death program from time to time. The important thing is not to let it discourage you. It’s a slow but steady learning process that will continue all your life. That’s what redemption is all about!” — end quote.

About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit – and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him – in family or church associations – embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God's elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God's Word is always free to all. God's way is, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8).