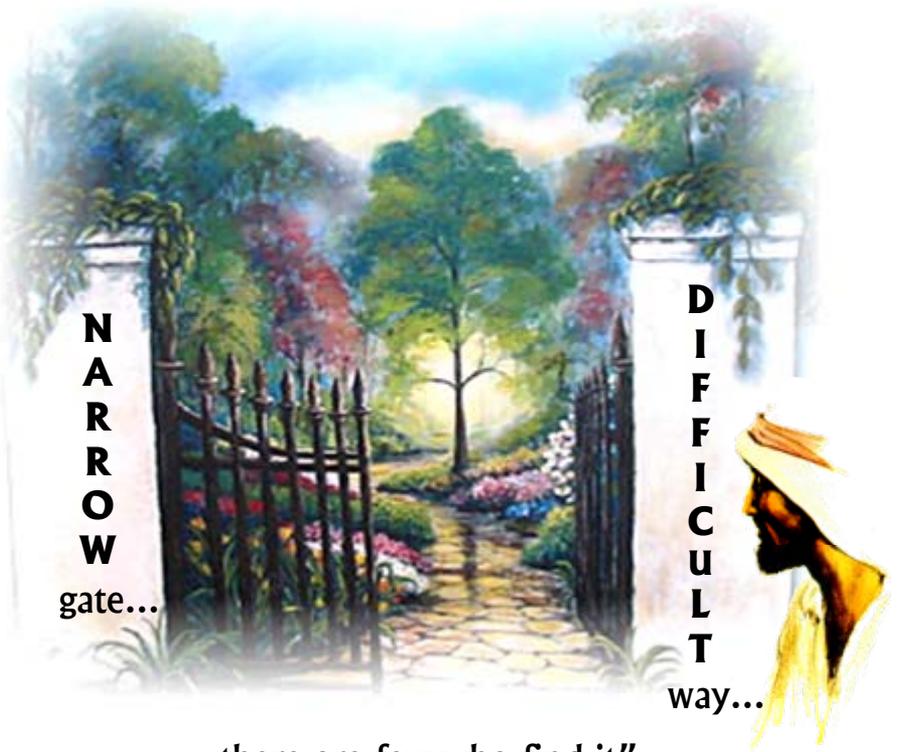


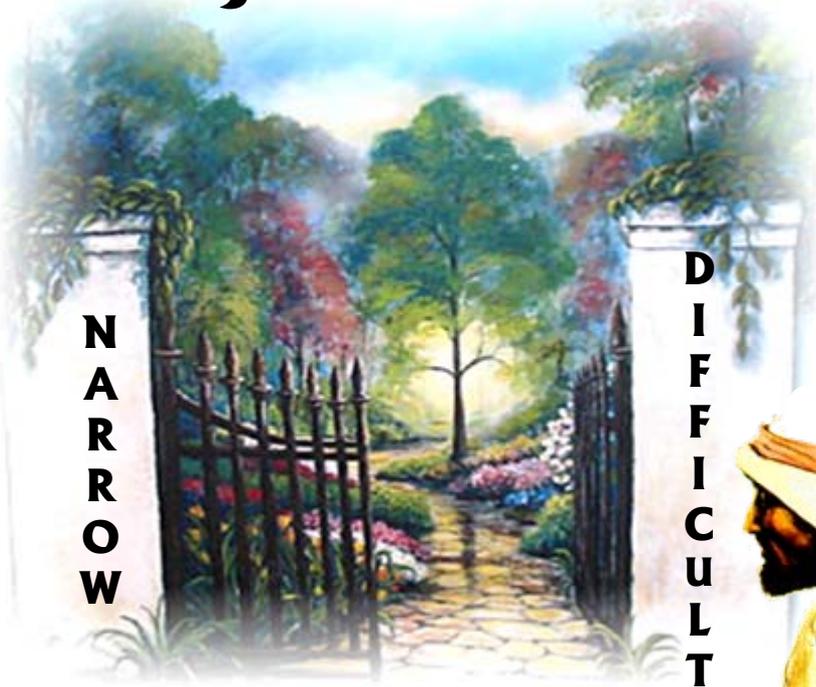
THE NARROW- MINDED GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



there are few who find it"

by Pastor Randy Shupe

THE NARROW- MINDED GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



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**“LORD,
ARE THERE FEW WHO ARE SAVED?”
AND HE SAID TO THEM,
“STRIVE TO ENTER THROUGH
THE NARROW GATE, FOR MANY,
I SAY TO YOU, WILL SEEK TO ENTER
AND WILL NOT BE ABLE.”**

Luke 13: 23-24



**“ENTER BY THE NARROW GATE;
FOR WIDE IS THE GATE,
AND BROAD IS THE WAY
THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION,
AND THERE ARE MANY WHO GO IN BY IT.
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AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY
WHICH LEADS TO LIFE,
AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT.”**

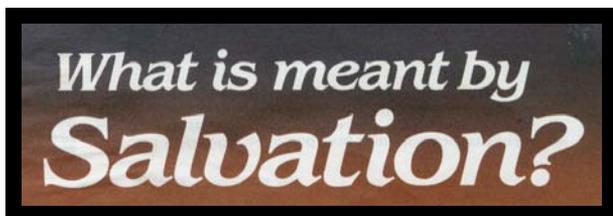
Matthew 7:13-14

FOREWORD

by Pastor Randy Shupe



I would like to begin this book by asking you the reader to take a little test. On the next two pages I have printed out a scanned image of a gospel tract which has the title;



This is a good and proper question to be considered. Many people in the Bible asked similar questions. Nicodemus was a Master (teacher) of the Law and yet he came to Jesus with many questions about the Lord's unusual teachings pertaining to the way of salvation (Jn. 3:1-10). Then there was a rich young ruler who came to Jesus asking, "What must I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mk. 10:17). There is also the question asked by the Jews to whom Peter preached his fiery sermon at Pentecost by which they were quickened to anxiously ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). We could also consider the question asked by the Philippian jailer of Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:31). To ask questions about the meaning and the method of salvation is wise and prudent for if we do not understand what is meant by these things, then we are at a loss to consider whether this is something that we want to do, or perhaps having already done so, whether we have done it properly and fully.

If you are a professing Christian, I would like for you to read through the tract on the next two pages and ask yourself whether it is a proper and valid expression of the gospel that provides salvation as taught by Jesus Christ and His apostles.



S

SALVATION means to be rescued from sin and its punishment and set free to know, love and serve God.

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. . . If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." John 8:34,36



A

ALL PEOPLE have turned away from God and broken the law of God. The Bible calls this sin.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
Romans 3:23



L

LEFT TO OURSELVES, there is no rescue, and the justice of God requires our eternal damnation in the terrors of hell.

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. John 3:36



V

VICTORY over sin was obtained when God sent His Son Jesus to earth. Jesus obeyed God's laws perfectly, yet He died to pay for the sins of all who believe.

This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:10



A

ADMITTING that our sin has put us in a desperate situation is the first step in our rescue.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:8,9



T

TAKING the free gift of Jesus' payment for our sin makes us "not guilty" in God's sight.

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23



I

IN GRATITUDE for such love, we follow Him in obedience and sacrificial service.

Therefore, I urge you, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.

Romans 12:1



O

ONLY JESUS has provided the way to salvation.

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12



N

NOW is the time to make your decision.

Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.
2 Corinthians 6:2

How do we receive it? Salvation is a gift, pure and simple. God gives us salvation on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done for us and welcomes us into the kingdom. We receive it by believing.

What has Jesus done that God should do this for us?

1. He came to earth and lived the life of perfect obedience before God. That perfect obedience was put into our accounts and registered to our names. So we never need fear being morally overdrawn on that day when we will stand in His holy presence. Our accounts are filled with the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ.
2. Jesus died on the cross for us, bearing in His own body the just punishment of God for our sin. God's justice was satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice. Those who believe are saved.

If you are ready to accept this gift, pray this prayer:

"Jesus, I believe that you are the holy Son of God. I believe that you died on the cross for my sins and that you rose from the dead. You are my salvation. Please wash all my sins away and make me a child of God. I give my life to you today. Amen"

Although there are several sound Biblical statements expressed in this tract supported with valid Scriptures, the overall presentation of the gospel as preached by Jesus Christ or His apostles is not presented at all! Surprised? "The gospel" (which means good news) is not the preaching of the isolated message of how to become born again or have your sins forgiven.

THE GOSPEL JESUS PREACHED IS BASED ON THE GOOD NEWS OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD:

**"NOW JESUS WENT ABOUT...
PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM..."** Matt. 4:23

**"...JOHN THE BAPTIST CAME
PREACHING...AND SAYING,
'REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN IS AT HAND!'"** Matt. 3:1-2

**"FROM THAT TIME JESUS BEGAN
TO PREACH AND TO SAY,
'REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN IS AT HAND.'"** Matt. 4:17

**"...HE (Jesus) WENT THROUGH EVERY CITY AND VILLAGE,
PREACHING AND BRINGING THE GLAD TIDINGS
OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD..."** Luke 8:1

Even these few passages are sufficient to establish that the contents of the tract, which typifies the modern-day presentation of the gospel, is quite deficient when it comes to either emphasizing or explaining the pre-requisite message of repentance, or of proclaiming "the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God." What is substituted for the call to "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand", is a gospel message solely based on how to receive salvation as a gift of God, and the forgiveness of sins. The ultimate purpose for this salvation gift is being left out. Restoration of the Kingdom of God, the true gospel message, is the purpose of this book.

Before we begin unfolding the subject of this book, let me say something about the format of the book itself. I have always been an advocate of the old saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” Throughout this book, as in all my other books, it is highly illustrated. There are two reasons why I illustrate my books. One is for the sake of creating inspiration by visual means. The other is to create revelational insight by using visuals. Most of what you will find in this book is to obtain the latter purpose. The man who most influenced me to write in an illustrated manner was the late Clarence Larkin. He was an architect by trade and used his talents to illustrate great revelation of God’s Word. From his works (six books over a 20-year span) I found great value in pondering the labor he invested in his illustrations. It impacted me greatly for I found that my retention of his teachings was due mainly to his illustration of truth.

A woman in our fellowship who is quite rooted in God’s Word told me recently, “Pastor, I cannot just read your books as I can with other authors. Your books must be studied in light of the illustrations.” I want to confirm this observation. Often the illustration contains the meat of the revelation. Surrounding it, I seek to elaborate on what has been visualized. Therefore my recommendation to you as you begin this book is to carefully ponder the visuals intended to convey revelation. Do not just skim over them and concentrate only on the surrounding words. Visuals added to what we read results in a much higher retention rate. A well known survey by Xerox stated that we retain only 10% of what we hear or read, but 30% of what we see visualized. Combine reading and seeing with emphasized visualization, and the retention rate jumps to 50% !

You will also notice that many Scripture passages are repeated, often on the same page. I do this purposely to enhance your ability to study what is written instead of having to turn back to previous quotations. May God grant you understanding as you contemplate both the visuals and words of this book!

Pastor Randy Shupe



**“BE DILIGENT
TO PRESENT YOURSELF
APPROVED TO GOD,
A WORKER WHO
DOES NOT NEED
TO BE ASHAMED,
RIGHTLY DIVIDING
THE WORD OF TRUTH.”**

2 Tim. 2:15

CHAPTER ONE

"THE NARROW GATE"

**"LORD,
ARE THERE
FEW WHO
ARE SAVED?"
AND HE SAID
TO THEM,
"STRIVE
TO ENTER
THROUGH
THE
NARROW
GATE,
FOR MANY,
I SAY
TO YOU,
WILL SEEK
TO ENTER
AND
WILL NOT
BE ABLE."
Luke 13: 23-24**



TO NARROW –
"TO LIMIT, CONTRACT, DECREASE,
LESSEN, RESTRAIN..."

NARROW-MINDED-
"LACKING A BROAD PERSPECTIVE,
A LIMITED OR HAMPERED
INTERPRETATION, A LIMITED VIEW,
TO BECOME LESS BROAD, LESS LIBERAL
IN THINKING, VOID OF GENERALITIES"

Webster

**"ENTER BY
THE NARROW
GATE;
FOR WIDE IS
THE GATE,
AND BROAD IS
THE WAY
THAT LEADS TO
DESTRUCTION,
AND THERE ARE
MANY WHO GO IN
BY IT.
BECAUSE NARROW
IS THE GATE
AND DIFFICULT
IS THE WAY
WHICH LEADS
TO LIFE,
AND
THERE ARE FEW
WHO FIND IT."
Matt. 7:13-14**

Normally speaking, to be narrow-minded is not considered to be a positive attribute. We usually label people as being narrow-minded who are incapable or unwilling to consider a broader perspective of an issue. They are set in their limited view and no amount of sound logic, truth or reasoning will make any impact. They have, as one man comically described, "minds like concrete - thoroughly mixed up and firmly set."

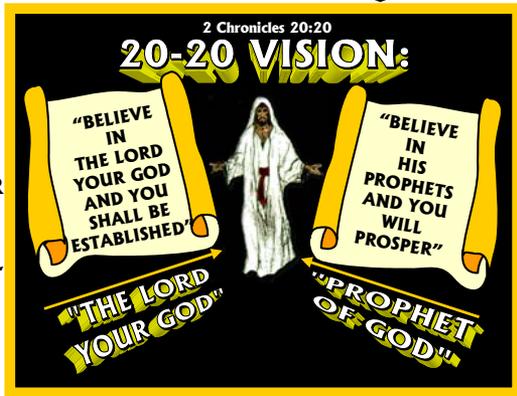
Taking into consideration Jesus' description of the way of salvation as being one found only by a few, and factoring in Webster's definition of narrow and narrow-mindedness, we can in a positive and respectful way conclude that Jesus is very narrow-minded when it comes to the pathway of salvation. However, quite the opposite is true of the modern-day preaching of the message of salvation. Most presentations of the gospel are quite broad-minded and liberally wide open, and I do not intend for that to be taken as a statement of approval.

Although the broad way of salvation is certainly more appealing to the masses than Jesus' narrow view, this modern-day broad way to salvation leads rather unto destruction ("apoleia - eternal misery") instead of the desired goal of eternal life.

There is a passage in the Old Testament that I like to refer to as the means of obtaining 20-20 vision. It is 2 Chron. 20:20 which says, "Believe in the Lord your God and you shall be established; believe in His prophets and you shall prosper." It is important to establish that Jesus fulfills both of these titles:

"FOR MOSES TRULY SAID TO THE FATHERS, 'THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN. HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU. AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO WILL NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE.'"

Acts 3:22-23



Ponder well that Jesus Christ, who calls the way of salvation narrow and difficult, speaks these words from His authoritative position as (1) The Lord your God, (2) The Prophet of God. The title "The Lord your God" is proliferate throughout the Old Testament. In the Book of Deuteronomy it is used relative to the covenant that God made with His people. As New Covenant believers this title is also applicable to us:

"KNOW THAT THE LORD YOUR GOD, HE IS GOD, THE FAITHFUL GOD WHO KEEPS COVENANT..."

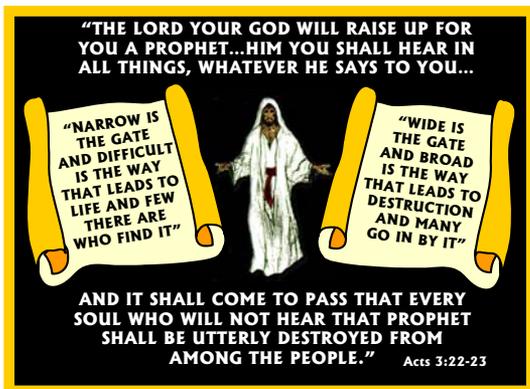
Deut. 7:9

If His first authoritative role as The Lord your God isn't sufficient enough to add sober weight to the words that Jesus speaks in Matthew Chapter 7:13-14, then we can give these passages more emphasis by showing that Jesus is also a prophet sent from God.

Consider the diagram on the right in which we find these words of Matt. 7:13-14 surrounded by the reminder in Acts 3:22-23 of the consequences of not hearing "all things, whatever He says to you," for it leads to being utterly destroyed.



Where does Jesus the prophet say that the wide-gate and the broad-way gospel lead? They lead to destruction (eternal misery), not eternal life. Note too that it is the many (majority) that take these false paths while only the few (minority) believe Jesus' words of warning.



The prophets have always been ignored by the majority. Jesus, who is not only The Lord your God, but who is also a prophet Himself, states that the narrow gate and the difficult way lead to life, and because this is so, few will find it. Do you believe in The Lord your God? Then you will be established. Do you believe in His prophets? Then you will prosper. However, if you are believing something other than what The Lord your God says, something other than what the prophet Jesus has said, you may be on a broad path that leads to destruction.

In these passages from Acts Chapter 3 the text goes on to state that God wants to bless His people in a unique way through the ministry of Jesus Christ as the prophet of God:

“...GOD, HAVING RAISED UP HIS SERVANT JESUS (the prophet), SENT HIM TO BLESS YOU, IN **TURNING AWAY EVERY ONE OF YOU FROM YOUR INIQUITIES.”**

Acts 3:26

The modern-day emphasis of the gospel is presented as blessing us by forgiving our sins, but this is not the initial concept God has in mind. He is willing to forgive our sins and it certainly is part of the gospel message, but as we shall see, the gospel that The Lord your God begins with has an emphasis upon turning us from sin through the initial act of repentance. Before we elaborate on that point, let me show you the ministry of a true prophet versus the false prophet:

“DO NOT LISTEN TO THE WORDS OF THE PROPHETS WHO PROPHECY TO YOU. THEY MAKE YOU WORTHLESS; THEY SPEAK A VISION OF THEIR OWN HEART, NOT FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD....I HAVE NOT SENT THESE PROPHETS...I HAVE NOT SPOKEN TO THEM, YET THEY PROPHESED. BUT IF THEY HAD STOOD IN MY COUNSEL, AND HAD CAUSED MY PEOPLE TO HEAR MY WORDS, THEN THEY WOULD HAVE

TURNED THEM FROM THE EVIL OF THEIR DOINGS... HE WHO HAS MY WORD, LET HIM SPEAK MY WORD FAITHFULLY... I AM AGAINST THOSE PROPHETS WHO ...CAUSE MY PEOPLE TO ERR... THEY HAVE PERVERTED THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD, THE LORD OF HOSTS, OUR GOD.”

Jeremiah 23:16-36 excerpts

**“...IF THEY HAD STOOD IN MY COUNSEL,
AND HAD CAUSED MY PEOPLE TO HEAR
MY WORDS, THEN THEY WOULD HAVE**

TURNED THEM

**FROM THE EVIL OF THEIR DOINGS...
HE WHO HAS MY WORD,
LET HIM SPEAK MY WORD FAITHFULLY...
I AM AGAINST THOSE PROPHETS WHO...
CAUSE MY PEOPLE TO ERR...
THEY HAVE PERVERTED
THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD,
THE LORD OF HOSTS, OUR GOD.”**

Jeremiah 23:16-36 excerpts

**“...GOD,
HAVING RAISED UP
HIS SERVANT
JESUS (the prophet),
SENT HIM TO
BLESS YOU,
IN**

TURNING AWAY

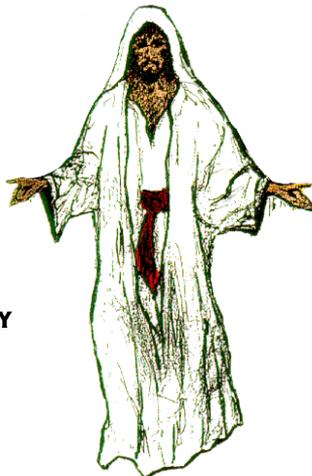
**EVERY ONE
OF YOU
FROM YOUR INIQUITIES.”**
Acts 3:26

Notice that in these passages from Jeremiah 23, as well as Acts 3, we see that the role of the prophet of God is to **TURN AWAY** the people from their iniquities, from the evil of their doings. This is the mark of the true prophet sent from God, but the false prophet will not bear such an emphasis. Rather by their false words they “cause God’s people to err.” Note the specific charge by God that “they have perverted the words of the living God.” The very same charge could be laid upon those who preach the wide-gate and broad-way gospel. They are causing God’s people to err by perverting the words of the living God !

To prove that this danger exists, we need to consider once more our opening text from Matthew Chapter 7, but this time we will add the very next verse in which Jesus, having warned about the counterfeit wide gate and broad way which leads to destruction, continues by stating the need to beware of false prophets:

**“ENTER BY
THE NARROW GATE;
FOR WIDE IS THE GATE,
AND BROAD IS
THE WAY
THAT LEADS TO
DESTRUCTION,
AND THERE ARE MANY
WHO GO IN BY IT.
BECAUSE NARROW
IS THE GATE
AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY
WHICH LEADS TO LIFE,
AND THERE ARE FEW
WHO FIND IT.”**

Matthew 7:13-14



**“BEWARE OF
FALSE PROPHETS,
WHO COME TO
YOU IN
SHEEP’S
CLOTHING,
BUT INWARDLY
THEY ARE
RAVENOUS
WOLVES.
YOU WILL
KNOW THEM
BY THEIR FRUITS.”**

Matthew 7:15-16

What is the biggest threat to God’s people? It is the message of false prophets in sheep’s clothing who, like in Jeremiah’s day, are causing God’s people to err by means of perverting the Words of the Lord.

**“ENTER BY THE NARROW GATE; FOR WIDE IS THE GATE,
AND BROAD IS THE WAY THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION,
AND THERE ARE MANY WHO GO IN BY IT. BECAUSE NARROW IS
THE GATE AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY WHICH LEADS TO LIFE,
AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT. BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS,
WHO COME TO YOU IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING,
BUT INWARDLY THEY ARE RAVENOUS WOLVES...”**

Matthew 7:13-15

Point of emphasis: Beware of drawing the conclusion that these words of warning from Jesus about a wide gate and a broad way are dealing with the teachings of obvious false cults such as Mormonism or Jehovah’s Witnesses. Rather He is speaking of false prophets who are wolves in sheep’s clothing, (professing Christians, teachers), functioning authoritatively in the Body of Christ bearing a false presentation of the reality and substance of Christianity. These promote a wide gate and a broad way with a non-confrontational gospel of easy believism. However, Jesus the prophet says these are false words spoken by false prophets that lead to destruction. It is only the narrow gate and the difficult way that lead to life.

I would like to suggest that you consider the other New Testament uses of this Greek word translated as “destruction” (#Apoleia-684- and 622 root in Strong’s Concordance). It is not a light word but rather means “damnable perdition, eternal misery, total destruction.” Here are four examples depicting such severity:

**“FALSE PROPHETS...WHO BRING IN DESTRUCTIVE HERESIES...
BRING ON THEMSELVES SWIFT DESTRUCTION.”** 2 Pet. 2:1

“...VESSELS OF WRATH PREPARED FOR DESTRUCTION.” Rom. 9:22

**“...THOSE WHO ARE UNTAUGHT AND UNSTABLE TWIST TO THEIR OWN
DESTRUCTION, AS THEY DO ALSO THE REST OF THE SCRIPTURES.”**

2 Pet. 3:16

**“...MANY WALK (AS) ENEMIES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST;
WHOSE END IS DESTRUCTION, WHOSE GOD IS THEIR BELLY,
AND WHOSE GLORY IS IN THEIR SHAME - WHO SET THEIR MIND
ON EARTHLY THINGS...”** Phil. 3:18-19

In the midst of such uses of the word destruction, we must place the severity of Jesus’ warning that this wide gate and broad way also lead to such devastating destruction (“damnable perdition, eternal misery, total destruction”). However, because today’s gospel is presented as an easy non-confrontational way to salvation, it is therefore readily received by many! Jesus refutes this heresy of easy believism with the warning that the way that leads to life is found by only a few. This is because it’s a narrow gate that we must enter, not a wide one, and it opens upon a difficult way, not a broad and easy way, once we are inside.

“NARROW IS THE GATE AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY WHICH LEADS TO LIFE, AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT.”

Matthew 7:14

If you tend to dismiss or resist this thought as being too radical or even erroneous, just remind yourself that it comes directly from the mouth of Jesus the true prophet of God. Look at His answer to His disciple's question once more:

**“LORD,
ARE THERE FEW
WHO ARE SAVED?”
AND HE SAID TO THEM,
“STRIVE TO ENTER THROUGH
THE NARROW GATE,
FOR MANY, I SAY TO YOU,
WILL SEEK TO ENTER
AND WILL NOT BE ABLE.”**

Luke 13: 23-24



For the disciples, these words embodied all that Jesus had preached for three and a half years of the narrow gate and the difficult way.

The Scriptures do not lack for vivid examples of Jesus presenting a confrontational gospel to the unsaved. Just consider what He told the rich young ruler who asked Him what was necessary to obtain eternal life. As you read this account, think back to what was presented as the way of salvation in the tract I printed out for you in the foreword of this book. There is a great disparity between these two accounts. Here is Jesus' encounter with the rich young ruler:

“GOOD TEACHER, WHAT SHALL I DO THAT I MAY INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?...

“...SELL WHATEVER YOU HAVE AND GIVE IT TO THE POOR, AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN; AND COME, TAKE UP THE CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME”.

BUT HE WAS SAD AT THIS WORD, AND WENT AWAY GRIEVED, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS. THEN JESUS LOOKED AROUND AND SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, “HOW HARD IT IS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE RICHES TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD!...CHILDREN, HOW HARD IT IS FOR THOSE WHO TRUST IN RICHES TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD!”

AND THEY WERE ASTONISHED BEYOND MEASURE, SAYING AMONG THEMSELVES, “WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?”

Mark 10:17-26 excerpts



“GOOD TEACHER, WHAT SHALL I DO THAT I MAY INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?... SELL WHATEVER YOU HAVE AND GIVE IT TO THE POOR, AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN; AND COME, TAKE UP THE CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME.”
BUT HE WAS SAD AT THIS WORD, AND WENT AWAY GRIEVED, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS. THEN JESUS LOOKED AROUND AND SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, ‘HOW HARD IT IS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE RICHES TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD!’CHILDREN, HOW HARD IT IS FOR THOSE WHO TRUST IN RICHES TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD! AND THEY WERE ASTONISHED BEYOND MEASURE, SAYING AMONG THEMSELVES, ‘WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?’ ”



Mark 10:17-26 excerpts

The rich young ruler had great possessions. It might be better said that his possessions had, or possessed, him. Jesus looked at him, loved him (vs.21), and therefore gave him a vivid picture of the narrow and difficult way that faced him on the other side of the gate as a follower of Christ. Jesus loved this young man enough to tell him about a cross that awaited him on the other side of being born again. Jesus preached the cost of following Him. He put him to the test as to whether he would place the call to follow Jesus above his possessions which possessed him. Jesus was calling this man to repent of the idolatry of his possessions. This story was never intended to be a blanket application for all who had riches. Paul gives counsel to rich believers contrary to Jesus’ words to the rich young ruler (see 1 Tim. 6:17-19). Jesus knew what was in the heart of this rich young ruler, it was his riches. Note well that Jesus let him walk away because he would not pay the price. The moral to the story? This is a descriptive example of what Jesus meant when He said “Many, I say to you, will seek to enter in and will not be able” (Luke 13:24). The cost of entering the narrow gate is often viewed as being too great a price to pay!

Let me ask you, if this same rich young ruler was presented with the modern-day version of the gospel, would any of these confrontational issues Jesus mentioned be raised? The answer is no, and there is a reason why. Modern-day presentations divulge a gospel based only on the **CONVERSION** experience instead of one based upon **DISCIPLESHIP**. It is important to see that each of these concepts promotes its own mental outlook (philosophy-way of life) on what constitutes the Christian life:

**CONVERSION
 PROMOTES THE
 MENTALITY OF
 A PAST EXPERIENCE**

**DISCIPLESHIP
 PROMOTES THE
 MENTALITY OF
 A PRESENT EMPHASIS**

Ponder these words carefully for they are vital keys to understanding what lies beyond the narrow gate:

**CONVERSION
PROMOTES THE MENTALITY
OF A PAST EXPERIENCE**

**DISCIPLESHIP
PROMOTES THE MENTALITY
OF A PRESENT EMPHASIS**

Do you think that the thrust of Christian teaching should focus upon a past experience such as, "I have been saved, born again, forgiven, and I am eternally secure?" Is it not more proper that having once laid a foundation of conversion, to now be centered upon a present emphasis such as the call to ongoing discipleship? Is this not what the apostle Paul is referring to when he exhorts believers:

"THEREFORE, LEAVING THE DISCUSSION OF THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST, LET US GO ON TO PERFECTION (MATURITY), NOT LAYING AGAIN THE FOUNDATION OF REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS AND OF FAITH TOWARD GOD..."

Heb. 6:1

Although conversion is a necessary foundational part of the gospel experience, Jesus always had his thoughts focused down the road on the other side of conversion which was the call to discipleship. As you consider these examples, ask yourself why it is that what we hear today is not the same as what Jesus emphasized:

**"THEN HE SAID TO THEM ALL,
"IF ANYONE DESIRES TO COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF,
AND TAKE UP THE CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME." Luke 9:23**

**"AND HE WHO DOES NOT TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW AFTER
ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME." Matt. 10:38**

**"AND WHOEVER DOES NOT BEAR HIS CROSS AND COME AFTER ME
CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE." Luke 14:27**

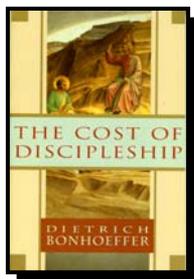
These Scriptures demonstrate how Jesus, the author of our salvation (Heb. 12:2), preached the call to discipleship to those who would enter the gate of salvation. It was not an emphasis based on a one-time past experience, but rather one of an ongoing daily commitment. If you listen to the presentation of the gospel today, you will find the emphasis being placed on the new birth experience instantly producing a state of eternal security, a position of "once saved always saved." When it comes to the sin issue, that too is relegated to a past experience with the popular cliché "every sin we have ever committed or ever will commit is already under the blood of Jesus." There is not one scriptural reference to support the pre-forgiveness of future sins. These are false words from false prophets that cause God's people to err. It is simply more of the perversion of the words of the Lord as Jeremiah stated. Statements pertaining to discipleship, or the confrontation presented to the rich young ruler by Jesus, are absent today because the emphasis is being placed on a one-time conversion experience instead of a call to ongoing discipleship!

If you have never read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's
"The Cost of Discipleship",

I would highly recommend that you do so.
It is a book that needs to be read often in the midst of
a Christian world that has been built upon the
concepts of "a wide gate and a broad way."

His two chapters on
"Costly Grace vs. Cheap Grace"
and "The Call to Discipleship"
are worth the cost of this book.

Here are some random excerpts:



A Touchstone Book
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"THE WORD OF CHEAP GRACE HAS BEEN THE RUIN OF MORE CHRISTIANS THAN ANY COMMANDMENT OF WORKS... CHEAP GRACE IS THE BITTEREST FOE OF DISCIPLESHIP..... THE CALL OF DISCIPLESHIP IS INSEPARABLE FROM GRACE....FOLLOWING CHEAP GRACE CAUSES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE TO MEAN NOTHING MORE THAN LIVING IN THE WORLD AND AS THE WORLD, IN BEING NO DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD...THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER IN THE WORLD HAS DEGENERATED INTO THE JUSTIFICATION OF SIN, COSTLY GRACE WAS TURNED INTO GRACE WITHOUT DISCIPLESHIP...GRACE IS COSTLY BECAUSE IT COMPELS A MAN TO SUBMIT TO THE YOKE OF CHRIST AND TO FOLLOW HIM...CHEAP GRACE IS THE PREACHING OF FORGIVENESS WITHOUT REQUIRING REPENTANCE...CHEAP GRACE IS GRACE WITHOUT DISCIPLESHIP, GRACE WITHOUT THE CROSS LIFE...COSTLY GRACE CALLS US TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST... IT IS COSTLY BECAUSE IT COSTS A MAN HIS LIFE...IT IS COSTLY BECAUSE IT CONDEMNS A LIFE OF SIN...CHEAP GRACE IS NOT THE KIND OF FORGIVENESS OF SIN WHICH FREES US FROM THE TOILS OF SIN. CHEAP GRACE IS THE GRACE WE BESTOW ON OURSELVES...WHAT WE MEAN BY CHEAP GRACE IS THE JUSTIFICATION OF SIN WITHOUT THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE REPENTANT SINNER WHO DEPARTS FROM SIN...CHEAP GRACE IS OFFERED TO THE WORLD AS A COVERING FOR ITS SINS, NO CONTRITION IS REQUIRED, STILL LESS ANY REAL DESIRE TO BE DELIVERED FROM SIN...THE ESSENCE OF CHEAP GRACE IS THAT THE ACCOUNT HAS BEEN PAID IN ADVANCE; AND BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN PAID, EVERYTHING CAN BE HAD FOR NOTHING...CHEAP GRACE IS THE DEADLY ENEMY OF OUR CHURCH. WE MUST FIGHT TODAY FOR COSTLY GRACE....IT IS ONLY THE OBEDIENT THAT TRULY BELIEVE. IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE, WE MUST OBEY...WITHOUT THIS PRELIMINARY STEP OF OBEDIENCE, OUR FAITH WILL ONLY BE A PIOUS HUMBUG, AND LEAD US TO THE GRACE WHICH IS NOT COSTLY...UNBELIEF THRIVES ON CHEAP GRACE, FOR IT IS DETERMINED TO PERSIST IN DISOBEDIENCE...THE ROAD TO FAITH PASSES THROUGH OBEDIENCE TO THE CALL OF JESUS. UNLESS A DEFINITE STEP IS DEMANDED, THE CALL VANISHES INTO THIN AIR, AND IF MEN IMAGINE THAT THEY CAN FOLLOW JESUS WITHOUT TAKING STEPS OF OBEDIENCE, THEY ARE DELUDING THEMSELVES...THE CALL TO FOLLOW IMPLIES THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OF BELIEVING ON JESUS CHRIST, AND THAT IS BY LEAVING ALL AND GOING WITH THE SON OF GOD..."

Let us now look at the biblical contents of the gospel. In doing so we will be able to instantly see what Jesus meant by the narrow gate and the difficult way that lead to life. We will also be able to see how this narrow gate and difficult way has been turned into a wide gate and a broad way



by the preaching of false prophets proclaiming a different gospel than what the prophet Jesus preached. Here is the gospel preached by the prophets John the Baptist and Jesus Christ:

<p>"...JOHN THE BAPTIST CAME PREACHING...AND SAYING, "REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND!" Matt. 3:2</p>	<p>"...JESUS BEGAN TO PREACH AND TO SAY, "REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND." Matt. 4:17</p>
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Two prophets sent forth with an identical message,
 (1) repent (2) for the Kingdom of God (or heaven) is at hand.
 Continue to read in Matthew 4 and you will come to what is the true content of the gospel message:

"NOW JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL GALILEE, TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES, PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM..." Matt. 4:23

The gospel is not to be merely the preaching of the message of the new birth, but rather it is the preaching of the Kingdom of God. Jesus did preach the necessity of the new birth to Nicodemus, but it was attached to this higher and ultimate purpose:

"MOST ASSUREDLY, I SAY UNTO YOU, UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD... UNLESS ONE IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD... DO NOT MARVEL THAT I SAID TO YOU, 'YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.'" John 3:3-7

Nicodemus, just like many today, marvel over the stated requirement to be born again. It has become the major thrust of what is being called the gospel. However, the gospel according to Jesus is the gospel of the Kingdom, not the gospel of the new birth. The new birth is the prerequisite for being able to see and to enter the Kingdom of God, but it is not the gospel. Where is the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom of God? What has happened to the emphasis of Jesus who:

"...WENT THROUGH EVERY CITY AND VILLAGE, PREACHING AND BRINGING THE GLAD TIDINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD..." Luke 8:1

Lest we think that the preaching of the Kingdom of God was limited to the Jewish people as some dispensational event only meant for them (this theory is taught today), consider that Paul taught these Kingdom concepts to both Jews and Gentiles alike:

“...HE EXPLAINED AND SOLEMNLY TESTIFIED OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PERSUADING THEM CONCERNING JESUS FROM BOTH THE LAW OF MOSES AND THE PROPHETS FROM MORNING UNTIL EVENING. AND SOME WERE PERSUADED BY THE THINGS WHICH WERE SPOKEN, AND SOME DISBELIEVED. SO WHEN THEY DID NOT AGREE AMONG THEMSELVES, THEY DEPARTED AFTER PAUL HAD SAID....

‘THEREFORE LET IT BE KNOWN TO YOU THAT THE SALVATION OF GOD HAS BEEN SENT TO THE GENTILES, AND THEY WILL HEAR IT!’ AND WHEN HE HAD SAID THESE WORDS, THE JEWS DEPARTED AND HAD A GREAT DISPUTE AMONG THEMSELVES. THEN PAUL DWELT TWO WHOLE YEARS IN HIS OWN RENTED HOUSE, AND RECEIVED ALL WHO CAME UNTO HIM, PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND TEACHING THE THINGS WHICH CONCERN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST...” Acts 28:23-31 excerpts

For the sake of enhancing the truth that Paul preached the Kingdom of God to Gentiles, you need only to consider the many references he made in his epistles written to the Gentiles that pertain to the Kingdom of God. Here are a few:

“FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT FOOD AND DRINK, BUT RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE AND JOY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT. HE WHO SERVES CHRIST IN THESE THINGS IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD...” Rom. 14:17-18

“FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD BUT IN POWER.” 1 Cor. 4:20

“DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THE UNRIGHTEOUS WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? DO NOT BE DECEIVED. NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATERS, NOR ADULTERERS, NOR HOMOSEXUALS, NOR SODOMITES, NOR THIEVES, NOR COVETOUS, NOR DRUNKARDS, NOR REVILERS, NOR EXTORTIONERS, WILL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”
1 Cor. 6:9-10

“...I TELL YOU BEFOREHAND, JUST AS I TOLD YOU IN TIME PAST, THAT THOSE WHO PRACTICE SUCH THINGS (THE 21 WORKS OF THE FLESH) WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.” Gal. 5:21

“HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE.”
Col. 1:13



These are all words written to Gentile churches long after Jesus preached the Kingdom of God to the Jews. This is not a dispensational message but rather it is the gospel of the Kingdom being worked out in the lives of those who have been born again, Jew and Gentile alike!

The following two charts give us a synopsis of the message of the gospel. It is the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom of God. However, it requires men to repent (and be born again) to enter into the Kingdom, and that is why it is a narrow gate that few find (like the rich young ruler). This is what Jesus meant by the narrow gate. He also spoke of a difficult way. The difficult way lies beyond the gate. It is a call to discipleship within the confines of the Kingdom of God:



It is not without significance that the early church was considered a cultic sect which bore the reputation and the cynical nickname of being “the Way.” The Book of Acts records this truth four times (see Acts 9:2, 22:4, 24:14, 24:22). Think on this, they were not called “the gate,” but rather “the Way,” and that was because the emphasis of the early church was not placed on the gate of entrance (new birth) but rather on the way of the Kingdom once inside the gate. It was Kingdom life, a vision that cultivated the call to discipleship. Look at this emphasis of Kingdom discipleship being placed upon the early church as a source of motivation and spiritual vision:

“AND WHEN THEY HAD PREACHED THE GOSPEL TO THAT CITY AND MADE MANY DISCIPLES, THEY RETURNED... STRENGTHENING THE SOULS OF THE DISCIPLES, EXHORTING THEM TO CONTINUE IN THE FAITH, AND SAYING, “WE MUST THROUGH MANY TRIBULATIONS ENTER THE KINGDOM...”
 Acts 14:21-22

“...WE OURSELVES (THE APOSTLES) BOAST OF YOU AMONG THE CHURCHES OF GOD FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND FAITH IN ALL YOUR PERSECUTIONS AND TRIBULATIONS THAT YOU ENDURE, WHICH IS MANIFEST EVIDENCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE COUNTED WORTHY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, FOR WHICH YOU ALSO SUFFER...” 2 Thess. 1:4-5

Do give thoughtful consideration to these passages for they bring out the awesome truth that the disciples were being measured by God Himself as to whether they were being found worthy of the Kingdom of God! How was their worthiness being measured? It was by the things that they suffered for the sake of Kingdom living!

“...WE OURSELVES (THE APOSTLES) BOAST OF YOU AMONG THE CHURCHES OF GOD FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND FAITH IN ALL YOUR PERSECUTIONS AND TRIBULATIONS THAT YOU ENDURE, WHICH IS MANIFEST EVIDENCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE COUNTED WORTHY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, FOR WHICH YOU ALSO SUFFER...”

2 Thess. 1:4-5

Such vision of the Kingdom is sorely lacking today and, in a moment, I will show you why it is so. For the present, consider carefully the comparison below. I plead with you not to hastily pass over it. One view represents the mentality cultivated by the vision of discipleship in the Kingdom of God. The other is a one-time event mentality of conversion that is void of any source of motivation once having passed through the gate.

Which of these two perspectives represents your understanding of the contents and the purpose of the gospel?

(Selah! Think on that)

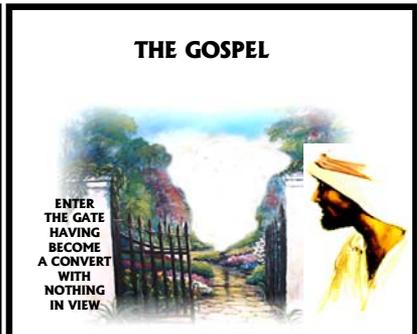
The choices are to either

**1) ENTER THE NARROW GATE
AS A DISCIPLE
WITH THE KINGDOM IN VIEW:**

**2) ENTER THE WIDE GATE
AS A CONVERT
WITH NOTHING IN VIEW:**



**DISCIPLESHIP
PROMOTES THE MENTALITY OF
“A PRESENT EMPHASIS”**



**CONVERSION
PROMOTES THE MENTALITY OF
“A PAST EXPERIENCE”**

“WRITE THE VISION AND MAKE IT PLAIN ON TABLETS, THAT HE MAY RUN WHO READS IT.”

Hab. 2:2

“WHERE THERE IS NO VISION THE PEOPLE CAST OFF RESTRAINT.”

Prov. 29:18

Ask yourself some hard questions. Which description best fits your concept of what the Christian life is all about? Are you a person of biblical vision or are you lacking vision? Are you hearing all that the prophet Jesus has said unto you as Acts 3:22 states? Is it possible that you are being led astray by the words of those whom Jesus calls false prophets?

Consider with me once more what the prophet Jesus said comprises the gospel that leads to life: →

It has a narrow gate and once inside the gate there is a difficult way to follow as a disciple of the King who rules this Kingdom - Jesus Christ.



We will look more at this Kingdom way in a moment. Let us now concentrate on the narrow gate which is the call to repentance. Like the message of the Kingdom of God, the gospel emphasis upon the prerequisite demand to repent is also missing from the modern-day gospel. Think about it! Both the emphasis Jesus places upon repentance and the emphasis on the Kingdom of God have been subtly extracted from the gospel message. This is deception!

We are going to look now at various Scriptures from John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul. The illustration on the left defines for us what constitutes the narrow gate unto salvation. The one on the right takes those very same Scriptures and removes the initial statement or description of repentance. By doing so the narrow gate easily becomes the wide gate which Jesus has warned will lead to destruction:



Carefully weigh the visual alteration of these Scriptures because that is what is being done to them doctrinally by means of the wide-gate and broad-way gospel. By omitting the prerequisite call to repent, the message begins with “believe in the gospel” (Mk.1:15) or “be converted that your sins may be blotted out”, (Acts 3:19), and what is presented as The Great Commission in Luke 24:47 becomes a great omission by preaching “remission of sins in His name” without the prerequisite call to preach repentance.

Let us consider another example:

"TO OPEN THEIR EYES AND TO TURN THEM FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, AND (TO TURN THEM) FROM THE POWER OF SATAN TO GOD, THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND AN INHERITANCE AMONG THOSE WHO ARE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH IN ME"
Acts 26:18



"NARROW GATE"

~~**"TO OPEN THEIR EYES AND TO TURN THEM FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, AND (TO TURN THEM) FROM THE POWER OF SATAN TO GOD,**~~

THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND AN INHERITANCE AMONG THOSE WHO ARE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH IN ME"
Acts 26:18



"WIDE GATE"

This Scripture reference from Acts 26:16-18 is the account of the apostle Paul being called by God as a minister to the Gentiles. It is perhaps the most detailed depiction of what God intended the gospel to accomplish. Instead of the simple command to preach repentance as in our other examples, we have this detailed account of what God commissioned Paul to accomplish in the lives of the Gentiles. We could look at it as an amplification of what repentance is designed to accomplish in the life of a believer:

**"I HAVE MADE YOU A MINISTER...
TO THE GENTILES TO WHOM I NOW SEND YOU,**

(1) **TO OPEN THEIR EYES AND
(2) TO TURN THEM FROM
DARKNESS TO LIGHT, AND
TO TURN THEM FROM THE
POWER OF SATAN TO GOD,**

(3)

**THAT (IN ORDER THAT) THEY MAY
RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
AND AN INHERITANCE AMONG
THOSE WHO ARE SANCTIFIED
(SET APART) BY FAITH IN ME."**

**THE OBJECTIVES OF
REPENTANCE**

**THE OBJECTIVES OF
SALVATION**

Look carefully at the progressive association of the words that God spoke to Paul. They contain what Paul was divinely commissioned to preach and, I might add, what every minister of God is supposed to continue to preach. The gospel message is not to begin with the preaching of "the forgiveness of sins." It must begin with the three stated objectives that only true repentance can produce. Otherwise, we have a people relishing the fact that they have forgiveness of sins and holding to a promise of possessing "an inheritance in Christ by faith" but never having had their "eyes opened" to the call to be "turned from darkness to light." They are professing children of light who continue to walk in darkness. Repentance demands the turning from darkness to light. They remain a people who have not been turned away from the power of Satan unto the power of God. The Kingdom of God, says Paul, is not in word, but in power! (1 Cor. 4:20).

"TO OPEN THEIR EYES AND TO TURN THEM
 FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, AND (TO TURN THEM)
 FROM THE POWER OF SATAN TO GOD,
 THAT THEY
 MAY
 RECEIVE
 FORGIVENESS
 OF SINS
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Acts 26:18



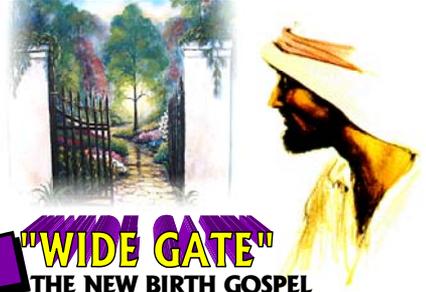
"WIDE GATE"

The doctrine of repentance, which makes for a narrow gate by which few will enter, suddenly becomes wide open by omitting the need to repent, then going directly to a gospel of forgiveness of sins by means of the new birth. The new birth and the forgiveness of sins is the **RESULT** of first responding to the call to repent. Repentance is a word that **CONFRONTS**. The preaching of forgiveness of sins is a word that **COMFORTS**. The modern-day gospel is eliminating the words that confront and replacing them with only the words that comfort. This is what is turning the narrow gate into a wide gate in which many will enter because it is costless and crossless. Had such a message been preached to the rich young ruler he would have readily accepted it as the way to eternal life. I fear that many are doing exactly that today!

Although such a costless and crossless wide-gate gospel is most appealing to the masses (who does not want forgiveness of sin and avoidance of hell-fire?), this pleasant doctrine should be looked at in light of this disturbing passage in John 2:23-25:

Many
 believed in
 His name,
 but did Jesus
 believe in
 them?
 Did He
 commit
 Himself to
 them?
 He did not.
 Why?
 He knew
 what was in
 their heart!

"MANY BELIEVED IN HIS NAME...
 BUT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO THEM...
 BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL MEN...HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN."
 ("HE COULD READ MEN'S HEARTS"- Amp.)
John 2:23-25



BEWARE
 "WIDE GATE"
 THE NEW BIRTH GOSPEL
 OF FORGIVENESS OF SINS

People believed in Jesus back then for many unusual reasons. He could perform miracles, raise the dead, heal the sick, cast out demons, provide fish and bread to the multitudes. He paid taxes by finding money in the mouths of fishes.

**"MANY BELIEVED IN HIS NAME...
BUT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO THEM...
BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL MEN...HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN."
("HE COULD READ MEN'S HEARTS"- Amp.)
John 2:23-25**

**"WIDE GATE"
THE NEW BIRTH GOSPEL
OF FORGIVENESS OF SINS**

He caused fishermen to prosper by telling them where to place their nets. He could calm the angry storms. Today Jesus is merely presented as one who has a wonderful plan for your life. He can heal your marriage, cause your business to prosper, heal your diseases, solve your financial crisis, and so the list goes on. However, God reads the heart of man and therefore to some who believe in Him, He does not commit to them. Why? Because, like those in Jesus' day, they believe in Him for the wrong motives.

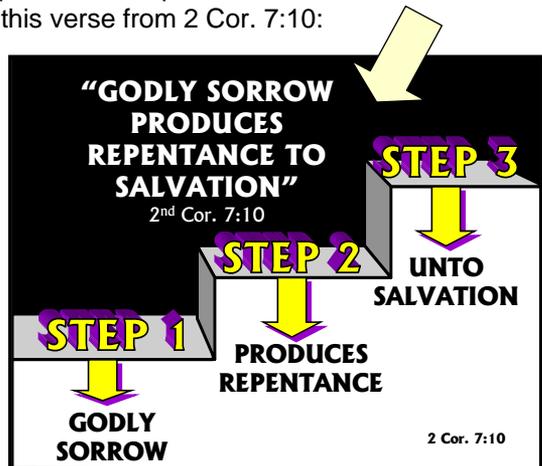
There is only one way that leads to salvation. There is only one way by which Jesus will commit to men. It is by means of a proper response to the call for repentance:

**"...GOD NOW COMMANDS ALL
MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT."
Acts 17:30**

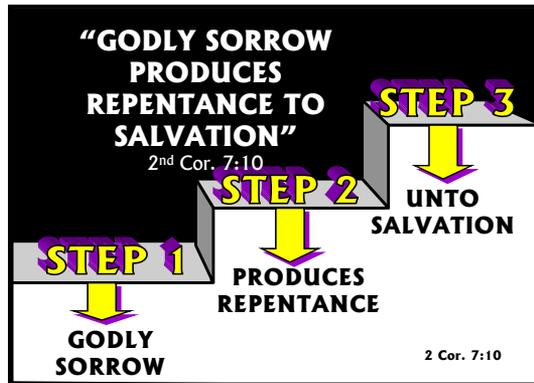
**"...UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU
WILL ALL LIKewise PERISH."
Luke 13:3,5**

Since the command to repent is inescapable, how then are we to repent? Look carefully at this verse from 2 Cor. 7:10:

This verse shows clearly that it takes godly sorrow to produce repentance. When God sees godly sorrow for sin in our hearts, then He will grant the ability to produce repentance which leads unto salvation. This is the only way that leads to eternal life.



Since it requires godly sorrow to produce repentance, let us examine the subject of godly sorrow. Below is an example of such. It is the repentant heart of King David after he was confronted by the prophet of God over his sin with Bathsheba:



“HAVE MERCY UPON ME, O GOD...BLOT OUT MY TRANSGRESSIONS, WASH ME THOROUGHLY FROM MY INIQUITY AND CLEANSE ME FROM MY SIN. FOR I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSIONS, AND MY SIN IS EVER BEFORE ME. AGAINST YOU, AND YOU ONLY, HAVE I SINNED AND DONE THIS EVIL IN YOUR SIGHT...YOU DESIRE TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS...CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, O GOD AND RENEW A STEADFAST SPIRIT WITHIN ME...THE SACRIFICES OF GOD ARE A BROKEN SPIRIT, A BROKEN AND A CONTRITE HEART- THESE, O GOD, YOU WILL NOT DESPISE.” Excerpts from Psalm 51

Consider now the context of 2 Cor.7:10 for it gives us warning about a counterfeit sorrow that does not produce repentance:

“NOW I REJOICE, NOT THAT YOU WERE MADE SORRY, BUT THAT YOUR SORROW LED TO REPENTANCE. FOR YOU WERE MADE SORRY IN A GODLY MANNER...”

FOR GODLY SORROW PRODUCES REPENTANCE TO SALVATION... but

THE SORROW OF THE WORLD PRODUCES DEATH.

FOR OBSERVE THIS VERY THING, THAT YOU SORROWED IN A GODLY MANNER: WHAT DILIGENCE IT PRODUCED IN YOU, WHAT CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, WHAT INDIGNATION, WHAT FEAR, WHAT VEHEMENT DESIRE, WHAT ZEAL, WHAT VINDICATION! IN ALL THINGS YOU PROVED YOURSELVES TO BE CLEAR IN THIS MATTER.” 2 Cor. 7:9-11

Only godly sorrow produces repentance unto salvation. The other type of sorrow is the sorrow of this world, and it leads to death. Worldly sorrow must not be mistaken for godly sorrow for the difference is a matter of life and death! Simply put, godly sorrow is sorrow toward God for sinning against Him and His Word. David expresses such godly sorrow. Worldly sorrow is like Esau:

“...LEST ANYONE FALL SHORT OF THE GRACE OF GOD...LEST THERE BE ANY PROFANE PERSON LIKE ESAU, WHO FOR ONE MORSEL OF FOOD SOLD HIS BIRTHRIGHT. FOR YOU KNOW THAT AFTERWARD HE WANTED TO INHERIT THE BLESSING, **HE WAS REJECTED, FOR HE FOUND NO PLACE FOR REPENTANCE, THOUGH HE SOUGHT IT DILIGENTLY WITH TEARS.”** Heb. 12:16-17

Take note that Esau’s form of repentance was rejected by God!

Often sinners turn to God in the midst of their self-inflicted crises, and they have sorrow, but it is worldly sorrow. They are sorry for being caught, sorry for being ashamed for the mess they are in, but like Esau, sorry for all the wrong reasons. Esau could not find repentance though he sought it diligently and even with tears. This story is recorded for us so we can learn from it. Unless we have true heartfelt godly sorrow toward God for our sin, we will not find the ability to repent. Esau was rejected, and so will all who express only worldly sorrow. It is only godly sorrow that produces repentance unto salvation! How then do we know that we have been granted repentance by God? Again 2 Cor. 7 holds the answer, there will be visible evidence for all to see and observe:

“FOR OBSERVE THIS VERY THING, THAT YOU SORROWED IN A GODLY MANNER: WHAT DILIGENCE IT PRODUCED IN YOU, WHAT CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, WHAT INDIGNATION, WHAT FEAR, WHAT VEHEMENT DESIRE, WHAT ZEAL, WHAT VINDICATION! IN ALL THINGS YOU PROVED YOURSELVES TO BE CLEAR IN THIS MATTER.” 2 Cor. 7:9-11

John the Baptist and the apostle Paul call for fruits and works of repentance. Our passage in 2 Cor. 7:11 lists seven such fruits or works worthy of and befitting repentance.

“BEAR FRUITS WORTHY OF REPENTANCE...”
Mat. 3:8

1. What **DILIGENCE...**
2. What **CLEARING OF YOURSELVES...**
3. What **INDIGNATION...**
4. What **FEAR...**
5. What **VEHEMENT DESIRE...**
6. What **ZEAL...**
7. what **VINDICATION...**

2 Cor. 7:11

“DO WORKS BEFITTING REPENTANCE...”
Acts 26:20

Can we know if we have truly repented? It will be evident to all. Over many years of ministry I have seen professing believers who showed forth little or no evidence that they had the life of God in them. This is so contrary to the testimony of Scripture:

“HE DIED FOR ALL, THAT THOSE WHO LIVE SHOULD NO LONGER LIVE FOR THEMSELVES, BUT FOR HIM WHO DIED FOR THEM... THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; OLD THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW.”

2 Cor. 5:15-17

I fear that there are many professing believers who have entered by the false wide gate devoid of the requirement to repent, and therefore they lack any evidence of having been truly impacted by godly sorrow.

**“I ENTREATED YOUR FAVOR (GRACE) WITH MY WHOLE HEART;
BE MERCIFUL TO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD.
I THOUGHT ABOUT MY WAYS, AND TURNED MY FEET
TO YOUR TESTIMONIES. I MADE HASTE, AND DID NOT DELAY
TO KEEP YOUR COMMANDMENTS.”** Psalm 119:58-60



This Scripture is the clearest definition of what it means to repent. Notice on this chart that it begins with godly sorrow, and by seeking God with the whole heart for His favor (or grace).

“BEAR FRUITS WORTHY OF REPENTANCE...” Mat. 3:8
1. GODLY SORROW: <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> “I ENTREATED YOUR FAVOR WITH MY WHOLE HEART; BE MERCIFUL TO ME...” </div>
2. REPENTANCE: <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> I THOUGHT ABOUT MY WAYS AND TURNED MY FEET... </div>
3. FRUITS OF REPENTANCE: <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> I MADE HASTE, AND DID NOT DELAY TO KEEP YOUR COMMANDMENTS.” </div>
Psalm 119:58-59
“DO WORKS BEFITTING REPENTANCE...” Acts 26:20

Secondly, it requires that we contemplate our own ways, our lifestyle. In areas where we are in opposition to God's Word then we are to turn our feet. This is true repentance. We must stop going our own way, turn around, and go the other way, God's way. Notice that it is not a “down-the-road-objective.” You have certainly heard the old cliché that “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.”. The Psalmist tells us of the need to “make haste and do not delay to keep His commandments”. As long as we continue practicing sin, we have not repented, for repentance is **TO TURN**. Do you remember earlier I gave you a unique way in which Jesus wants to bless us?

**“...GOD, HAVING RAISED UP HIS SERVANT JESUS (the prophet),
SENT HIM TO BLESS YOU, IN
TURNING AWAY
EVERY ONE OF YOU FROM YOUR INIQUITIES.”**
 Acts 3:26

Let's be very practical. How is Jesus going to turn us away from our iniquities? He can only turn us away from our iniquities by convincing us to TURN our feet from our present path through repentance. Why is it that the modern-day gospel majors in forgiveness of sins but does not even mention the need to turn from our iniquities? It is because the narrow gate has become a wide gate by omitting the specified prerequisite attached to the gospel, the need to repent:

**“...GOD NOW COMMANDS ALL
MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT.”**
 Acts 17:30

**“...UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU
WILL ALL LIKewise PERISH.”**
 Luke 13:3,5

**"...GOD NOW COMMANDS ALL
MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT."**

Acts 17:30

**"...UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU
WILL ALL LIKewise PERISH."**

Luke 13:3, 5

How serious is the call to repent? It is deadly serious! No one can be saved unless they repent. How serious a problem in the church is the lack of repentance? Just consider the fact that Jesus writes seven letters to His churches in which He calls five out of the seven to "repent or else" (Rev. 2-3). Take the time to read the references and you will be struck by the severity of what is listed as "or else" by Jesus. Let us not forget that these statements are certainly to be considered as among the words spoken by Jesus the prophet in which we were exhorted and warned:

**"...HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU.
AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO WILL NOT HEAR
THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED
FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE."** Acts 3:22-23

EPHESUS: REPENT OR ELSE...	Rev. 2:5
PERGAMOS: REPENT OR ELSE...	Rev. 2:16
THYATIRA REPENT OR ELSE...	Rev. 2:21
SARDIS: REPENT OR ELSE...	Rev. 3:3
LAODICEA: REPENT OR ELSE...	Rev. 3:19

The seven letters of Jesus to His churches are a prophetic depiction of the spiritual condition of the churches right up to the event known as the rapture ("hold fast what you have till I come" Rev. 2:25). Therefore we can see that the majority (5 out of 7) of God's end-time churches will be found in serious need of repenting! Is it not because of the perverted wide-gate and broad-way gospel message which, from the very beginning, has eliminated the doctrine of repentance? If repentance has been successfully removed as a requirement to enter the gate of salvation, does it not stand to reason that there would be a lack of evidence of universal repentance within the church as well? The seven letters confirm this conclusion for the last-days church is badly in need of repenting as these letters indicate.

Let us be clear about it, repentance is what makes the gate narrow in which few will pay the price to enter! Not only do we have this pathetic state of the church in dire need of repentance just prior to the rapture, but the book of Revelation goes on to show that the whole unregenerate world, even during the outpouring of the wrath of God, will not be willing to repent!

“BUT THE REST OF MANKIND, WHO WERE NOT KILLED BY THESE PLAGUES, DID NOT REPENT OF THE WORKS OF THEIR HANDS, THAT THEY SHOULD NOT WORSHIP DEMONS, AND IDOLS OF GOLD, SILVER, BRASS, STONE, AND WOOD, WHICH CAN NEITHER SEE NOR HEAR NOR WALK; AND THEY DID NOT REPENT OF THEIR SORCERIES OR THEIR SEXUAL IMMORALITY OR THEIR THEFTS.” Rev.9:20-21

“THEN THE FIFTH ANGEL Poured OUT HIS BOWL ON THE THRONE OF THE BEAST, AND HIS KINGDOM...AND THEY GNAWED THEIR TONGUES BECAUSE OF THE PAIN. AND THEY BLASPHEMED THE GOD OF HEAVEN BECAUSE OF THEIR PAINS AND THEIR SORES, AND DID NOT REPENT OF THEIR DEEDS.” Rev. 16:10-11

There is a Scripture passage in Proverbs that says, “Who can find a faithful man?” (Prov. 20:6). The implication is that faithfulness is a rare quality among men. From all that we have seen about repentance, we might say the same principle is applicable, namely, that repentance among mankind is a rare quality. Apparently it will be rare among the churches in the last days as Jesus calls most of His churches to repentance. The above passages from Revelation certainly show that it will also be a rare thing among the unsaved as even in the midst of the wrath of God they will continue to harden their hearts. Obviously, it is very difficult for mankind to repent. Let us hear this clearly:

**IT IS NOT GOD WHO MAKES THE GATE NARROW,
IT IS THE LACK OF WILLINGNESS OF MAN TO REPENT
THAT MAKES THE GATE NARROW.**

It is narrow because all of mankind, both the believer and the unbeliever, find it very difficult to humble themselves and take responsibility for their own actions. Therefore the gate is narrow and few will be able to enter it because of their own inability and unwillingness to repent. God testifies of this truth:

**“...THE LORD IS LONGSUFFERING TOWARD US,
NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH BUT THAT
ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE.”** 2 Pet. 3:9

**“...DO YOU DESPISE THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS,
FORBEARANCE, AND LONGSUFFERING, NOT KNOWING THAT THE
GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS TO REPENTANCE?
BUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR HARDNESS AND YOUR
IMPENITENT HEART YOU ARE STORING UP FOR YOURSELF WRATH
IN THE DAY OF WRATH AND REVELATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENT OF GOD, WHO WILL RENDER TO EACH ONE
ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.”** Rom. 2:4-6

CHAPTER TWO

"THE DIFFICULT WAY"



We have examined how the narrow gate becomes a wide gate,

let us now begin to consider how the difficult way becomes a broad way.

What was done to the narrow gate is also being done to what Jesus called the difficult way. The call to repentance made the gate very narrow and thus only entered by a few. Therefore, the elimination of any emphasis upon repentance makes it a wide gate in which many can enter.

The message of the Kingdom of God is what makes the Christian life a difficult way which few embrace. Eliminate the emphasis upon the Kingdom in the gospel message and instantly it becomes a broad way which many can easily endure as it places little or no sanctified demands on the convert.



"THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET...HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU..."

"NARROW GATE"

GODLY SORROW PRODUCES REPENTANCE UNTO SALVATION
2 Cor. 7:10

"WIDE GATE"

PREACH SALVATION WITHOUT REPENTANCE

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO WILL NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE"
Acts 3:22-23

"THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET...HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU..."

"DIFFICULT WAY"

PREACH THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"BROAD WAY"

PREACH THE GOSPEL WITHOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO WILL NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE"
Acts 3:22-23

Apart from embracing the Kingdom way of life, the only alternative is the kingdoms of this world. Look carefully and you will see that Christianity in America is inundated with, and married together with all kinds of priorities and causes that are not Kingdom priorities. Unless the Kingdom of God is held high as a vision and a goal, the kingdoms of this world are the only alternatives. Therefore God's people act no differently than the worldly kingdom in which they live. In fact, the political, social and cultural issues of the unsaved become the all consuming priorities of God's people as well. Why so?

BECAUSE THE KINGDOM OF GOD DOES NOT EXIST IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER AS A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD.

“THEN THE DEVIL, TAKING HIM UP ON A HIGH MOUNTAIN, SHOWED HIM ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD IN A MOMENT OF TIME. AND THE DEVIL SAID TO HIM, “ALL THIS AUTHORITY I WILL GIVE YOU, AND THEIR GLORY; FOR THIS HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO ME, AND I GIVE IT TO WHOMEVER I WISH. THEREFORE, IF YOU WILL WORSHIP BEFORE ME, ALL WILL BE YOURS.” Luke 4:5-7, Matt. 4:8-9

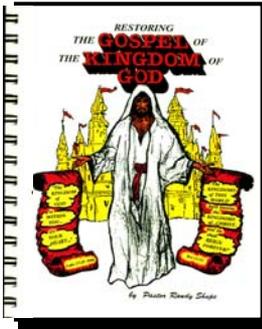


It is not coincidental that after Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness forty days, He went forth preaching, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand” (see Matt.4:8-9, 4:17). Satan knew that Jesus was going to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, he attempted to sidetrack Jesus by offering Him all the kingdoms of the world that are under his authority. Luke’s account above states that all the kingdoms of the world belong to Satan, and that he could give them to whomever he wished. Do note that Jesus did not dispute Satan’s claim to possess authority over all the kingdoms of this world, and this includes America!

There is an important moral to this story that impacts every follower of Christ. Satan did not want the Kingdom of God preached as the gospel message, so just prior to Jesus beginning His ministry, the devil offers Him all the kingdoms of this world. Satan is presently offering his earthly kingdoms as a substitute for the Kingdom of God to God’s people, particularly preachers of the gospel. Jesus said no to Satan’s offer, but I believe multitudes of modern-day preachers of “the gospel” in this country have said “yes, we very much want the kingdoms of this world, especially America!” I make that charge simply because of the wide-spread lack of evidence in this country of the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God as the central theme of God’s plan of salvation! To worship any kingdom under Satan’s authority is to worship Satan himself! Christians in America have been swallowed up by the fervor of religious patriotism, the unbiblical marriage of “God and country.” God expects His people to choose between America and the Kingdom of God because of this stated principle:

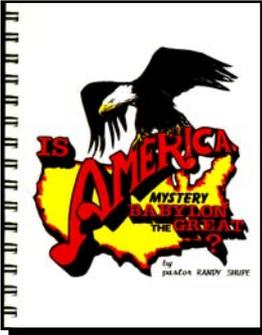
“NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS; FOR EITHER HE WILL HATE THE ONE AND LOVE THE OTHER, OR ELSE HE WILL BE LOYAL TO THE ONE AND DESPISE THE OTHER.”

Matt. 6:24

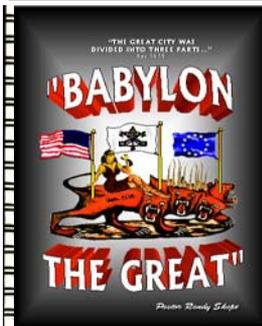


I have resisted a desire to repeat in this present book what I have written in three other books pertaining to America as a kingdom of this present world which is under the authority of Satan. I strongly urge you to read them all.

The first book, **“Restoring the Gospel of the Kingdom of God”** deals with the evidence that no earthly kingdom is a substitute for the Kingdom of God. This book also teaches in a practical way what is the true Kingdom of God.



The second book, **“Is America Mystery Babylon the Great?”** will tell you about America’s role in end-time prophecy. It too goes into great depth to dispel the idea that this is “One Nation Under God.”



The last book, **“Babylon the Great”** deals not only with America, but also with the European Union and Catholicism’s role in forming “Mystery Babylon the Great”, the New World Order of the last days. I can only urge you to order this trio of books which will challenge you to the core as a Christian concerning the substitute patriotic gospel that has replaced the true gospel of the Kingdom of God here in America!

Although I highly recommend reading the above books as a great enhancement to the subject we are dealing with, know that this book you are reading is sufficient by itself to convince you that the gospel that is being preached today is in essence, “another gospel” than what Jesus preached. Paul warns explicitly:

“...THERE ARE SOME WHO TROUBLE YOU AND WANT TO PERVERT THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. BUT EVEN IF WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN WHAT WE HAVE PREACHED TO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED. AS WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, SO NOW I SAY AGAIN, IF ANYONE PREACHES ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.” Gal. 1:7-9

As Christians we are not to accept the preaching of any other gospel than what we find articulated in the Word of God!

**“BELOVED, DO NOT BELIEVE EVERY SPIRIT,
BUT TEST THE SPIRITS, WHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD;
BECAUSE MANY FALSE PROPHETS HAVE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD.”**

1 Jn. 4:1

John, like Jesus in our text from Matthew 7, warns of false prophets. Jesus said it would be such false prophets that would turn the narrow gate and the difficult way of the gospel of the Kingdom into a deceptive wide gate and broad way that would lead to destruction. Our objective is to determine in a practical way how this is being done. John tells us that we are not to believe every spirit but test the spirits whether they are of God. Paul gave us a litmus test pertaining to what is a true or false gospel:

**“...IF ANYONE PREACHES ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN
WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.”**

Gal. 1:9

The gospel message is to be the one Paul preached. Here in America, the gospel is devoid of the message of the Kingdom of God as Jesus and Paul preached it. We must ask ourselves why this is so, and how did it happen? We are going to look at what is recorded in the Word of God pertaining to the Kingdom of God. It is only this biblical presentation of that Kingdom which we as God's people are to embrace. However, It should not surprise us that Satan, as the master deceiver, would attempt to disguise one of his kingdoms as being the Kingdom of God on earth. He is very clever at creating subtle substitutes because he does not want the true Kingdom of God to be understood or embraced by God's people. Satan has cunningly crafted a concept of the gospel that has caused Christians in this country to be at ease with the elimination of the true gospel of the Kingdom of God. This substitute gospel is heavily intertwined with the political structure of this country due to the belief that its foundations were laid by God Himself.

Apart from the books that I recommended to you that would greatly challenge that concept, I want to zero in on the origin from which this substitute political gospel springs. The French historian, Amaury de Riencourt, states in his book, *“The Coming Caesars”*:

**“GIVEN SUFFICIENT TIME, CHERISHED
TRADITIONS BECOME DOGMATIC BELIEFS”**

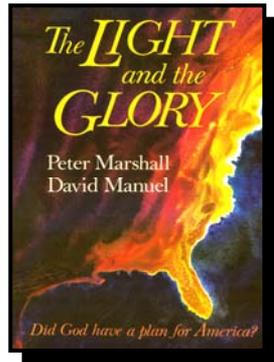
Jesus warned about the power of tradition being able to “make the Word of God of no effect” (Mk.7:9-13). I believe that Christianity in this country has comfortably laid aside the true message of the Kingdom of God as presented in the Word of God. It has been replaced by a handed down religious tradition that began with the Puritans.

**“BELOVED, DO NOT BELIEVE EVERY SPIRIT,
BUT TEST THE SPIRITS, WHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD;
BECAUSE MANY FALSE PROPHETS HAVE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD.”**

1 Jn. 4:1

Below are some excerpts from a very popular book among Christians in America. Keep in mind that these are not the created views or opinions of Peter Marshall the author. Rather this book is based on the historical writings of the Puritans who helped to found this nation.

Peter Marshall uses extensively the historical accounts and writings of the Puritans to support the popular ideology that America was founded by the Puritans as God's "New Israel" on earth. This book is widely accepted by Christianity in America because we want it to be true. We would like to be the new chosen nation of God replacing Israel. Because the Puritans profusely quoted the Scriptures, there is a tendency to readily attribute to them a rightness to their beliefs.



However, it is dangerous to be swayed by the copious quotation of Scriptures for the Pharisees were good at that also. Rather it is the proper or improper application of Scripture that must be weighed. According to their constant tendency to spiritualize the Scriptures, the Puritans felt they had a divine mission to perform for God:

“THEY SAW THEMSELVES AS CALLED TO A NEW PROMISE LAND IN ORDER TO FOUND A NEW ISRAEL...” (20) THE LORD BROUGHT HIS SERVANTS INTO A DESERT LAND OF AMERICA...IN THE WAY OF SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD FOR THE PURPOSE OF “FULLER AND BETTER REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, THAN IT HATH YET APPEARED IN THE WORLD.”

“ (Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, pg. 7-11)

IN THE VIRGIN WILDERNESS OF AMERICA GOD WAS MAKING HIS MOST SIGNIFICANT ATTEMPT SINCE ANCIENT ISRAEL TO CREATE A NEW ISRAEL...THE PURITANS UNDERSTOOD NEW ENGLAND TO BE A “TYPE AND EMBLEM OF NEW JERUSALEM.”

(Bercovitch, *Puritan Origins*, pg. 51)

“A NEW JERUSALEM, A MODEL OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST UPON EARTH- WE AMERICANS WERE INTENDED TO BE A LIVING PROOF TO THE REST OF THE WORLD...” (PG. 23) “WHAT IF, IN PARTICULAR, HE HAD A PLAN FOR THOSE HE WOULD BRING TO AMERICA, A PLAN WHICH SAW THIS CONTINENT AS THE STAGE FOR A NEW ACT IN THE DRAMA OF MANKIND’S REDEMPTION? COULD IT BE THAT WE AMERICANS, AS A PEOPLE, WERE MEANT TO BE A “LIGHT TO LIGHTEN THE GENTILES” (LUKE 2:32)-A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD OF HOW GOD INTENDED HIS CHILDREN TO LIVE TOGETHER UNDER THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST?” (PG. 19) IF GOD WAS TRYING TO BUILD A NEW ISRAEL IN AMERICA, SATAN WAS DOING EVERYTHING TOTHWART IT.” (234)

**“BELOVED, DO NOT BELIEVE EVERY SPIRIT,
BUT TEST THE SPIRITS, WHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD;
BECAUSE MANY FALSE PROPHETS HAVE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD.”**

1 Jn. 4:1

“IF WE LIVE WE LIVE, AND IF WE DIE FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS WE DIE, BUT WHETHER WE LIVE OR DIE LET THE WORK OF GOD GO ON...BRETHREN, FEAR NOT, BUT BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN THE FAVOR OF HIS MIGHT. WHAT IS MAN THAT THE SERVANT OF GOD SHOULD FEAR HIM, OR THE SON OF MAN THAT HE SHOULD TREMBLE AT HIM...THE FIERY TRIALS WITH WHICH WE ARE TRIED ARE BUT THE AFFLICTIONS BY WHICH MEN ARE PERFECTED.”

Such paraphrasing of Scriptural principles conveys immense trust and dependence upon God, does it not? The problem with this quote is that it is from Brigham Young, the American Moses of the Mormon church. (“The American Moses”-L.J. Arrington-pg. 69). Would you endorse Mormonism because its founder spoke God-centered words? Likewise, should we endorse Puritan beliefs such as the concept of America being the New Israel of God simply because they too profusely quoted principles from the Word of God to condone their actions? No, we must rather test the application of the Scriptures for they can be twisted to our own destruction as Peter warns (2 Pet. 3:16). The parallels between Mormonism and Puritanism are immense and yet Christians will condemn Mormon doctrines and turn around and condone the beliefs of Puritans! Do you realize that they both believed they were the “New Israel” of God? Are you aware that both Mormonism and Puritanism believed America was the New Promise Land of God? Brigham Young was called the American Moses supposedly chosen by God to lead the new chosen people into Zion (now located in Utah?) . This heretical idea that America was the New Israel spawned the doctrine of Manifest Destiny which resulted in the slaughter of Native America men, women and children all across the land of New Canaan. The sense of divine election and the identification of the America’s with ancient Canaan were used to justify expelling America’s indigenous peoples from their land. Just as Joshua led the Tribes of Israel against the heathen nations of Israel’s Promise Land, so likewise did the Puritan preachers incite the people by fiery sermons filled with Old Testament patterns to justify the slaughter of the unconverted heathen around them:

“THE ROAMING INDIAN TRIBES, IN PURITAN EYES, BELONGED TO THE ANIMAL WORLD RATHER THAN THE HUMAN WORLD AND IN SPITE OF A FEW EARLY ATTEMPTS AT MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THEM...THE EARLY SETTLERS DEVELOPED A POLICY OF PIOUS BUT RUTHLESS EXTERMINATION...THEY WERE COLD, IMPLACABLE, AND DETERMINED TO CLEAR THE LAND OF INDIANS... THEY REFUSED TO BE SEDUCED OR INTIMIDATED BY WHAT COTTON MATHER CALLED THE “PERNICIOUS CREATURES” (Indians)...THE PURITANS CLUNG TENACIOUSLY TO AN ABSTRACT IDEA OF A PERFECT HUMAN SOCIETY WHICH WOULD ACTUALIZE ON EARTH THE ALMIGHTY’S DREAM (OF A NEW ISRAEL).”

(Pg. 35-37)

“THE FIRST SETTLERS CONSCIOUSLY THOUGHT OF THEMSELVES AS A PEOPLE CALLED INTO A CONTINUATION OF THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD...WHICH ISRAEL HAD ENTERED INTO...THEY EVEN FELT THAT PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE (WHICH WERE ORIGINALLY ADDRESSED TO ISRAEL) APPLIED IN PARTICULAR TO THEM:

“For the Lord God is bringing you into a good land...a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing... you shall bless the Lord for the good land He has given you...” Deut.8:7,9)

FURTHERMORE THEY SAW THEMSELVES AS CALLED INTO THEIR NEW PROMISE LAND IN ORDER TO FOUND A NEW ISRAEL, WHICH WOULD BE “A LIGHT TO THE WHOLE WORLD”. “A CITY SET UPON A HILL” WAS HOW JOHN WINTHROP, THE FIRST GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS, PUTS IT.... “(19-20)

“...“IN THE VIRGIN WILDERNESS OF AMERICA GOD WAS MAKING HIS MOST SIGNIFICANT ATTEMPT SINCE ANCIENT ISRAEL TO CREATE A NEW ISRAEL... ..THEY SAW THEMSELVES AS CALLED INTO THEIR NEW PROMISE LAND IN ORDER TO FOUND A NEW ISRAEL, WHICH WOULD BE “A LIGHT TO THE WHOLE WORLD”. “A CITY SET UPON A HILL” THE PURITANS UNDERSTOOD NEW ENGLAND TO BE A “TYPE AND EMBLEM OF NEW JERUSALEM”...A NEW JERUSALEM, A MODEL OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST UPON EARTH...WE AMERICANS WERE INTENDED TO BE A LIVING PROOF TO THE REST OF THE WORLD...”
...THIS CONTINUES AS THE STAGE FOR A NEW ACT IN THE DRAMA OF MANKIND’S REDEMPTION?...WE AMERICANS, WERE MEANT TO BE A “LIGHT TO THE GENTILES...” A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD...”

Eloquent words to say the least! If you were to read Peter Marshall's *“The Light and The Glory”*, you too could be swept up by the religious patriotic fervor that his inspiring words create as he quotes the Puritans who were masters at applying the Scriptures to themselves. However, John the apostle has warned us:

**“BELOVED, DO NOT BELIEVE EVERY SPIRIT,
BUT TEST THE SPIRITS, WHETHER THEY ARE OF GOD;
BECAUSE MANY FALSE PROPHETS HAVE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD.”**
1 Jn. 4:1

Can we test this whole inspiring theory by the Scriptures? Yes we can. Since God testifies Himself “Surely, the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7), We may ask, where is the prophesied account of God’s intention of making a New Israel? Paul dedicates three whole chapters of the Book of Romans to prove this statement:

“HAS GOD CAST AWAY HIS PEOPLE? CERTAINLY NOT!” Rom. 11:1

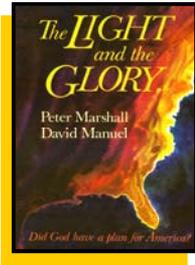
America is **NOT** God’s New Israel for He has not cast away His old Israel. Prophecies pertaining to Israel depict that they will be fulfilled in Israel, not in America! What you read above are the foundational seeds of heresy which have grown up to produce this custom made gospel in which America has a destiny to manifest God’s Kingdom on earth! This is a perversion of the words of the Lord and must be deemed as another gospel fated to be accursed.

“...WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?” Rom. 4:4

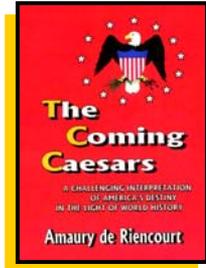
There
NEVER
will be a
“NEW ISRAEL”
replacing the
OLD ISRAEL



There
WILL
be a
“NEW ROME”
Replacing the
“OLD ROME”



“THE LIGHT AND THE GLORY” was written in 1977 and *“THE COMING CAESARS”* was written in 1957. Peter Marshall primarily used the historical accounts and writings of the Puritans to support the ideology that America is God’s “New Israel.” However, French historian Amaury de Riencourt formed his belief that America is rather a manifestation of “New Rome” by making detailed comparisons between ancient Rome and modern America. In other words, he looked at the evidence around him. Jesus said:



“GOD WAS MAKING HIS MOST SIGNIFICANT ATTEMPT SINCE ANCIENT ISRAEL TO CREATE A NEW ISRAEL OF PEOPLE LIVING IN OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS OF GOD, THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST”
(22-23)...**WE AMERICANS WERE INTENDED TO BE A LIVING PROOF TO THE REST OF THE WORLD...”**
...**THIS CONTINENT AS THE STAGE FOR A NEW ACT IN THE DRAMA OF MANKIND’S REDEMPTION?...WE AMERICANS, WERE MEANT TO BE A “LIGHT TO THE GENTILES...” A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD...”**

“A GOOD TREE CANNOT BEAR BAD FRUIT...BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM.”

Matt. 7:18-20

De Riencourt views America as bearing all the fruit of a New Rome rather than that of a New Israel. He does not close his eyes to what is plainly evident in favor of historical Puritan beliefs which contains much unscriptural ideology.

“SO IT WAS, TRANSLATING LONG-MEDITATED THOUGHTS INTO ACTION, THAT THE STERN PURITANS FOUNDED ON THE COAST OF NEW ENGLAND WHAT THEY THOUGHT WOULD BE THE LAND OF CANAAN, THE NEW JERUSALEM OF THEIR DREAMS, AND WHAT WE CAN NOW LABEL FAR MORE ACCURATELY THE NEW ROME... THE PURITANS WERE THE HUMAN SEED FROM WHICH THE NEW ROME OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION WAS TO SPRING ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.”

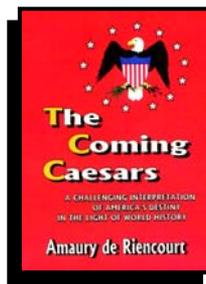
(PAGE 30, 35)

Here are two books, one religious and the other secular, forming conclusions totally opposite of each other. They both cannot be right. It is sad (and scary), that the secular book is more in harmony with the Scriptures than the religious one. Jesus warns of this too:

“...THE SONS OF THIS WORLD ARE MORE SHREWD IN THEIR GENERATION THAT THE SONS OF LIGHT.” Luke 16:8

Although it is beyond the scope of the subject we are dealing with (the gospel of the Kingdom), I want to highly recommend this out-of-print book to you (purchase through our ministry (\$8.95). If America is not the “New Israel” the Puritans said it was, but rather is a kingdom under Satan’s authority, then you can assume it is something altogether different. This secular book convinced me of the true destiny of America as being the “New Rome” (“Babylon the Great”).

Here are a few excerpts to entice you:



“OUR WESTERN WORLD, AMERICA AND EUROPE, IS THREATENED WITH CAESARISM ON A SCALE UNKNOWN SINCE THE DAWN OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE ...IT IS IN WASHINGTON AND NOT IN LONDON, PARIS, OR BERLIN THAT THE CAESARS OF THE FUTURE WILL ARISE ...POLITICAL POWER IN THE WESTERN WORLD HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCENTRATED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT WITHIN AMERICA. THE POWER AND PRESTIGE OF THE PRESIDENT HAS GROWN WITH THE GROWTH OF AMERICA AND OF DEMOCRACY WITHIN AMERICA, WITH THE MULTIPLICATION OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND MILITARY EMERGENCIES, WITH THE NECESSITY OF RULING WHAT IS VIRTUALLY BECOMING AN AMERICAN EMPIRE....WE MUST SEE IN THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES NOT MERELY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ONE OF THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, BUT ONE ALREADY ENDOWED WITH POWERS OF TRULY CAESARIAN MAGNITUDE. TODAY, ONE MAN IS DIRECTLY IN COMMAND, EITHER AS PEACETIME PRESIDENT OR WARTIME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF MORE THAN HALF OF THE ENTIRE GLOBE'S ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL POWER.....EVERYWHERE, ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT, IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND IN THE FAR EAST, HE CAN MAKE THE WEIGHT OF HIS INCALCULABLE POWER FELT WITH IMMEDIATE AND CRUSHING SPEED....IT IS THIS WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW IN ANY EMERGENCY, ECONOMIC OR MILITARY, THE LEADERSHIP OF ONE MAN...THE VETO POWER OF THE PRESIDENT...WITH THE POWER TO INITIATE AND THE POWER TO CONSUMMATE LEGISLATION, TO GIVE VITALITY AND VIGOR TO EVERY LAW, OR TO STRIKE IT DEAD AT HIS PLEASURE, THE PRESIDENT MUST ULTIMATELY BECOME THE RULER OF THE NATION ...THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO AN ELECTIVE MONARCHY ...HISTORICAL EVIDENCE THUS SHOWS THAT EACH NEW WAR ADDS TO THE ALREADY TREMENDOUS POWERS OF A PRESIDENT, WHO IS SIMULTANEOUSLY CHIEF OF STATE, PRIME MINISTER IN CHARGE OF ALL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS, AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES...ONE MAN WAS ALREADY LARGELY IN CONTROL OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST POWER” (ROOSEVELT) ROOSEVELT'S FULL USE OF POWERS WERE TRULY CAESARIAN IN MAGNITUDE. IT WAS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S FULL ACCEPTANCE OF THIS CONCENTRATION OF IMMENSE POWERS IN THE HAND OF ONE MAN AND THEIR FIRM BELIEF THAT IT SHOULD REMAIN THERE IN SPITE OF TRADITIONS AGAINST A THIRD, FOURTH OR MORE TERMS....THE FIRST GHOSTLY CONTOURS OF CAESARISM WERE APPEARING, AND AS ALWAYS, WELLING UP FROM THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES...” ...THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OF AMERICA STAND SUPREME...ULTIMATELY, THE PROBLEM IS THE SAME ANCIENT ROME AND AMERICA, HAVING CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO CREATE WORLD ECONOMY, ARE COMPELLED TO POLICE THE WORLD ECONOMICALLY- AND SOONER OR LATER POLITICALLY AS WELL...”

It is my firm conviction that by means of the Puritan perversion of America being the chosen “New Israel” of God, Christians have endorsed, hook, line and sinker, the likes of Peter Marshall’s summarization of America’s divine destiny:

“WE AMERICANS WERE INTENDED TO BE A LIVING PROOF TO THE REST OF THE WORLD...THIS CONTINENT AS THE STAGE FOR A NEW ACT IN THE DRAMA OF MANKIND’S REDEMPTION...WE AMERICANS, WERE MEANT TO BE A “LIGHT TO THE GENTILES...” A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD...”

Out of such ideology the banners of the Religious Right or the Moral Majority herald the concepts of “One Nation Under God” and “In God We Trust”. The Christian battle cry has become a political one of “Returning This Nation to its Godly Foundations.” It sounds so good and reads so well, but it will fail every litmus test when comparing this literal, physical “kingdom” concept to what Jesus called The Kingdom of God. What Peter Marshall is calling the destiny of “we Americans” as being “living proof to the rest of the world”, and “this continent as the stage for a new act in the drama of mankind’s redemption”, is rather what God commissioned the church universal to be to the world. To say that “we Americans, were meant to be a “light to the Gentiles...a demonstration to the world” is to steal the divine destiny of the church of the living God!:

“THAT YOU MAY BECOME BLAMELESS AND HARMLESS, CHILDREN OF GOD WITHOUT FAULT IN THE MIDST OF A CROOKED AND PERVERSE GENERATION, AMONG WHOM YOU SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD, HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE...” Phil. 2:15-16

The Kingdom of God is not a physical kingdom at present, but a spiritual one. It does not rest in any particular geographical region such as America, but rather it is to exist in the hearts of individual Christians all over the world regardless of what cultural society they live in. Consider the description Jesus gives of the Kingdom of God and compare it to the likes of what is stated above by Peter Marshall:

“MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD. IF MY KINGDOM WERE OF THIS WORLD, MY SERVANTS WOULD FIGHT, SO THAT I SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED TO THE JEWS; BUT NOW MY KINGDOM IS NOT FROM HERE.”

John 18:36

Jesus’ Kingdom is out of this world! It was not a visible geographical Kingdom in Jesus’ day, nor has it now become visible in America regardless of what the Puritans claimed! The Pharisees expected a literal, physical Kingdom that could be seen. Jesus said to them:

“NOW WHEN HE WAS ASKED BY THE PHARISEES WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD WOULD COME, HE ANSWERED...“THE KINGDOM OF GOD DOES NOT COME WITH OBSERVATION; NOR WILL THEY SAY, “SEE HERE!” OR “SEE THERE!” FOR INDEED THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.” Luke 17:20-21

Let me give you a piece of divine illumination:

**“YOU DO NOT LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIVES IN YOU.”**

We are going to develop this line of thinking in a moment, but first let us consider another litmus test as to whether America is to be as stated earlier: **“...WE AMERICANS, WERE MEANT TO BE A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES...A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD...”**

Christianity in America believes that the form of government that this country endorses is divinely given by God. That is why President Bush seeks to “democratize” all the nations in the Middle East. He has publically alluded to having a “Messianic mission” or commission from God to do so. This position has been endorsed by believing Christians as well. However, we are told not to “believe every spirit, but to test the spirits as to whether they are from God” (1 Jn. 4:1).

The government of God throughout the Scriptures has always been a theocracy and never a democracy. It takes little comparative study to come to the conclusion that these two “instruction manuals” (the Bible and the US Constitution or Declaration of Independence) were not written by the same author!

One is based on divine rule and the other on the rule of man. One emphasizes the will of God (“Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth), but the other is a government consisting “of the people, for the people and by the people.”



The Book of Genesis begins with, “In the beginning God...”, while the Declaration of Independence begins with “We the people...” God’s Word says that the Kingdom of God is God-centered with “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” as its primary objectives (Rom. 14:17), but America’s kingdom concepts have three totally man-centered objectives, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Is God double minded? Has the Word of God been replaced by the US Constitution, or are we just not bothering to test the spirits as God’s people? Are we, as Christians, being sold the proverbial “bill of goods” under a God-inspired Bill of Rights?

**“YOU DO NOT LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIVES IN YOU.”**



Jesus clearly states where the Kingdom of God presently resides. It is not in America as God's New Israel. It is not even in Israel itself at this time. The Kingdom of God abides in the heart of every born again disciple of Jesus Christ who has heard the good news of the gospel, namely, that the Kingdom of God is at hand! Do not allow anyone to substitute the present **INTERNAL** Kingdom of God for an **EXTERNAL** one! It is not the time for a literal external manifestation of the Kingdom of God on the earth. The Bible does prophesy of its coming and we will examine that position later on. Listen to what Jesus told His disciples when they asked Him about the physical Kingdom:

“ ...UNTIL THE DAY HE WAS TAKEN UP...HE PRESENTED HIMSELF ALIVE AFTER HIS SUFFERING BY MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS, BEING SEEN BY THEM DURING FORTY DAYS AND SPEAKING OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD... THEREFORE, WHEN THEY HAD COME TOGETHER, THEY ASKED HIM, SAYING, “LORD, WILL YOU AT THIS TIME RESTORE THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL?” AND HE SAID TO THEM, IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO KNOW TIMES OR SEASONS WHICH THE FATHER HAS PUT IN HIS OWN AUTHORITY. BUT YOU SHALL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU; AND YOU SHALL BE WITNESSES TO ME...” Acts 1:2-8 excerpts

Take note of what Jesus was still preaching after three and a half years on the earth. He began His ministry with, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” and here, right prior to His ascension, He is “speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” The Kingdom of God was the consistent message of Jesus! Why is it not the consistent message of today's followers of Jesus?

**“...SPEAKING OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD
...THEREFORE, WHEN THEY HAD COME TOGETHER, THEY ASKED HIM, SAYING,
“LORD, WILL YOU AT THIS TIME RESTORE THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL?”
AND HE SAID TO THEM, IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO KNOW TIMES OR SEASONS
WHICH THE FATHER HAS PUT IN HIS OWN AUTHORITY. BUT YOU SHALL RECEIVE
POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU;
AND YOU SHALL BE WITNESSES TO ME...”** Acts 1:2-8 excerpts

The disciples wanted the power of a physical kingdom that would overthrow the harsh rule of the Romans. It was a premature request Jesus tells them of a different kind of power that they will receive in the present manifestation of His Kingdom that abides in the heart (Acts 1:8).

Paul would later record that:

**“BUT YOU SHALL RECEIVE
POWER WHEN THE HOLY
SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU;
AND YOU SHALL BE
WITNESSES TO ME...”**

Acts 1:8

**“...THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS
NOT IN WORD
BUT IN POWER...”
“...IN DEMONSTRATION OF
THE SPIRIT AND OF POWER...”**

1 Cor. 4:20, 2:4

The Holy Spirit is the power behind the Kingdom of God that lives in the believer. When Jesus was casting out demons He said, “If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mat. 12:28). When He sent out His disciples to heal the sick, He said, “heal the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The Kingdom of God has come near to you’ ” (Luke 10:9). In Acts we read;

**“GOD ANOINTED JESUS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH POWER,
WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD AND HEALING ALL WHO WERE
OPPRESSED BY THE DEVIL, FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM.”**

Acts 10:38

Jesus not only preached the gospel of the Kingdom in word but He demonstrated it in the power of the Holy Spirit. Here we have two persons of the Godhead, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, working together to manifest Kingdom power on earth. The focal point of their ministry together was to release those who were oppressed by the devil. Consider this detailed account Jesus gives as an object lesson:

**“THERE WAS A WOMAN WHO HAD A SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY EIGHTEEN
YEARS...BUT WHEN JESUS SAW HER, HE CALLED HER TO HIM AND
SAID TO HER, “WOMAN, YOU ARE LOOSED FROM YOUR
INFIRMITY”...OUGHT NOT THIS WOMAN, BEING A DAUGHTER OF
ABRAHAM, WHOM SATAN HAS BOUND-THINK OF IT -
FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS, BE LOOSED FROM THIS BOND...?”**

Luke 13:11-16 excerpts

Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Herein lies the thrust and the purpose of the present manifestation of the Kingdom of God! It is the power of one Kingdom undoing the power of another kingdom! Jesus came to loose what Satan had bound! This is the power of the Kingdom of God to work in the midst of the kingdom of darkness!

"...OUGHT NOT THIS WOMAN, BEING A DAUGHTER OF ABRAHAM, WHOM SATAN HAS BOUND-THINK OF IT - FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS, BE LOOSED FROM THIS BOND...?"

Luke 13:11-16 excerpts



**" I WILL GIVE YOU
THE KEYS
OF THE KINGDOM
OF HEAVEN,
AND WHATEVER YOU BIND ON
EARTH WILL BE BOUND IN HEAVEN;
AND WHATEVER YOU LOOSE ON
EARTH WILL BE LOOSED IN
HEAVEN."**

Matt. 16:19

How did Jesus loose this woman whom Satan had bound? He used the keys of the Kingdom. Kingdom authority loosed what Satan had bound! To whom did Jesus transfer these keys? It was not to the Pope that the keys were given, as Catholicism claims, but rather they were given to the church, to you and me, as citizens of the Kingdom of God!

Are you beginning to see that the Kingdom of God is the means by which Christians are to function on earth while still living in Satan's kingdoms? We are to cast out demons as did Jesus by Kingdom power. We are to heal the sick as did Jesus by the power of the Kingdom of God. We have authority to use the Keys of the Kingdom to bind Satan's power over people on earth or loose those whom Satan has bound! Listen to how Jesus speaks of Kingdom power:

"IF I CAST OUT DEMONS BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, SURELY THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS COME UPON YOU. OR ELSE HOW CAN ONE ENTER A STRONG MAN'S HOUSE AND PLUNDER HIS GOODS, UNLESS HE FIRST BINDS THE STRONG MAN? AND THEN HE WILL PLUNDER HIS HOUSE." Matt. 12:28-29

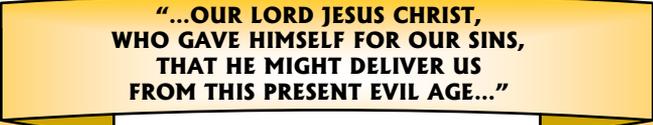
The strong man Jesus is talking about is Satan, and his house is comprised of the kingdoms of this world. Jesus is casting out demons and bringing the Kingdom of God to the people who were held captive by Satan. The Book of Isaiah talks about Satan as if he were the wizard of Oz. You remember that mythical story of how "the Great Oz" terrified people by his deception until it was revealed that he was a phony old man with no real power? Listen to Isaiah tell about Satan's exposure that one day will come just as it did for the mythical Great Oz:

**"IS THIS THE MAN WHO MADE THE EARTH TO TREMBLE,
WHO SHOOK KINGDOMS, WHO MADE THE WORLD AS A
WILDERNESS AND DESTROYED ITS CITIES, WHO DID NOT
OPEN THE HOUSE OF HIS PRISONERS?"** Isa. 14:16-17

What is our commission as subjects of the Kingdom of God? It is to use the keys of the Kingdom of God to bind the strong man so that we can plunder his house which is filled with prisoners!

Before you can deliver others from Satan's power you need to make sure that you have been delivered yourself! We are going to begin now to examine the fullness of the Kingdom of God. We've talked briefly about its power to deliver, let us regress a little and see how we initially enter into the Kingdom of God.

Take a look at this passage from Galatians and ask yourself why did Jesus give Himself for our sins, and what was the purpose behind the death of Christ upon the Cross?

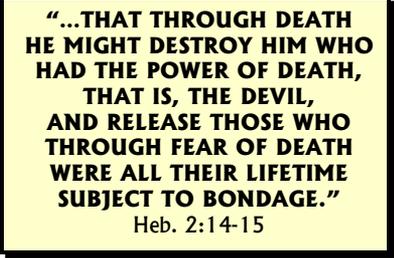


**“...OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS,
THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US
FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE...”**

Gal. 1:3-4

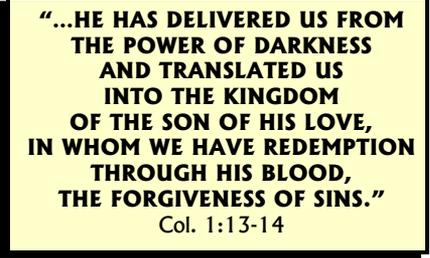
Jesus gave Himself for our sins **THAT** (in order that) He might **DELIVER US** from this **PRESENT** evil age. There is a lot in these verses that we tend to skim over, so forgive me if I become very redundant, but we must firmly grasp these fundamental principles pertaining to the Kingdom of God!

First of all there is a present age, and it is evil! Why is it evil? Because it is under the authority of the wicked one (1Jn.5:19). An age is merely a predetermined dispensation of time. We live in this present evil age that is under the authority of Satan. As we live in this evil age, Jesus wants us to know that He intends to fully deliver us from this present evil age. How is He going to do that? I do not believe He is talking about the future event known as the rapture being the mode of delivery He has in mind, although eventually it will become a vehicle of deliverance from this present evil age. Nor do I believe He is talking about future deliverance by means of dying and going to Heaven although it too will, for many, eventually be a method of deliverance from this present evil age. Jesus intends for His people to be delivered from this present evil age by means of using Kingdom power such as we have just examined. Where does it all begin? It begins with the death of Jesus by which He delivered us from our sins. Sin keeps us in the house of bondage, in the house of Satan as his prisoners. Consider what is contained within these two crucial revelational passages:



**“...THAT THROUGH DEATH
HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM WHO
HAD THE POWER OF DEATH,
THAT IS, THE DEVIL,
AND RELEASE THOSE WHO
THROUGH FEAR OF DEATH
WERE ALL THEIR LIFETIME
SUBJECT TO BONDAGE.”**

Heb. 2:14-15



**“...HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM
THE POWER OF DARKNESS
AND TRANSLATED US
INTO THE KINGDOM
OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE,
IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION
THROUGH HIS BLOOD,
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”**

Col. 1:13-14

**"...OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS,
THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US
FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE..."** Gal. 1:4



"KINGDOM POWER"

vs.



"KINGDOM POWER"

**"...THAT THROUGH DEATH
HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM WHO
HAD THE POWER OF DEATH,
THAT IS, THE DEVIL, AND
RELEASE THOSE WHO
THROUGH FEAR OF DEATH
WERE ALL THEIR LIFETIME
SUBJECT TO BONDAGE."**

Heb. 2:14-15

**"...HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM
THE POWER OF DARKNESS
AND TRANSLATED US
INTO THE KINGDOM
OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE,
IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION
THROUGH HIS BLOOD,
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS."**

Col. 1:13-14

The key word in these verses above is **POWER**. Note there are two distinct sources of power described. Satan had the power of death until Jesus took it away from him by His own death on the cross! This is a display of power vs. power. Jesus, by means of His own death, stripped Satan of the power of death. The power of the cross of Christ defeated the power of the fear of death. What is the result? It releases from bondage those who have lived all their lifetime in the bondage of the fear of death! Can you see that this is the beginning of being delivered from this present evil age? We no longer have to fear death even though we may face death.

The passage above from Colossians contains even more deliverance from this present evil age. Although we still live in it physically, God the Father has delivered us from the power of darkness. How did He do it? He has translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love. That simply means that He has taken those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, those who have received forgiveness of sins, out of the kingdom (power) of darkness (Satan's kingdom) and has placed them into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. This transfer of kingdoms is the power and the purpose behind the new birth:

**"UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN,
HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD...
HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD...
YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN."**

John 3:3-7 excerpts

**“UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN,
HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD...
HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD...
YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”**

John 3:3-7 excerpts



**“...HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS
AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM
OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE, IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION
THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”**

Col. 1:13-14

If you fully grasp the above concepts then you also will better understand this statement I made to you earlier:

**“YOU DO NOT LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIVES IN YOU.”**

By means of the new birth we exit the kingdom (power) of darkness and we enter the Kingdom of God. We exchange kingdoms, darkness for light, death for life. However, we have seen that the Kingdom of God is not a physical, geographical Kingdom such as America, but rather for the present, it is a spiritual one. The physical will come later. It is therefore not presently an **EXTERNAL** Kingdom, but rather an **INTERNAL** Kingdom, one that exists only in the heart of the believer who has Kingdom vision. All that the Kingdom of God is meant to be, at this present time, abides within the heart of the redeemed. The Kingdom of God has come to abide within you. The Kingdom comes inside of us in the person of Jesus Christ who is the King of the Kingdom, and it comes inside of us in the person of the Holy Spirit, who we have already seen is the source of functioning power behind the Kingdom of God!

**“FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD BUT IN POWER...”
“...IN DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT AND OF POWER...”**

1 Cor. 4:20, 2:4

In our initial opening text from Matthew Chapter 7, we have seen what Jesus meant by Christianity having a narrow gate. Let us now begin to see why Jesus said that it will also be a difficult way once inside the gate. By now you should be able to see that there is more to the new birth than just having redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. However, isolate this truth by itself, and you will have the essence of a broad way because of the omission of emphasizing having been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of the Son. Let us visually do to these passages of Scripture from Col.1:13-14 what we did with those passages on page 21 that turned the narrow gate into a wide gate:

“THE DIFFICULT WAY”

“THE BROAD WAY”

“...HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE,



IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”

~~**“...HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE,**~~



IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”

Take away what we have seen to be the purpose behind the new birth, namely, to be delivered out of the power of darkness and into the Kingdom of the Son, then we are only left with redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. What about our responsibility to the new Kingdom, and the King of that Kingdom into which we have been translated?

For the sake of illustration, what if you were suddenly translated out of America and placed in Saudi Arabia. Would you be able to live in this new environment oblivious to the laws of the land or the customs of the people? How long would it take before you found yourself in serious trouble if you tried to live your existence there as you once lived in America? To survive, you would have to change your ways and your thinking drastically! This is what should happen to you through the new birth. It is not just a matter of forgiveness of sins, but rather it is going to require a drastic change in the way you live in the Kingdom of God. You cannot practice what you did in your old kingdom anymore! The new birth is going to require embracing a new way of life, a difficult way, because the Kingdom of God functions by a different set of laws altogether!

The first thing we need is a higher Kingdom vision as to who Jesus Christ is. He is more than just your Savior from sin as this passage from Isaiah 33:22 will attest:



THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**"THE LORD IS
our JUDGE...
our LAWGIVER...**

**our KING...
He will
SAVE us"**

Isa. 33:22

**ENTER
THE GATE
HAVING
BECOME
A DISCIPLE
WITH THE
KINGDOM
IN VIEW**



Jesus is not only the one who died for our sins, but as Isaiah reveals, "the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and it is He who will save us." Notice that Isaiah does not reveal the Lord as Savior first on his list but rather, Judge, Lawgiver, King and then Savior. It is the broad way gospel that always exalts the Lord primarily as Savior.

I have always looked at this verse from the bottom up as to how we progressively encounter the Lord. In experience it is the Lord who first saves us. The second encounter or revelational knowledge we obtain from the Lord is that He is our King. Remember, we were translated into the Kingdom of the Son so it is quite logical that there will be a King over the Kingdom of God and His name is Jesus, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords (1 Tim. 6:15). Look at the third encounter that we have with the Lord. He is our Lawgiver. It is also quite logical that the King of the Kingdom also institutes laws to govern the function of His Kingdom. Then, the fourth encounter we have with the Lord is that, He is our Judge. This refers to The Judgment Seat of Christ spoken of by Paul in Rom.14:10-12 and in 2 Cor. 5:9-11. Take the time to look up these verses for it will be at this Judgment Seat that we, as followers of Christ, will give an account of our lives as subjects of the Kingdom of God. Were we law-abiding citizens in the Kingdom of God? Have we been submitted to the Savior, the King and the Lawgiver? Jesus as The Righteous Judge will make those crucial evaluations of our Kingdom worth in eternity! We need Isaiah's full revelation of the Lord now!

Let us now begin to look at Jesus Christ as “our Lawgiver.” The broad-way gospel usually hammers on the point that those who have been saved by grace are delivered from the law. Paul does firmly argue that “a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law” (Rom. 3:28). However, this is but half of the truth for Paul goes on to say:

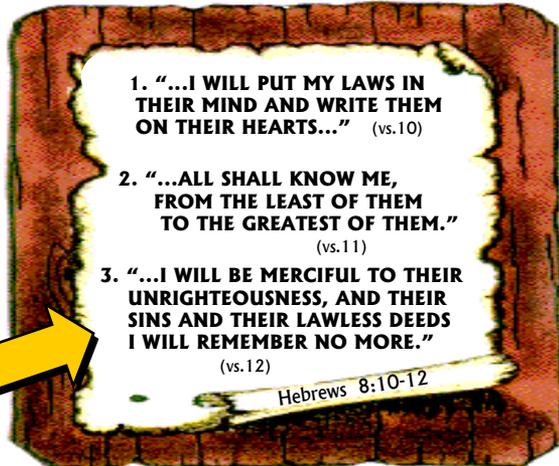


“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law” (Rom. 3:31). Paul gives us the balance; the law is not made void by faith but rather it becomes established.

How can we have Jesus as our King who is also our Lawgiver and then claim to be delivered from obeying the law? It is true that obedience to the law will save no one, but we are not discussing how to become saved, but rather we are addressing saved people. God has laws that govern His Kingdom. Please hear that I am not referring to the Mosaic Law given to Israel. I am talking about New Covenant law given to the church. From such Kingdom law the church has not and cannot be delivered! The meaning of law is “that which is right.” How can we be delivered from obeying that which is right?

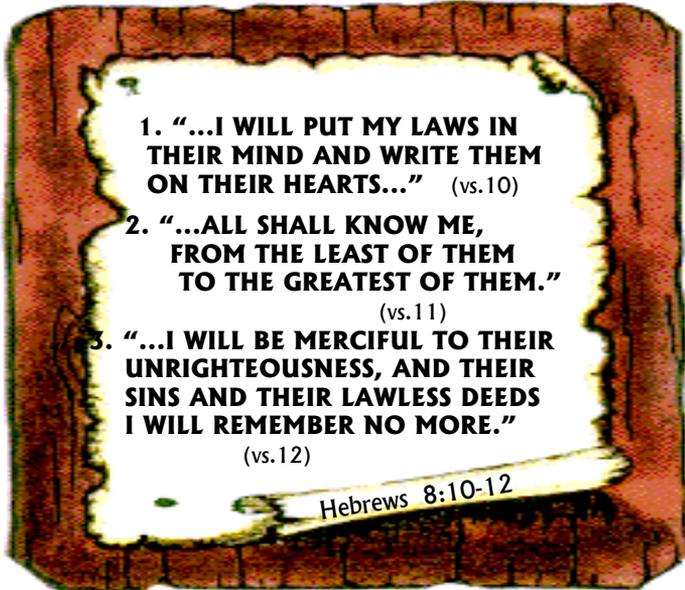
Let us begin examining Kingdom law from our Lawgiver by first looking at the terms of the New Covenant which Jesus presently mediates:

Notice first of all, that there are three specific terms of the New Covenant. The broad-way gospel reduces it to just the third term, the one which emphasizes the forgiveness our sins and lawless deeds.



God has more in mind than forgiving His people of their lawless deeds. He fully intends to place His laws in their hearts so that they are enabled to cease committing lawless deeds. Remember, Jesus came to bless us in turning us away from our iniquity! (Acts 3:26). It takes law to govern lawless deeds!

Every kingdom is governed by laws. The Constitution of the United States contains bylaws (the objectives and the laws necessary to achieve them). The New Covenant contains the objectives and bylaws of the Kingdom of God:



Read the Eight Chapter of Hebrews in which you will find that Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant established on better promises (Heb. 8:6). In Verse 13 Paul states "In that He says, 'A New Covenant,' He has made the first obsolete." The Old Covenant with its set of laws becomes **OBSOLETE**. So it is true that we are not under the Mosaic Law, but note that God fully intends to put His (Kingdom) laws in our minds and write them on our hearts.

This covenant in Hebrews Chapter 8 was first prophesied to the Jews in Jeremiah Chapter 31 as a future covenant to come to Israel. Although it was first promised to Israel, the church became the first partaker of it. Israel will yet be grafted into this New Covenant as well (Rom. 11:22-32, Zech. 12:10). I mention this because of the fact that some teach that this covenant mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 8 is not the New Covenant of the church. To that charge I simply must say, read the entire chapter because Jesus died to mediate only one New Covenant! This is the complete covenant that God gave to His church.

The broad-way gospel proclaims that there is no place for law under grace. Jesus, the mediator of the covenant, disagrees. This law term of the New Covenant is the core essence of what makes the Christian life a difficult way that only few will find! Get rid of the law and you have a broad way that many will embrace!

**"...I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MIND
AND WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS..."**

Heb.8:10

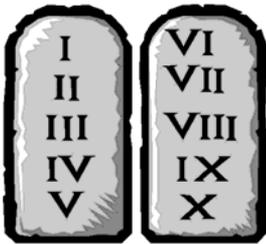
Not only do we have this stated objective of God to write His laws on the hearts of His Kingdom people, but also Paul gives us the means by which it shall be done:

**"YOU ARE MANIFESTLY AN EPISTLE OF CHRIST, MINISTERED BY US,
WRITTEN NOT WITH INK BUT BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD,
NOT ON TABLETS OF STONE BUT ON THE TABLETS OF FLESH, THAT
IS, OF THE HEART...AS MINISTERS OF THE NEW COVENANT, NOT OF
THE LETTER BUT OF THE SPIRIT, FOR THE LETTER KILLS, BUT THE
SPIRIT GIVES LIFE...IF THE MINISTRY OF DEATH, WRITTEN AND
ENGRAVED ON STONES WAS GLORIOUS...**

**HOW WILL THE MINISTRY OF
THE SPIRIT NOT BE MORE GLORIOUS...?"**

2 Cor. 3:3-8 excerpts

**LAW IN THE
OLD COVENANT:**



"TABLETS OF STONE..."

**"THE LETTER
WHICH KILLS..."**

"MINISTRY OF DEATH..."

**LAW IN THE
NEW COVENANT:**



"TABLETS OF FLESH (HEART)..."

**"THE SPIRIT
WHICH GIVES LIFE..."**

"MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT..."

No wonder Hebrews 8:6-7 proclaims:

**"BUT NOW HE (Jesus) HAS OBTAINED A MORE EXCELLENT
MINISTRY, INASMUCH AS HE IS ALSO MEDIATOR OF A BETTER
COVENANT, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED ON BETTER PROMISES.
FOR IF THE FIRST COVENANT HAD BEEN FAULTLESS,
THEN NO PLACE WOULD HAVE BEEN SOUGHT FOR A SECOND."**

There is much on this page to mediate upon, so give it sufficient time! Notice it is (once again) the Holy Spirit (the power of the Kingdom of God) who will write God's laws on the tablets of His people's heart so that they may be manifestly an epistle of Christ. Have you ever thought of your life as a Christian being a living epistle? That means we should be a mirror reflection of what is written as the will of God in the epistles!

Can you see that Jesus, the King of His Kingdom,
as our Lawgiver, is very serious about
placing His laws on our hearts?



**“THIS IS THE COVENANT
THAT I WILL MAKE...
I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN
THEIR MIND AND WRITE
THEM ON THEIR HEARTS...”**

Heb.8:8-10

**“...WRITTEN NOT
ON TABLETS OF STONE...
BUT BY THE SPIRIT OF THE
LIVING GOD...ON THE TABLETS...
OF THE HEART.”**

2 Cor. 3:3-8

Since we are dealing with The gospel of the Kingdom of God, we must now ask, how can one who has become a subject of that Kingdom get away with continuing to practice lawlessness and remain in the Kingdom in a state of eternal security as the broad-way gospel proclaims? This is certainly not in accordance with the teaching of the King:

**“NOT EVERYONE WHO SAYS TO ME,
‘LORD, LORD, SHALL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,
BUT HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER IN HEAVEN.’
MANY WILL SAY TO ME IN THAT DAY, ‘LORD, LORD, HAVE WE NOT
PROPHESIED IN YOUR NAME, CAST OUT DEMONS IN YOUR NAME,
AND DONE MANY WONDERS IN YOUR NAME?’
AND I WILL DECLARE TO THEM, ‘I NEVER KNEW YOU;
DEPART FROM ME YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS!’ ”**

Matt. 7:21-23

Among the terms of New Covenant which we examined is the fact that Jesus forgives our sins and remembers our lawless deeds no more. Matthew speaks of **MANY** (many go in the broad way) who are charged with practicing lawlessness. Does Jesus welcome them into the eternal Kingdom of God? He does not. Rather we see that their lawlessness prevents them from entering the Kingdom! Let us not be unaware that the context of these disturbing verses follow on the heels of Jesus' warning about the many who enter into the wide gate and follow the broad way (Mat. 7:13-14). They are calling Him “Lord, Lord”, but are practicing lawlessness in His Kingdom. They will be excluded from the Kingdom. This is hardly an expression of unconditional eternal security, is it? These are the **MANY** who enter a wide gate and a broad way, people who want Jesus to be merciful to their lawless deeds, but refuse to have Kingdom laws govern their deeds. They do not end up with eternal life but rather as Jesus warned, the broad way leads to destruction (Mat. 7:13). Consider how Jesus says this age will end:

**“...SO IT WILL BE AT THE END OF THIS AGE. THE SON OF MAN WILL
SEND OUT HIS ANGELS, AND THEY WILL GATHER OUT OF HIS
KINGDOM ALL THINGS THAT OFFEND, AND THOSE WHO PRACTICE
LAWLESSNESS, AND WILL CAST THEM INTO THE FURNACE OF FIRE.
THERE WILL BE WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH. THEN THE
RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN IN THE KINGDOM OF
THEIR FATHER. HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR!”**

Matt. 13:40-43

Paul's writings are no less disturbing than the words of Jesus when it comes to professing Christians who practice lawlessness:

“NOW THE WORKS OF THE FLESH ARE EVIDENT, WHICH ARE : ADULTERY, FORNICATION, UNCLEANNESS, LICENTIOUSNESS, IDOLATRY, SORCERY, HATRED, CONTENTIONS, JEALOUSIES, OUTBURSTS OF WRATH, SELFISH AMBITIONS, DISSENSIONS, HERESIES, ENVY, MURDERS, DRUNKENNESS, REVELRIES, AND THE LIKE; OF WHICH I TELL YOU BEFOREHAND, JUST AS I TOLD YOU IN TIME PAST, THAT THOSE WHO PRACTICE SUCH THINGS WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.... THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST’S HAVE CRUCIFIED THE FLESH WITH ITS PASSIONS AND DESIRES. IF WE LIVE IN THE SPIRIT, LET US ALSO WALK IN THE SPIRIT.” Gal. 5:19-25 excerpts



“DO NOT BE DECEIVED, GOD IS NOT MOCKED; FOR WHATEVER A MAN SOWS, THAT HE WILL ALSO REAP. FOR IF HE SOWS TO HIS FLESH WILL OF THE FLESH REAP CORRUPTION, BUT HE WHO SOWS TO THE SPIRIT WILL OF THE SPIRIT REAP EVERLASTING LIFE.” Gal. 6:7-8

This latter Scripture is the moral to the story of what is depicted in the Fifth Chapter of Galatians. We reap what we sow! No broad-way doctrine is going to reverse that! God reminds His people that He will not be mocked! The Spirit leads to life but the flesh leads to corruption! In Galatians 5 notice Paul says that the mark of those who are Christ's is that they have (1) crucified the flesh with its passions and desires, and (2) they live and walk in the Spirit. Remember, the Holy Spirit is the source of power behind the Kingdom! Paul starts this dissertation in Galatians 5 with a conditional promise: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal.5:16). It is the Holy Spirit who has been sent to write God's laws on the tablets of our heart. Those in the broad way are always emphasizing truths such as having believed, you were sealed by the Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession (Eph. 1:13-14). There is nothing wrong with that fact, but it is only half of the truth! The other side of the coin goes on to state in the very same epistle, And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). The broad-way philosophy gives God's people only words of **COMFORT**, but ignores the other side of that same truth which gives words that **CONFRONT**. Can we just claim the benefits of having been sealed by the Holy Spirit, but turn around and get away with living a lawless lifestyle that grieves the same Holy Spirit who sealed us until the day of redemption? I say to such broad-way thinking, as Paul often would retort to ridiculous concepts, "Certainly not!"



**“DO YOU NOT KNOW
THAT THE UNRIGHTEOUS WILL NOT INHERIT
THE KINGDOM OF GOD?
DO NOT BE DECEIVED.
NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATERS,
NOR ADULTERERS, NOR HOMOSEXUALS,
NOR SODOMITES, NOR THIEVES, NOR
COVETOUS, NOR DRUNKARDS, NOR REVILERS,
NOR EXTORTIONERS
WILL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”**

1 Cor. 6:9-10

**“BUT FORNICATION AND ALL UNCLEANNESS OR
COVETOUSNESS, LET IT NOT EVEN BE NAMED
AMONG YOU, AS IS FITTING FOR SAINTS...
FOR THIS YOU KNOW, THAT NO FORNICATOR,
UNCLEAN PERSON, NOR COVETOUS MAN, WHO
IS AN IDOLATER, HAS ANY INHERITANCE IN
THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND GOD.**

**LET NO ONE DECEIVE YOU WITH EMPTY WORDS, FOR BECAUSE OF THESE
THINGS THE WRATH OF GOD COMES UPON THE SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE.
THEREFORE DO NOT BE PARTAKERS WITH THEM. FOR YOU WERE ONCE
DARKNESS, BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT IN THE LORD.
WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT.”** Eph. 5:3-8 excerpts

Paul not only warned the church at Galatia, but also Corinth and Ephesus that lifestyles of Christians practicing lawlessness do not lead to inheriting the Kingdom of God. The warning above is clear. Paul believed that it was possible for those who were once darkness (were unsaved) but now have become light in the Lord (saved), could by practicing lawless deeds, become partakers of the wrath of God along with the sons of disobedience. The broad-way gospel emphatically insists that doctrinally this is not possible under grace! Jesus gives a prophetic warning about the degree of lawlessness that will prevail in the last days:

**“MANY FALSE PROPHETS
WILL RISE UP AND DECEIVE MANY.
AND BECAUSE LAWLESSNESS WILL ABOUND,
THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD.
BUT HE WHO ENDURES TO THE END WILL BE SAVED.
AND THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM WILL BE
PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD AS A WITNESS TO ALL
NATIONS, AND THEN THE END WILL COME.”**

Matt. 24:11-14



Notice again the warning about many false prophets who will deceive many. This is a repeated warning of what we saw in Matthew Chapter 7 about the false prophets preaching a broad way in which many would enter! Notice also the connection Jesus makes between lawlessness and lovelessness. Wherever there is lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. The Greek word used for love here is agape which is strictly used for God's kind of love. Prophetically, Jesus is saying that the love of God's people will grow cold due to their lawless lifestyle!

Let us consider how Jesus measures the level of love His people have for Him. I do not need to stress the fact that the broad-way gospel only talks about how much Jesus unconditionally loves His people, but there is another side to this doctrinal coin. Consider how conditional Jesus presents God's love in these verses:



“HE WHO HAS MY COMMANDMENTS AND KEEPS THEM, IT IS HE WHO LOVES ME. AND HE WHO LOVES ME WILL BE LOVED BY MY FATHER, AND I WILL LOVE HIM AND MANIFEST MYSELF TO HIM...IF ANYONE LOVES ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORD; AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM, AND WE WILL COME TO HIM AND MAKE OUR HOME WITH HIM. HE WHO DOES NOT LOVE ME DOES NOT KEEP MY WORDS...” John 14:21-24

Previously we considered the prophetic warning Jesus gave that in the last days the “love of many will grow cold because lawlessness abounds.” What is the antidote to the poison of lawlessness? It is law. It is to keep God's commandments, and this is why God wants to write His law on the hearts of His people! God's law will prevent a lawless lifestyle unless the people of God allow their love to grow cold. How is it that their love can grow cold? It is by becoming lawless, by not choosing to keep His commandments as proof that we love Jesus. It is evident to me from the verses above that Jesus is speaking of a close relationship existing only between Himself, the Father, and the believer who truly loves God. Such a relationship is not a one-way street as the broad-way gospel presents it. Jesus is plainly stating that He and the Father will come and make their home with those who prove that they love Jesus. How is that love proven? Jesus, the prophet of God, says that it is by keeping His commandments! A great man of God once said:

“YOU DO NOT LOVE GOD ANY MORE THAN YOU LOVE HIS WORD.”

Derek Prince

Obviously, brother Derek had believed what Jesus said that “if any man loves Me he will keep My word, and he who does not love Me does not keep My words.” So dear friend, it is quite true, we cannot say that we love God if we do not love His Word, and if we love His Word we will keep His Word! Another statement of Derek's that greatly impacted me was this play on words:

“YOU DO NOT BREAK GOD'S COMMANDMENTS, GOD'S COMMANDMENTS BREAK YOU.”

Derek Prince

He is right, the breaking of God's commandments can only lead to the breaking up of our own lives. We self-destruct. We need to see that God's commandments were given to protect us from the awful consequences that arise from disobedience to what God says is right and wrong.

Much of God's Word contains commandments. The keeping or breaking of those commandments reflects the level of our love for God. Consider how keeping or breaking God's commandments affects our personal relationship with Him in the Kingdom of God in eternity:

"WHOEVER BREAKS ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE COMMANDMENTS, AND TEACHES MEN SO, SHALL BE CALLED LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; BUT WHOEVER DOES AND TEACHES THEM, HE WILL BE CALLED GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

Matt. 5:19

Is obedience to Kingdom law important in the Kingdom of God? This verse states clearly that the degree of our obedience now in this life will impact our positional status in the eternal Kingdom!

There is one other important point that should be made concerning the relationship between law and love. It centers on the error that the broad way gospel teaches of love replacing the need for law in the New Testament. Paul teaches just the opposite. His theory is that love will fulfill the law:



"...HE WHO LOVES ANOTHER HAS FULFILLED THE LAW. FOR THE COMMANDMENTS, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,' 'YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,' 'YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,' 'YOU SHALL NOT COVET,' AND IF THERE IS ANY OTHER COMMANDMENT, ARE ALL SUMMED UP IN THIS SAYING, NAMELY, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' LOVE DOES NO HARM TO A NEIGHBOR; THEREFORE LOVE IS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW."

Rom.13:8-10

Love does not replace the law, love fulfills what is contained in the law! Compare these words of Paul with the words of Jesus on the previous page in John 14:21-24 and you will see that they both are teaching the same truth. Where there is love there is law. If we truly love, we will be law keepers, not lawbreakers! If we commit adultery, we do not love. If we murder, we certainly are not expressing love! If we steal, how is this an expression of love? If we bear false witness against some one and destroy his character or reputation, is this love? Paul sums it up with the principle love does no harm to a neighbor. The commandments define for us what is the true meaning of love. Keeping the commandments demonstrates that we have and exercise real love! Are you beginning to see why God wants to put His laws in our minds and write them on our hearts? It is a security blanket that will keep God's people from ending up as a lawless and loveless people!

The next chapter in this book is devoted entirely to looking at what are some of the laws of the Kingdom of God. What kind of laws does God intend to write on the hearts of His people? That is the objective we want to define in the next chapter.

It is such Kingdom laws that will set apart the people of God from the people of the world ("My Kingdom is not of this world"). It is God's Kingdom laws that will stand in direct opposition to the laws that govern earthly kingdoms that are under the bondage of Satan's rule. What we are going to look at will give you clear understanding as to why Jesus depicts the Christian life for a true follower of Christ as a difficult way. The broad way which Jesus warned against will ignore Kingdom law in favor of compromise with the culture, priorities, philosophy and immorality of the kingdom of Satan in which we must live for the present. We have clear warning from the apostle Paul about what this world is capable of doing to God's people and their relationship to Jesus Christ:

"AS YOU HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK IN HIM, ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM AND ESTABLISHED IN THE FAITH, AS YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT...BEWARE LEST ANYONE CHEAT YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND EMPTY DECEIT, ACCORDING TO THE TRADITION OF MEN, ACCORDING TO THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD, AND NOT ACCORDING TO CHRIST."
Col. 2:6-8

What are the dangers we need to beware of that can cheat us of what is available in Christ? There are four:

<p>1. PHILOSOPHY Religious and secular humanism, evolution, and intellectualism.</p>		<p>2. EMPTY DECEIT Madison Ave. propaganda, from the greedy merchants of the earth 2 Pet. 2:3</p>
<p>3. THE TRADITION OF MEN Religion or religiously-based patriotism, (4th of July celebrations in the church) America as a God-ordained Christian nation, ("One nation Under God", God's New Israel,) Pagan-based celebrations of Christmas and Easter</p>		<p>4. THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD "All that is in the world that is not of the Father: is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." 1 Jn. 2:15-16</p>

This spirit of compromise and conformity to the world makes for a broad way in which there is little clash with the world around us. This way of life is not Kingdom life and, according to Jesus, does not lead to eternal life!

CHAPTER THREE

“KINGDOM LAW”

If we have entered into the Kingdom of God by means of the new birth, we have become subjects of the Kingdom. We must now embrace the King who rules over the Kingdom.



This King is Jesus, who is the King of Kings (Rev. 19:16). Isaiah 33:22 has revealed to us that He is not only our King but He is also our lawgiver.

Every kingdom must have laws to govern its citizens. If you disobey the law of the land here in America, you will face the consequences that are plainly spelled out in the law. Tax evaders end up in jail. There is a principle in Romans that I want to share with you. It is vitally important for it deals with the Christian's responsibility to the civil laws of the land. However, I want to suggest to you that this principle of obedience to civil law is equally applicable to our relationship to Kingdom law. Paul taught believers this principle:

“LET EVERYONE BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT FROM GOD, AND THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST ARE APPOINTED BY GOD. THEREFORE WHOEVER RESISTS THE AUTHORITY RESISTS THE ORDINANCE OF GOD, AND THOSE WHO RESIST WILL BRING JUDGMENT ON THEMSELVES. FOR RULERS ARE NOT A TERROR TO GOOD WORKS, BUT TO EVIL. DO YOU WANT TO BE UNAFRAID OF THE AUTHORITY? DO WHAT IS GOOD, AND YOU WILL HAVE PRAISE FROM THE SAME. FOR HE IS GOD’S MINISTER TO YOU FOR GOOD. BUT IF YOU DO EVIL, BE AFRAID; FOR HE DOES NOT BEAR THE SWORD IN VAIN; FOR HE IS GOD’S MINISTER, AN AVENGER TO EXECUTE WRATH ON HIM WHO PRACTICES EVIL. THEREFORE YOU MUST BE SUBJECT, NOT ONLY FOR WRATH, BUT FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE. FOR BECAUSE OF THIS YOU ALSO PAY TAXES, FOR THEY ARE GOD’S MINISTERS ATTENDING CONTINUALLY TO THIS VERY THING. RENDER THEREFORE TO ALL THEIR DUE; TAXES TO WHOM TAXES ARE DUE, CUSTOMS TO WHOM CUSTOMS, FEAR TO WHO FEAR, HONOR TO WHOM HONOR.”

Rom. 13:1-7

What God has stated pertains not only to where you live in an earthly kingdom, but also to the Heavenly Kingdom that abides in you. These principles are to govern our life pertaining to civil authority but also to heavenly authority. Read the above carefully and measure yourself by it, for you will be accountable to God for its contents!

Look at this comparison between what we have seen Paul teach God's people and what Peter presents also pertaining to civil law:

“LET EVERYONE BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT FROM GOD, AND THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST ARE APPOINTED BY GOD. THEREFORE WHOEVER RESISTS THE AUTHORITY RESISTS THE ORDINANCE OF GOD, AND THOSE WHO RESIST WILL BRING JUDGMENT ON THEMSELVES. FOR RULERS ARE NOT A TERROR TO GOOD WORKS, BUT TO EVIL. DO YOU WANT TO BE UNAFRAID OF THE AUTHORITY? DO WHAT IS GOOD, AND YOU WILL HAVE PRAISE FROM THE SAME. FOR HE IS GOD’S MINISTER TO YOU FOR GOOD. BUT IF YOU DO EVIL, BE AFRAID; FOR HE DOES NOT BEAR THE SWORD IN VAIN; FOR HE IS GOD’S MINISTER, AN AVENGER TO EXECUTE WRATH ON HIM WHO PRACTICES EVIL. THEREFORE YOU MUST BE SUBJECT, NOT ONLY FOR WRATH, BUT FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE. FOR BECAUSE OF THIS YOU ALSO PAY TAXES, FOR THEY ARE GOD’S MINISTERS ATTENDING CONTINUALLY TO THIS VERY THING. RENDER THEREFORE TO ALL THEIR DUE; TAXES TO WHOM TAXES ARE DUE, CUSTOMS TO WHOM CUSTOMS, FEAR TO WHO FEAR, HONOR TO WHOM HONOR.”

Rom. 13:1-7

It is inescapably clear that we, as God’s people, have responsibility to interact properly with the laws of the land.

We should not be rebels toward civil authority unless God’s Word is directly being violated such as the example given in Daniel 6:10.

Also consider these principles are equally applicable to us as subjects of God’s Kingdom that is internalized within us.

We are just as accountable to God’s Kingdom laws as we are to civil law.

Let us now begin to look at what are God’s Kingdom laws.

“BELOVED, I BEG YOU AS SOJOURNERS AND PILGRIMS, ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS WHICH WAR AGAINST THE SOUL, HAVING YOUR CONDUCT HONORABLE AMONG THE GENTILES, THAT...THEY MAY BY YOUR GOOD WORKS, WHICH THEY OBSERVE, GLORIFY GOD...THEREFORE SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO EVERY ORDINANCE OF MAN FOR THE LORD’S SAKE, WHETHER TO THE KING AS SUPREME, OR TO GOVERNORS, AS TO THOSE WHO ARE SENT BY HIM FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF EVILDOERS AND FOR THE PRAISE OF THOSE WHO DO GOOD. FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD, THAT BY DOING GOOD YOU MAY PUT TO SILENCE THE IGNORANCE OF FOOLISH MEN- AS FREE, YET NOT USING YOUR LIBERTY AS A CLOAK FOR VICE, BUT AS SERVANTS OF GOD. HONOR ALL PEOPLE.

LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD. FEAR GOD. HONOR THE KING.”

1 Pet. 2:11-17

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **FORGIVENESS**

“IF YOU FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU.

“BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, IF ANYONE HAS A COMPLAINT AGAINST ANOTHER; EVEN AS CHRIST FORGAVE YOU, SO YOU ALSO MUST DO.”

Col. 3:13



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

BUT IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, NEITHER WILL YOUR FATHER FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES.”

Matt. 6:14-15

“IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST ANYONE, FORGIVE HIM, THAT YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN MAY ALSO FORGIVE YOU OF YOUR TRESPASSES. BUT IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE, NEITHER WILL YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES.”

Mark 11:25-26

Jesus presents forgiveness as a conditional promise, forgive, and you will be forgiven. Flying in the face of such plain Kingdom law is the broad-way gospel proclamation that, by means of the new birth, Jesus has forgiven every sin we have ever committed or ever will commit. Jesus has forgiven your past sins at the new birth, but you will not find one shred of Scripture proclaiming the pre-forgiveness of future sins. This is a man-made concoction based on nothing more than thin air! The warning is quite clear that it is only if you will forgive others their trespasses that your heavenly Father will forgive your trespasses. This makes holding on to unforgiveness a deadly sin, unless we believe those who teach that heaven is still eternally secure for those who do not have their sins forgiven by God the Father.

Can a believer practice unforgiveness and enter Heaven with his own sins still upon him? Let us say that a believer has unforgiveness against an unbeliever and both die in their un-repentant state. Why is hell the destiny for the unbeliever who dies in his sins, but it is heaven for the believer whose sins are not forgiven because he refuses to forgive? Is this sound doctrine or just a bad doctrine that sounds good? If Jesus really means what He says, then we have just discovered another unpardonable sin! At least it remains unpardonable as long as the individual refuses to forgive. What if he dies in the state of unforgiveness? How can heaven be his home?

Not only is attaining heaven in jeopardy for the unforgiving believer, but he/she is headed for real trouble in this present life. Consider the parable Jesus told Peter when he asked his Master if forgiving his offending brother seven times was sufficient enough:

“JESUS SAID TO HIM, “I DO NOT SAY TO YOU, UP TO SEVEN TIMES, BUT UP TO SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN!” THEREFORE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A CERTAIN KING WHO WANTED TO SETTLE ACCOUNTS WITH HIS SERVANTS. AND WHEN HE HAD BEGUN TO SETTLE ACCOUNTS, ONE WAS BROUGHT TO HIM WHO OWED TEN THOUSAND TALENTS. BUT AS HE WAS NOT ABLE TO PAY, HIS MASTER COMMANDED THAT HE BE SOLD, WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN AND ALL THAT HE HAD, AND THAT PAYMENT BE MADE. THE SERVANT THEREFORE FELL DOWN BEFORE HIM, SAYING, “MASTER, HAVE PATIENCE WITH ME, AND I WILL PAY YOU ALL.” THEN THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION, RELEASED HIM, AND FORGAVE HIS DEBT.

BUT THAT SERVANT WENT OUT AND FOUND ONE OF HIS FELLOW SERVANTS WHO OWED HIM A HUNDRED DENARII; AND HE LAID HANDS ON HIM AND TOOK HIM BY THE THROAT, SAYING, “PAY ME WHAT YOU OWE!” SO HIS FELLOW SERVANT FELL DOWN AT HIS FEET AND BEGGED HIM, SAYING, “HAVE PATIENCE WITH ME, AND I WILL PAY YOU ALL”. AND HE WOULD NOT, BUT WENT AND THREW HIM IN PRISON TILL HE SHOULD PAY THE DEBT.

SO WHEN HIS FELLOW SERVANTS SAW WHAT HAD BEEN DONE, THEY WERE VERY GRIEVED, AND CAME AND TOLD THEIR MASTER ALL THAT HAD BEEN DONE. THEN THE MASTER, AFTER HE HAD CALLED HIM, SAID TO HIM, “YOU WICKED SERVANT! I FORGAVE YOU ALL THAT DEBT BECAUSE YOU BEGGED ME. SHOULD YOU NOT ALSO HAVE HAD COMPASSION ON YOUR FELLOW SERVANT, JUST AS I HAD PITY ON YOU?” AND HIS MASTER WAS ANGRY, AND DELIVERED HIM TO THE TORTURERS UNTIL HE SHOULD PAY ALL THAT WAS DUE TO HIM.

“SO MY HEAVENLY FATHER ALSO WILL DO TO YOU, IF EACH OF YOU, FROM HIS HEART, DOES NOT FORGIVE HIS BROTHER HIS TRESPASSES.”

Matt. 18:21-35

Jesus says this is a Kingdom parable! That should mean to you by now that it applies to the Kingdom of God as it exists presently on earth. Peter wants to limit his forgiveness. After seven times he wants it to become justifiable unforgiveness. Jesus does not buy that, and so this parable is taught to convey what happens to Kingdom servants that practice unforgiveness. In this life, they are turned over to the torturers or tormentors. Dear friends, that is demon activity! The moral to the story is “so My Heavenly Father also will do to you, if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” Unforgiveness will not only lead to an eternity in hell, but also a living hell on earth, to be plagued by demons until we choose to forgive! This is a very serious Kingdom law. Holding on to unforgiveness is not worth the cost!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING JUDGMENTALNESS

**“JUDGE NOT,
THAT YOU BE
NOT JUDGED.
FOR WITH
WHAT
JUDGMENT YOU
JUDGE, YOU
WILL BE
JUDGED; AND
WITH THE SAME
MEASURE YOU
USE, IT WILL BE
MEASURED
BACK TO YOU.**



**“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE
YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER
YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH
AND SHOWING
THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT.
TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”**
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

**AND WHY DO YOU
LOOK AT THE SPECK
IN YOUR BROTHER'S
EYE, BUT YOU DO
NOT CONSIDER THE
PLANK IN YOUR
OWN EYE? OR HOW
CAN YOU SAY TO
YOUR BROTHER,
“LET ME REMOVE
THE SPECK OUT OF
YOUR EYE” AND
LOOK, A PLANK IS
IN YOUR OWN EYE?**

**HYPOCRITE! FIRST REMOVE THE PLANK FROM YOUR OWN EYE,
AND THEN YOU WILL SEE CLEARLY
TO REMOVE THE SPECK OUT OF YOUR BROTHER'S EYE.”** Matt. 7:1-5

**“WITH THE
MERCIFUL
YOU WILL
SHOW
YOURSELF
MERCIFUL...”**
Psm. 18:25

**“FOR JUDGMENT IS
WITHOUT MERCY TO THE
ONE WHO HAS SHOWN NO
MERCY. MERCY TRIUMPHS
OVER JUDGMENT.”**
Jas. 2:13

**“DO NOT JUDGE
ACCORDING TO
APPEARANCE, BUT
JUDGE WITH
RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENT.”**
Jn. 7:24

**“THEREFORE YOU ARE INEXCUSABLE, O MAN, WHOEVER YOU ARE
WHO JUDGE, FOR IN WHATEVER YOU JUDGE ANOTHER YOU
CONDEMN YOURSELF; FOR YOU WHO JUDGE PRACTICE THE SAME
THINGS...DO YOU THINK, YOU WHO JUDGE THOSE PRACTICING
SUCH THINGS, AND DOING THE SAME, THAT YOU WILL ESCAPE THE
JUDGMENT OF GOD?”** Rom. 2:1-3

**“FOR IF WE WOULD JUDGE OURSELVES WE WOULD NOT BE JUDGED.
BUT WHEN WE ARE JUDGED, WE ARE CHASTENED BY THE LORD,
THAT WE MAY NOT BE CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD.”**
1 Cor. 11:31-32

**“FOR WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH JUDGING THOSE ALSO WHO ARE
OUTSIDE? DO YOU NOT JUDGE THOSE WHO ARE INSIDE?
BUT THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE GOD JUDGES...”** *1 Cor. 5:12*

When you look at all of this together, you may be confused. At times I am to judge and at times I am not to judge. Which position is right? You guessed it-both! Jesus in Matthew 7:1-5 is not condemning the act of judging, He is condemning judging from a position of hypocrisy! Paul's exhortation in Romans 2:1-3 is also condemning the hypocritical position on judging others for the very same things that we are doing ourselves. It is possible to see the faults of others, but not see our own.

Consider this important principle:

WE SET OUR OWN STANDARDS FOR BEING JUDGED:

**"...FOR WITH WHAT
JUDGMENT YOU JUDGE,
YOU WILL BE JUDGED;
AND WITH THE SAME
MEASURE YOU USE,
IT WILL BE MEASURED
BACK TO YOU."**

Matt. 7:2

**"WITH THE
MERCIFUL
YOU WILL
SHOW
YOURSELF
MERCIFUL..."**

Psm. 18:25

**"FOR JUDGMENT IS
WITHOUT MERCY TO
THE ONE WHO HAS
SHOWN NO MERCY.
MERCY TRIUMPHS
OVER JUDGMENT."**

Jas. 2:13

Once we become aware of the fact that God is allowing each of us to set the standard by which we ourselves shall be judged, we will tend to err on the side of mercy in judging others! Whatever measure we use on others will be used in return on us! If we are nit-picking and super-critical of others, that is exactly how God will be with us at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You have heard of the Golden Rule:

**"THEREFORE, WHATEVER YOU WANT MEN TO DO TO YOU,
DO ALSO TO THEM, FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS."**

Matt. 7:12

If we practice the Golden Rule here on earth, then God will practice it with us in eternity! The carnal tendency within us is to be very soft on ourselves but very hard on others. This is a double standard, it is hypocrisy! My encouragement to you would be to work very hard to reverse this pattern and become very hard on yourself and very easy on others. When it comes to judging ourselves, we should never be too lenient. It is better to error on the side of being too introspective with ourselves than not enough. This kind of self-judgment will not hurt you in the Kingdom if you are overboard. However, if we focus on being hard on others, we may step over the line and fail to judge with righteous judgment as Jesus warns that we should (Jn. 7:24). The last type of judgment we must beware of is expressed in this passage:

**"FOR WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH JUDGING THOSE ALSO WHO ARE
OUTSIDE? DO YOU NOT JUDGE THOSE WHO ARE INSIDE?
BUT THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE GOD JUDGES..."**

1 Cor. 5:12

Those who are inside the Kingdom are to judge only those who are inside the Kingdom! Those who are outside the Kingdom will be judged by God. Christianity has this concept totally reversed. The Christian Religious Right movement as well as the Tea Party are busy judging those outside the Kingdom of God for their abortions, pornography, homosexuality and gay marriages. These are not Kingdom issues! The laws of the Kingdom are for those inside the Kingdom, not outside! There is a serious lack of judging what goes on inside the Kingdom because we are too busy keeping our eyes focused on the sins of those outside the Kingdom! Beware of this serious error.

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **INDEBTEDNESS**

“WOE TO HIM WHO INCREASES WHAT IS NOT HIS... AND TO HIM WHO LOADS HIMSELF WITH MANY PLEDGES. WILL NOT YOUR CREDITORS RISE UP SUDDENLY? WILL THEY NOT AWAKEN WHO OPPRESS YOU? AND YOU WILL BECOME THEIR BOOTY.”

Hab. 2:6-7



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

“THE BORROWER IS SERVANT TO THE LENDER.”

Prov. 22:7

“DO NOT BE ONE OF THOSE WHO SHAKES HANDS IN A PLEDGE, ONE WHO IS A SURETY FOR DEBTS; IF YOU HAVE NOTHING WITH WHICH TO PAY, WHY SHOULD HE TAKE AWAY YOUR BED FROM UNDER YOU?”

Prov. 22:26-27

“KEEP OUT OF DEBT AND OWE NO MAN ANYTHING...”

Rom. 13:8 Amp.

“LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE ‘YES’, AND YOUR ‘NO’ BE ‘NO’...”

Jas. 5:12

“PAY WHAT YOU HAVE VOWED. IT IS BETTER NOT TO VOW THAN TO VOW AND NOT PAY.”

Ecc. 5:4-5

America has become a nation whose people are indebted beyond belief! A 2004 survey stated that the average monthly unpaid balance of credit cards subject to interest ranging from 5 to 21% is \$3,857.00! John the Baptist told the soldiers, “Be content with your wages” (Luke 3:14). Paul said, “...let your life be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have” (Heb.13:5). Greedy merchants are ever seeking to convince the inhabitants of earth to be discontent with everything and that happiness is found in things, even if you can’t afford them. However, Jesus warns that this is not so, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses” (Luke 12:15).

To carry an ongoing unpaid monthly balance on credit cards is evidence that we are not willing to live within our present means. It is actually borrowing on paychecks that we have not yet even earned. It is a sign of discontentment and an unwillingness to pay as you go. If left unchecked, eventually, the credit cards become maxed out, the payments fall behind, the interest rate increases, the lender begins to hound the borrower and the shame of repossession of unpaid-for goods begins. The world has a quick fix cure for this, it is called bankruptcy. However, there is a problem with bankruptcy.

The problem is that bankruptcy is robbery of the bank. For Kingdom citizens, this is not to be considered as an option! Better it is to pay a few dollars whenever you can than to create such indebtedness and then bail out leaving the bank or credit company with your debts!

**“LET YOUR
‘YES; BE ‘YES’,
AND
YOUR
‘NO’ BE ‘NO’.”**
Jas. 5:12

For a Kingdom subject, we must be governed by these two Kingdom laws.



**“PAY WHAT YOU
HAVE VOWED.
IT IS BETTER NOT
TO VOW THAN
TO VOW AND
NOT PAY.”**
Ecc. 5:4-5

It is not wrong to borrow money to pay on a home mortgage or a car, or even for basic furnishings. However, a careful calculation should be made in advance understanding that “the borrower becomes a servant to the lender.” If you over commit, he can take everything you have!

**“WOE TO HIM WHO INCREASES WHAT IS NOT HIS...
AND TO HIM WHO LOADS HIMSELF WITH MANY PLEDGES.
WILL NOT YOUR CREDITORS RISE UP SUDDENLY?
WILL THEY NOT AWAKEN WHO OPPRESS YOU?
AND YOU WILL BECOME THEIR BOOTY.”** Hab. 2:6-7

It is wrong to enter into debt knowing that you are unable to make the agreed payments. This is a vow made to the lender. Therefore our yes must be yes throughout the term of that vow. It is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay, as Solomon states above.

The undisciplined use of credit cards become plastic time-bombs for they allow the continual purchasing of goods with the subtle effect of not reducing the principle at all, but just paying the interest month after month with ever increasing late fees added on. There have been horror stories of people paying 400% interest on the goods that they bought! This is unbridled covetousness! The world lives in such a manner, but the people of the Kingdom of God should not be “conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their mind” (Rom.12:2). I like the Phillips translation which says:

**“DON’T LET THE WORLD AROUND YOU SQUEEZE YOU INTO
ITS OWN MOLD, BUT LET GOD RE-MAKE YOU SO THAT YOUR
WHOLE ATTITUDE OF MIND IS CHANGED.”**
Rom. 12:2 Phillips

It isn't that God does not want you to have things, He just does not want things to have you. We must keep ourselves out of the bondage of indebtedness. It has been the ruin of many marriages, and many lives. Do not let it be your ruin! If you have dug yourself in, then dig yourself out, but do not bail out on your creditors! This is a reproach to the name of Christ, and brings shame upon us as a Christian. We must be different than the world!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **LITIGATION**

“DARE ANY OF YOU, HAVING A MATTER AGAINST ANOTHER, GO TO LAW BEFORE THE UNRIGHTEOUS, AND NOT BEFORE THE SAINTS?”



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

BUT BROTHER GOES TO LAW AGAINST BROTHER, AND THAT BEFORE UNBELIEVERS! ... IT IS ALREADY AN UTTER FAILURE FOR YOU THAT YOU GO TO LAW AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.

**WHY DO YOU NOT RATHER ACCEPT WRONG?
WHY DO YOU NOT RATHER LET YOURSELVES BE DEFRAUDED?
NO, YOU YOURSELVES DO WRONG AND DEFRAUD,
AND YOU DO THESE THINGS TO YOUR BRETHERN!”**

1 Cor.6:1-8 excerpts

America thrives on lawsuits. People sue each other at the drop of a hat! As incredible as it is, people eat junk food all their life, and then sue the food establishments because they are fat. People have bought coffee to go at fast food stores, placed the hot cup between their legs as they drive off, get severe skin burns, and then sue the establishment because the coffee was too hot! People smoke all their life and then sue the tobacco manufactures because they now have lung cancer. Doctors and surgeons have to charge sky-high rates because of the cost of insurance against litigation threats. The latest suit rage is over sexual harassment in the work place. Having been a manager for a large corporation for many years, I know that such things exist among men. However, I also have observed that enticing sensuality and subtle seduction exists on the female side of the corporate fence also. Now consider these words of Paul to the saints. Can't you just see sizzling heat rising off of his words as he says,

“DARE ANY OF YOU, HAVING A MATTER AGAINST ANOTHER, GO TO LAW BEFORE THE UNRIGHTEOUS?...IT IS AN UTTER FAILURE FOR YOU THAT YOU GO TO LAW AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.”

1 Cor. 6:1

Yes, Paul, they do dare! Lawsuits involving Christians abound, and I dare say some are for pretty absurd reasons as well. A civil court of law is not how we are to settle our differences. This is the way of the world. It is not the way of the Kingdom of God.

**“WHY DO YOU NOT RATHER ACCEPT WRONG?
WHY DO YOU NOT RATHER LET YOURSELVES BE DEFRAUDED?
NO, YOU YOURSELVES DO WRONG AND DEFAUD,
AND YOU DO THESE THINGS TO YOUR BRETHREN!”**

1 Cor.6:1-8 excerpts

If it cannot be settled out of court, if it cannot be settled by the church, Paul says we ought to let ourselves be defrauded rather than to sue a brother or sister. Is it beginning to dawn on you why the Kingdom of God is called by Jesus a difficult way that few are willing to enter? Worldly ways are not the way of the Kingdom!

The subtle force that is at work behind this willingness to sue is the Bill of Rights. It is the U.S. Constitutional theme that Americans have inalienable rights. This may be fine for the subjects of an earthly kingdom, but this Bill of Rights becomes a bill of goods when it comes to rights as revealed in the Word of God. However, we see Christian leaders pushing the rights of Christians into the courts. No prayer in the schools? Let us sue! No Bible studies in the schools? Let us sue! Take the Ten Commandments carved in stone out of our public buildings? Let us sue! Threaten our rights to unsupervised home schooling? Let us sue!

Does it bother you as much as it does me that the name of the last-day church that Jesus threatens to spew out of His mouth, (Laodicea), means “the rights of the people?” Does this mounting epidemic of Christian litigation over rights not prove that the American church may indeed be this Laodicean church? Who else in the world can boast, “I am rich, increased in goods and have need of nothing?” (Rev. 3:17).

Where is the Biblical pattern in the history of the church in which Christians are exhorted to stand up for their rights? Rather what we find is this account:

“RECALL THE FORMER DAYS IN WHICH, AFTER YOU WERE ILLUMINATED, YOU ENDURED A GREAT STRUGGLE WITH SUFFERINGS: PARTLY WHILE YOU WERE MADE A SPECTACLE BOTH BY REPROACHES AND TRIBULATIONS, AND PARTLY WHILE YOU BECAME COMPANIONS OF THOSE WHO WERE SO TREATED; FOR YOU HAD COMPASSION ON ME IN MY CHAINS, AND JOYFULLY ACCEPTED THE PLUNDERING OF YOUR GOODS, KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE A BETTER AND AN ENDURING POSSESSION FOR YOURSELVES IN HEAVEN.”

Heb. 10:32-34

Accept the plundering of our goods? Are you kidding? Let us sue! There is an antagonistic spirit building in Christianity here in America and it is being fed by the likes of the Religious Right and Moral Majority. The Christian motto in America is becoming more like the one found on the old Texas flag; “Don’t tread on Me!”

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **NONRESISTANCE**

“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID, “AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.” BUT I TELL YOU NOT TO RESIST AN EVIL PERSON. BUT WHOEVER SLAPS YOU ON YOUR RIGHT CHEEK, TURN THE OTHER TO HIM ALSO.”
Matt. 5:38-39



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

“LORD, SHALL WE STRIKE WITH THE SWORD?” Luke 22:49

THEN JESUS SAID TO HIM, “PUT YOUR SWORD IN ITS PLACE, FOR ALL WHO TAKE UP THE SWORD WILL PERISH BY THE SWORD.” Matt. 26:52

“HE WHO HAS AN EAR LET HIM HEAR. HE WHO KILLS WITH THE SWORD MUST BE KILLED BY THE SWORD. HERE IS THE PATIENCE AND THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS.” Rev. 13:9-10

“REPAY NO ONE EVIL FOR EVIL...IF IT IS POSSIBLE, AS MUCH AS DEPENDS UPON YOU, LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN. BELOVED, DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELVES... DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL BY GOOD.”
Rom. 12:17-21

The world believes that the likes of the Charles Bronson and Clint Eastwood “make my day” movies depict the right way to respond to violence; an eye for an eye and a tooth for tooth! If you have fed yourself a diet of such retaliatory “vengeance is mine!” films, then you are going to have a hard time with this Kingdom law! If you endorse the concept of war as a righteous necessary thing that is ordained by God to bring peace to the world, this is going to be indeed a very “difficult way” for you to embrace.

The only sword God wants a Christian to take up is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph.6:17). The only adversary God wants His people to resist is the devil (Eph. 6:10-17, 1 Pet. 5:8-9). The only good fight God wants His people to fight is to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12). The only thing God wants Christians to kill or put to death are the sins of the flesh nature (Col. 3:5, Rom. 8:13, Gal. 5:24, Rom. 6:11). The only good warfare God wants us to wage is to have faith and a good conscience (1 Tim.1:18). The only weapons of our warfare that are approved by God are those by which we cast down our vain imaginations and bring our thought life into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:4-5). This is all **SPIRITUAL** warfare!

We are not as Christians to be participating in protest rallies but rather God's way (the difficult way) is by means of prayer rallies. When Peter was thrown in prison and was to be executed like James, the early church did not gather to protest but rather to pray:

"PETER WAS THEREFORE KEPT IN PRISON, BUT CONSTANT PRAYER WAS OFFERED TO GOD FOR HIM BY THE CHURCH." Acts 12:5

If Peter's predicament was to be handled by the American church today, I fear that they would have gathered to offer up constant protest rallies for him. There is something about a mob gathering that generates the thought that it is going to be effective. I once had someone say to me, "Pray? Is that all we are supposed to do?" Read the rest of Peter's story in Acts 12 for it was certainly sufficient to deliver him from prison. Perhaps we don't see the same results today because we don't use the effective tools the early church used. Today we hear the rallying battle cry, "Organize a boycott! Don't buy their products! Don't vote for them! Write your congressman! Show up on the corner with placards and signs and ask people to honk their horns in approval!" This is how you get things done, right? **NO, WRONG!**

"THE TRUTH IS THAT, ALTHOUGH WE LEAD NORMAL HUMAN LIVES, THE BATTLE WE ARE FIGHTING IS ON THE SPIRITUAL LEVEL. THE VERY WEAPONS WE USE ARE NOT HUMAN BUT POWERFUL IN GOD'S WARFARE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY'S STRONGHOLDS."

2 Cor. 10:3-4 Phillips

We see bumper stickers with clever sayings like, "this car is insured by Smith and Wesson." Christian, is your car (or home) "insured" by a Smith and Wesson revolver? Remember, if you live by the sword you will also die by the sword. The hard fact is that most people killed in their homes die by their own weapons held by family members! Can't we trust God to protect us from the thief and the robber, or the rapist? Are God's angels not effective enough for you?

"YOU SHALL NOT BE AFRAID OF THE TERROR BY NIGHT, NOR OF THE ARROW THAT FLIES BY DAY, NOR OF THE PESTILENCE THAT WALKS IN DARKNESS, NOR OF THE DESTRUCTION THAT LAYS WASTE AT NOONDAY. A THOUSAND MAY FALL AT YOUR SIDE, AND TEN THOUSAND AT YOUR RIGHT HAND; BUT IT SHALL NOT COME NEAR YOU...BECAUSE YOU HAVE MADE THE LORD YOUR REFUGE...NO EVIL SHALL BEFALL YOU, NOR SHALL ANY PLAGUE COME NEAR YOUR DWELLING; FOR HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER YOU TO KEEP YOU IN ALL YOUR WAYS."

Psalms 91 5-11 excerpts

It is the effective fervent prayer of a righteous man that avails much! (Jas.5:16). As our first line of defense, God wants us to pray for all who are in authority that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior! (1 Tim. 2: 1-3). Nonresistance is the Kingdom way!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING TRUTHFULNESS

**“A RIGHTEOUS
MAN HATES
LYING.”**

Prov. 13:5

**“A FAITHFUL
WITNESS DOES
NOT LIE.”**

Prov. 14:5

**“HE WHO SPEAKS
LIES WILL NOT
ESCAPE...HE WHO
SPEAKS LIES SHALL
PERISH.”**

Prov. 19:5,9

**“PUTTING AWAY LYING,
EACH ONE SPEAK TRUTH
WITH HIS NEIGHBOR...”**

Eph. 4:25



*“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE
YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER
YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH
AND SHOWING
THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT.
TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”*
2nd Cor. 13:5 Amp.

**“LYING LIPS ARE
AN ABOMINATION
TO THE LORD,
BUT THOSE WHO
DEAL TRUTHFULLY
ARE HIS DELIGHT.”**

Prov. 12:22

**“DO NOT LIE TO
ONE ANOTHER,
SINCE YOU HAVE
PUT OFF
THE OLD MAN WITH
HIS DEEDS...”**

Col. 3:9

**“...ALL LIARS SHALL HAVE THEIR PART
IN THE LAKE OF FIRE... Rev. 21:8**

**“...WHOEVER LOVES AND
PRACTICES A LIE.” Rev.22:15**

**“YOU ARE OF YOUR FATHER THE DEVIL...
HE DOES NOT STAND IN THE TRUTH, BECAUSE THERE IS NO TRUTH IN HIM...
HE IS A LIAR AND THE FATHER OF IT.” John 8:44**
“...SATAN HAS FILLED YOUR HEART TO LIE...” Acts 5:3

Perhaps we could label this Kingdom principle after an old once popular television show called “Truth or Consequences.” There are severe consequences attached to the sin of lying for God warns that all liars will have their part in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 21:8). Lying is the identifying mark of the kingdom of Satan for God said he is a liar and the father of it (Jn. 8:44). To practice lying is to have one’s heart filled by Satan to lie (Acts 5:3).

The October 5, 1992 issue of Time reveals how widespread lying is as a way of life in the world. Such lying is understandable among those who are unbelievers for they still have Satan as their father (John 8:44). However, for a Kingdom saint to use lying as the world does, reveals a serious deficiency of the heart:

**“...FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE
OF THE HEART, HIS MOUTH SPEAKS.”**

Luke 6:45

Lying is the outward evidence of a heart problem. Lying is the outward sin, but the root is iniquity in the heart (“Satan has filled your heart to lie” (Acts 5:3). We are warned not to give place to the Devil (Eph. 4:27).



**"...SATAN HAS FILLED
YOUR HEART TO LIE..."**

Acts 5:3



"A GOOD MAN OUT OF
THE GOOD TREASURE
OF HIS HEART BRINGS
FORTH GOOD;
AND AN EVIL MAN
OUT OF THE EVIL
TREASURE OF HIS
HEART BRINGS FORTH
EVIL. FOR OUT OF THE
ABUNDANCE OF THE
HEART HIS MOUTH
SPEAKS."
Luke 6:45

**"BEHOLD,
YOU DESIRE TRUTH IN
THE INWARD PARTS..."**

Psm. 51:6



Lying is the distinguishing mark of the kingdom of Satan. Truth is the identifying mark of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, those who are in the Kingdom of God must hate lying and put it away. For believers to lie is to align themselves with the father of lies (Satan.) As believers we have a new Father and therefore we should align ourselves with His truth. How important is truth in God's Kingdom?

1. **JESUS is THE TRUTH** (Jn. 14:6)
2. **THE HOLY SPIRIT is THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH** (Jn.14:17)
3. **THE WORD OF GOD is TRUTH** (Jn. 17:17)
4. **THE CHURCH is
THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH** (1 Tim. 3:15)
5. **GOD'S LAW is TRUTH** (Psm. 119:142)

Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, the law of God, and even the church itself are all ear-marked with the Truth. We are to be a people of truth in which there is no room for lying lips. That means you cannot tell little white lies for your boss such as "He's not in" or to say "the check's in the mail" when it is not. Lies do not come in colors. God's kind of honesty in the work place will demonstrate to you how the Kingdom life is indeed a difficult way.

When the Antichrist, the man of sin, is released on the earth, he will come forth promoting the lie and it will be confirmed with lying wonders. Of this time Paul records this sober warning:

"THE COMING OF THE LAWLESS ONE IS ACCORDING TO THE WORKING OF SATAN, WITH ALL POWER, SIGNS, AND LYING WONDERS, AND WITH ALL UNRIGHTEOUS DECEPTION AMONG THOSE WHO PERISH, BECAUSE THEY DID NOT RECEIVE THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH, THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED. AND FOR THIS REASON GOD WILL SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION, THAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE THE LIE, THAT THEY ALL MAY BE CONDEMNED WHO DID NOT BELIEVE THE TRUTH BUT HAD PLEASURE IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS."

2 Thess. 2:9-12

Notice the constant contrasting of the truth with the lie in these verses. Do you love the truth or the lie? You can tell by listening to your own lips for we speak what is in our hearts!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **SEXUAL IMPURITY**

"FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD, YOUR SANCTIFICATION; THAT YOU SHOULD ABSTAIN FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY; THAT EACH OF YOU SHOULD KNOW HOW TO POSSESS HIS OWN VESSEL IN SANCTIFICATION AND HONOR, NOT IN PASSION OF LUST, LIKE THE GENTILES WHO DO NOT KNOW GOD."

1 Thess. 4:3-5



"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

"...NOW THE BODY IS NOT FOR SEXUAL IMMORALITY, BUT FOR THE LORD... FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY. EVERY SIN THAT A MAN DOES IS OUTSIDE THE BODY, BUT HE WHO COMMITS SEXUAL IMMORALITY SINS AGAINST HIS OWN BODY... DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT... GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY..."

1 Cor. 3:13-20
excerpts

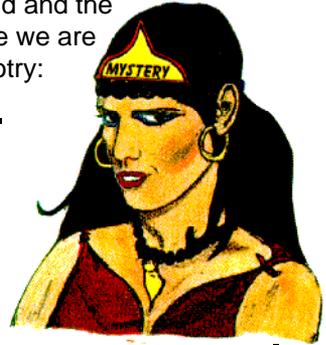
"BUT FORNICATION AND ALL UNCLEANNESS... LET IT NOT EVEN BE NAMED AMONG YOU, AS IS FITTING FOR SAINTS... FOR THIS YOU KNOW, THAT NO FORNICATOR, UNCLEAN PERSON... HAS ANY INHERITANCE IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND GOD. LET NO ONE DECEIVE YOU WITH EMPTY WORDS FOR BECAUSE OF THESE THINGS THE WRATH OF GOD COMES UPON THE SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE. THEREFORE DO NOT BE PARTAKERS WITH THEM."

Eph. 5:3-7 excerpts

We saw previously that lying was a prevalent mark of the world. So is sexual immorality. The biggest single commercial product throughout the whole world today is pornography. The selling of pornography by means of the world-wide web and the internet is of mind-boggling proportions. We are talking of a multibillion dollar industry that knows no language barriers.

Sensuality sells. Multitudes of television commercials use blatant sensuality to sell their wares. From hardware to software, it is mostly marketed by provocative sensuality. This is one area in which we can see plainly, "the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1 Jn. 5:19). Even the Super Bowl is super sensual! The sidelines are filled with seductive cheerleaders, obviously to the cameraman's delight. It is a very sensual and seductive world in which we find ourselves, and in the very midst of its perversity, God calls us to live a life of sexual purity. To fail to do so is deadly for the believer.

How does God portray Satan's kingdom in the last days? By means of the imagery of a harlot. Both the Old and the New testament warns against the harlot. I believe we are looking at what God refers to as the spirit of harlotry:



“COME, I WILL SHOW YOU THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT HARLOT WHO SITS ON MANY WATERS, WITH WHOM THE KINGS OF THE EARTH COMMITTED FORNICATION, AND THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH WERE MADE DRUNK WITH THE WINE OF HER FORNICATION.” Rev. 17:1-2

“DO NOT LET YOUR HEART TURN ASIDE TO HER WAYS, DO NOT STRAY INTO HER PATHS; FOR SHE HAS CAST DOWN MANY WOUNDED, AND ALL WHO WERE SLAIN BY HER WERE STRONG MEN. HER HOUSE IS THE WAY TO HELL, DESCENDING TO THE CHAMBERS OF DEATH.” Prov. 7:25-27

“HARLOTRY, WINE, AND NEW WINE ENSLAVE THE HEART... THE SPIRIT OF HARLOTRY HAS CAUSED THEM TO STRAY, AND THEY HAVE PLAYED THE HARLOT AGAINST THEIR GOD... THEY DO NOT DIRECT THEIR DEEDS TOWARD TURNING TO THEIR GOD, FOR THE SPIRIT OF HARLOTRY IS IN THEIR MIDST...”

Hosea 4:11-12, 5:4

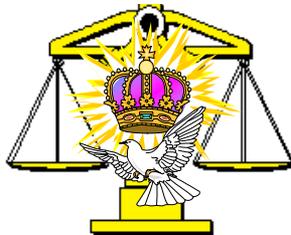
the Hebrew word for harlot or whoredom is Zannah and it means “to be given to idols and unfaithful to God.” In the Greek language it is the word Porneia from which we get our word pornography. It means “to be highly fed and therefore wanton, indulgent, undisciplined in mind or body, lustful and sensual in thought or deed.” As God's people (male and female) we must avoid ensnarement in the spirit of harlotry. It is ideology to think we shall clean up this present world's entertainment. Consider again the picture John portrays that “the inhabitants of the world were drunk with the wine of her fornication” (sexual immorality). The world is already drunk with sex and it is going to get even more intoxicated than it is presently! Look around you at the likes of homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, rape, prostitution, pornography, and even child pornography, more and more mass-murderers committing sexual crimes beyond imagination. Look at the divorce rate among Christians due to sexual immorality! This is the spirit of harlotry which is at work in our midst as it was in Israel's midst! Lest we, the church, be guilty of repeating Israel's sin, we must heed the expressed will of God for us in this area:

“FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD, YOUR SANCTIFICATION; THAT YOU SHOULD ABSTAIN FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY; THAT EACH OF YOU SHOULD KNOW HOW TO POSSESS HIS OWN VESSEL IN SANCTIFICATION AND HONOR, NOT IN PASSION OF LUST, LIKE THE GENTILES WHO DO NOT KNOW GOD.”

1 Thess. 4:3-5

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID TO THOSE OF OLD, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.’ BUT I SAY UNTO YOU THAT WHOEVER LOOKS AT A WOMAN TO LUST FOR HER HAS ALREADY COMMITTED ADULTERY WITH HER IN HIS HEART... FURTHERMORE, IT HAS BEEN SAID,



*“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.*

“JUDAH HAS PROFANED THE LORD’S HOLY INSTITUTION WHICH HE LOVES... FOR THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL SAYS THAT HE HATES DIVORCE, FOR IT COVERS ONE’S GARMENT WITH VIOLENCE, SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.

THEREFORE TAKE HEED TO YOUR SPIRIT, THAT YOU DO NOT DEAL TREACHEROUSLY.” THE LORD HAS BEEN A WITNESS BETWEEN YOU AND THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH, WITH WHOM YOU HAVE DEALT TREACHEROUSLY; YET SHE IS YOUR COMPANION AND YOUR WIFE BY COVENANT... DID HE NOT MAKE THEM ONE?...AND WHY ONE? HE SEEKS GODLY OFFSPRING. THEREFORE TAKE HEED TO YOUR SPIRIT, LET NONE OF YOU DEAL TREACHEROUSLY WITH THE WIFE OF HIS YOUTH.”

Mal. 2:11-16 excerpts

“NOW TO THE MARRIED I COMMAND, YET NOT I BUT THE LORD: A WIFE IS NOT TO DEPART FROM HER HUSBAND. BUT EVEN IF SHE DOES DEPART, LET HER REMAIN UNMARRIED OR BE RECONCILED TO HER HUSBAND. AND A HUSBAND IS NOT TO DIVORCE HIS WIFE.... A WIFE IS BOUND BY LAW AS LONG AS HER HUSBAND LIVES; BUT IF HER HUSBAND DIES, SHE IS AT LIBERTY TO BE MARRIED TO WHOM SHE WISHES, ONLY IN THE LORD.” 1 Cor. 7:10-13, 39

**‘WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE.’ BUT I SAY UNTO YOU THAT WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE FOR ANY REASON EXCEPT SEXUAL IMMORALITY CAUSES HER TO COMMIT ADULTERY; AND WHOEVER MARRIES A WOMAN WHO IS DIVORCED COMMITS ADULTERY.”
Matt. 5: 27-32**

Such verses should convince any Kingdom believer that God is against divorce, in fact, He says plainly, “I hate divorce.” As Kingdom saints we must learn to hate what God hates and to love what God loves. God hates divorce and He loves His holy institution which is marriage. We ought to ponder well that God Himself is a witness between you and the wife (or husband) of your youth. God sees all that transpires inside of the marriage covenant. Cultivate that.

"...WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE FOR ANY REASON EXCEPT SEXUAL IMMORALITY CAUSES HER TO COMMIT ADULTERY; AND WHOEVER MARRIES A WOMAN WHO IS DIVORCED COMMITS ADULTERY."

Matt. 5: 32

In God's sight, there is but one valid reason for divorce and it is not the popular incompatibility plea, but rather the unpopular charge of sexual immorality. The fact that the context in which this exception is included begins with mental adultery being the same as physical adultery in God's sight, makes this exception clause broader than just someone being caught in the very act as was the adulterous woman. God's way is for a husband to be faithful to his wife, even in his thought life toward other women. A man who is a womanizer in his thoughts is just as guilty as if he was physically promiscuous with other women. This is not something that can be proven in a court of law, but remember, it is man that looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7).

"THE LORD HAS BEEN A WITNESS BETWEEN YOU AND THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH, WITH WHOM YOU HAVE DEALT TREACHEROUSLY; YET SHE IS YOUR COMPANION AND YOUR WIFE BY COVENANT..."

Mal. 2:14

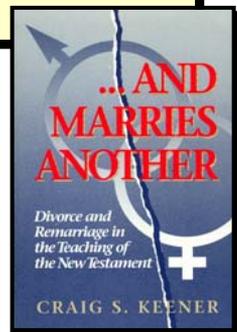
With God, heart motive is supreme. What He hates is a treacherous relationship existing between a husband and wife. It is always the children that pay the price. God says He hates divorce because He is after godly offspring (Mal. 2:15). Rarely do the children of a divorced couple end up as godly offspring, but rather they are prone to cast off God just as their parents cast off one another. Parents teach their children what to do by what they do themselves!

In Paul's following dissertation on divorce, you can see that he makes room for a wife to divorce her husband but then she is to remain unmarried or become reconciled to her husband:

"NOW TO THE MARRIED I COMMAND, YET NOT I BUT THE LORD: A WIFE IS NOT TO DEPART FROM HER HUSBAND. BUT EVEN IF SHE DOES DEPART, LET HER REMAIN UNMARRIED OR BE RECONCILED TO HER HUSBAND. AND A HUSBAND IS NOT TO DIVORCE HIS WIFE.... A WIFE IS BOUND BY LAW AS LONG AS HER HUSBAND LIVES; BUT IF HER HUSBAND DIES, SHE IS AT LIBERTY TO BE MARRIED TO WHOM SHE WISHES, ONLY IN THE LORD."

1 Cor. 7:10-13, 39

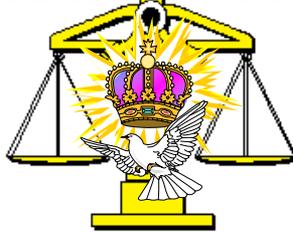
It isn't the divorce issue that is the complex one, but rather when the divorced remarry. Let me recommend this book to you as a balanced perspective on this issue of divorce and remarriage. Let me say to those who have been divorced and have remarried, that you need to treat the matter as sin, but not as unpardonable sin. This book brings a biblical balance to this difficult issue.



THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING RECONCILIATION OF OFFENSES

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT NO OFFENSES SHOULD COME, BUT WOE UNTO HIM THROUGH WHOM THEY DO COME!...IF YOUR BROTHER SINS AGAINST YOU, REBUKE HIM; AND IF HE REPENTS FORGIVE HIM. AND IF HE SINS AGAINST YOU SEVEN TIMES A DAY...AND RETURNS TO YOU SAYING, 'I REPENT' YOU SHALL FORGIVE HIM. AND THE APOSTLES SAID TO THE LORD, "INCREASE OUR FAITH."

Luke 17:1-5



"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

"REPAY NO ONE EVIL FOR EVIL... IF IT IS POSSIBLE, AS MUCH AS DEPENDS UPON YOU, LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN. BELOVED, DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELVES... DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD."

Rom. 12:17-21

"MOREOVER IF YOUR BROTHER SINS AGAINST YOU, GO AND TELL HIM HIS FAULT BETWEEN YOU AND HIM ALONE. IF HE HEARS YOU, YOU HAVE GAINED YOUR BROTHER. BUT IF HE WILL NOT HEAR YOU, TAKE WITH YOU ONE OR TWO MORE, THAT 'BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.' AND IF HE REFUSES TO HEAR THEM, TELL IT TO THE CHURCH. BUT IF HE REFUSES EVEN TO HEAR THE CHURCH, LET HIM BE TO YOU LIKE A HEATHEN..."

Matt. 18:15-17

Everyone gets offended, sooner or later, and some seem to get offended sooner than later! When people in the world take hold of offenses, they tend to hang on to them forever!

There is only one way to overcome evil with good and that is the difficult way, the Kingdom way of dealing with offenses. It is by earnestly seeking reconciliation instead of plotting retaliation. Reconciliation is the Kingdom way but retaliation is the way of the world. To be a Kingdom saint who seeks reconciliation is to follow the difficult way as a follower of Christ. Few find that way because the flesh wants vindication, retaliation and vengeance instead of reconciliation. God has a better plan and it is systematically spelled out for us above in Matthew 18. However, this formula rarely is applied properly by God's people due to a misunderstanding of the law of witness referred to by Jesus.

“MOREOVER IF YOUR BROTHER SINS AGAINST YOU, GO AND TELL HIM HIS FAULT BETWEEN YOU AND HIM ALONE. IF HE HEARS YOU, YOU HAVE GAINED YOUR BROTHER. BUT IF HE WILL NOT HEAR YOU, TAKE WITH YOU ONE OR TWO MORE, THAT ‘BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.’ AND IF HE REFUSES TO HEAR THEM, TELL IT TO THE CHURCH. BUT IF HE REFUSES EVEN TO HEAR THE CHURCH, LET HIM BE TO YOU LIKE A HEATHEN...”

Matt. 18:15-17

There are three clearly stated steps in seeking reconciliation with an offended brother. Most Christians don't even make it to first base. The first step is usually ignored in favor of going to everyone but the offending brother or sister. It is more appealing to our flesh to jump down to the mandate to tell it to the church. To whom shall we go? The word is clear: If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, and there will be a better chance that he will if you have not already told it to the church, then you will have gained your brother. Both, the offense and the reconciliation of that offense, goes no further than between the two of you. There is no need to involve anyone else prior to this initial attempt at reconciliation. Usually the second step is also violated due to a lack of understanding what is the law of witness of which Jesus speaks. Here is what Jesus is quoting from:

“ONE WITNESS SHALL NOT RISE AGAINST A MAN CONCERNING ANY INIQUITY OR ANY SIN THAT HE COMMITS; BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES THE MATTER SHALL BE ESTABLISHED.”

Deut. 19:15

The reference of two or three witnesses in Matthew 18 does not mean to take with you brethren from the church who could judge impartially. Rather it is referring to those who were eye-witnesses to the offense that occurred! If he will not hear what you have to say, then take two or three more people who witnessed the event that took place! Here comes the difficult way. What if there were no other witnesses than yourself? Read the law of witness again: “one witness shall not rise against any iniquity or any sin that he commits.” You went to your brother and he will not hear. Since there were no other witnesses, then you should go no further! For the sake of your brother you should forgive and forget his offense! Like the apostles we must cry out to God, “Lord increase our faith!” (Luke 17:5). It should not become a matter taken before the church unless he will not hear the other two or three who witnessed the offense! The meaning of the phrase “take it to the church” refers to church leadership and not the congregation! It is those who will not submit to church authority that should then be considered as heathen, those who refuse correction and continue to hold on to their offenses! This is the law of witness! It is a difficult way because most offenses take place apart from the presence of other witnesses. It is far more difficult to forgive and forget the offense!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING CITIZENSHIP

"OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN, FROM WHICH WE ALSO EAGERLY WAIT FOR THE SAVIOR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST..."

Phil. 3:20



"FOR HERE WE HAVE NO CONTINUING CITY, BUT WE SEEK THE ONE TO COME."

Heb. 13:14

"NO ONE ENGAGED IN WARFARE ENTANGLES HIMSELF WITH THE AFFAIRS OF THIS LIFE, THAT HE MAY PLEASE HIM WHO ENLISTED HIM AS A SOLDIER."

2 Tim. 2:4

"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."

2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

"...HE WAITED FOR THE CITY WHICH HAS FOUNDATIONS, WHOSE BUILDER AND MAKER IS GOD... THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES

"THESE ARE THE ONES WHO HEAR THE WORD, AND THE CARES OF THIS WORLD, THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, AND THE DESIRES FOR OTHER THINGS ENTERING IN CHOKE THE WORD, AND IT BECOMES UNFRUITFUL."

Mark 4:18-19

BUT HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF WERE ASSURED OF THEM, EMBRACED THEM, AND CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH. FOR THOSE WHO SAY SUCH THINGS DECLARE PLAINLY THAT THEY SEEK A HOMETLAND. AND TRULY IF THEY HAD CALLED TO MIND THAT COUNTRY FROM WHICH THEY HAD COME OUT, THEY WOULD HAVE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN. BUT NOW THEY DESIRE A BETTER, THAT IS, A HEAVENLY COUNTRY. THEREFORE GOD IS NOT ASHAMED TO BE CALLED THEIR GOD, FOR HE HAS PREPARED A CITY FOR THEM."

Heb. 11:10-16 excerpts

Reading passages like these cannot help but cause one to ask what has happened to such teachings in the church in America? This is foreign theology to say the least! Citizenship in Heaven? Strangers and pilgrims on earth? No continuing city here? Not to be mindful of the country from which we have come out? Not to be entangled in the affairs of this life? What kind of strange sayings are these? They are strange to those who are not strangers and pilgrims on earth. Lost is the truth that the word church literally means "the called out ones" much as was our Father Abraham called out of Ur (Heb. 11:8). The Bible calls Abraham the father of us all and the pattern for our faith (Rom. 4:16). However, his spiritual children are not emulating their spiritual father to come out as he did!

Philippians was among Paul's last epistles. It was written 23 years after his conversion experience. In it, Paul sets forth his personal goals as a pattern for all to follow:

"BRETHREN, JOIN IN FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE, AND NOTE THOSE WHO SO WALK, AS YOU HAVE US FOR A PATTERN... FOR OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN..." Phil. 3:17, 20

Perhaps the above was an eventual painful confession of Paul, for early in his spiritual life he boasted of the power and benefits that were his due to his earthly Roman citizenship:

"THEY HAVE BEATEN US OPENLY, UNCONDEMNED ROMANS, AND HAVE THROWN US IN PRISON. AND NOW DO THEY PUT US OUT SECRETLY? NO INDEED! LET THEM COME THEMSELVES AND GET US OUT." AND THE OFFICERS TOLD THESE WORDS TO THE MAGISTRATES, AND THEY WERE AFRAID WHEN THEY HEARD THEY WERE ROMANS..." Acts 16:37-38

"AND AS THEY BOUND HIM, PAUL SAID TO THE CENTURION WHO STOOD BY, "IS IT LAWFUL FOR YOU TO SCOURGE A MAN WHO IS A ROMAN, AND UNCONDEMNED? WHEN THE CENTURION HEARD THAT, HE WENT AND TOLD THE COMMANDER, SAYING, "TAKE CARE WHAT YOU DO, FOR THIS MAN IS A ROMAN". THEN THE COMMANDER CAME AND SAID TO HIM, TELL ME, ARE YOU A ROMAN?" HE SAID, "YES....I WAS BORN A CITIZEN." THEN IMMEDIATELY THOSE WHO WERE ABOUT TO EXAMINE HIM WITHDREW FROM HIM; AND THE COMMANDER WAS ALSO AFRAID AFTER HE FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS A ROMAN..." Acts 22:25-29

Later on Paul would use the authority of his Roman citizenship once more as he appealed to Caesar. King Agrippa said, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (see Acts 26:32) This time it kept him imprisoned until he was beheaded by a Roman axe (Romans were beheaded, not crucified as was Peter). Why are all these details recorded? They are recorded for our learning. Paul used his Roman citizenship at times to keep him from beatings and imprisonment, but eventually it cost him his life. It is at the end of his life that Paul proclaims, "Our citizenship is in Heaven." So is the believer's! Beware of leaning upon your American citizenship with its Bill of Rights as your protection against unjust persecution. Consider what is recorded of Peter and the other apostles that stand in contrast to the early years of Paul:

"AND WHEN THEY HAD CALLED FOR THE APOSTLES AND BEATEN THEM...THEY DEPARTED FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE COUNSEL, REJOICING THAT THEY WERE COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER SHAME FOR HIS NAME." Acts 5:40-41

We lack space to write of the dangers of becoming entangled in the affairs of this life. Let me just say that if you remain mindful of the country from which you have been called out, you will have opportunity to return as Hebrews 11 warns. Focus on an earthly citizenship and you too will have your mind filled with its earthly political and cultural affairs and agendas, and you will be among those whom God is ashamed to be called their God (Heb.11:16).

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **APPEARANCE**

“DO NOT LET YOUR BEAUTY BE THAT OUTWARD ADORNING OF ARRANGING THE HAIR, OF WEARING GOLD, OR OF PUTTING ON FINE APPAREL; BUT LET IT BE THE HIDDEN PERSON OF THE HEART, WITH AN INCORRUPTIBLE ORNAMENT OF A GENTLE AND QUIET SPIRIT, WHICH IS VERY PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.”

1 Pet. 3:3-4



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

“DON’T LET THE WORLD AROUND YOU SQUEEZE YOU INTO ITS OWN MOLD...”

Rom. 12:2 Phillips

“IN LIKE MANNER ALSO, THAT THE WOMEN ADORN THEMSELVES IN MODEST APPAREL, WITH PROPRIETY AND MODERATION, NOT WITH BRAIDED HAIR OR GOLD OR PEARLS OR COSTLY CLOTHING BUT, WHICH IS PROPER FOR WOMAN PROFESSING GODLINESS...”

1 Tim. 2:9-10

“A WOMAN SHALL NOT WEAR ANYTHING THAT PERTAINS TO A MAN, NOR SHALL A MAN PUT ON A WOMAN’S GARMENT, FOR ALL WHO DO SO ARE AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD YOUR GOD.”

Deut. 22:5

From the above we can see that although God is emphasizing the importance of what is on the inside, He is also very clearly giving specific instruction pertaining to what the outside looks like as well. It is a fact that the outward appearance of God’s people is a direct reflection upon what is, or is not, on the inside. It has been well said, “you are what you eat.” It can also be said “you are what you wear.”

I believe we can also plainly evaluate that God is addressing His people who live in parts of the world where there is great abundance like we find here in America. This kind of instruction is not applicable to most parts of the world in which there is little or no availability of costly clothing, fine apparel, and ornaments of gold and pearls. The instruction centers upon the people of God practicing moderation and modest apparel in the midst of a land of great abundance. We are not to look like carbon copies of the fashion and the ever-changing fads of this world. What we choose to wear is as much a part of our witness as what we say and do. The battle cry must be “don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its mold” (Rom. 12:2).

"...THOSE WHO USE THIS WORLD AS NOT MISUSING IT. FOR THE FORM (FASHION) OF THIS WORLD IS PASSING AWAY."

1 Cor. 7:31



We are of necessity in the world but are not to be of the world. We must work in it but not allow it to work in us. As the Philips says, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold."

If you pour a hardening liquid into a mold, it takes the form of that mold. Let it set and it becomes firmly fixed. We must not be as putty in the hands of worldly potters when it comes to the form or fashion of this world. We are not to allow ourselves to be squeezed or pressured into the form of this world for as 1 Cor. 7:31 says, "the form of this world is passing away." The form of this world varies all over the world. We call it culture. Anything that does not conform to the cultural environment is considered to be cultic. It is interesting to note that the first four letters of culture is cult. The world will brand whatever is not conformed to its culture a cult.

God's people are not to be conformed to the appearance of the world around them. Let us talk about fashion. Should God's people flow with the fashion of this world? Read the Scriptures on the previous page again and you must answer "No!" Take the present trend of women looking more and more like men in hair styles and clothing, and men looking more and more like women in hair styles, earrings, gold jewelry and clothing. Deuteronomy 22:5 specifically says:

"A WOMAN SHALL NOT WEAR ANYTHING THAT PERTAINS TO A MAN, NOR SHALL A MAN PUT ON A WOMAN'S GARMENT, FOR ALL WHO DO SO ARE AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD YOUR GOD."

Deut. 22:5

Why then do Christian women wear blue jeans or slacks with zippers in the front? Is this not wearing anything that pertains to a man? You can see how easy it is to be squeezed into the mold of this world. It is especially grievous to this pastor to see how many of God's people are walking billboards for the merchants of this earth. They freely advertise merchandise from Harleys to Hard Rock Cafes. I see as many Christians advertising the local sports stars of baseball, football, basketball and hockey as I see of those in the world. Considering the cost of these jerseys (between \$80-100), is this a good investment (or testimony) for those professing allegiance to God? How is this not idolatry? Would not Paul cry out today as we find in Scriptures, "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God...Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch (or wear?) what is unclean" (2 Cor.6:16-17).

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING DELEGATED AUTHORITY

“SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO EVERY ORDINANCE OF MAN FOR THE LORD’S SAKE, WHETHER TO THE KING AS SUPREME, OR TO GOVERNORS, AS TO THOSE WHO ARE SENT BY HIM FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF EVILDOERS...”

1 Pet. 2:13-14

“CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING TO THE LORD...”

Col. 3:20

“SERVANTS, OBEY IN ALL THINGS YOUR MASTERS ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, NOT WITH EYE-SERVICE, AS MEN-PLEASERS, BUT IN SINCERITY OF HEART, FEARING GOD.”

Col. 3:22

“LET EVERY SOUL BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT FROM GOD, AND THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST ARE APPOINTED BY GOD. THEREFORE WHOEVER RESISTS THE AUTHORITY RESISTS THE ORDINANCE OF GOD...THEREFORE YOU MUST BE SUBJECT... YOU ALSO PAY TAXES...RENDER TO ALL THEIR DUE...”

Rom. 13:1-7 excerpts



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”

2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

“SERVANTS, BE SUBMISSIVE TO YOUR MASTERS WITH ALL FEAR, NOT ONLY TO THE GOOD AND GENTLE, BUT ALSO TO THE HARSH.

FOR THIS IS COMMENDABLE...”

1 Pet. 2:18-19

“LIKEWISE YOU YOUNGER PEOPLE, SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO YOUR ELDERS. YES, ALL OF YOU BE SUBMISSIVE TO ONE ANOTHER...”

1 Pet. 5:5

“OBEY THOSE WHO RULE OVER YOU, AND BE SUBMISSIVE, FOR THEY WATCH OUT FOR YOUR SOULS, AS THOSE WHO MUST GIVE ACCOUNT. LET THEM DO SO WITH JOY AND NOT WITH GRIEF, FOR THAT WOULD BE UNPROFITABLE FOR YOU.”

Heb. 13:17

“LIKEWISE YOU WIVES, BE SUBMISSIVE TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS THAT EVEN IF SOME DO NOT OBEY THE WORD, THEY, WITHOUT A WORD, MAY BE WON BY THE CONDUCT OF THEIR WIVES, WHEN THEY OBSERVE YOUR CHASTE CONDUCT ACCOMPANIED BY FEAR.”

1 Pet. 3:1-2

“SUBMITTING TO ONE ANOTHER IN THE FEAR OF GOD.”

Eph. 5:21

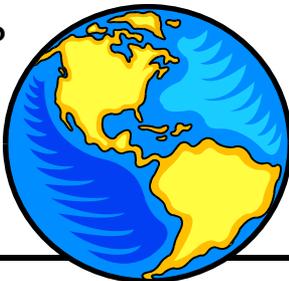
A centurion said to Jesus, “I also am a man under authority” (Mat. 8:9). Are you a man or woman under authority? You can test yourself by the Scriptures above. It is quite evident that God wants His people to be under delegated authority that He has commissioned to govern every phase and facet of our lives, in our homes, in our workplace, in our church, and in our interactions with society around us.

**"LET EVERY SOUL BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES.
FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT FROM GOD,
AND THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST ARE APPOINTED BY GOD.
THEREFORE WHOEVER RESISTS THE AUTHORITY RESISTS THE ORDINANCE OF GOD."**
Rom. 13:1-7 excerpts

**WIVES SUBMITTED TO
THEIR HUSBANDS...**

**SERVANTS SUBMITTED TO
THEIR MASTERS,
EVEN THE HARSH ONES...**

**THE CHURCH SUBMITTED
TO ONE ANOTHER...**



**THE CHURCH SUBMITTED
TO THEIR ELDERS..**

**CHILDREN SUBMITTED
TO THEIR PARENTS...**

**THE CHURCH
SUBMITTED TO ALL
CIVIL AUTHORITY...**

All authority is ordained by God, and God's people are to submit to all authority. To resist in any area of God's delegated authority is to resist the ordinances which God Himself has instituted. God has created a series of environmental tests for His people. We will be tested in the environment of our homes and families, we will be tested in the environment of our workplace, we will be tested in the environment of our church, and we will be tested in the environment of our civil society. Life is to be filled with tests of obedience. It is these tests which comprise what Jesus called the Christian life as the difficult way. It is difficult because the world around us does not practice willing submission to anything! Many marriages today are based on contractual agreements between a husband and wife. The submit clauses in the wedding vows are being scratched out by the women's lib movement. What goes on in the homes of God's people is usually carried right into the church because it is nothing more than a family consisting of many families. If there is a lack of submission in the home by wives or children, it will manifest in the church as well.

The work place is becoming a battle zone. How many stories can you recall pertaining to disgruntled employees who resented correction by their employers and have returned with guns blazing? It is true that the workplace is becoming more difficult and more demanding as corporations downsize and outsource to increase profits. More demands are being placed on fewer people which causes much dissention and dissatisfaction among the employees. Many employees are no longer happy campers. In the midst of this pressure cooker, God says to His people, "be submissive to your masters, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh." This is a test. God wants His people to react differently under pressure than the world does. It is only then that we can be effective witnesses in our homes, in our workplace, in our church and in society. We are to:

**"LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN,
THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS
AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN."** Matt. 5:16

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING

OATHS

“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID TO THOSE OF OLD, “YOU SHALL NOT SWEAR FALSELY, BUT SHALL PERFORM YOUR OATHS TO THE LORD.” BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, DO NOT SWEAR AT ALL; NEITHER BY HEAVEN, FOR IT IS GOD’S THRONE;



*“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.*

NOR BY THE EARTH, FOR IT IS HIS FOOTSTOOL; NOR BY JERUSALEM, FOR IT IS THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. NOR SHALL YOU SWEAR BY YOUR HEAD, BECAUSE YOU CANNOT MAKE ONE HAIR WHITE OR BLACK. “BUT LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE ‘YES’, AND YOUR ‘NO’ BE ‘NO’. FOR WHATEVER IS MORE THAN THESE IS FROM THE EVIL ONE.”

Matt. 5:33-37

“BUT ABOVE ALL, MY BRETHREN, DO NOT SWEAR, EITHER BY HEAVEN OR BY EARTH OR WITH ANY OTHER OATH, BUT LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE ‘YES’, AND YOUR ‘NO’, BE ‘NO’, LEST YOU FALL INTO JUDGMENT.” James 5:12

We have two confirming passages of Scripture pertaining to the swearing of oaths, one from Jesus Himself and the other from the apostle James. Note that James gives it a high priority among the believers by stating, “But above all, my brethren...” Considering all the serious admonitions that James records in his brief epistle, it becomes very significant that in his closing thoughts to his epistle he would place an “above all” tag on avoiding oaths beyond a simple yes or no. Anything beyond a firm yes or no is strongly warned against by both Jesus and James:



“BUT LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE ‘YES’, AND YOUR ‘NO’ BE ‘NO’. FOR WHATEVER IS MORE THAN THESE IS FROM THE EVIL ONE.”

Matt. 5:37

“BUT LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE ‘YES’, AND YOUR ‘NO’ BE ‘NO’, LEST YOU FALL INTO JUDGMENT.”

James 5:12



If we go beyond a simple yes commitment, we are giving place to being set up by the evil one which is Satan, and we are placing ourselves in a position of falling into judgment by God for not heeding His warning against the taking of oaths.

We have the God given ability to say yes or no and mean what we say. When we begin to add to that ability by swearing on a stack of Bibles, we are extending our range beyond our ability. We do not have more power by swearing an oath, we just have more accountability for doing so. Solomon speaks about making such vows:

“DO NOT BE RASH WITH YOUR MOUTH, AND LET NOT YOUR HEART UTTER ANYTHING HASTILY BEFORE GOD. FOR GOD IS IN HEAVEN, AND YOU ARE ON THE EARTH; THEREFORE LET YOUR WORDS BE FEW...IT IS BETTER NOT TO VOW THAN TO VOW AND NOT PAY. DO NOT LET YOUR MOUTH CAUSE YOUR FLESH TO SIN, NOR SAY BEFORE THE MESSENGER OF GOD THAT IT WAS AN ERROR. WHY SHOULD GOD BE ANGRY AT YOUR EXCUSE AND DESTROY THE WORK OF YOUR HANDS?” Ecc. 5:2-6

Follow the kiss principle (“keep it simple saints”). Just let your yes be a firm yes and likewise your no be a firm no. Do not add an oath to it to prove your firm commitment. Let me show you a situation where your commitment to this Kingdom principle will be greatly tested:

**“PLACE YOUR HAND ON THE BIBLE,
RAISE YOUR RIGHT HAND AND REPEAT AFTER ME:
“I DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY SWEAR TO TELL
THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING
BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP ME GOD!”**



The real moment of truth is whether you will now tell the judge why you cannot take such an oath.

He will readily tell you that you may affirm rather than swearing on the Bible. The problem is that if you will look up the word affirm and compare it to swear there is no distinguishable difference between the two. To affirm is to make an oath. What we have now is an opportunity to explain why the God who authored the Bible that they want you to swear on, does not want you to swear at all! It takes meekness and humility and the ability to state the Scriptures that forbid you to take an oath. You can tell the judge that you are a Christian, and as we have seen in an earlier Kingdom law, “A righteous man hates lying”, so your yes will be yes concerning your willingness to tell the truth. This is a lot of pressure! My wife and I have been through this several times and God has honored our stand each time.

This is just one little area in which you are going to find that the Kingdom way is a difficult way and very few of God’s people will walk in it. It is much easier just to ignore God’s law pertaining to oaths. However, we shall all stand before the Righteous Judge of the universe, the King of the Kingdom, on Judgment Day. Do you want to hear, “Well done good and faithful servant?” Then obey God’s Kingdom law concerning oaths!

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **ENEMIES**

“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AND HATE YOUR ENEMY.’ BUT I SAY TO YOU, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, BLESS THOSE WHO CURSE YOU, DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO SPITEFULLY USE YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU.”

Matt. 5:43-44



“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES...”
2nd Cor. 13:5 Amp.

“REPAY NO ONE EVIL FOR EVIL...

DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELVES...

IF YOUR ENEMY HUNGERS, FEED HIM;

IF HE THIRSTS, GIVE HIM A DRINK;

FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD.

DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.”

Rom. 12:17-21

“BUT I SAY TO YOU WHO HEAR: LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU. BLESS THOSE WHO CURSE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO SPITEFULLY USE YOU...LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD...AND YOUR REWARD WILL BE GREAT, AND YOU WILL BE SONS OF THE HIGHEST. FOR HE IS KIND TO THE UNTHANKFUL AND THE EVIL.”

Luke 6:27-35

The Old Covenant was much more easy on the flesh nature than the New for it was permissible to love your neighbor but hate your enemy. Some of David's Psalms express such great hatred toward his enemies that they make you cringe just to read them:

“LET THOSE WHO SEEK AFTER MY LIFE...WHO PLOT MY HURT...LET THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CHASE THEM. LET THEIR WAY BE DARK AND SLIPPERY... LET DESTRUCTION COME UPON HIM UNEXPECTEDLY, AND LET HIS NET THAT HE HAS HIDDEN CATCH HIMSELF; INTO THAT VERY DESTRUCTION LET HIM FALL...” Psalm 35:5-8

“BREAK THEIR TEETH IN THEIR MOUTH, O GOD! LET THEM BE LIKE A SNAIL WHICH Melts AS IT GOES, LIKE A STILLBORN CHILD OF A WOMAN THAT THEY MAY NOT SEE THE SUN...” Psalm 58:6-8

“LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE BEFORE THEM, LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED, SO THAT THEY DO NOT SEE; MAKE THEIR LOINS SHAKE CONTINUALLY. POUR OUT YOUR INDIGNATION UPON THEM...LET THEIR HABITATION BE DESOLATE...LET THEM NOT COME INTO YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. LET THEM BE BLOTTED OUT OF THE BOOK OF THE LIVING AND NOT BE WRITTEN WITH THE RIGHTEOUS.” Psalm 69:22-28

If God would let us still pray for our enemies like David prayed, our prayer meetings would be full up instead of near empty, for such praying gratifies our fleshly desires of vengeance and retaliation.

THE OLD WAY: THE NEW WAY:

“BREAK THEIR TEETH IN THEIR MOUTH, O GOD! LET THEM BE LIKE A SNAIL WHICH MELTS AS IT GOES, LIKE A STILLBORN CHILD OF A WOMAN THAT THEY MAY NOT SEE THE SUN...”

Psalms 58:6-8

“LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE BEFORE THEM, LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED, SO THAT THEY DO NOT SEE; MAKE THEIR LOINS SHAKE CONTINUALLY. POUR OUT YOUR INDIGNATION UPON THEM...LET THEIR HABITATION BE DESOLATE...LET THEM NOT COME INTO YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. LET THEM BE BLOTTED OUT OF THE BOOK OF THE LIVING AND NOT BE WRITTEN WITH THE RIGHTEOUS.”

Psalms 69:22-28

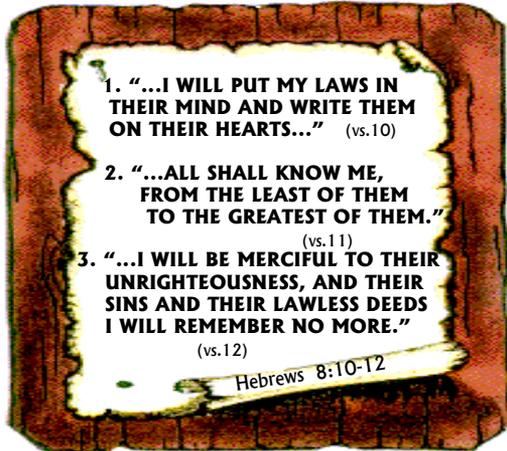
“BUT I SAY TO YOU, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, BLESS THOSE WHO CURSE YOU, DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO SPITEFULLY USE YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU.”

Matt. 5:43-44

“REPAY NO ONE EVIL FOR EVIL...DO NOT AVENGE YOURSELVES... IF YOUR ENEMY HUNGERS, FEED HIM; IF HE THIRSTS, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD. DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.” Rom. 12:17-21

Where did we get the silly notion that the New Covenant is easier than the Old Covenant? It is only easier (and broader) if you ignore the Kingdom laws that are attached to the New Covenant.

Remember we saw earlier in Chapter Two what the New Covenant consists of. It is not only God's amazing grace that forgives our sins, it also contains a declaration that God fully intends to have His laws placed first in our minds, and then written on our hearts! This was not possible under the Old Covenant for God's laws were written on stone tablets!



“YOU ARE MANIFESTLY AN EPISTLE OF CHRIST, MINISTERED BY US, WRITTEN NOT WITH INK BUT BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD, NOT ON TABLETS OF STONE BUT ON THE TABLETS OF FLESH, THAT IS, OF THE HEART...AS MINISTERS OF THE NEW COVENANT, NOT OF THE LETTER BUT OF THE SPIRIT, FOR THE LETTER KILLS, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVES LIFE...IF THE MINISTRY OF DEATH, WRITTEN AND ENGRAVED ON STONES WAS GLORIOUS...HOW WILL THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT NOT BE MORE GLORIOUS...?”

2 Cor. 3:3-8 excerpts



We have the enabling grace provided by the power source of the Kingdom, the Holy Spirit, to equip us to love our enemies!



THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING

THE POOR

"...WE SHOULD REMEMBER THE POOR, THE VERY THING WHICH I WAS EAGER TO DO."
Gal. 2:10

"BLESSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERS THE POOR... THE LORD WILL DELIVER HIM... HE WILL BE BLESSED ON THE EARTH... YOU WILL NOT DELIVER HIM TO THE WILL OF HIS ENEMIES. THE LORD WILL STRENGTHEN HIM ON HIS BED OF ILLNESS..."
Psm. 41:1-3



"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

"THE RIGHTEOUS CONSIDERS THE CAUSE OF THE POOR, BUT THE WICKED DOES NOT UNDERSTAND SUCH KNOWLEDGE."
Prov. 29:7

"THERE WAS A CERTAIN RICH MAN WHO WAS CLOTHED IN PURPLE AND FINE LINEN AND FARED (LIVED IN LUXURY) SUMPTUOUSLY EVERY DAY. BUT THERE WAS A CERTAIN BEGGAR...WHO WAS LAID AT HIS GATE... DESIRING TO BE FED WITH THE CRUMBS WHICH FELL FROM THE RICH MAN'S TABLE..."
Luke 16:19-21

"...HE HAS DISPERSED ABROAD, HE HAS GIVEN TO THE POOR..."
2 Cor. 9:9

"HE WHO HAS PITY ON THE POOR LENDS TO THE LORD, AND HE WILL PAY BACK WHAT HE HAS GIVEN."
Prov. 19:17

"THE RICH HAS MANY FRIENDS... BUT HE WHO HAS MERCY ON THE POOR, HAPPY IS HE."
Prov. 14:20-21

We Christians who live in America the rich man of which the Bible speaks. Like the rich man we too are "clothed in purple and fine linen" and "live in luxury every day." It is also true that the beggars in essence "lie at our gate" as well. They are on every street corner as we exit freeway ramps and they hold up signs before our eyes pleading for help. They approach us while we put money in parking meters (where our nice cars are parked). They approach us outside of restaurants as we seek to enter in to eat a good meal. Jesus said, "The poor you have with you always" (Jn.12:8). We cannot alleviate the condition of the poor, but we can heed the exhortations to consider the poor and to have mercy on them. God has not called us to judge why they are poor, but rather just to have pity upon them. This is a Kingdom law that is dear to the heart of God. Is it as dear to your heart?

Let's talk about the practical ways in which we can cultivate the Kingdom law of remembering the poor. First and foremost we must recognize that we are the rich man of the Bible. The average annual wage in America is \$53,000 as of 2004. There are many countries in the world in which the average wage is under \$500.00 per year! Even if you earn half of America's average wage, you are still very rich! Let us look at several passages of Scripture that are instruction to the rich. One passage is what we ought to do, the other is a condemnation of the rich who did not do right. Which category describes your use of riches?

“COMMAND THOSE WHO ARE RICH IN THIS PRESENT AGE NOT TO BE HAUGHTY, NOR TO TRUST IN UNCERTAIN RICHES BUT IN THE LIVING GOD, WHO GIVES US RICHLY ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. LET THEM DO GOOD, THAT THEY MAY BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS, READY TO GIVE, WILLING TO SHARE, STORING UP FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION FOR THE TIME TO COME, THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD OF ETERNAL LIFE.”
1 Tim. 6:17-19

“COME NOW YOU RICH, WEEP AND HOWL FOR YOUR MISERIES THAT ARE COMING UPON YOU! YOUR RICHES ARE CORRUPTED, AND YOUR GARMENTS ARE MOTH-EATEN YOUR GOLD AND SILVER ARE CORRODED, AND THEIR CORROSION WILL BE A WITNESS AGAINST YOU...YOU HAVE HEAPED UP TREASURE IN THE LAST DAYS ...YOU HAVE LIVED ON THE EARTH IN PLEASURE AND LUXURY; YOU HAVE FATTENED (“indulged”) YOUR HEARTS AS IN A DAY OF SLAUGHTER.”
James 5:1-5 excerpts

We can see from this contrast that God is not against us having riches as long as we are ready to give and willing to share. James gives strong admonition about seeing a brother or sister being naked and destitute of daily food but then not giving them the things that they need (see James 2:14-17). Understandably, that truth must be applied in a balanced way for Paul also taught that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat, and that he should work and eat his own bread (see 2 Thess 3:10-12). Obviously, the balance is that we are talking about cases of hardship that are not the fault of the individual. Paul tells us “as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). Paul also says “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work” (2 Cor. 9:8). The very next verse talks about giving to the poor. God wants us to be mission minded toward the poor (physically and spiritually) who fill the whole earth.

Two things you can do. One is to support a good rescue mission in your home town that tends to the homeless. The second is to do what my wife does faithfully. Make up little bags containing food items such as cheese, crackers, candy bars, two or three dollars, and above all, but not divorced from the other items, a good gospel tract. Put them in your car so that when you are approached, or you see one of those poor souls holding up a sign for help, you will have something to give them, rather than looking the other way.

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING **PRIORITIES**

**"...DO THIS,
KNOWING THE TIME,
THAT NOW IT IS HIGH
TIME TO AWAKE OUT
OF SLEEP; FOR NOW
OUR SALVATION IS
NEARER THAN
WHEN WE FIRST
BELIEVED.**

**THE NIGHT IS FAR
SPENT, THE DAY
IS AT HAND.
THEREFORE
LET US CAST OFF
THE WORKS OF
DARKNESS...
LET US WALK
PROPERLY..."**

Rom. 13:11-14



**"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE
YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER
YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH**

**AND SHOWING
THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT.
TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."**

2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

**"WOE
TO YOU
SCRIBES AND
PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES!
FOR YOU HAVE...**

**NEGLECTED THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF THE LAW:
JUSTICE AND MERCY AND FAITH.
THESE YOU OUGHT TO HAVE DONE,
WITHOUT LEAVING THE OTHERS UNDONE.**

BLIND GUIDES, WHO STRAIN OUT A GNAT AND SWALLOW A CAMEL!"

Matt. 23:23-24

**"AFTER ALL THESE
THINGS THE
GENTILES SEEK...
BUT SEEK FIRST
THE KINGDOM OF
GOD AND HIS
RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND ALL THESE
THINGS SHALL BE
ADDED TO YOU..."**

Matt. 6:32-33

**"...WALK
CAREFULLY...
REDEEMING THE
TIME, BECAUSE THE
DAYS ARE EVIL...
UNDERSTAND WHAT
THE WILL OF THE
LORD IS."**

Eph. 5:15-17

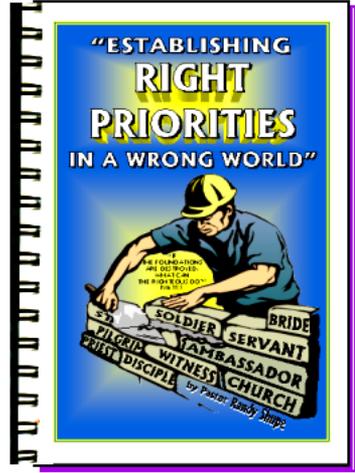
Not all Bible truths are equal. Jesus speaks of the weightier matters of the Law, which means that some truths are more important than others. Note that Jesus accuses the religious teachers of the Jews that they were busy trying to strain out gnats, but while doing so, were swallowing camels. That was a humorous way of stressing that they were majoring in minor issues and minoring in major issues. In other simplistic and plain to understand words, their priorities were all out of whack!

Look at the other two passages from the apostle Paul. Both speak of what should be the priorities for God's people as the last days draw near. His charge to the Roman church was that it is high time to awake out of sleep and walk properly. To the Ephesian church he told them to walk carefully, redeeming the time because the days were evil. One church is asleep and the other is wasting their time away because they do not understand what the will of the Lord is all about. There are things within the Kingdom that have higher priority than others. We need to know those priorities lest we be like the Pharisees who were majoring in minor issues while ignoring the weightier matters of the law.

Let me recommend this book to you that is useful not only as a teaching tool, but also as a quick reference guide as to what are the priorities of God for His people. The key to identifying what God’s priorities are for His people is to see ourselves as God sees us. In other words, God identifies us in various roles and responsibilities.

We need to know what they are and how to respond to them properly.

There are twelve ways which describes how God sees His people. They “spell” Christianity:



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T
Y | 1. | I AM A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST |
| | 2. | I AM A PRIEST TO GOD THRU CHRIST |
| | 3. | I AM A SERVANT OF CHRIST |
| | 4. | I AM A SOLDIER OF CHRIST |
| | 5. | I AM A WITNESS FOR CHRIST |
| | 6. | I AM AN AMBASSADOR FOR CHRIST |
| | 7. | I AM THE SALT/LIGHT OF THE WORLD |
| | 8. | I AM A STRANGER/PILGRIM ON EARTH |
| | 9. | I AM THE SPIRITUAL HOUSE OF CHRIST |
| | 10. | I AM PART OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST |
| | 11. | I AM A MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST |
| | 12. | I AM THE ESPOUSED BRIDE OF CHRIST |

The church of Laodicea saw themselves as rich, increased in goods, and in need of nothing (Rev. 3:17a KJ). However, God saw them as “wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked” (Rev. 3:17b). The moral to this story is that we, as God’s people, can be measuring ourselves by what we think is important and all the while being oblivious to what God says is important. The above nine Kingdom categories depict how God sees His people. They will be the areas of our judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ. How important are these Kingdom roles in your life?

THE KINGDOM LAW CONCERNING

"A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE TO YOU, THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, THAT YOU ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS ALL WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER."

John 13:34-35

"BELOVED, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER, FOR LOVE IS OF GOD; AND EVERYONE WHO LOVES IS BORN OF GOD AND KNOWS GOD. HE WHO DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW GOD, FOR GOD IS LOVE."

1 Jn. 4:7-8

'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND'. THIS IS THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT.

AND THE SECOND IS LIKE IT:

**'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'
ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.'**

Matt. 22:36-40

LOVE



"EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOURSELVES..."
2 Cor. 13:5 Amp.

"...PUT ON LOVE, WHICH IS THE BOND OF PERFECTION."

Col. 3:14

**"TEACHER, WHICH IS THE GREAT COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW?"
JESUS SAID TO HIM,**

"THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU...THESE THINGS I COMMAND YOU, THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

John 15:12,17

"THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT BURDENSOME."

1 Jn.5:3

"EVERYONE WHO LOVES HIM WHO BEGOT ALSO LOVES HIM WHO IS BEGOTTEN OF HIM."

1 Jn.5:1

There are two planes on which love functions. There is a vertical plane which is the expression of our love for God. It is to "love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

The second plane upon which love is to function is a horizontal plane which is the expression of our love for the people of God.

Consider well that our love for God is measured by our love for the brethren. You cannot have one relationship without the other:

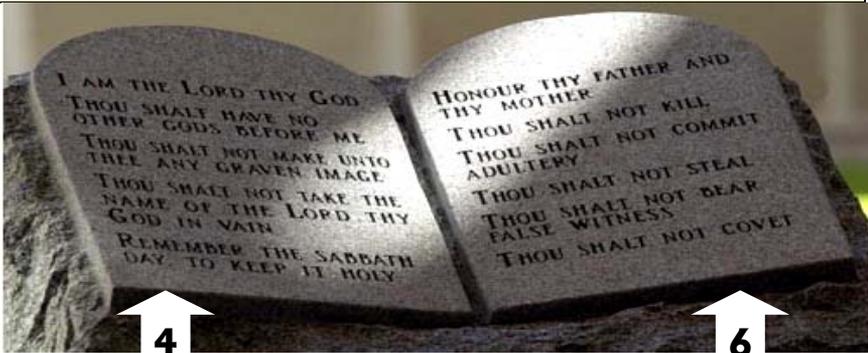
"IF SOMEONE SAYS, 'I LOVE GOD,' AND HATES HIS BROTHER, HE IS A LIAR; FOR HE WHO DOES NOT LOVE HIS BROTHER WHOM HE HAS SEEN, HOW CAN HE LOVE GOD WHOM HE HAS NOT SEEN? AND THIS IS THE COMMANDMENT WE HAVE FROM HIM: THAT HE WHO LOVES GOD MUST LOVE HIS BROTHER ALSO." 1 Jn. 4:20-21

**ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG
ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS:**

**“THIS IS THE FIRST AND GREAT
COMMANDMENT:
YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR
GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART,
WITH ALL YOUR SOUL,
AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.**

**AND THE SECOND
IS LIKE IT:
YOU SHALL LOVE
YOUR
NEIGHBOR
AS YOURSELF.”**

Matt. 22:37-40



**VERTICAL
RELATIONSHIP
TO GOD**

**HORIZONTAL
RELATIONSHIP
TO MAN**

We can measure, and should measure, our love relationship with God and with man by the ten commandments as shown above. Remember God has reduced the ten into two categories of love:

- (1) your love for God.
- (2) your love for your neighbor.

There is another way to measure whether we are fulfilling the love mandate. It is contained in the love chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13. This definition of love breaks down into eight things that love is and eight things that love is not:

8 THINGS LOVE IS NOT

LOVE

1. LOVE DOES NOT ENVY...
2. LOVE DOES NOT PARADE...
3. LOVE IS NOT PUFFED UP...
4. LOVE IS NOT RUDE...
5. LOVE IS NOT SELFISH...
6. LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED...
7. LOVE DOES NOT THINK EVIL...
8. LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE IN INIQUITY...

8 THINGS LOVE IS

LOVE

1. LOVE WILL SUFFER LONG...
2. LOVE IS KIND...
3. LOVE REJOICES IN TRUTH...
4. LOVE WILL BEAR ALL THINGS...
5. LOVE WILL BELIEVE ALL THINGS...
6. LOVE WILL HOPE ALL THINGS...
7. LOVE WILL ENDURE ALL THINGS...
8. LOVE WILL NEVER FAIL...

Having just considered a good sampling of Kingdom law, we should now be able to understand better why Jesus speaks of the way (the Christian life) as being difficult. To help you see that difficulty more clearly, consider this brief review of the Kingdom laws which we have just considered:

We looked at the law of forgiveness that governs the Kingdom of God. In God's Kingdom there is no place for unforgiveness. Either we forgive or we will not be forgiven.

We examined the Kingdom law governing judgmentalness.

We are to judge, but not from a position of hypocrisy.

We learned that we ourselves will be judged by God with the same standard of judgment we use on others.

We considered the Kingdom law forbidding indebtedness.

We are to pay as we go, and are to live within the means of our present finances. Bankruptcy is not an option for

Kingdom saints. If you dig yourself in, you must dig yourself out, not bail out.

We looked at the Kingdom law of litigation. We are not to take brethren to civil courts to settle our differences.

It is better to be defrauded than to shame the name of Christ by civil law suits.

We pondered the Kingdom law of nonresistance toward evil people. This is an extremely difficult Kingdom law to obey in the midst of a lawless society. It will take a life of faith in the promises of God for our protection.

We examined the Kingdom law of truthfulness. There is no place in God's Kingdom for liars. Lying sides with the father of lies, Satan. God is truth, the Word is truth, the Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and the church is to be the pillar and the ground of truth.

A Righteous man hates lying and loves truth.

We considered the Kingdom law against sexual impurity.

There is no place in the Kingdom of God for the sexually immoral lifestyle. Our bodies are the temple of God.

We examined the Kingdom law pertaining to divorce and remarriage. God hates divorce. We must avoid the worldly easy way out of a difficult situation. It is most alarming that Christian couples have surpassed unbelievers in the divorce statistics.

We also pondered the Kingdom law concerning reconciliation of offenses. We are to live at peace with all men as much as depends on us. We need to practice the law of witness as revealed in Matthew 18 which requires going first to the one who has offended, not to others first as is often done. It may require forgiving and forgetting the offence for the sake of the relationship.

We examined the Kingdom law pertaining to citizenship. Here in patriotic America, this becomes a real warfare that our citizenship is in heaven. On earth we are to be strangers and pilgrims looking for a heavenly city, not the one we were called out from.

We looked at the Kingdom law concerning our appearance. Men are not to wear women's cloths and women are not to wear men's clothes. We are not to follow every fashion craze this world can think up. We are not to let the world around us squeeze us into its mold. Modesty and moderation are what God wants for His people.

We examined the Kingdom law pertaining to delegated authority.

God has placed authority over His people in the home, in the workplace, in the church and in society. We are to obey the laws of the land, including paying taxes, whether they are just or unjust.

There is no place in God's Kingdom for rebels against authority.

We pondered the Kingdom law pertaining to the taking of oaths. This is not what God wants His people to do. Your yes must be yes and your no 'no'. Anything beyond that is from the evil one. This Kingdom law will put you in difficult situations to say the least!

We considered the Kingdom law pertaining to our enemies. We are to love our enemies, pray for our enemies, bless our enemies, give them food and drink, etc. This is a difficult, a very difficult way of life for it grates against our wounded flesh.

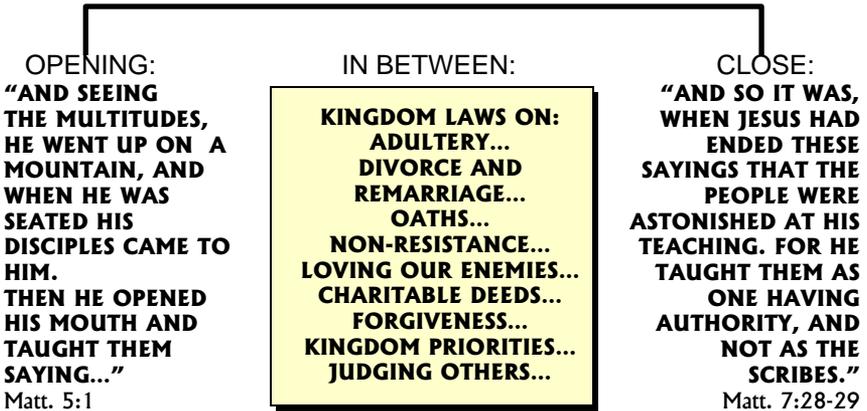
We examined the Kingdom law concerning the poor. Being the rich men of the Bible, we have responsibility to be ready to give and willing to share. We are to find practical ways for helping the poor.

We examined the Kingdom law pertaining to priorities. We must find out the things that God thinks are important rather than establishing our own priorities. We can be like the Pharisees who were straining gnats while swallowing camels. We can major in minor issues and ignore the weightier matters of the law.

Finally,

we looked at the greatest Kingdom law of all, the law of love. If we lack love, we are nothing more than a clanging symbol in God's ear. We are nothing unless we love. It is the single mark of a disciple of Jesus, for "God is love."

Many of the Kingdom laws that we have considered came from Matthew Chapters 5-7. This is significant since the text used for this book, the narrow gate and the difficult way (Mat. 7:13-14), is found in the middle of Chapter Seven of Matthew. It is my conviction that what is called “The Sermon on the Mount” spans all of these three chapters. This can be seen as we look at the opening and the closing verses of these three chapters and what lies in between:

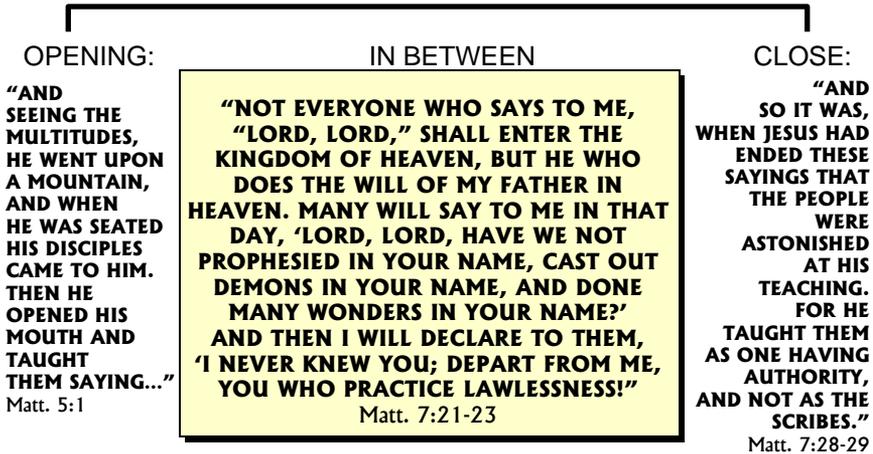


What we have here is not a conglomeration of teachings on various subjects by Jesus, but rather one continuous story from the beginning until the end. It is in the middle of the Seventh Chapter of Matthew that Jesus speaks our text:

**“ENTER BY THE NARROW GATE;
 FOR WIDE IS THE GATE, AND BROAD IS THE WAY
 THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND THERE ARE MANY WHO GO IN BY IT.
 BECAUSE NARROW IS THE GATE AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY
 WHICH LEADS TO LIFE, AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT.”**
 Matthew 7:13-14

The point that I want to make clear is that Jesus spoke these words about the narrow gate and the difficult way in the contextual setting of all the laws that govern the subjects of those in the Kingdom of God. It is adherence to these Kingdom laws that makes for a difficult way of life as a Christian, and underlines why it is that Jesus said few find it. Because the gate is narrow and the way is difficult, few will pay the price of repentance to enter into the Kingdom, and few will embrace the cost of discipleship required within the Kingdom! It is that difficult way that Jesus had in His mind when the rich young ruler approached Him about the way to eternal life. Jesus did not just consider entrance through the gate (the new birth), but rather the new life which is to be lived on the other side of the gate. This mentality is lacking in today’s wide-gate and broad-way presentation of the gospel because neither repentance nor the Kingdom of God is being preached along with the new birth!

To further convince you that this is one continuous theme of Jesus from Chapter 5 through Chapter 7, let us continue in Matthew Chapter 7 and see what is recorded after Jesus' warning about the narrow gate and the difficult way being changed into a wide gate and a broad way by the teachings of wolves in sheep's clothing (false prophets). Here again are the opening and closing statements with a further warning of Jesus in between:



The one who has just preached His Kingdom laws for three chapters now rebukes those who practice lawlessness! We might conclude that these verses are limited to the false prophets, the wolves in sheep's clothing who proclaim the wide gate and the broad way to God's people, but sadly, I believe it also includes those who heed their words, for in context, Jesus goes on to say to the people:

"NOW EVERYONE WHO HEARS THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOES NOT DO THEM, WILL BE LIKE A FOOLISH MAN WHO BUILT HIS HOUSE ON THE SAND; AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW AND BEAT ON THAT HOUSE; AND IT FELL. AND GREAT WAS ITS FALL." Matt. 7:26

According to Jesus, not everyone who calls Him Lord is going to enter the Kingdom of God in eternity. It will only be the doers of God's will. What is His will? It is obedience to the Kingdom laws that He just elaborated on in Chapters 5-7. These are Jesus' concluding thoughts which began back in Chapter Five! Those who practice lawlessness (no law), will not enter the Kingdom! How contrary this is to the wide-gate and broad-way gospel being fed to God's people! Notice it is "many" to whom Jesus will say, "Depart from Me you who practice lawlessness." It was "many" who will enter the wide gate and broad way that leads to destruction! It is not only the preachers portrayed above in Matthew 7:21-23, but also those who build their spiritual houses on the sand foundation of the teachings of those false prophets (preachers), wolves in sheep's clothing who say things directly opposite of the rock foundation of Jesus' sayings!

In addition to the Kingdom laws we examined from Matthew Chapters 5 through 7, we also considered other Kingdom laws as taught in the New Testament by Paul. We also saw that selected Old Testament laws are still applicable to the Kingdom, for Jesus said:

“EVERY SCRIBE INSTRUCTED CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A HOUSEHOLDER WHO BRINGS OUT OF HIS TREASURE THINGS NEW AND OLD.” Matt. 13:52

The Kingdom of God was a running theme throughout the apostle Paul's epistles. In addition to all the passages about Paul preaching the Kingdom of God, let us consider one more which he wrote forty years after his conversion experience:

“I KEPT BACK NOTHING THAT WAS HELPFUL, BUT PROCLAIMED IT TO YOU, AND TAUGHT YOU PUBLICALLY AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, TESTIFYING TO JEWS, AND ALSO TO GREEKS,

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD

AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST...SO THAT I MAY FINISH MY RACE WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY WHICH I RECEIVED FROM THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY TO

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

AND INDEED, NOW I KNOW THAT YOU ALL, AMONG WHOM I HAVE GONE

PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD,

WILL SEE MY FACE NO MORE. THEREFORE I TESTIFY TO YOU THIS DAY THAT I AM INNOCENT OF THE BLOOD OF ALL MEN. FOR I HAVE NOT SHUNNED TO DECLARE TO YOU THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.... FOR I KNOW THIS, THAT AFTER MY DEPARTURE SAVAGE WOLVES WILL COME IN AMONG YOU NOT SPARING THE FLOCK. ALSO FROM AMONG YOURSELVES MEN WILL RISE UP, SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS, TO DRAW AWAY DISCIPLES AFTER THEMSELVES.”

Acts 20:20-30 excerpts

This is very important:

Notice the context in which Paul speaks of the gospel of the grace of God. It is sandwiched on either side by the prerequisite of (1) repentance toward God and (2) preaching the Kingdom of God. This is the dual content of the gospel. Today we have “the gospel of the grace of God” that leaves out the need to repent, and the message of the Kingdom of God making it into a wide gate and a broad way. Grace is being presented today without repentance and the Kingdom of God! This is “another gospel” (Gal. 1:9). Notice also that Paul warns of savage wolves. What did Jesus warn about in our text? It was wolves in sheep's clothing who turn the narrow gate into a wide gate and the difficult way into a broad way. All that is necessary to do so is to pick out the gospel of the grace of God and isolate it from the full gospel of:

“FROM THAT TIME JESUS BEGAN TO PREACH AND TO SAY, “REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND.” Matt. 4:17



“BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS WHO COME TO YOU IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING, BUT INWARDLY ARE RAVENOUS WOLVES.”
 Matt. 7:15

“FOR I KNOW THIS, THAT AFTER MY DEPARTURE SAVAGE WOLVES WILL COME IN AMONG YOU, NOT SPARING THE FLOCK.”
 Acts 20:29



I want to give you a sampling of passages in which we find amplification of the prophetic warnings stated above that will pave the way for our next chapter pertaining to “the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God.” These passages, and what we will look at in the next chapter reveal where the church is heading. It is a portrayal of the Kingdom of God until Jesus returns. It is not a pretty picture. I say this to forewarn you of false prophets who are predicting the coming of a great revival in the church such as the one we find in the book of Acts. Beware of such vain imaginings that are not in accord with God’s Word. Here are some prophetic warnings of what was already happening in the church and what is coming in the days ahead:

“BUT THERE WERE ALSO FALSE PROPHETS AMONG THE PEOPLE, EVEN AS THERE WILL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, WHO WILL SECRETLY BRING IN DESTRUCTIVE HERESIES, EVEN DENYING THE LORD WHO BOUGHT THEM AND BRING UPON THEMSELVES SWIFT DESTRUCTION. AND MANY WILL FOLLOW THEIR DESTRUCTIVE WAYS, BECAUSE OF WHOM THE WAY OF TRUTH WILL BE BLASPHEMED. BY COVETOUSNESS THEY WILL EXPLOIT YOU WITH DECEPTIVE WORDS...”

2 Pet. 2:1-3

“BELOVED, WHILE I WAS VERY DILIGENT TO WRITE TO YOU CONCERNING OUR COMMON SALVATION, I FOUND IT NECESSARY TO WRITE TO YOU EXHORTING YOU TO CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS. FOR CERTAIN MEN HAVE CREPT IN UNNOTICED...UNGODLY MEN, WHO TURN THE GRACE OF OUR GOD INTO LICENTIOUSNESS...”

Jude 3-4

“I CHARGE YOU THEREFORE BEFORE GOD AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO WILL JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD AT HIS APPEARING AND HIS KINGDOM:PREACH THE WORD...FOR THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THEY WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE, BUT ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN DESIRES, BECAUSE THEY HAVE ITCHING EARS, THEY WILL HEAP UP FOR THEMSELVES TEACHERS; AND THEY WILL TURN THEIR EARS AWAY FROM THE TRUTH, AND BE TURNED ASIDE TO FABLES.” 2 Tim. 4:1-4

In the next chapter, we are going to examine a series of parables Jesus taught pertaining to the Kingdom of God. These seven parables, like what we have seen in Matthew 5-7, tell one continuous story about the Kingdom of God in its present manifestation on earth. The contents of these parables will confirm the truth contained in Matthew 7 as well as the prophetic warnings shown above.

CHAPTER FOUR

“THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM”

“...IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN...”

Matt. 13:11



“BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES FOR THEY SEE, AND YOUR EARS FOR THEY HEAR...”

Matt. 13:16

Among all that Jesus taught His disciples were forty parables. Most of those parables were specifically singled out by Jesus as being depictions of what comprises the Kingdom of God. For instance:

“AND HE SAID, ‘TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD? OR WITH WHAT PARABLE SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...’ AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES HE SPOKE THE WORD TO THEM AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT. BUT WITHOUT A PARABLE HE DID NOT SPEAK TO THEM. AND WHEN THEY WERE ALONE, HE EXPLAINED ALL THINGS TO HIS DISCIPLES.” Mark 4:30-34

In the Thirteenth Chapter of Matthew there are seven of these parables presented together, one right after another, each one stated as being a depiction of the Kingdom of Heaven. These seven parables taken together contain the essence of what Jesus called the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 13:11). A mystery is a hidden truth. It is quite mind-boggling when you grasp why Jesus spoke in parables or hidden truths:

“AND HE SAID TO THEM, “TO YOU IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO KNOW THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD; BUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE, ALL THINGS COME IN PARABLES, SO THAT “SEEING THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND HEARING THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND; LEST THEY SHOULD TURN, AND THEIR SINS BE FORGIVEN THEM.” Mark 4:11-12

When judgment had fallen on the Jews, Jesus said to the Pharisees, “...the Kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it...” (Matt. 21:43-45). Paul confirms this judgment upon the Jews with the same quotation Jesus used from Isaiah:

“GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY; “HEARING YOU WILL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.” THEREFORE...THE SALVATION OF GOD HAS BEEN SENT TO THE GENTILES, AND THEY WILL HEAR IT!” Acts 28:26-28

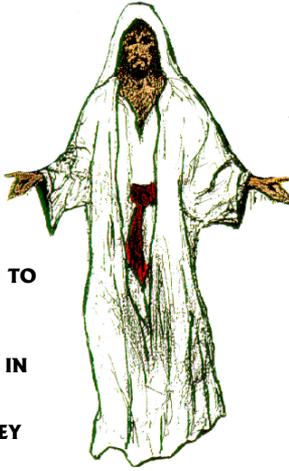
Why did Jesus speak in parables? Unbelievably, it is so that those who were being judged would not be able to be saved:

"THEREFORE I SAY UNTO YOU, THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND GIVEN TO A NATION BEARING THE FRUITS OF IT...NOW WHEN THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE PHARISEES HEARD HIS PARABLES, THEY PERCEIVED THAT HE WAS SPEAKING TO THEM..."

Matt.21:43-45

"AND HE SAID TO THEM, 'TO YOU IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO KNOW THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD; BUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE, ALL THINGS COME IN PARABLES, SO THAT 'SEEING THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND HEARING THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND; LEST THEY SHOULD TURN, AND THEIR SINS BE FORGIVEN THEM.' "

Mark 4:11-12



"GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY; 'HEARING YOU WILL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.' THEREFORE...THE SALVATION OF GOD HAS BEEN SENT TO THE GENTILES, AND THEY WILL HEAR IT!"

Acts. 28:26-28

Notice carefully what Paul tells us in Acts 28. Judgment was brought upon the Jews because the heart of this people had grown dull and their ears were hard of hearing. It was because they closed their eyes to truth. For these self-inflicted sins God began to speak in parables so that these people would not be able to understand! There is a message in this story for the segment of the church that has also grown dull, become hard of hearing, and have closed their eyes to the truth revealed in God's Word, truths such as we are unfolding in this book. From the very beginning God has warned:

"AND THE LORD SAID, "MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT STRIVE WITH MAN FOREVER, FOR HE IS INDEED FLESH..." Gen. 6:3

What follows this statement is the account of the Genesis flood. Proverbs Chapter One gives a similar warning:

"THEN THEY WILL CALL UPON ME, BUT I WILL NOT ANSWER; THEY WILL SEEK ME DILIGENTLY, BUT THEY WILL NOT FIND ME. BECAUSE THEY HATED KNOWLEDGE AND DID NOT CHOOSE THE FEAR OF THE LORD, THEY WOULD HAVE NONE OF MY COUNSEL AND DESPISED ALL MY REPROOF, THEREFORE THEY SHALL EAT THE FRUIT OF THEIR OWN WAY..."

Prov. 1:28-31

Isaiah also speaks of a limited time-frame God has set for salvation:

"SEEK THE LORD WHILE HE MAY BE FOUND, CALL UPON HIM WHILE HE IS NEAR. LET THE WICKED FORSAKE HIS WAY AND THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAN HIS THOUGHTS; LET HIM RETURN TO THE LORD, AND HE WILL HAVE MERCY ON HIM..." Isaiah 55:6-7

I have taken the time to stress the overall significance of the forty Kingdom parables in order that you may be stirred up to consider their content.

"...IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN..."

Matt. 13:11

We are going to look at seven of those forty Kingdom parables. These seven contain a message we need to hear and comprehend.

"BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES FOR THEY SEE, AND YOUR EARS FOR THEY HEAR..."

Matt. 13:16

There is a real danger the church could repeat Israel's sin of growing dull, of hardening our hearts, and of closing our eyes and our ears to what God is saying. The last plea of Jesus to His unrepentant churches is:

"HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES."

Rev. 3:22

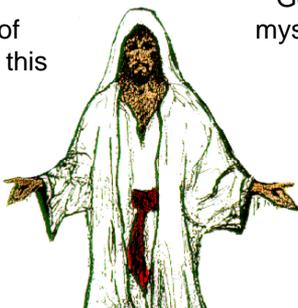
Paul also pleads with believers to watch out for a lack of willingness to hear and of a hardening of the heart through unbelief and sin:

**"...AS THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS:
"TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE,
DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION...
BEWARE BRETHREN, LEST THERE BE IN ANY OF YOU AN EVIL HEART
OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD:
BUT EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY,
WHILE IT IS CALLED "TODAY" LEST ANY OF YOU
BE HARDENED THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.
FOR WE BECOME PARTAKERS OF CHRIST IF WE HOLD THE
BEGINNING OF OUR CONFIDENCE STEADFAST TO THE END, WHILE
IT IS SAID: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE,
DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION."**

Hebrews 3:7-14

We are the people to whom the Kingdom of God has been given in this present dispensation.

"BUT BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES FOR THEY SEE, AND YOUR EARS FOR THEY HEAR; FOR ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU THAT MANY PROPHETS



God wants us to know the mysteries, the hidden truths contained within the parables.

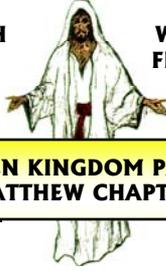
AND RIGHTEOUS MEN DESIRED TO SEE WHAT YOU SEE, AND DID NOT SEE IT, AND TO HEAR WHAT YOU HEAR, AND DID NOT HEAR IT."

Matt. 13:16-17

**THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES
OF
MATTHEW CHAPTER 13**

One single verse from Matthew Chapter 13 will tell us how important these Kingdom parables are:

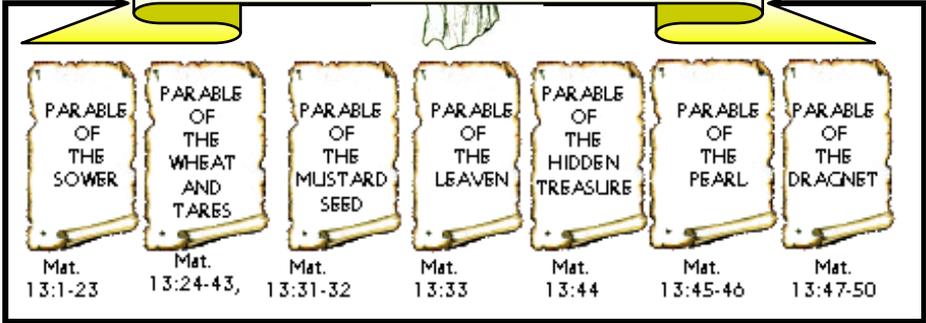
**"I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH
IN PARABLES;
I WILL UTTER THINGS**



**WHICH HAVE BEEN KEPT SECRET
FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE
WORLD."**

Matthew 13:35

**THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES
OF MATTHEW CHAPTER 13**



After giving this string of parables to His disciples, Jesus asked them,

**"HAVE YOU UNDERSTOOD ALL THESE THINGS?"
THEY SAID TO HIM, 'YES, LORD.' "** Matt. 13:51

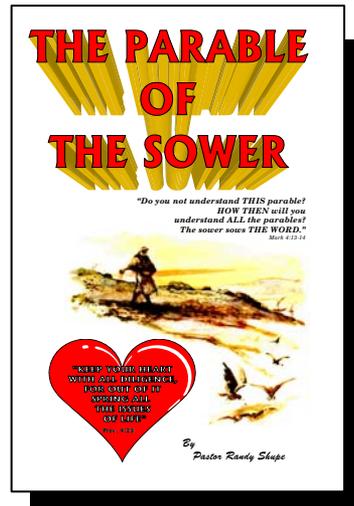
Perhaps Jesus asked this question of His disciples with a kind of "tongue in cheek" attitude after stating these seven Kingdom parables to them. "Yes, Lord" we got it, clear as a bell, no problem, no questions, makes perfect sense, we see it all plainly. What Jesus taught them was so overwhelming that they did not dare to ask what it was all about. We've all done the same, haven't we? Just cover up and pretend we got it all! What Jesus taught in these parables is not so plain to the eye, but is extremely profound! He has just given seven parables which contain things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

It is my firm conviction that these seven parables span the time frame of the Kingdom of God on earth depicting the sowing of the seed to the harvesting of the crop. The first parable begins the Kingdom story with a sower sowing seed, the Word of God, in the hearts of men. The last parable concludes with God's angels separating the wicked from the just at the end of this age. All that is in between paint for us a hidden picture of the various stages and significant happenings within the Kingdom of God from "seed to harvest." It is vitally important for us to grasp the meaning of these seven parables for that understanding will prevent us from believing false prophets preaching "great expectations" (such as a last-day church revival) that are not based on God's Word.

**"AND HE SAID TO THEM,
"DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE?
HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND
ALL THE PARABLES?"**

Mark 4:13

The principles contained within the first of the Matthew 13 parables, the parable of the sower, is so important that I previously wrote a 70-page booklet just on this subject. I will not duplicate here the depth of what I wrote previously in that book, so you may want to consider ordering a copy for an in-depth study of this subject. You can order it from our ministry.



The parable of the sower is recorded in three of the four gospels. You can find it in Mark 4, in Luke 8, as well as in Matthew 13. The quote above from Mark 4:13 reveals the extreme importance Jesus places on this Kingdom parable for it is the key to understanding all the parables. I believe the "all" Jesus refers to is all forty of the Kingdom parables that He taught! The key to understanding them lies in first grasping the principles of the parable of the sower. There are some very hard sayings in Jesus' forty parables. He is often seen to deal quite harshly with some of His servants in those parables. Here are a few troublesome examples:

"BUT IF THAT SERVANT SAYS IN HIS HEART, 'MY MASTER IS DELAYING HIS COMING' AND BEGINS TO BEAT THE MENSERVANTS AND MAIDSERVANTS, AND TO EAT AND DRINK AND BE DRUNK, THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT WILL COME ON A DAY WHEN HE IS NOT LOOKING FOR HIM, AND AT AN HOUR WHEN HE IS NOT AWARE, AND WILL CUT HIM IN TWO AND APPOINT HIM HIS PORTION WITH THE UNBELIEVERS." Luke 12:45-46

"BUT HIS LORD ANSWERED AND SAID TO HIM, 'YOU WICKED AND LAZY SERVANT'...CAST THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT INTO OUTER DARKNESS. THERE WILL BE WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH....DEPART FROM ME, YOU CURSED, INTO THE EVERLASTING FIRE...THESE WILL GO AWAY INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO ETERNAL LIFE." Matt. 25:26, 30, 41, 46

"...THE BRIDEGROOM CAME, AND THOSE THAT WERE READY WENT IN WITH HIM TO THE WEDDING; AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT...THE OTHER VIRGINS CAME ALSO, SAYING, 'LORD, LORD, OPEN TO US!' BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, 'ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, 'I DO NOT KNOW YOU.'" Matt. 25:10-12

It is important to see that these are all servants in the Kingdom of God. You cannot understand Jesus' harsh dealing with them apart from the principles contained within the parable of the sower!

Why does Jesus give such priority to this single parable? Because it is a parable about the condition of the heart.



“DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THIS PARABLE? HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THE PARABLES?”

Mark 4:13

Let me call to your memory two Scriptures we looked at in the beginning of this book about the importance of the heart:

“...MANY BELIEVED IN HIS NAME... BUT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO THEM, BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL MEN, AND HAD NO NEED THAT ANYONE SHOULD TESTIFY OF MAN, FOR HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN.”
(“HE COULD READ MEN’S HEARTS”) (Amp.)
Jn. 2:23-25

“...DO NOT LOOK AT HIS APPEARANCE... I HAVE REFUSED HIM. FOR THE LORD DOES NOT SEE AS MAN SEES; FOR MAN LOOKS AT THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART.”
1 Sam. 16:7

What is in the heart is of supreme importance to God. He will not even commit Himself to those who say they believe in His name apart from considering what is in their heart. Remember, it is godly sorrow that produces repentance to salvation (2 Cor. 7:10). Where there is no godly sorrow of heart, there is no salvation from God!

The parable of the sower is a depiction of four heart conditions that exist whenever the Word of God is sown. This parable is not restricted to being a message of salvation, although it certainly is that as well. It is also a story about the “Word of the Kingdom” being sown in the heart. Consider two different accounts of the parable of the sower revealing this truth:

“THOSE BY THE WAYSIDE ARE THE ONES WHO HEAR; THEN THE DEVIL COMES AND TAKES AWAY THE WORD OUT OF THEIR HEARTS, LEST THEY SHOULD BELIEVE AND BE SAVED.” Luke 8:12

“WHEN ANYONE HEARS THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM, AND DOES NOT UNDERSTAND IT, THEN THE WICKED ONE COMES AND SNATCHES AWAY WHAT WAS SOWN IN THE HEART. THIS IS HE WHO RECEIVES SEED BY THE WAYSIDE.” Matt. 13:19

By now you should know that there is a lot more to the Kingdom of God than merely entering it by the new birth. This parable is applicable when any facet of the Kingdom of God is preached. God will be looking at the heart’s reaction to Kingdom truths. Therefore:

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER IS AT WORK WHENEVER AND HOWEVER THE WORD OF GOD IS SOWN INTO THE HEART, BOTH IN BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS.

I would strongly suggest that you read all three accounts of the parable of the sower. They are located in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. Consider them in the Amplified Bible as well if you have one. This is an important parable as it is the key to understanding the other 39 Kingdom parables that Jesus spoke.

The Parable of the Sower Explained

13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

14 "The sower sows the word.

15 "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. And when they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness:

17 "and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are the ones who hear the word,*

19 "and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

20 "But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

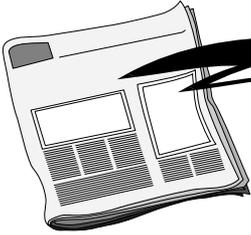
MARK 4

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

What is the parable attempting to communicate to us? It is that the same Word sown on four hearts will have four different reactions. Three of those reactions are the result of Satan impacting their heart in a negative manner toward what is contained in the Word.

Think about it: only one out of four people will hear the Word in a positive way and then do something about what they heard. They begin to bring forth fruit in their lives, "some thirty fold, some sixty fold, and some a hundredfold" increase.





HEART DISEASE TOP KILLER

“Heart disease remains by far the nation’s biggest killer, taking a life every 32 seconds, the American Heart Association said yesterday...”

In light of the above statistic, there is a great emphasis being placed on taking good care of our heart in the natural or physical realm. However, there is a greater need for protecting our heart in the spiritual realm. This the moral to the story of the parable of the sower, for it contains a threefold depiction of:

SPIRITUAL HEART DISEASE



What is portrayed above as a mini-synopsis of the heart disease found in the parable of the sower, is also found in Paul’s account of the children of Israel in the wilderness. God’s people have always been vulnerable to Satan’s spiritual heart attacks.



**“THEREFORE, AS THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS:
 ‘TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE,
 DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE
 REBELLION, IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE
 WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TESTED
 ME, PROVED ME, AND SAW MY WORKS FORTY
 YEARS. THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THAT
 GENERATION, AND SAID,
 ‘THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART,
 AND THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS.’
 ‘SO I SWORE IN MY WRATH,
 “THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.”
 “BEWARE, BRETHREN, LEST THERE BE IN ANY
 OF YOU AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF IN
 DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD;
 BUT EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY,
 WHILE IT IS CALLED ‘TODAY,’
 LEST ANY OF YOU BE HARDENED THROUGH
 THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.’ ”**

Heb.3:7-13

The chart below is taken from the book I suggested to you earlier on the parable of the sower. What is stated shows how Satan attacks the hearts of the people within the Kingdom of God. The sower booklet goes into these areas in great detail. I believe you will find it to be very illuminating.

"...THE CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD, AND DISTRACTIONS OF THE AGE, AND THE PLEASURE AND DELIGHT AND FALSE GLAMOUR AND DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, AND THE THE CRAVING AND PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS CREEP IN..."

Mark 4:18-19 Amplified

"LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US... WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."

2 Cor. 2:11

ENSNARED

"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL."

Eph. 6:11



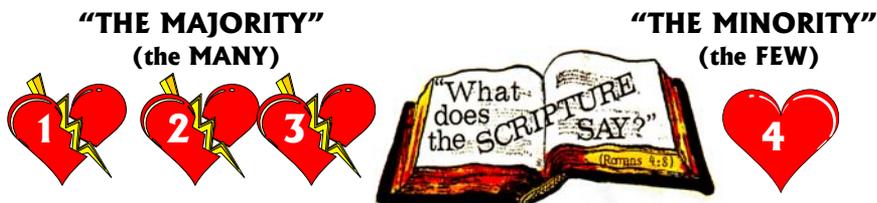
"WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD... SATAN COMES AT ONCE AND TAKES AWAY THE MESSAGE WHICH IS SOWN IN THEM..."

Mark 4:15
Amplified

"WHEN TROUBLE OR PERSECUTION ARISES ON ACCOUNT OF THE WORD, THEY IMMEDIATELY ARE OFFENDED, BECOME DISPLEASED, INDIGNANT, RESENTFUL, STUMBLE AND FALL AWAY..."

Mark 4:17
Amplified

There is one main point I would like to firmly emphasize from the parable of the sower in light of the contents of the book that you are presently reading. It is this: Christianity will be greatly divided when it comes to embracing Kingdom truths and Kingdom law:



This is just another way to convey the same truth Jesus has stated:

**“ENTER BY THE NARROW GATE;
FOR WIDE IS THE GATE, AND BROAD IS THE WAY
THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND THERE ARE MANY WHO GO IN BY IT.
BECAUSE NARROW IS THE GATE AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY
WHICH LEADS TO LIFE, AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT.”**
Matthew 7:13-14

The parable of the sower is adding mathematical understanding to what Jesus has stated is the narrow gate and the difficult way that few choose to embrace. How few are there? This parable tells us that the ratio is one out of four. To see an example of this truth consider this:

“UNTIL THE DAY IN WHICH HE WAS TAKEN UP...HE ALSO PRESENTED HIMSELF ALIVE...BEING SEEN BY THEM DURING FORTY DAYS AND SPEAKING OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. AND BEING ASSEMBLED TOGETHER WITH THEM, HE COMMANDED THEM NOT TO DEPART FROM JERUSALEM, BUT TO WAIT FOR THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER...YOU SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT MANY DAYS FROM NOW....NOW WHEN HE HAD SPOKEN THESE THINGS, WHILE THEY WATCHED, HE WAS TAKEN UP, AND A CLOUD RECEIVED HIM OUT OF THEIR SIGHT.”

Acts 1:2-9 excerpts

“...HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY... AFTER THAT HE WAS SEEN BY OVER FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN AT ONCE...” 1 Cor. 15:4, 6

These two Scriptures taken together reveal that over five hundred brethren together saw Jesus as He ascended. He had commanded that they were not to leave Jerusalem until a few more days passed, for they were going to receive the power of the Holy Spirit! Ten days later, on the day of Pentecost, only 120 of the 500 brethren who saw Him ascend, are now assembled together waiting for the promise of the Father:

“AND THE NUMBER OF NAMES WAS ABOUT A HUNDRED AND TWENTY...”
Acts 1:15

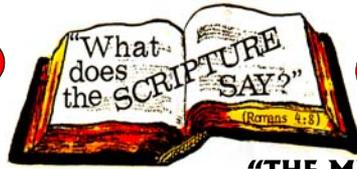
Five hundred brethren saw Him ascend, but only 120 were waiting when the power of the Holy Spirit fell. That is one-fourth! The other three-fourths had something else to do, or somewhere else to be! This is the parable of the sower at work!

SEEN BY 500 BRETHREN..

120 NAMES...



“THE MAJORITY”
(the MANY)



“THE MINORITY”
(the FEW)

The principles of the parable of the sower are at work at the end of the church age as it was at its infant beginnings. Jesus writes seven letters to His churches in Asia. They are prophetic letters which depict the spiritual condition of His church just prior to the rapture. To five of His churches He calls them to “repent or else.” Only two out of seven are considered faithful and true witnesses. Consider the mini-synopsis of the corrupt testimony these five churches bear:



In contrast, consider that the two remaining churches, Smyrna and Philadelphia, receive no words of correction, no rebuke from Jesus, but rather only encouragement to persevere (see Rev. 2:8-11, 3:7-13).



“THE MAJORITY”
(the **MANY**)



“THE MINORITY”
(the **FEW**)

Do you want to enter the narrow gate? Do you want to walk the difficult way? If so, then arm yourself by being mindful of the many (majority) and the few (minority) principle of the sower as depicted above. It is a **L-O-N-E-L-Y** walk because you are not going to find very many people who are willing to travel along with you!

If you take a look at Chapter 13 of Matthew you will see that there are 53 verses dedicated to these seven parables. However, note well that 23 verses, nearly half of the 53 verses, are dedicated to the first of the seven parables, the parable of the sower! Jesus wants us to get the significance this parable plays in the Kingdom of God. Remember, Jesus said that the present manifestation of the Kingdom of God was not a physical, geographical Kingdom, but rather it is a Kingdom that abides and functions in **THE HEART**:

**“YOU DO NOT LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIVES IN YOU.”**

THE GOSPEL OF
THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**“THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS WITHIN YOU,
IN YOUR
HEART”**

**ENTER
THE GATE
HAVING
BECOME
A DISCIPLE
WITH THE
KINGDOM
IN VIEW**

Luke 17:21 Amp.

**“MY SON, GIVE ATTENTION TO MY WORDS...
KEEP THEM IN THE MIDST OF YOUR HEART;
FOR THEY ARE LIFE TO THOSE WHO FIND THEM...
KEEP YOUR HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE,
FOR OUT OF IT SPRING THE ISSUES OF LIFE.”**

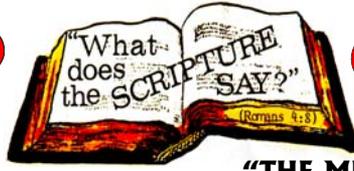
Prov. 4:20-23

**"MY SON, GIVE ATTENTION TO MY WORDS...
KEEP THEM IN THE MIDST OF YOUR HEART;
FOR THEY ARE LIFE TO THOSE WHO FIND THEM...
KEEP YOUR HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE,
FOR OUT OF IT SPRING THE ISSUES OF LIFE."**

Prov. 4:20-23

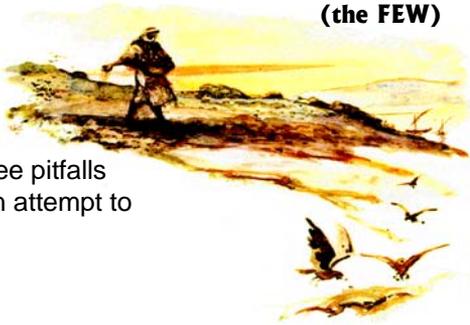


"THE MAJORITY"
(the MANY)



"THE MINORITY"
(the FEW)

Whenever,
the Word of the Kingdom
is sown in your heart, you are
going to have to avoid the three pitfalls
Satan will set before you in an attempt to
steal the seed that was sown:



UNBELIEF

"WHEN ANYONE HEARS THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM, AND DOES NOT UNDERSTAND IT, THEN THE WICKED ONE COMES AND SNATCHES AWAY WHAT WAS SOWN IN THE HEART.

THIS IS HE WHO RECEIVED SEED BY THE WAYSIDE."

Matthew 13:19



OFFENDED

"...THE ONES ON STONY GROUND ARE THOSE WHO, WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD, AT ONCE RECEIVE AND ACCEPT AND WELCOME IT WITH JOY...THEY ENDURE FOR A LITTLE WHILE; THEN WHEN TROUBLE OR PERSECUTION ARISES ON ACCOUNT OF THE WORD, THEY IMMEDIATELY ARE OFFENDED(BECOME DISPLEASED, INDIGNANT, RESENTFUL) AND THEY STUMBLE AND FALL AWAY."

Mark 4:16-17 Amplified



ENSNARED

"...THE CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD, AND DISTRACTIONS OF THE AGE, AND THE PLEASURE AND DELIGHT AND FALSE GLAMOUR AND DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, AND THE THE CRAVING AND PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS CREEP IN..."

Mark 4:18-19 Amplified

**"THESE ARE THE ONES SOWN ON
GOOD GROUND**



**WHO HEAR THE WORD,
AND RECEIVE AND ACCEPT
AND WELCOME IT,
AND BEAR FRUIT-
SOME THIRTY TIMES AS MUCH
AS WAS SOWN,
SOME SIXTY TIMES AS MUCH,
AND
SOME A HUNDRED TIMES AS MUCH."**

Mark 4:20 Amplified

**"...I CHOSE YOU AND APPOINTED YOU THAT YOU SHOULD GO
AND BEAR FRUIT, AND THAT YOUR FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN...
BY THIS MY FATHER IS GLORIED, THAT YOU BEAR MUCH FRUIT;
SO YOU WILL BE MY DISCIPLES."**

John 15:16, 8

There is one thing that God wants in His Kingdom, and that is fruit-bearing disciples. This is the one thing Satan does not want to see. The parable of the sower tells us that the majority of God's people will not be fruitful. It is only one out of four that will succeed. Set your heart on being among the minority! We must constantly remind ourselves why the Kingdom of God was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles:

**"THEREFORE I SAY UNTO YOU, THE KINGDOM OF GOD
WILL BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND GIVEN TO A NATION
BEARING THE FRUITS OF IT..."** Matt. 21:43

Notice the different degrees of fruit bearing even among the good hearts depicted above. Some will bear thirty times, some sixty, and some will even produce a hundred times as much as was sown. What makes the difference? Jesus tells us in Mark's account of the parable of the Sower:

**"IF ANY MAN HAS EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM BE LISTENING AND LET
HIM PERCEIVE AND COMPREHEND. AND HE SAID TO THEM,
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ARE HEARING. THE MEASURE
OF THOUGHT AND STUDY YOU GIVE TO THE TRUTH YOU HEAR WILL
BE THE MEASURE OF VIRTUE AND KNOWLEDGE THAT COMES BACK
TO YOU-AND MORE WILL BE GIVEN TO THOSE WHO HEAR..."**

Mark 4:23-24 Amplified

What makes the distinction between a valedictorian who has excelled in college and the average student? It is the degree of labor and effort being applied. This is true in the Kingdom of God as well!

**THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES
OF
MATTHEW CHAPTER 13**



Mat. 13:1-23

The first of these seven prophetic parables which depict the Kingdom of God in its present manifestation on earth gives us warning about the spiritual condition of the hearts of God's people who hear "the Word of the Kingdom." Only one out of four who hear the same word will bring forth fruit. The rest will fall to Satan's devices and bring reproach to the name of Christ. They will say they are Christians but will continue to look like the world, and continue to like what they see in the world. It will be evident that there is a lack of loving God with the whole heart!



Mat. 13:24-30

Let us now look at the second of the seven parables Jesus uses to depict what the Kingdom of God will be like on earth. This is the second longest parable spanning 15 of the 53 total verses.

Like the previous parable of the sower, the parable of the wheat and the tares is also a story depicted by the sowing of seeds. Here is the parable and how Jesus interpreted it to His disciples:

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

26 "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

27 "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

28 "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'

29 "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

30 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

The Parable of the Tares Explained

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

38 "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.

39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

40 "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

This parable is one of the sowing of seed just as was the parable of the sower. In the sower parable the seed was sown in the hearts of men. Here the seed is sown in the field of the Master. This parable says "the field is the world." This is where God has planted us as His field -- in the world! Consider Paul's parallel word in Corinthians:

"I PLANTED, APOLLOS WATERED, BUT GOD GAVE THE INCREASE... HE WHO PLANTS AND HE WHO WATERS ARE ONE...FOR WE ARE GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS, YOU ARE GOD'S FIELD..."

1 Cor. 3:6-9

The church is God's field planted in the midst of the world. The servants asked the Master, "did you not plant good seed in your field? How does it have tares?" (vs.27). Jesus answers by saying "An enemy has done this" (vs.28). Look carefully now at the detailed explanation of Jesus:

The two "seeds" that will grow up together in the midst of God's field, which is the church planted in the world, are:

1. The sons of the Kingdom
2. The sons of the wicked one.

They will grow up together with the saints until the end of the age!

God will then gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness!

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

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the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

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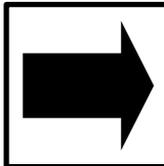
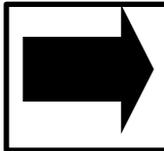
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42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!



Look carefully at the passages from Matthew 13:41-43. I have divided them so that you can see two distinct phases of the Kingdom:

**“THE SON OF MAN WILL SEND
OUT HIS ANGELS,
AND THEY WILL GATHER
OUT OF HIS KINGDOM
ALL THINGS THAT OFFEND,
AND THOSE WHO
PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS...**

Matt. 13:41-43

**THEN THE RIGHTEOUS
WILL SHINE FORTH
AS THE SUN
IN THE KINGDOM
OF THEIR FATHER.
HE WHO HAS EARS TO
HEAR, LET HIM HEAR!”**

**THE IMPURE STAGE:
(TEMPORAL)**

**THE PURE STAGE:
(ETERNAL)**

One is an impure phase due to the tares (sons of the wicked one) who are IN the Kingdom but are causing offense and are practicing lawlessness. Only after the angels take out of His Kingdom all things that offend and those who practice lawlessness, will we have a pure Kingdom in which the righteous (the sons of the Kingdom) will then shine forth like the sun! The parable of the sower tells us that three out of four, three fourths, (the majority) of those who enter the Kingdom will not bear forth the fruit of the Kingdom. Satan will overcome them. This conveys that the present stage (the impure stage) of the Kingdom will be laden down with those who offend and practice lawlessness. The minority, one fourth, will bear fruit but will be overshadowed by the majority with their lawless lifestyle. It will remain like this until the end of the age when Jesus sends forth His angels to gather out of the Kingdom all things that offend and those who practice lawlessness. Do you remember these verses I gave you earlier pertaining to lawlessness?

**“AND MANY WILL BE OFFENDED, WILL BETRAY ONE ANOTHER,
AND WILL HATE ONE ANOTHER, THEN MANY FALSE PROPHETS WILL
ARISE AND DECEIVE MANY. AND BECAUSE LAWLESSNESS WILL
ABOUND, THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD. BUT HE WHO
ENDURES TO THE END WILL BE SAVED. AND THE GOSPEL OF THE
KINGDOM WILL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD AS A WITNESS TO ALL
THE NATIONS, AND THEN THE END WILL COME.”** Matt. 24:10-14

**“NOT EVERYONE WHO SAYS TO ME, “LORD, LORD,”
SHALL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,
BUT HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER IN HEAVEN.**

**MANY WILL SAY TO ME IN THAT DAY,
‘LORD, LORD, HAVE WE NOT PROPHESED IN YOUR NAME, CAST OUT
DEMONS IN YOUR NAME, AND DONE MANY WONDERS IN YOUR NAME?’
AND THEN I WILL DECLARE TO THEM, ‘I NEVER KNEW YOU;
DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS!’** Matt. 7:21-23

I pray that you do not leave this page until the Holy Spirit imparts to you the depth of what it contains! Look at the use of “many” by Jesus in relation to lawlessness. Remember that many will go in at the wide gate and walk the broad way that leads to destruction-eternal misery! Jesus will purge His Kingdom eventually, but for now, in this present impure stage of the Kingdom, the many outweigh the few!

THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES OF MATTHEW CHAPTER 13

THE MORAL TO THE STORY

Jesus' first Kingdom parable tells us why few are able to enter the narrow gate and difficult way. It is due to spiritual heart attacks that three fourths of those in the Kingdom suffer when the word of the Kingdom is sown in their hearts. They have evil hearts of unbelief, they have hearts offended by the words that confront their worldly lifestyle, they have ensnared hearts that are choked with the cares of this life, with the deceitfulness of riches, and with the lust for other things. Only one-fourth bring forth fruit and even that varies 30-60-100 fold! The more effort given, the more fruit produced!



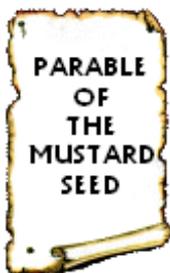
Mat. 13:1-23

THE MORAL TO THE STORY

The second parable Jesus tells about the Kingdom of God in Matthew 13 shows that the condition of the Kingdom is worsened by the corruption of Satan sowing tares (sons of the wicked one) among the wheat (sons of the Kingdom). These sons of the wicked one will be in the Kingdom until the end of the age when Jesus will take out of His Kingdom all things that offend and those who practice lawlessness. What kind of image will Christianity project right up to the end of the age? Just combine together what the parable of the sower says with what the parable of the wheat and tares reveals. It is a Kingdom in which few obey the mandate to "love the Lord Your God with all of your heart..." (Matt. 22:37). It is a Kingdom predominantly dominated by those who cause offense and live in lawlessness as Christians.



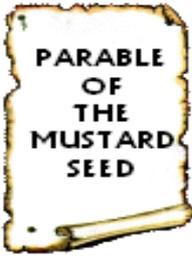
Mat. 13:24-43,



Mat. 13:31-32

Let us add now the third Kingdom parable in this string. Like the parable of the sower, and like the the wheat and tares, this is also a parable about sowing of seeds. This time it is a mustard seed:

"ANOTHER PARABLE HE PUT FORTH TO THEM, SAYING: "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED, WHICH A MAN TOOK AND SOWED IN HIS FIELD, WHICH INDEED IS THE LEAST OF ALL THE SEEDS, BUT WHEN IT IS GROWN IT IS GREATER THAN THE HERBS AND BECOMES A TREE, SO THAT THE BIRDS OF THE AIR COME AND NEST IN ITS BRANCHES."



“ANOTHER PARABLE HE PUT FORTH TO THEM, SAYING: “THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED, WHICH A MAN TOOK AND SOWED IN HIS FIELD, WHICH INDEED IS THE LEAST OF ALL THE SEEDS, BUT WHEN IT IS GROWN IT IS GREATER THAN THE HERBS AND BECOMES A TREE, SO THAT THE BIRDS OF THE AIR COME AND NEST IN ITS BRANCHES.”

Matt. 13:31-32

Often this parable is misinterpreted when it is isolated from its contextual setting. These seven parables are like a string of pearls. They are one complete story, not individual random truths to be isolated from each other as are some of Jesus' other parables.

When you read the parable by itself it seems to portray a quiet tranquil story about a tiny seed that grows up into a big tree and provides nice little homes for the birdies. However, this is a story about the imperfect phase of the Kingdom of God in its present manifestation on earth. So far Jesus has painted a dismal picture by means of the parable of the sower, followed by the parable of the wheat and the tares. A rosy interpretation of this parable of the mustard seed does not fit the negative flow of the parable of the sower or the wheat and the tares, and it certainly does not fit the parable which follows it, the parable of the leaven. Leaven is a picture of corruption and sin. So then, we must look at this parable of the mustard seed in light of the previous parables and the one which follows it since Jesus did not interpret this specific parable for us as He did the previous two.

In the parable of the sower we had a picture of little birds coming along and devouring the seed sown along the wayside (Mat. 13:4). What did Jesus say the birds who stole away the seed in the parable represent? He said the birds depict the wicked one who comes and snatches away what was sown in the heart (Matt. 13:19). The illustration in the parable itself seems innocent, just birds devouring seed, but the birds represent the wicked one, Satan! In the parable of the mustard seed, birds nesting in the branches of the tree seems innocent enough, but I would suggest to you that Jesus does not have a double meaning for the birds! It was the wicked one in the parable of the sower and I believe it represents the wicked one in the parable of the mustard seed. The mustard seed is very tiny but becomes a huge tree. Is this not what happened to the church? It began with only 12 disciples and blossomed into a huge conglomerate covering the earth! The parable of the wheat and tares told of Satan planting the sons of the wicked one in God's field. This parable of the mustard seed is another variation of that story. The church is destined to become a nesting place for Satan's emissaries.

**“I HAVE SEEN
THE WICKED
IN GREAT
POWER,
AND
SPREADING
HIMSELF
LIKE A NATIVE
GREEN TREE.”**

Psalm 37:35



**“...WHEN IT IS
GROWN...
AND BECOMES
A TREE...
THE BIRDS
OF THE AIR
COME AND
NEST IN
ITS BRANCHES.”**

Matt. 13:32

The mustard seed was sown in a man's field. The field in the previous parable of the wheat and the tares belonged to the Master. So does this one. The field in the previous parable represented the church in the world and so must this one.

The parable of the mustard seed is a different perspective in that it shows the infant tiny beginnings of the church planted in the field of the world as a tiny mustard seed, but it quickly grows into a humongous tree. The church universal today certainly qualifies as a humongous institution (especially if you add Catholicism to it). Jesus is simply bringing forth the point that the birds, as in the parable of the wheat and the tares, are Satan and his emissaries. The message is that they have found the church to be a great nesting place from which they can wreak havoc. The parable of the sower showed this corruptive force at work in that three-fourths of those who hear the Word do not bring forth any fruit. They continue to be like the world. The parable of the wheat and the tares shows this corruption in that Satan has planted within the confines of the Kingdom the sons of the wicked one to cause offense and practice lawlessness while disguised as wheat. This parable is just another confirmation of the previous two. The fourth parable will confirm even more that we are dealing with a continuous theme:



**“ANOTHER PARABLE HE SPOKE TO THEM:
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE LEAVEN,
WHICH A WOMAN TOOK
AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL TILL
IT WAS ALL LEAVENED.”**

Matt. 13:33



**“ANOTHER PARABLE HE SPOKE TO THEM:
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE LEAVEN,
WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE
MEASURES OF MEAL
TILL IT WAS ALL LEAVENED.”**

Matt. 13:33



Where does meal come from?

It is from the kernels of wheat which were planted in the field and have been ripened and harvested. This is a further revelation of the progression of the Kingdom of God. The field has yielded a harvest and now is ground into meal. The parable states “three measures of meal” which I would suggest to you prophetically represents

JUDAISM CATHOLICISM PROTESTANTISM

What does the woman hide in the three measures of meal? It is leaven which in Scripture is always a picture of corruption, false teaching and sin. Here are some proof texts:

**“HIS DISCIPLES...HAD FORGOTTEN TO TAKE BREAD. THEN JESUS SAID TO THEM, “TAKE HEED AND BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES.” (Matt. 16:5-6)
“..YOU SHOULD BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN...THE DOCTRINE OF THE PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES.” Matt. 16:11-12**

“AND THE PHARISEES CAME OUT AND BEGAN TO DISPUTE WITH HIM...TESTING HIM...THEN HE CHARGED THEM SAYING, “TAKE HEED, BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND THE LEAVEN OF HEROD.” Mark 8:11,15

**“DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENS THE WHOLE LUMP? THEREFORE PURGE OUT THE OLD LEAVEN...THE LEAVEN OF MALICE AND WICKEDNESS...”
1 Cor. 5:6-8 excerpts**

“YOU RAN WELL. WHO HAS HINDERED YOU FROM OBEYING THE TRUTH? THIS PERSUASION DOES NOT COME FROM HIM WHO CALLS YOU. A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENS THE WHOLE LUMP.” Gal. 5:7-9

Often this parable is erroneously taught as a picture of the gospel being preached by which the whole world will become “leavened” with its message of good news. Leaven in Scripture is not a positive illustration but a negative one. Also the woman hides the leaven in the meal, she does not reveal it to the world! The gospel is not to be hidden, but proclaimed. There is no support for such an interpretation. Leaven depicts sin, corruption and false doctrine!



“ANOTHER PARABLE HE SPOKE TO THEM: THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL TILL IT WAS ALL LEAVENED.”

Matt. 13:33



JUDAISM



**CATHOLICISM
PROTESTANTISM**

Why do I include Judaism? Because the Kingdom of God began with the Jews and was taken from them and given to the Gentiles:

“THEREFORE I SAY UNTO YOU, THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND GIVEN TO A NATION BEARING THE FRUITS OF IT... NOW WHEN THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE PHARISEES HEARD HIS PARABLES, THEY PERCEIVED THAT HE WAS SPEAKING TO THEM...” Matt. 21:43-45

Why did the Jews not bring forth the fruits of the Kingdom? Because of the leaven of the doctrine of the Pharisees. Consider the charges Jesus brings against the leaders of Judaism:



“THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME. AND IN VAIN THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN. FOR LAYING ASIDE THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD, YOU HOLD TO THE TRADITION OF MEN...ALL TOO WELL YOU REJECT THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY KEEP YOUR TRADITION...MAKING THE WORD OF GOD OF NO EFFECT THROUGH YOUR TRADITION WHICH YOU HAVE HANDED DOWN. AND MANY SUCH THINGS YOU DO.” Mark 7:6-13

Notice (1) their HEART is far from Jesus (parable of the sower), and (2) they teach as doctrines the commandments of men (no Kingdom law). God’s Kingdom laws written for His people have been replaced with handed-down cherished traditions of men. Notice the power of tradition makes the Word of God of no effect. The leaven that the woman places in three measures of meal (Judaism, Catholicism and Protestantism) is tradition. Each of these three subtle substitutes for true Kingdom Christianity are riddled with traditions that make the Word of God of no effect. God wrote the Torah for the Jews, but the Jews wrote the Talmud for themselves. The Talmud consists of all the handed-down oral traditions that they clung to over the centuries that caused Jesus to charge them with, “all too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.” For example, consider that God told Israel when they came up out of Egypt, “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you” (Ex. 12:2). God wanted their new year to begin with the Feast of Passover depicting the Suffering Messiah. What have they done with this written commandment of God? By tradition they moved the biblical new year from the first to the fifth feast of Lev.23, the Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah.



**“ANOTHER PARABLE HE SPOKE TO THEM:
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE LEAVEN,
WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE
MEASURES OF MEAL TILL IT WAS ALL LEAVENED.”**



Matt. 13:33

JUDAISM

CATHOLICISM



PROTESTANTISM

If you think Judaism is steeped in tradition, Catholicism is the king of tradition! Like Judaism, its doctrines are all the traditions and commandments of men. Most often, Catholic catechism is in opposition to what is stated in the Word of God. If you were to make a point-by-point comparison between what Catholicism professes and what the Word of God says, you would have to brand this religion as a cult that is contrary to God's Word. However, because they profess allegiance to the same trinity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, they are readily accepted as Christian. Never mind that Mary is called “the mother of God” (instead of the mother of Jesus) and occupies a theological place equal to the Godhead. Catholicism makes the bold statement in all their literature that the Roman Catholic church is the one and only true church of Jesus Christ. They claim apostolic authority all the way back to Peter as being the first pope, and that the present pope is Peter's God-appointed heir as “the Vicar of Christ.” The vicar (voice of God), is the Holy Spirit, not the Catholic pope!

Catholicism is the originator of many traditions that are observed even by the protestant church. Take Christmas or the “Christ Mass,” which is the origin of this traditional word. The Catholic Encyclopedia plainly admits that they made the birthday of the S-o-n fall on the pagan worship day of the s-u-n (Sol), the winter Solstice. Likewise “Easter” is a word that Catholicism coined which is derived from “Ishtar”, the Greek Goddess of fertility. What does the Word of God call the day that Jesus Christ raised from the dead? It is Firstfruits (1 Cor. 15:20,23). Where did this name come from? It is the third feast of Leviticus 23. Again, tradition makes the Word of God of no effect.

Catholicism is full of man-made traditions. The popery, the celibate priesthood, selected sainthood, confession of sins to men, praying the Rosary, Mary worship, praying to statues of “the saints”, the nunnery, transubstantiation of the wafer into Jesus' body, the ascension of Mary, the sinless divine conception of Mary, these are all man-made traditions without a shred of evidence or support in the Scriptures! Here is a religion claiming to best represent Jesus but is often totally opposite to the Word of God which IS Jesus! (Jn. 1:1,14,).



**"ANOTHER PARABLE HE SPOKE TO THEM:
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE LEAVEN, WHICH
A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF
MEAL TILL IT WAS ALL LEAVENED."**

Matt. 13:33

JUDAISM

CATHOLICISM

PROTESTANTISM



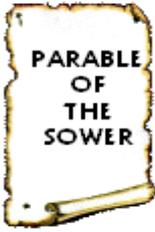
The third measure of meal in which the woman of this parable hides leaven so that the whole lump will become leavened, is Protestantism. I have already shown to you the foundational seed from which such leaven sprung forth here in America. It was Puritanism with its manmade, unbiblical claim that America is God's New Israel. From this foundational error has sprung the marriage of Christianity with political agendas and credos such as "One Nation Under God" and "In God We Trust." These are manmade cherished traditions that make the Word of God of no effect.

As this book was written (2004), a movie came forth called "The Passion of Christ." It was created by actor and producer, Mel Gibson, a radical and outspoken Roman Catholic. One might readily understand that Catholics would wholeheartedly endorse this movie as it was produced by one of their own. However, Protestant believers throughout this country went berserk over this movie as an "evangelical tool." The problem is that this movie is nothing more than a evangelical tool for Catholicism! The wide endorsement of this Catholic movie by the church is proof of how much leaven is already at work leavening Protestantism with religious tradition. For a Protestant believer to swallow the unbiblical content of this movie shows the degree of the lack of true biblical doctrine abiding in the hearts of God's people. Consider this analysis of the movie:

"Concerning the film, Gibson has declared, "It reflects my beliefs." He also has stated, "There is no salvation for those outside the [Catholic] Church...I believe it." Clearly, before the public eye, here is a Catholic movie, made by a Catholic director, with Catholic theological advisers and a Catholic message. According to a Catholic website, Catholic Passion Outreach, "The Passion of The Christ" offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for you to spread, strengthen, and share the Catholic faith with your family and friends." It is obvious from this and other Catholic sources that Catholics see this film as an excellent way to convey the Catholic Christ. The Passion of Christ leaves us with a vision of the sacrifice of Christ that is full of grief; sad; sorrowful; doleful; dismal and which puts into sharp relief the Roman Catholic notion, not only of the importance of Christ's agony, but that of Mary in 'offering her Son'."

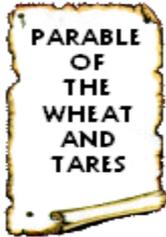
Richard Bennett's WebPage is: www.bereanbeacon.org

**THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES
OF
MATTHEW CHAPTER 13**



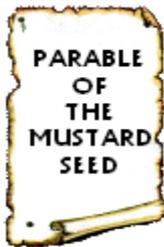
Mat. 13:1-23

The parable of the sower brings home the truth that the majority of God's people that are inside the Kingdom will not be fruit-bearing Christians. Only the minority will persevere and bring forth fruit that will glorify God the Father. We need to set our sights on being among the fruit bearers and not be discouraged by those all around us who do not bear fruit. To be forewarned is to be forearmed!



Mat. 13:24-43

This parable was given so that we would know in advance that God is going to allow the sons of the wicked one whom Satan has planted inside the Kingdom to continue to be there right up to the end of the age, professing to be "wheat" but living like the devil himself.



Mat. 13:31-32

This parable tells us how enormous the professing church will become, and that Satan's emissaries (the birds) will make nests in the branches of God's church and wreak their havoc from within the church.



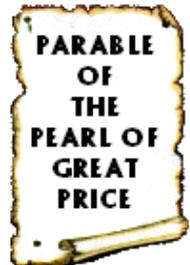
Mat. 13:33

The parable of the leaven reveals the three divisions of the Kingdom of God that have been, and are presently being leavened by the corruption of tradition.



Mat. 13:44

Standing in stark contrast to the above four dismal accounts of the Kingdom of God are these next two. I have always believed that God gives just enough encouragement in order that we are not overwhelmed by discouragement. These next two parables represent the true remnant of Israel and the church.



Mat 13:45-46



“AGAIN, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A TREASURE HIDDEN IN A FIELD, WHICH A MAN FOUND AND HID; FOR THE JOY OVER IT HE GOES AND SELLS ALL THAT HE HAS AND BUYS THE FIELD.” Matt. 13:44



Jesus does not interpret this parable for us but there are enough facts stated within it that we can deduce that this parable of the hid treasure is depicting the remnant of Israel which will be grafted back into the Kingdom of God. First of all consider that God regards Israel alone to be a special treasure above all peoples:

“NOW THEREFORE, IF YOU WILL INDEED OBEY MY VOICE AND KEEP MY COVENANT, THEN YOU SHALL BE A SPECIAL TREASURE TO ME ABOVE ALL PEOPLE; FOR ALL THE EARTH IS MINE.... THESE ARE THE WORDS WHICH YOU SHALL SPEAK TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.” Exodus 19:5-6

Notice the unique promise that Israel is to be a special treasure to God above all people. This statement is followed by the reminder that “all the earth is mine.” The field of this parable is, as it has been in the previous parables, some form of God’s Kingdom planted in the world. Unfortunately, Israel did not meet the conditions attached to the promise of being a special treasure to God for they neither obeyed His voice nor kept His Covenant. Therefore God scattered them throughout the nations of the world but with a promise of someday to gather them back into the land:

“SURELY, I WILL TAKE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FROM AMONG THE NATIONS, WHEREVER THEY HAVE GONE, AND WILL GATHER THEM FROM EVERY SIDE AND BRING THEM INTO THEIR OWN LAND...THEN THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD.” Ezk. 37:21-23

Paul teaches the church that God has not cast away Israel (Rom. 11:1-2), even though He did take away the Kingdom from them and give it to the Gentiles, as we saw earlier. Paul exclaims, “Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5, 9:27). The prophet Zechariah tells us that two-thirds of the Jews will perish but one-third will be saved as God pours out the spirit of grace on them once again (Zech 12:10, and 13:1-9). The parable is exacting. Jesus did not buy the treasure but rather He hid the treasure in the field. The field that God buys in this parable is the land of Israel. The treasure hid in that field is the one-third remnant of Israel that will yet be saved.

These two parables, The hid treasure and the pearl of great price teach us how God is simultaneously dealing with two peoples, Israel and His Gentile church. Keep them distinctly separated as God does, and you will rightly divide God’s Word of truth.



“AGAIN, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MERCHANT SEEKING BEAUTIFUL PEARLS. WHO, WHEN HE FOUND ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, WENT AND SOLD ALL THAT HE HAD AND BOUGHT IT.”

Matt. 13:45



The order of these two parables, the hid treasure and the pearl of great price, are significant as well. The church (the pearl) is not first but rather the hid treasure. The Scripture proclaims, “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him” (Jn. 1:11). Therefore, by means of His death, Jesus paid the price to buy back the field (the land of Israel) with all that He had which was His life. Hidden in that field is His own special treasure, the remnant of Israel.

Following on the heels of the parable of the hid treasure is this parable of the pearl of great price. Notice the exactness as in the other parable. This time the merchant gives all that He has to be able to purchase the pearl which I believe is the gentile church. Consider the fullness of the Scripture I quoted above from the Gospel of John:

“HE CAME TO HIS OWN, AND HIS OWN DID NOT RECEIVE HIM. BUT AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM, TO THEM HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD, EVEN TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIS NAME...” John 1:11-12

Paul cried out to the Christ rejecting Jews:

“THEREFORE LET IT BE KNOWN TO YOU THAT THE SALVATION OF GOD HAS BEEN SENT TO THE GENTILES, AND THEY WILL HEAR IT!” AND WHEN HE HAD SAID THESE WORDS, THE JEWS DEPARTED AND HAD A GREAT DISPUTE AMONG THEMSELVES.” Acts 28:28-29

Often, I have heard preachers speak of the pearl of great price as being Jesus Himself. It is not Jesus that is the pearl of great price. We did not buy Jesus, He bought us with His own blood:

“SHEPHERD THE CHURCH OF GOD WHICH HE PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD.” Acts 20:28

“FOR YOU WERE BOUGHT AT A PRICE...” 1 Cor. 6:20

“...YOU WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS LIKE SILVER OR GOLD...BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST...”

1 Pet. 1:17-19

“...THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION...”

Eph. 1:14

One final thought here: Do you know how pearls are formed? They are made by means of the ongoing suffering that the oyster experiences over a long period of time. Paul reminds us that “For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Phil. 1:29), “If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him” (2 Tim. 2:12 KJ).



“AGAIN, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A DRAGNET THAT WAS CAST INTO THE SEA AND GATHERED SOME OF EVERY KIND, WHICH, WHEN IT WAS FULL, THEY DREW TO SHORE; AND THEY SAT DOWN AND GATHERED THE GOOD INTO VESSELS, BUT THREW THE BAD AWAY.

SO IT WILL BE AT THE END OF THE AGE. THE ANGELS WILL COME FORTH, SEPARATE THE WICKED FROM AMONG THE JUST, AND CAST THEM INTO THE FURNACE OF FIRE. THERE WILL BE WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH.”

Matt. 13:47-50



Had this string of Kingdom parables ended on the positive note with the parable of the pearl of great price (the church), there would be room for speculative teachings such as a worldwide revival to come on the church as it happened in the book of Acts. However, Jesus' string of parables does not end on the positive but rather on yet another dreadful scenario summed up by “There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

The parable of the dragnet is how Jesus ends this series of depictions of what the Kingdom of God is going to look like at the end of the age. There is a sudden change of scenery from parables about the earth to one that takes place in the sea. The sea in Scripture is a picture of the mass of humanity and it usually speaks heavily of the wicked:

“BUT THE WICKED ARE LIKE THE TROUBLED SEA, WHEN IT CANNOT REST, WHOSE WATERS CAST UP MIRE AND DIRT.” Isa. 57:20

“THE LORD... WILL PUNISH LEVIATHAN THE FLEEING SERPENT... THAT TWISTED SERPENT; AND HE WILL SLAY THE REPTILE THAT IS IN THE SEA.” Isa. 27:1-2

“AND FOUR GREAT BEASTS CAME UP FROM THE SEA, EACH DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER...” Dan. 7:3

The last picture above is that of the appearance of Antichrist. The sea is usually associated with the wicked and that may be the very reason that when God makes a new heaven and a new earth we read:

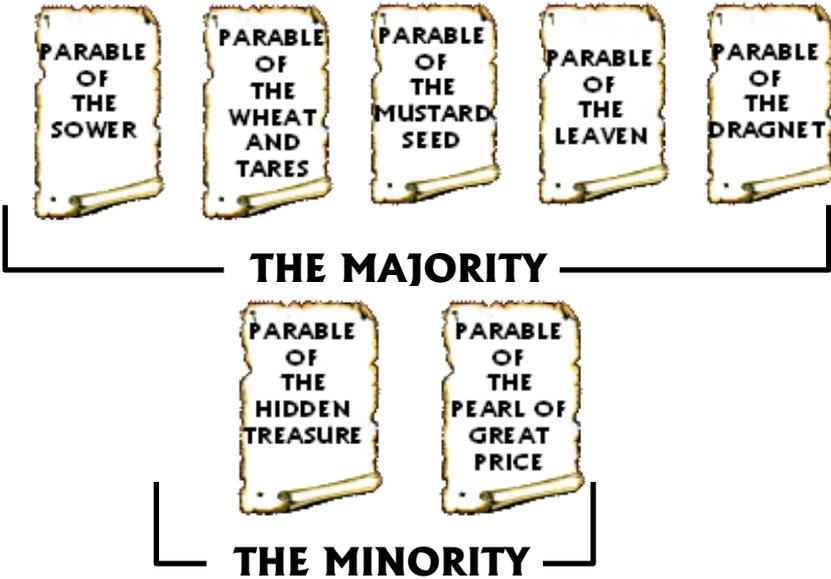
“ALSO THERE WAS NO MORE SEA.” Rev. 21:1

This last parable is depicting the close of the age. You can read a blow-by-blow detailed account of it in the book of Revelation. It is the Day of God's wrath, the great tribulation which is coming to test all those who dwell on the earth. It is the final purging of the wicked from among the just. The parable ends with a reference to “the furnace of fire.” Chapter 20 of Revelation ends with the wicked being cast into the lake of fire. Then comes a new heaven and a new earth in which there is no more sea, no more wicked!

**THE SEVEN KINGDOM PARABLES
OF
MATTHEW CHAPTER 13**

**“AND HE SAID, “TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN THE KINGDOM OF
GOD? OR WITH WHAT PARABLE SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...
AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES HE SPOKE TO THEM
THE WORD AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT.”**

Mark 4:30-32



This diagram will help you to see the overall perspective that Jesus is presenting of the Kingdom of Heaven as it will exist right up to the end of the age. It is a familiar story. It is again a depiction of “the many” and “the few,” the majority and the minority. I separated the negative parables from the positive ones so that you can see the ratio of the many and the few more clearly. There is a 5 (negative) to 2 (positive) ratio portrayed above. Where have we seen this ratio presented before? It is recorded in Revelation Chapters Two and Three where we find the seven prophetic letters that Jesus wrote to His churches. In those letters He calls five of the seven churches, Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis and Laodicea, to “repent or else”. Only the two remaining churches, Philadelphia and Smyrna, were considered faithful and true and in need of no correction.

This is also a 5 to 2 ratio just as we find depicted in the seven parables above. The percentage ratio may vary slightly as in the parable of the sower (3 out of 4), but the picture will always be that the majority are in error while the minority is on track. There is a warning of great significance here. Do not be deceived by what the multitudes are embracing!

**“AND HE SAID,
“TO WHAT
SHALL WE LIKEN
THE KINGDOM
OF GOD?
OR WITH WHAT
PARABLE
SHALL WE
PICTURE IT?...
AND WITH MANY
SUCH PARABLES HE
SPOKE TO THEM THE
WORD AS THEY WERE
ABLE TO HEAR IT.”**

Mark 4:30-33



**“I WILL OPEN
MY MOUTH
IN PARABLES;
I WILL UTTER THINGS
WHICH
HAVE BEEN
KEPT SECRET
FROM
THE FOUNDATION
OF
THE WORLD.”**

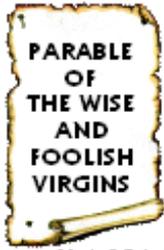
Matthew 13:35

We have only considered seven of Jesus' forty parables pertaining to the Kingdom of God as it presently exists, or will exist on earth. In closing out this chapter I want to encourage you to consider the contents of the remaining parables on your own. I believe several of them, however, are very significant to gaining and holding a proper perspective of what is presently happening in Christendom as well as what lies ahead in the near future. Therefore I will suggest a few of them to you which are needful to gain understanding of the severity of God's judgment in the midst of His own Kingdom.

Jesus' parables are important because they function as absolute litmus tests for sound doctrine. The body of Christ is inundated with all kinds of teachings that will not stand up to the light of what is revealed in these parables. Remember, the parables contain the mysteries, the hidden truths, of the Bible that God has kept secret from the foundation of the world. Therefore the content of them must be given our highest priority. All that we embrace as sound doctrine must be in harmony with the content of the parables. Ask the question, do doctrines such as "once saved, always saved" and "unconditional eternal security" stand in agreement or in opposition to what Jesus has taught in His parables? Are we going to believe the words of men which are the opposite of what Jesus has spoken to us by means of His office as the prophet of God?

**“FOR MOSES TRULY SAID TO THE FATHERS,
“THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU
A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN. HIM YOU
SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU.
AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO WILL
NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED
FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE.”**

Acts 3:22-23



Mat. 25:1-13

**"AND HE SAID,
"TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN
THE KINGDOM OF GOD?
OR WITH WHAT PARABLE
SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...
AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES
HE SPOKE TO THEM THE WORD
AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT."**

Mark 4:30-31,33



What does Jesus say His Kingdom will be like? It is like ten virgins. Virginity is a picture of purity! They were all considered to be virgins! We become spiritual virgins by the new birth and therefore become espoused to Jesus Christ who is the bridegroom to come. Read Paul's words to Corinth in which he expresses his desire to present them as "chaste virgins to one husband, Christ" (2 Cor. 11:1-4). Paul's fear for Corinth (and for us) is that Satan will corrupt our minds from whole hearted and sincere and pure devotion to Christ as the Amplified renders these verses.

We cannot claim to be the bride of Christ and then reject the very parable that speaks of the coming of the bridegroom for His bride. The message of this parable is that half of those espoused to Christ as virgins are going to be left behind at the rapture because they are found to be foolish instead of wise!

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins

25 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 "Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,

4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps;

5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'

7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

8 "And the foolish said to the wise: 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

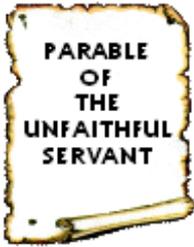
9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.



Luke 12:41-48

**“AND HE SAID,
“TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN
THE KINGDOM OF GOD?
OR WITH WHAT PARABLE
SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...
AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES
HE SPOKE TO THEM THE WORD
AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT.”**

Mark 4:30-31,33



This parable should be sufficient witness against the heresy of “once saved, always saved.” Here is one of the Master’s servants, a believer, who ends up getting his portion with the unbelievers.

Two scenarios are pictured for the same servant. He can be blessed and become ruler over all the Master has, or he can get his portion with the unbelievers, (which proves he is a believer).

Notice that both scenarios are based on how one lives as a servant. We can be considered faithful and end up ruling over all that the Master has, or, if that same servant behaves like the unbeliever, then he will get his portion with the unbeliever!

The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant

41 Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?”

42 And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them* their portion of food in due season?

43 “Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

44 “Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

45 “But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to eat and drink and be drunk,

46 “the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers.

47 “And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48 “But he who did not know, yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.



A servant who is cut in two by the Master and appointed his portion with the unbelievers does not sound like a supportive proof text for the doctrine of “once saved, always saved”, does it? Test all doctrines by the contents of the Kingdom parables!



Mat. 25:14-30

“AND HE SAID, “TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD? OR WITH WHAT PARABLE SHALL WE PICTURE IT?... AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES HE SPOKE TO THEM THE WORD AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT.”

Mark 4:30-31,33



This Kingdom parable drives home the point that our stewardship here on earth, as subjects of the Kingdom of God, is going to impact the degree of our rulership in the eternal Kingdom which is to come. Do not let people fill your head with ideas that everybody is going to be the same in eternity because of God's grace. His grace will get you there, but how you functioned in the Kingdom of God on earth is going to reward you when you get to the heavenly Kingdom.

There is also a fearful negative side to this parable in which we find the “wicked lazy servant” being “cast out into outer darkness” because of his unfaithfulness as a servant in the Kingdom. I have said before that God is after fruit in His Kingdom. Unfruitful branches, according to Jesus, are cast into the fire and burned (John 15:5-8). That does not sound like a confirmation of “once saved, always saved,” does it?

The Parable of the Talents

14 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

15 “And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

16 “Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

17 “And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.

18 “But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

19 “After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20 “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’

21 “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

22 “He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’

23 “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

24 “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

25 ‘And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

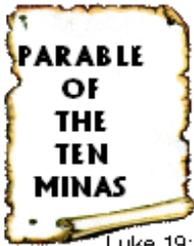
26 “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.

27 ‘Therefore you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

28 “Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

29 ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

30 ‘And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’



Luke 19:11-27

**"AND HE SAID,
"TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN
THE KINGDOM OF GOD?
OR WITH WHAT PARABLE
SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...
AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES
HE SPOKE TO THEM THE WORD
AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT."**

Mark 4:30-31,33



This is the sister parable to the parable of the talents. There are noteworthy distinctions that can be made between them if you will compare them carefully. However, I want to draw your attention to the other information that is contained in this parable pertaining to the Kingdom of God. In Verse 14 the citizens hated the nobleman who went off to receive the Kingdom. Notice also their declaration, "we will not have this man to reign over us." These are rebels in the Kingdom of God who insist on running the show. No king is going to rule over their lives! This is a heart confession from those who have entered by a wide gate and intend to walk in a broad way as born-again believers. God calls them citizens and they hate Him and will not allow Him to reign over them. What are the consequences for these declarations? Read the very last verse of this parable. Does this support the doctrine of "once saved, always saved?" Hardly!

The Parable of the Minas²¹

11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'

14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be

called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'

17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

18 "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.'

19 "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

20 "And another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.'

21 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

22 "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.'

23 "Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?"

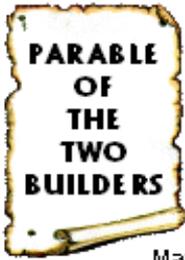
24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.'

25 ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.'

27 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'





**“AND HE SAID,
 “TO WHAT SHALL WE LIKEN
 THE KINGDOM OF GOD?
 OR WITH WHAT PARABLE
 SHALL WE PICTURE IT?...
 AND WITH MANY SUCH PARABLES HE
 SPOKE TO THEM THE WORD
 AS THEY WERE ABLE TO HEAR IT.”**
 Mark 4:30-31,33



Mat. 7:17-29

Two Ways of Life

This will be the last parable that we shall consider. I believe it will suffice as a capstone to all that is written in the parables. We find this parable of the two builders in the final verses Chapter 7 of Matthew in which Jesus is calling us to a narrow gate and a difficult way that few will find. All that follows this mandate from Jesus leads up to this parable of the two builders. We are God's house. (Heb. 3:6), we are God's building (1 Cor. 3:9). Paul warns us in these passages from Corinthians “no other foundation can be laid...” and that we must “take heed how we build on it...” If we build on the rock of Jesus' sayings such as we find in Matthew 5-7, or as we find in His 40 Kingdom parables, we will be a wise man, and our house will stand. However, build your spiritual house with doctrines contrary to His sayings, and your house will fall, and its fall will be great!

13 ^R“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

14 ^R“Because narrow is the gate and ^Tdifficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. *confined*

15 ^R“Beware of false prophets, ^Rwho come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

16 ^R“You will know them by their fruits. ^RDo men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

17 “Even so, ^Revery good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. Mat. 12:33

18 “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

19 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

20 “Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who ^Rdoes the will of My Father in heaven.

22 “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we ^Rnot prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ Num. 24:4

23 “And ^Rthen I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; ^Rdepart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Parable of the Two Builders-

24 “Therefore whoever ~~hears~~ hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

25 “and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

26 “Now everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

27 “and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Let me give you one more parable about builders. I do not know who is the author of it, but in light of the parable of the two builders we just considered, ponder this one as well:

The Builder

There was a man who was an efficient builder. He had worked for years in a large company and had reached the age of retirement. His employer asked him to build one more house; it was to be his last commission.

The builder took the job, but his heart was not involved. He used inferior materials, timber was poor, and he failed to see the many things that should have been clear to him had he shown even his normal interest in the work.

When the house was eventually finished, his employer came to him and said, "The house is yours, here is the key, it is a present from me!" The builder immediately regretted that he had not used the best materials and engaged the most capable workers. If only he had known that the house was for him . . .

We as God's children, are building our own spiritual houses. The faithful God provides us with the best materials. What do we use? Let us be mindful of the many gifts of grace of our Lord. Let us ensure that our hearts participate in everything we do. Not one of us builds a house in eternity for someone else; it is always for ourselves.

Listen to Paul's admonition to us all:



"ACCORDING TO THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH WAS GIVEN TO ME, AS A WISE MASTER BUILDER I HAVE LAID THE FOUNDATION, AND ANOTHER BUILDS ON IT... NOW IF ANYONE BUILDS ON THIS FOUNDATION WITH GOLD, SILVER, PRECIOUS STONES (OR) WOOD, HAY STRAW, EACH ONE'S WORK WILL BECOME MANIFEST...THE FIRE WILL TEST EACH ONE'S WORK, OF WHAT SORT IT IS. IF ANYONE'S WORK WHICH HE HAS BUILT ON IT ENDURES, HE WILL RECEIVE A REWARD. IF ANYONE'S WORK IS BURNED, HE WILL SUFFER LOSS, BUT HE HIMSELF WILL BE SAVED, YET SO AS THROUGH FIRE."

1 Cor. 3:10-15

CHAPTER FIVE

“KINGDOM SALVATION”

“THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AS IF A MAN SHOULD SCATTER SEED ON THE GROUND, AND SHOULD SLEEP BY NIGHT AND RISE UP BY DAY, AND THE SEED SHOULD SPROUT AND GROW, HE HIMSELF DOES NOT KNOW HOW.



FOR THE EARTH YIELDS CROPS BY ITSELF; FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE HEAD, AFTER THAT THE FULL GRAIN IN THE HEAD. BUT WHEN THE GRAIN RIPENS, IMMEDIATELY HE PUTS IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST HAS COME.”

Mark 4:26-29

We will consider one more Kingdom parable to bring forth the principles at work that produce what I call “Kingdom salvation.” Read carefully this parable, ever keeping in mind that it is a depiction of what is expected to take place in the Kingdom of God on earth.

First of all note that this is yet another parable using “seeds” to describe the Kingdom of God. Our last chapter dealt with the seeds sown in the parable of the sower, with the seeds sown in the wheat and the tares, and with a seed sown in the parable of the mustard seed. Now we have a fourth parable using the planting of seeds to portray what the Kingdom of God will be like on earth. However, this parable goes way beyond just the planting of the seed for it culminates in an expected harvest.

The message Jesus is conveying in this fourth parable about seeds is that the Kingdom of God is to develop progressively from seed to harvest. Note the progression that comes forth from the initial act of planting the seed in the ground



“THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AS IF A MAN SHOULD SCATTER SEED ON THE GROUND, AND SHOULD SLEEP BY NIGHT AND RISE UP BY DAY, AND THE SEED SHOULD SPROUT AND GROW, HE HIMSELF DOES NOT KNOW HOW.	P R O G R E S S I V E	THE SEED IS PLANTED...	FOR THE EARTH YIELDS CROPS BY ITSELF; FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE HEAD, AFTER THAT THE FULL GRAIN IN THE HEAD. BUT WHEN THE GRAIN RIPENS, IMMEDIATELY HE PUTS IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST HAS COME.” <small>Mark 4:26-29</small>
		SPROUTS AND GROWS...	
		FIRST THE BLADE APPEARS...	
		THEN THE HEAD APPEARS...	
		THEN THE FULL GRAIN APPEARS...	
THEN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST HAS COME...			

We begin with the planting of a seed, then progressively growth takes place from “the blade, to the head, to the full ripened grain.” When that which was first planted as a seed grows to full maturity, then it is ready to be harvested.

<p>“THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AS IF A MAN SHOULD SCATTER SEED ON THE GROUND, AND SHOULD SLEEP BY NIGHT AND RISE UP BY DAY, AND THE SEED SHOULD SPROUT AND GROW, HE HIMSELF DOES NOT KNOW HOW.</p>	<p>P R O G R E S S I V E</p>	<p>THE SEED IS PLANTED...</p>	<p>FOR THE EARTH YIELDS CROPS BY ITSELF; FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE HEAD, AFTER THAT THE FULL GRAIN IN THE HEAD. BUT WHEN THE GRAIN RIPENS, IMMEDIATELY HE PUTS IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST HAS COME.” Mark 4:26-29</p>
		<p>SPROUTS AND GROWS...</p>	
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		<p>THEN THE FULL GRAIN APPEARS...</p>	
<p>THEN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST HAS COME...</p>			

This is an illustration Jesus is using to portray what the Kingdom of God is like and what salvation in that Kingdom is to produce.

The parable of the sower revealed where the seed of the Kingdom was initially sown. It was sown in the heart of man. However, we were warned that only one out of the four hearts in which the word of the Kingdom was sown would bring forth fruit to fruition. Hear this: if the plant doesn’t progressively grow up from “the blade, to the head, and to the full grain,” it can’t bring forth any fruit to harvest! The parable of the sower is a depiction of the new birth in which God’s revelation of the gospel of the Kingdom of God is planted in the hearts of man (“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”). Consider now how the apostle Peter describes the act of being born again:



**“HAVING BEEN BORN AGAIN,
NOT OF CORRUPTIBLE SEED, BUT INCORRUPTIBLE,
THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD
WHICH LIVES AND ABIDES FOREVER...
NOW THIS IS THE WORD
BY WHICH THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED TO YOU....
AS NEWBORN BABES,
DESIRE THE PURE MILK OF THE WORD,
THAT YOU MAY GROW THEREBY...”**

1 Pet. 1:23-25, 2:2

Peter likens the new birth, as does the parable of the sower, to the seed of God’s Word being sown in the heart producing the new birth. Peter also immediately calls those who have been born again to “desire the pure milk of the Word that they may grow thereby.” God expects growth from the seed! The new birth is the beginning of the process that produces growth. The parable of the growing seed tells us this is what happens to the seed that is planted. It begins to progressively grow up. The planting of the seed is but **THE BEGINNING** of God’s intention for being planted in the first place. The new birth is the **INITIAL** act which occurs when the Word of the Kingdom enters the heart. There is more to come and more expected of the seed that has been planted!

“HAVING BEEN BORN AGAIN, NOT OF CORRUPTIBLE SEED, BUT INCORRUPTIBLE, THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD WHICH LIVES AND ABIDES FOREVER... NOW THIS IS THE WORD BY WHICH THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED TO YOU.... AS NEWBORN BABES, DESIRE THE PURE MILK OF THE WORD, THAT YOU MAY GROW THEREBY...”

1Pet. 1:23-25, 2:2

P R O G R E S S I V E	THE SEED IS PLANTED...	FOR THE EARTH YIELDS CROPS BY ITSELF; FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE HEAD, AFTER THAT THE FULL GRAIN IN THE HEAD. BUT WHEN THE GRAIN RIPENS, IMMEDIATELY HE PUTS IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST HAS COME." <small>Mark 4:26-29</small>
	SPROUTS AND GROWS...	
	FIRST THE BLADE APPEARS...	
	THEN THE HEAD APPEARS...	
	THEN THE FULL GRAIN APPEARS...	
	THEN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST HAS COME...	

What does God expect from the planting of the seed? He expects growth until the time of harvest. Peter expresses the need for the new-born believer to grow once the “incorruptible seed” of God’s Word has been implanted in the heart. This parable of Jesus was given to also depict expected growth from “seed to harvest” in the life of the believer.

The Kingdom of God itself, as well as the salvation of God in that Kingdom, follows the pattern of the parable of the growing seed. Beginning with a planted seed, it progressively grows and matures, and eventually the time comes for it to be harvested. This is a progression from seed to harvest. It is one story. It is a picture of the Kingdom of God and of salvation in that Kingdom. We are going to examine the progression that is destined to take place in the Kingdom of God and likewise the progression that is to take place in the revealed plan of God’s salvation for man. God’s Kingdom is progressive, and salvation in that Kingdom is also progressive.

By the time that you reach the end of this chapter I believe you will fully understand this chart. → It depicts the progressiveness of salvation in God’s Kingdom as the Word of God presents it.

INTERNAL PAST	THE SEED IS PLANTED...	SALVATION TO THE SPIRIT “WHAT HAS HAPPENED”
	SPROUTS AND GROWS...	
EXTERNAL PRESENT	FIRST THE BLADE APPEARS...	
	THEN THE HEAD APPEARS...	SALVATION TO THE SOUL “WHAT IS HAPPENING”
	THEN THE FULL GRAIN APPEARS...	
ETERNAL FUTURE	THEN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST HAS COME...	SALVATION TO THE BODY “WHAT WILL HAPPEN”

I intend to fully show you that this is what the Scripture teaches, but I must warn, it is certainly not what the wide-gate and broad-way gospel teaches.

We have already seen that the prerequisite of repentance has been removed from the wide-gate gospel. We have also seen that the real good news of the Kingdom of God has been deleted from the broad-way gospel. We must now consider that the basic message of salvation itself has also been altered to fit the wide gate and broad way by which many have entered. They may truly believe that this is the way of life; but in reality, as Jesus warned, it is the way that leads to destruction.

One of the great identifying marks of the erroneous wide-gate and broad-way gospel is the relegating of all aspects of salvation totally to past events in the life of the believer. With reference to Jesus' words on the cross, "It is finished!," the broad way places every aspect of salvation under this banner. This is error and, as we shall see, it stands in total opposition to the fullness of what the Word of God reveals. Over the last 24 years of ministry, I have come to this observation of the wide-gate and broad-way gospel:

THE WORD OF GOD IS BEING PERVERTED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT EVERYTHING IS AUTOMATICALLY AND IRREVERSIBLY PLACED IN THE BELIEVER'S SPIRITUAL WIN COLUMN RIGHT FROM THE NEW BIRTH. THEREFORE SALVATION IS VIEWED FROM A PAST TENSE PERSPECTIVE, FROM A POSSESSIVE POSITION IN WHICH NOTHING OF VALUE LIES IN FRONT OF US.



Paul's own testimony, found in Philippians Chapter 3, refutes such a past-tense hypothesis of Christianity:

"NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON, THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME.

BRETHREN, I DO NOT COUNT MYSELF TO HAVE APPREHENDED; BUT ONE THING I DO, FORGETTING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND AND REACHING FORWARD TO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE AHEAD, I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. THEREFORE LET US, AS MANY AS ARE MATURE, HAVE THIS MIND...

TO THE DEGREE THAT WE HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, LET US WALK..."

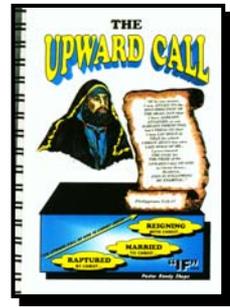
Phil. 3:12-16 excerpts

Paul does not speak as though nothing of value lay in front of him, does he? Neither does he speak as though he "got it all when he got saved." He does not boast of "being already perfected" or having "already attained" as we hear in the wide-gate and broad-way gospel. Look carefully at these passages and you will see Paul speaks of the past, present and future aspects of the Christian life. He does not relegate everything to past events such as the new birth. His goal is to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of him. Paul speaks these words 23 years after his conversion!

**"NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED,
OR AM ALREADY PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON,
THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST
JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME.**

**BRETHREN, I DO NOT COUNT MYSELF TO HAVE
APPREHENDED; BUT ONE THING I DO, FORGETTING THOSE
THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND AND REACHING FORWARD TO
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CHRIST JESUS. THEREFORE LET US, AS MANY AS ARE
MATURE, HAVE THIS MIND...TO THE DEGREE THAT WE
HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, LET US WALK..."**

Phil. 3:12-16 excerpts



If the above has never been taught to you then I am going to recommend a booklet I wrote on that subject. Paul's goals are to be our goals.

At the risk of being redundant, consider again this observation that I have surmised over the years:

**THE WORD OF GOD IS BEING PERVERTED IN SUCH A MANNER
THAT EVERYTHING IS AUTOMATICALLY AND IRREVERSIBLY
PLACED IN THE BELIEVER'S SPIRITUAL WIN COLUMN RIGHT
FROM THE NEW BIRTH. THEREFORE SALVATION IS VIEWED FROM
A PAST TENSE PERSPECTIVE, FROM A POSSESSIVE POSITION IN
WHICH NOTHING OF VALUE LIES IN FRONT OF US.**

To achieve such a warped and twisted theological position requires either adding to God's Word or taking away from what it says. God warns against such maneuvers both in the Old and the New Testament:



We see that both of God's Covenant people, the Jew and the Church, have been warned about tampering with what is written in God's Word.

Let us ponder together the Old Covenant passage pertaining to adding to or taking away from the contents of God's Word. I choose to elaborate on this passage simply because it contains the reason why God does not want us to add to or take away from His written Word.

"YOU SHALL NOT ADD TO THE WORD WHICH I HAVE COMMANDED YOU, NOR TAKE ANYTHING FROM IT, THAT YOU MAY KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD WHICH I COMMAND YOU." Deut. 4:2

If we add to or take away from what God has written in His Word, we are unable to keep His commandments. The chart below portrays what the wide-gate and broad-way gospel has added to and taken away from God's Word:

"YOU SHALL NOT ADD TO THE WORD WHICH I COMMAND YOU, NOR TAKE ANYTHING FROM IT THAT YOU MAY KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD WHICH I HAVE COMMANDED YOU."
Deut. 4:2

WHAT HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY:	WHAT HAS BEEN ADDED TO:
1. THE MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM: "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS"	1. THE MESSAGE OF ETERNAL LIFE HAS BEEN ADDED UNTO: "I ALREADY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE"
2. THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM: "YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN"	2. THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION HAS BEEN ADDED UNTO: "I AM ALREADY SAVED"

So far, the contents of this book has centered upon elaborating on what the wide-gate and broad-way gospel has taken away from God's Word. It is the message of repentance and the message of the Kingdom of God. Therefore God's people who endorse this perverted gospel are unable to keep either of these two specific commandments:

"...GOD...COMMANDS ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT."
Acts 17:30

"...SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS..."
Matt. 6:33

If a believer endorses a gospel that takes away what is written about either repentance or the Kingdom of God, then it becomes impossible to keep such commandments of God. Can you see that?

“YOU SHALL NOT ADD TO THE WORD WHICH I HAVE COMMANDED YOU, NOR TAKE ANYTHING FROM IT, THAT YOU MAY KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD WHICH I COMMAND YOU.” Deut. 4:2

The other scenario is just as deadly. If you endorse a gospel that adds to God’s Word then you are in danger of keeping the commandments of men – things added to the Word of God.

Let us expound on this concept. The wide-gate and broad-way gospel teaches salvation as a past-tense completed event. For instance, there are teachers who major in drilling home the point that the born-again believer has already received eternal life. Is that true? Is that really what the Scriptures teach? Does the believer possess eternal life or is it given to the believer in the form of a promise and a hope for the future? This is an enormously important question to answer properly.

Equally emphasized by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel is the emphatic declaration of salvation being a completed task. Is this what the Scriptures teach, or do they present salvation as an on-going progressive action that begins in the spirit, progresses to the soul, and is yet-to-be finalized in the body through the resurrection of the dead? This too is a vitally important question to consider.

Based upon these two erroneous doctrinal teachings of the wide-gate and broad-way gospel, there has emerged the very popular but unscriptural teaching of “once saved, always saved,” or as it is also referred to as “unconditional eternal security.”



Clinging tenaciously to these two false concepts as being the teaching of the Word of God, multitudes of believers are endorsing the “once saved, always saved” concept because of the belief that they already possess eternal life; and if it is eternal, then they can never lose it. It is a doctrine that sounds good, but it is not sound doctrine! These concepts are “sand theology” (Matt.7:26). These are the teachings of man replacing the rock foundational teachings of Christ (Matt. 7:25).

Let us begin to examine what the Scriptures teach about eternal life and salvation.

**“BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES
EVERY WORD SHALL BE ESTABLISHED.”**

2 Cor. 13:1

With this text in mind, that every fact is established in the mouth of two or three witnesses, let us examine the recorded witness that the Scriptures bear pertaining to the subject of when one receives eternal life. There are 15 pertinent passages in the New Testament using the words eternal life and 10 verses using the phrase everlasting life. About half of both categories are repetitive passages which you can (and should) verify for yourself. Let us look at 10 of those passages which convey different aspects and qualifying content that shed light on the subject of when the believer will inherit eternal/everlasting life. You might be in for a shock, for the Scriptures do not convey the likes of what is being presented by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel.

Let us begin with Paul who wrote two-thirds of the New Testament. Let us consider what Paul spoke to Timothy, his “true son in the faith” (1 Tim.1:2). I stress this point about Timothy because Paul, by making such a statement, confirms that Timothy is a born-again believer. In the opening of this epistle Paul calls Timothy “my true son in the faith” (1:2). His closing words in this same epistle to this “man of God” is to “lay hold on eternal life to which you were called” (6:11-12).

1st Witness:

**“ BUT YOU
O MAN OF GOD...
FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT
OF FAITH,
LAY HOLD ON
ETERNAL LIFE,
TO WHICH
YOU WERE ALSO CALLED...”**

1 Tim. 6:11-12

We must ask ourselves why it is that Paul would speak to Timothy, his “true son in the faith”, telling him to “lay hold on eternal life” if he already possessed it, when the wide-gate and broad-way gospel proclaims it takes place at the new birth? Timothy is not only born-again, but he is an apostle and pastoring the church at Ephesus.

As a born-again believer, Timothy is told by Paul to lay hold on eternal life by fighting the good fight of faith just as Paul did (2 Tim. 4:7). Why is this not the message for the born-again believer today? These passages of Paul to Timothy make perfect sense if we realize that the Scripture presents eternal life as a hope and a promise rather than a present possession! Otherwise, Paul's words to Timothy make no sense whatever if he already possessed eternal life as the wide-gate and broad-way gospel claims. There is more.

2nd Witness:

In this very same epistle Paul begins to exhort the believers who are rich to also “lay hold on eternal life.” Notice the reference to the future, “for the time to come” that they may lay hold on eternal life. Why, we must again ask, is Paul placing eternal life in the future tense rather than in the past tense as does the wide-gate and broad-way gospel?

**“ ...COMMAND THOSE WHO ARE RICH...
LET THEM DO GOOD, THAT THEY MAY BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS, WILLING TO SHARE, STORING UP FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION FOR THE TIME TO COME, THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE.”**

1 Tim. 6:17-19

Paul gives many more witnesses in his other epistles that eternal life is a future expectation. Let us consider more of what he has to say.

3rd Witness:

**“ ...ACCORDING TO THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT...
IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE WHICH GOD, WHO CANNOT LIE, PROMISED BEFORE TIME BEGAN.”**

Titus 1:1-2

Paul’s definition of hope is in perfect alignment with eternal life being stated as a hope. Paul would not call eternal life a “hope” if it were a present possession.

By the time you reach Paul’s concluding thoughts in this same epistle, he emphatically stresses that we are not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, but rather that we are justified by God’s grace and therefore have become heirs of the hope of eternal life. Notice the phrase here is identical to the one he made earlier in this same epistle.

4th Witness:

“ ...HAVING BEEN JUSTIFIED BY HIS GRACE WE SHOULD BECOME HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.”

Titus 3:7

In Paul’s epistle to Titus, he opens by referring to eternal life as (1) a future hope and (2) as a promise.

Is not a promise different from a possession? We possess the promise, not what is in it.

Paul defines hope for us as:

“FOR WE ARE SAVED IN THIS HOPE, BUT HOPE THAT IS SEEN IS NOT HOPE; FOR WHY DOES ONE STILL HOPE FOR WHAT HE SEES? BUT IF WE HOPE FOR WHAT WE DO NOT SEE, THEN WE EAGERLY WAIT FOR IT WITH PERSEVERANCE.”

Rom. 8:24-25

A clear distinction in this passage is that he is speaking of those who “have been justified by His grace.” In other words, they are believers.

Note Paul is careful to state that they are “heirs” of, not possessors of, eternal life. What is an heir?

It is one who will become a possessor but is not presently.

5th Witness:

**“BUT NOW HAVING BEEN
SET FREE FROM SIN, AND
HAVING BECOME SLAVES
OF GOD, YOU HAVE YOUR
FRUIT TO HOLINESS,
AND THE END,
EVERLASTING
LIFE.**

**FOR THE WAGES
OF SIN IS DEATH,
BUT THE GIFT OF GOD
IS ETERNAL LIFE
IN CHRIST JESUS
OUR LORD.”**

Rom. 6:22-23

Let us consider now what Paul spoke to the believers in his epistle to the Romans pertaining to eternal life.

← This is a classic case in which the wide-gate and broad-way gospel misuses the Word of God in subtle ways. To make the point, read these two verses together. Now just read Verse 23 apart from Verse 22. There is nothing wrong with what is stated in Verse 23, but the connecting word “for” tells you that it is a continuing thought of the Verse above it (22).

The wide-gate and broad-way gospel separates Verse 22 from Verse 23 even though it begins with the connecting word “for.” When this is done, an isolated “proof text” is used for the present possession of the gift of eternal life. However, Verse 22 tells us specifically **WHEN** “everlasting life” will be received as a gift from God: “and the end, everlasting life.”

What does Paul place as the emphasis for “now”? It is in Verse 22 which leads into Verse 23. He exhorts the believer that, having been set free from sin (by the new birth), he is “now” to become a slave of God who brings forth the fruit of holiness in this present life. Then at “the end, everlasting life” will be his. This is a call to discipleship. What Paul presents above is the “full gospel.” He states what should be the present emphasis of a believer. It is to be a willing bond slave of Jesus Christ who has set him free from the bondage of sin! The present emphasis is to be that of bringing forth fruits of holiness (Hagimos-sanctification). The wide-gate and broad-way gospel has severed this confronting present priority of holiness in favor of giving a present emphasis to the comforting “gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus.” This is separating the conditions from the promise, is it not? Having been set free from sin, we are to live in this life as believers fulfilling God’s present call of holiness unto the Lord with a visionary eye upon the end, everlasting life!

Watch carefully for the presentation and use of this passage of Scripture (Rom. 6:23) in tracts and preaching. I will dare say that you will rarely find it kept in context with the connecting verse which states that eternal life comes at the end, not in the beginning, as the wide-gate and broad-way gospel conveys. I cannot overstress to you the importance of considering Scripture in context!

6th Witness:

**“...HE WHO SOWS TO
THE SPIRIT**

**WILL OF THE
SPIRIT REAP
EVERLASTING
LIFE.**

**AND LET US NOT
GROW WEARY...**

**IN DUE
SEASON WE
SHALL REAP
IF WE DO NOT LOSE
HEART.”**

Gal. 6:8-9

The Sixth Chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians is written to the brethren (6:1). The exhortation of Paul is “let us (the believers) not grow weary.” He includes himself in this picture of those who will “reap in due season if we do not lose heart.” What will they reap in due season?

The context tells us: those who sow to the Spirit will reap of the Spirit everlasting life. Paul does not convey to the Galatians that they have already reaped eternal life, does he?

Conversely, Paul warns believers not to be deceived, for if they sow to the flesh they will reap of their flesh corruption (Gal. 6:7-8).

7th Witness:

**“ ...HE IS THE MEDIATOR OF
THE NEW COVENANT BY
MEANS OF DEATH...THAT
THOSE WHO ARE CALLED
MAY RECEIVE**

**THE PROMISE
OF THE
ETERNAL
INHERITANCE. ”**

Hebrews 9:15

If Paul authored the Book of Hebrews (which I believe he did), then again we find him carefully referring to our eternal inheritance as being a promise rather than a present possession. If Paul did not author this epistle, then whoever did is preaching exactly what Paul taught pertaining to eternal life, namely, that it is a promise rather than a possession.



**“BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES
EVERY WORD SHALL BE ESTABLISHED.”**

2 Cor. 13:1

We have considered seven Scriptures in five epistles of Paul that bear witness that eternal life comes at the end and not the beginning.

Paul is consistent in his preaching to all the churches. There is no room for misinterpretation when his teaching spans five different epistles written at different times. Paul taught that eternal life is a hope and a promise for the future.

Among those who taught that eternal life is a future possession and not a present one was Jesus Himself. May I remind you that Acts 3:22-23 warns that "Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And...every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." Let us consider some very precise words that Jesus spoke pertaining to eternal life:

8th Witness:

**"ASSUREDLY, I SAY UNTO YOU,
THERE IS NO ONE WHO HAS LEFT
HOUSE OR BROTHERS OR SISTERS
OR FATHER OR MOTHER OR WIFE
OR CHILDREN OR LANDS, FOR MY
SAKE AND THE GOSPEL'S,
WHO SHALL NOT RECEIVE
A HUNDREDFOLD NOW
IN THIS TIME --
HOUSES AND BROTHERS AND
SISTERS AND MOTHERS AND
CHILDREN AND LANDS,
WITH PERSECUTIONS -
AND
IN THE AGE TO COME,
ETERNAL LIFE."**

Mark 10:29-30



Just as Paul did in Romans 6:22-23, Jesus, in these passages, states the inheritance for the present and the future. What will the believer receive "in this time?" Jesus said it would be "houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions." That is how He described the Christian life "in this time." Then He tells us what will be received by the believer "in the age to come." It is eternal life! Again, we must see that what is being said by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel is not in agreement with what Jesus says. Jesus, who is the Word of God, the one who commissioned Paul to write two-thirds of the New Testament epistles, says in essence, as does Paul, that eternal life is a promise and a hope for "the age to come." Nowhere does either Jesus or Paul present eternal life as a present possession. It is a gift, a free gift, but it is given to the "heirs of the hope of eternal life."

Clearly we need to deal with this issue of when a believer receives eternal life as a possession. Scripture emphatically tells us it is a hope and a promise for the future. Let us consider two more witnesses.

Let us now consider two other apostles who bear the same confirming witness as Paul and Jesus that eternal life is a hope and a promise for the future rather than a present possession.

9th Witness:

“BUT YOU, BELOVED, BUILDING YOURSELVES UP ON YOUR MOST HOLY FAITH, PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT, KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD, LOOKING FOR THE MERCY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

UNTO ETERNAL LIFE.”

Jude 20-21

Even in this brief epistle by the apostle Jude, we find him exhorting believers that eternal life is something we are looking forward to receiving rather than it being a present possession.

10th Witness:

“AND THIS IS THE PROMISE THAT HE HAS PROMISED US -- ETERNAL LIFE.

THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU CONCERNING THOSE WHO TRY TO DECEIVE YOU.”

1 Jn. 2:25-26

Our last witness is the apostle John. Note that he also confirms that eternal life is a promise that God has given us rather than a present possession. Notice that, in context, he is warning against those who would “try to deceive you.” I believe this is a prophetic forewarning by the apostle John of what was going to happen to the doctrine of eternal life.

Let us add to this verse from Chapter Two of John's epistle in which he states eternal life to be a promise, this verse found in the Fifth Chapter of the same epistle:

“...AND GOD HAS GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. HE WHO HAS THE SON HAS THE LIFE, HE WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE SON OF GOD DOES NOT HAVE LIFE. THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU...THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND THAT YOU MAY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD.”

1 Jn. 5:11-13

Here in 1John 5:11-13 is a Scripture that appears to convey that eternal life is a present possession. However, it must be isolated to do so. John has already told us that eternal life is a promise. In spite of all the other verses that consistently call eternal life a future hope and a promise, it is this verse that is singled out and used by those who wish to “prove” that eternal life is a present possession. The other verses are merely ignored.

**"AND THIS IS
THE PROMISE THAT HE
HAS PROMISED US --
ETERNAL LIFE.**

**THESE THINGS I HAVE
WRITTEN TO YOU
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**"...AND GOD HAS GIVEN US
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AND THAT YOU MAY CONTINUE
TO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF
THE SON OF GOD."**

1 Jn. 5:11-13

We appear to have a conflict of understanding between these two passages. Is it logical for John, having stated in Chapter Two of this epistle that eternal life is a promise, to change his mind in Chapter Five and now make it a present possession? No, this is not logical reasoning.

Personally I find it helpful to remind myself, as well as God's people, of this warning Harold Horton gives pertaining to the misleading habit of isolating a verse of Scripture:

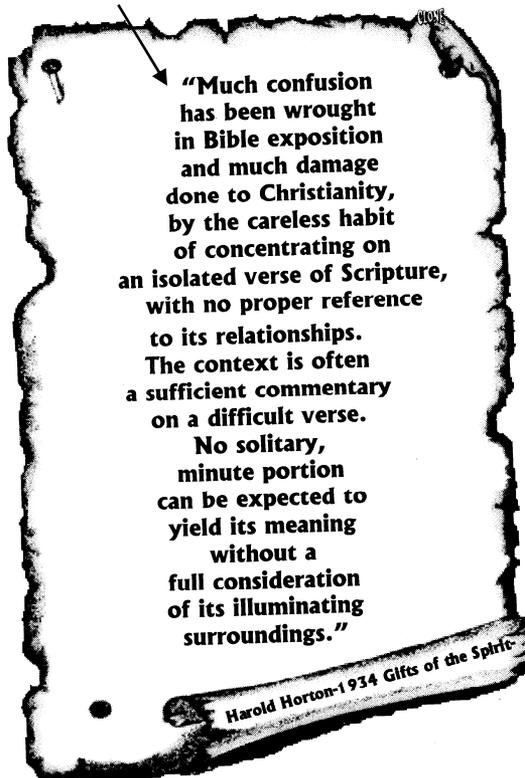
Let us take time to consider this verse which appears to say that eternal life is indeed a past/present possession.

John has already aligned his theology with the words of Paul, Jude, and Jesus.

His epistle opens with a confirmation that eternal life is a promise (2:25).

He has already established that fact.

It does not stand to reason that by Chapter Five he has changed his mind to a present possessive position on eternal life. What is John expressing?



**"...AND GOD HAS GIVEN US
ETERNAL LIFE,
AND THIS LIFE
IS IN HIS SON.**

**HE WHO HAS THE SON HAS THE
LIFE, HE
WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE SON
OF GOD DOES NOT HAVE LIFE.
THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN
TO YOU... THAT YOU MAY
KNOW THAT YOU HAVE
ETERNAL LIFE, AND THAT YOU
MAY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN
THE NAME OF THE SON OF
GOD."**

1 Jn. 5:11-13

First of all, note that this verse does not say "God has given us eternal life" - period, but rather the sentence goes on to clarify what John means by this statement. He adds, "and this life is in His Son." What does that mean? Eternal life is still a promise in John's theology. He is not contradicting what he has said previously in Chapter Two.

To have the Son means we have the promise of eternal life abiding in us in the in-dwelling presence of Jesus Christ.

Where you find eternal life stated in a possessive way, you will also find following it a phrase stating in some form or another that Christ abides in us. Here is an example:

"...CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY." Col. 1:27

Jesus is the HOPE of glory that abides in us! In Titus 2:13 Paul exhorts the believer to be looking for the appearance of "the blessed HOPE." Why is eternal life presented as a hope and a promise? Because Jesus is "THE HOPE OF GLORY--THE BLESSED HOPE." and all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus (2nd Cor.1:20). God has not given us eternal life as a possessive gift apart from the inward presence of His Son. Jesus said of Himself "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (Jn.11:25). If we indeed already possess eternal life, then why must we still die? Eternal life cannot die, can it? We die because eternal life is a promise for the afterlife, not for this present life. What is behind the dogma of the broad-way proclamation of presently possessing eternal life is the false doctrine of "once saved always saved." The argument goes "Eternal life is eternal, and I have that which is eternal." No, you have a promise and a hope of eternal life according to the Scriptures! Eternal life is not presented in Scripture as a present possessive gift, but rather as an intimate relationship and fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ:

**"...THAT HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO AS MANY AS
YOU HAVE GIVEN HIM. AND THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE,
THAT THEY MAY KNOW YOU, THE ONLY TRUE GOD,
AND JESUS CHRIST WHOM YOU HAVE SENT."**

Jn. 17:2-3

Why isn't this explanation of eternal life the one being proclaimed? Because the wide-gate and broad-way gospel is a possessive clinging to fragments of the total message by those who extract partial thoughts from the whole to support unscriptural dogmas.

We must not leave our examination of these verses in First John without commenting on the rest of John's statement; "These things I have written to you that you may know that you have eternal life..." Should we not ask ourselves what things has John written to us in order that we may know that we have eternal life? He certainly does not mean by this isolated verse that we know we have eternal life. This is a letter and must be considered in whole. John has written some things that are measurable so that we may know whether the life of Christ abides in us. It is not just to verbalize "I believe I have eternal life because this verse says so." Rather John has written some specific things in this epistle that are practical, observable and measurable evidence that Christ abides within the professing believer. For example John records:

**"WHOEVER HATES HIS BROTHER IS A MURDERER,
AND YOU KNOW THAT NO MURDERER
HAS ETERNAL LIFE ABIDING IN HIM."
1 Jn. 3:15**

Christ's indwelling presence will not abide in the heart of the hateful!

Here are some of the measurable things John wrote in his epistle by which you may know that you have eternal life abiding within you:

**"THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU THAT YOU
MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE."**

<p>"...LET US NOT LOVE IN WORD OR IN TONGUE, BUT IN DEED AND IN TRUTH. AND BY THIS WE KNOW THAT WE ARE OF THE TRUTH..." 1 Jn. 3:18-19</p>	<p>"NOW BY THIS WE KNOW THAT WE KNOW HIM, IF WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. HE WHO SAYS "I KNOW HIM," AND DOES NOT KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, IS A LIAR, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN HIM. BUT WHOEVER KEEPS HIS WORD, TRULY THE LOVE OF GOD IS PERFECTED IN HIM.</p>
<p>"...BY THIS WE KNOW THAT WE LOVE THE CHILDREN OF GOD, WHEN WE LOVE GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS..." 1 Jn. 5:1-2</p>	<p>BY THIS WE KNOW THAT WE ARE IN HIM." 1 Jn. 2:3-5</p>
<p>"WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH TO LIFE, BECAUSE WE LOVE THE BRETHREN..." 1 Jn. 3:14</p>	

We have examined the consistent and repetitious evidence for eternal life being a hope and a promise rather than, as the wide-gate and broad-way gospel proclaims, a present possession.

We considered the teachings of Paul, Jude, John and even Jesus Himself.

Eternal life is consistently presented as a hope and a promise for the life which is to come, not a present possession that a believer has already received. That hope and promise given to us by the indwelling presence of Christ. It is not a gift that can be separated from Christ's presence. I possess the hope of eternal life as long as the indwelling presence of Christ abides in me. He will not abide in the heart of one who hates his brother, will He? Consider what Jesus states as the conditions for His indwelling presence and, that of His Father within a believer:

"HE WHO HAS MY COMMANDMENTS AND KEEPS THEM, IT IS HE WHO LOVES ME AND HE WHO LOVES ME WILL BE LOVED BY MY FATHER, AND I WILL LOVE HIM AND MANIFEST MYSELF TO HIM...IF ANYONE LOVES ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORD; AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM, AND WE WILL COME TO HIM AND MAKE OUR HOME WITH HIM."

John 14:20-23 excerpts

Why is it that these plain conditions Jesus states as necessary for the ongoing abiding presence of Himself and His Father are not taught by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel? Rather we have a dogmatic clinging to the possession of the free gift of eternal life that can never be lost regardless of how the believer lives. This kind of "gospel" is devoid of the true meaning of eternal life:

"...THAT HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO AS MANY AS YOU HAVE GIVEN HIM. AND THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE, THAT THEY MAY KNOW YOU, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, AND JESUS CHRIST WHOM YOU HAVE SENT." Jn. 17:2-3

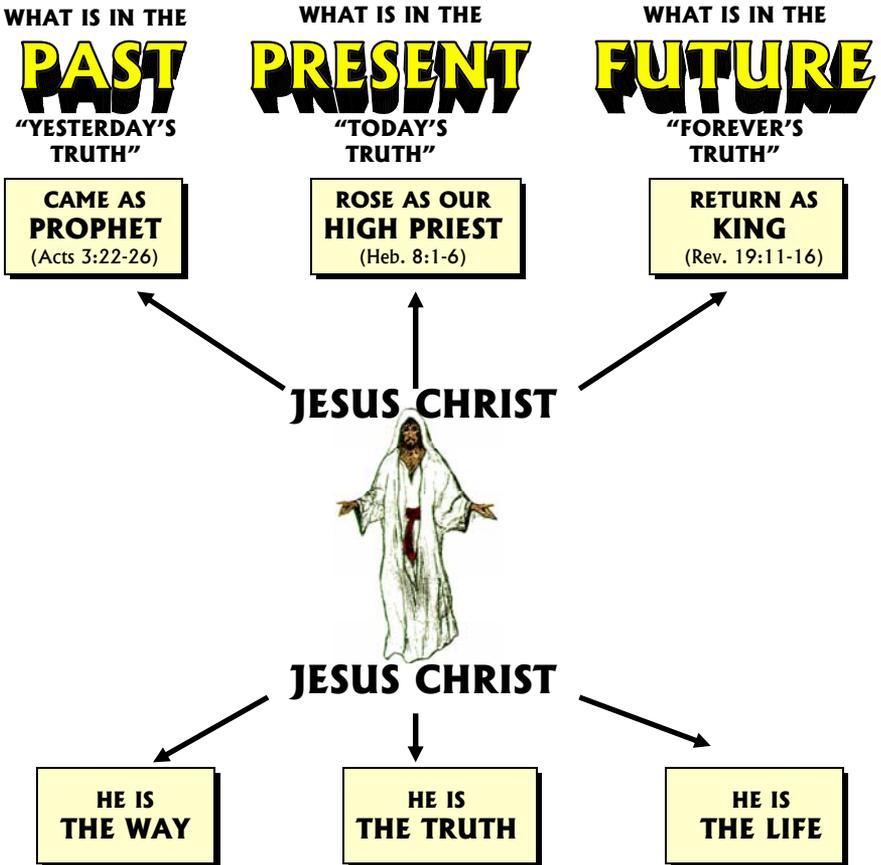
Let us now begin to examine the second premise upon which the wide-gate and broad-way gospel is built, that of "I am already saved."



We cannot relegate all passages of Scripture that deal with salvation to a past-tense position. Salvation spans the past, present and the future. Let us examine the validity of that statement by examining what the Scriptures teach about salvation.

**“JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME
 YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER.
 DO NOT BE CARRIED ABOUT WITH VARIOUS AND STRANGE DOCTRINES.”**
 Heb.13:8-9

In light of various strange doctrines, such as the wide-gate and broad-way gospel which teaches that all aspects of salvation were received at the new birth – a past experience, God’s Word reminds us that Jesus is the same in three aspects, **YESTERDAY**(what is past) **TODAY** (what is present) and **FOREVER** (what is in the future). Based on the above Scripture, I would suggest to you that the identifying mark of sound doctrine pertaining to salvation will cover all three of these aspects: past, present, and future.



Neither of these two illustrations of Jesus can be relegated to “yesterday’s truth.” He is the same person, but has three different offices and functions which govern the past, present and future. Likewise all aspects of salvation cannot be placed under “yesterday’s truth” as the wide-gate and broad-way gospel seeks to do. All aspects will not doctrinally fit under one banner. Let us consider why this is so.

Just as Jesus has a progressive trinity of titles such as Prophet, Priest and King, and The Way, The Truth and The Life, God has designed man to be a triune being comprised of:

SPIRIT

THE HEART
(Hebrew is Leb- "center")
OF MAN

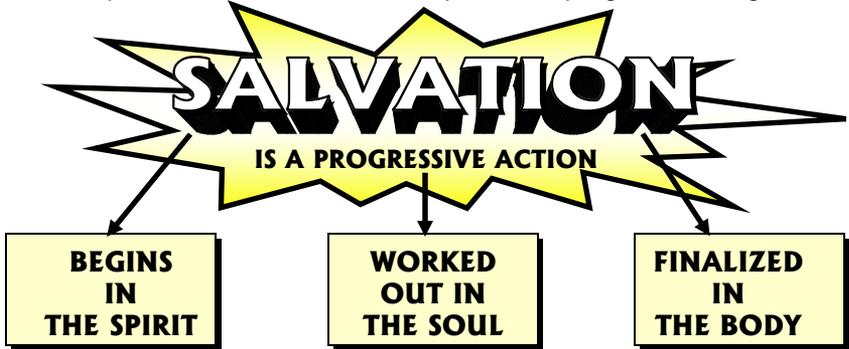
SOUL

**THE MIND, WILL,
AND EMOTIONS
OF MAN**

BODY

**THE PHYSICAL
OUTWARD
MAN**

Since God's creation of man is a trinity (spirit, soul and body), it requires that salvation of man span three progressive stages:



**WHAT IS THE
PAST
EMPHASIS OF
SALVATION:**



"...UNLESS ONE IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE FLESH IS FLESH, AND THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT. DO NOT MARVEL THAT I SAID TO YOU 'YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.' "
John 3:5-7

**WHAT IS THE
PRESENT
EMPHASIS OF
SALVATION:**



"...RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH - THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS."
1 Pet. 1:9

"...WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING; FOR IT IS GOD WHO WORKS IN YOU ..."
Phil. 2:12-13

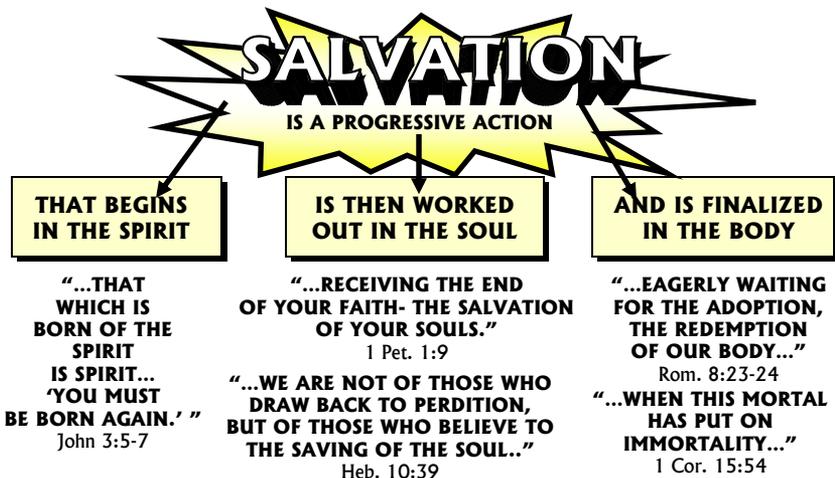
"...WE ARE NOT OF THOSE WHO DRAW BACK TO PERDITION, BUT OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE TO THE SAVING OF THE SOUL."
Heb. 10:39

**WHAT IS THE
FUTURE
EMPHASIS OF
SALVATION:**



"...WE OURSELVES GROAN WITHIN OURSELVES, EAGERLY WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY..."
Rom. 8:23-24

"...WHEN THIS CORRUPTIBLE HAS PUT ON INCORRUPTION, AND THIS MORTAL HAS PUT ON IMMORTALITY, THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS THE SAYING... "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY."
1 Cor. 15:54



I have condensed the illustration from the previous page so that you can ponder just the meaty parts that are in it. This is salvation in God's sight. This is His progressive plan revealed. How can the past, present and future aspects of it be placed under the single banner of "It is finished" when obviously it is not yet completed? What Jesus was exclaiming on the cross was that He had finished His role as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (Jn. 1:29). The sacrifice for sins was finished, never to be repeated. If it was our salvation that was finished, why then would Paul say:

"BEING CONFIDENT OF THIS VERY THING, THAT HE WHO HAS BEGUN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL COMPLETE IT UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST." Phil. 1:6

"...LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US LOOKING UNTO JESUS THE AUTHOR AND THE FINISHER OF OUR FAITH..." Heb. 12:1-2

Peter said, "Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls..." (1st Pet. 1:9). When is your soul saved? Is it at the beginning of your faith or is it at the end of your faith? Why readily endorse phraseology such as "so many souls were saved in the meeting last night" when it should be stated "so many were born of the spirit in the meeting last night." According to the apostle Peter, the soul is saved at the end of our faith, not at the beginning. This saving of the soul is what Paul must have in mind when he says, "work out your own salvation..." and if not, pray tell, what is he saying?

When will our mortal body be saved? Paul tells us that the redemption of our body will take place when this "mortal puts on immortality." Think about that statement! We know that "immortality" is eternal life! When will you put on eternal life (immortality)? According to the apostle Paul, it will take place at the redemption of our body when this mortal puts on immortality. Then, and only then, can a believer say correctly I am totally saved, spirit, soul and body.

Take a careful look at the passages below from two translations, the New King James and the Amplified. Also there is a scan from the Greek Interlinear Bible to show the correctness of these translations. The Old King James incorrectly places these verses in a past verb tense, but this is not correct as the Greek Interlinear Bible will show. Thus “saved” becomes more properly “being saved” and “perish” is more correctly translated as “are perishing” or “being lost.”

“FOR THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS IS FOOLISHNESS TO THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING, BUT TO US WHO ARE BEING SAVED IT IS THE POWER OF GOD.” 1 Cor. 1:18 NKJ

“FOR THE STORY AND MESSAGE OF THE CROSS IS SHEER ABSURDITY AND FOLLY TO THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING AND ON THEIR WAY TO PERDITION, BUT TO US WHO ARE BEING SAVED IT IS THE MANIFESTATION OF THE POWER OF GOD.” 1 Cor. 1:18 Amplified

cross is truly foolishness to	3472	2076	of the	4982	2254	1411	2316	2076
those being lost; but to us	μωρία ἐστὶ, τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις ἡμῖν δύναμις Θεοῦ ἐστὶ.		cross to those truly					
being saved, it is the power	foolishness is;		and being saved to us (the) power of God is.					
of God. 19 For it has been	1125	1063	622	4678			4680	

“The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament Vol. IV page 451 Hendrickson Publishers

It is erroneous to speak of unbelievers in the past tense saying, “They are lost.” They are not lost yet, but rather they are in the process of being lost. When will they be totally and permanently lost? When they die and enter the gates of Hell. For the present, they are in the process of “being lost.” Conversely, it is incorrect to speak of believers in the same past tense saying, “They are saved.” They are not saved yet, but rather they are in the process of being saved. When will they be totally and permanently saved? When they die and enter the gates of Heaven. For the present, they are progressively “being saved.” Is there anything that we can correctly say is already saved? Yes, the spirit is saved. God has planted the seed of His life in our spirit (in our heart – Heb. Leb: the center) by the new birth. Truly the seed of salvation has been planted in our heart. Now it is to sprout and grow.

What is presently being saved? The soul is presently being saved. God’s salvation is progressively being worked into our mind, our will and our emotions as we follow the leading of God’s Holy Spirit.

What is yet to be saved? The body is yet to be saved. We are presently “eagerly waiting for the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23), waiting for the day when “this mortal will put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:54).

Salvation is a complete plan for the complete man; spirit, soul and body. God wants us to know that He intends to “complete the good work He has begun in us” (Phil.1:6). It will be a work completed as we “...look to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith” (Heb.12:2).

SALVATION

4991. σωτηρία sōtēria, so-tay-ree'-ah; fem. of a der. of 4990 as (prop. abstr.) noun; *rescue or safety (phys. or mor.):—deliver, health, salvation, save, saving.* Strong's Concordance

Perhaps it is noteworthy to bring out the fact that “eternal life” is not even specified as part of the definition of the Greek word translated as salvation, and yet many teach that as its sole meaning. If you say “salvation” the first word response people utter is “eternal life.” Look at the diagram below. It is a comparison of Strong’s Concordance definition with what Jesus said He came to preach. It is easy to see the four words found in Strong’s described in Jesus’ objectives for preaching the gospel:

S
A
L
V
A
T
I
O
N

“RESCUE...

“SAFETY...

“HEALTH...

“DELIVERANCE



“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR; HE HAS SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PREACH DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET AT LIBERTY THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

Luke 4:18-19

In light of this definition of salvation we must conclude that when Paul uttered the command to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12), he wasn’t issuing a mandate to “work out your own way to eternal life,” was he? Rather he must have in mind for God’s people to work out what is needful to be “saved” as being rescued, to find safety, health and deliverance in the midst of this present evil age that is under the sway of the wicked one. Paul is talking about “salvation” being worked out in the soul (mind, will and emotions). That is why you will find him admonishing the saints:

“...DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT YOU MAY PROVE WHAT IS THAT GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD.” Rom.12:2

Can you see that this too is a “salvation” verse according to the fuller meaning of the word? Salvation is obtained through a renewed mind.

**S
A
L
V
A
T
I
O
N**

“RESCUE...

“SAFETY...

“HEALTH...

“DELIVERANCE



Consider another use of the word salvation that does not speak of eternal life. James uses the Greek word for salvation to state that “the prayer of faith will save the sick” (Jas.5:14-15). We would not use this verse to convey how to be saved unto eternal life, would we? James is merely speaking of the aspect of salvation that brings health in the physical realm. All verses about salvation do not speak of eternal life.

**SALVATION
BEGINS
IN THE SPIRIT,**

**“...THAT
WHICH IS
BORN OF THE SPIRIT
IS SPIRIT...
“YOU MUST
BE BORN AGAIN.”
John 3:5-7**

**IS WORKED
OUT IN THE SOUL,**

**“...RECEIVING
THE END
OF YOUR FAITH-
THE SALVATION
OF YOUR SOULS...”
1 Pet. 1:9**

**“...WORK OUT
YOUR OWN
SALVATION...”
Phil. 2:12-13**

**IS FINALIZED
IN THE BODY**

**“...EAGERLY WAITING
FOR THE ADOPTION,
THE REDEMPTION,
OF OUR BODY...”
Rom. 8:23-24**

**“...WHEN THIS MORTAL
HAS PUT ON
IMMORTALITY...”
1 Cor. 15:54**

There is more to salvation than the message of eternal life. This is not to be the present emphasis of our salvation. Eternal life takes place in eternity.

Just because I am presenting to you a picture of progressive salvation, I pray that you do not surmise that I am proclaiming to you salvation by works! We are talking about the evidence that should be visible in the life of the believer that proves that he has the abiding presence of the Son. In the parable of the growing seed, there is a progression from “the seed, to the blade, then to the head, and afterward, the full grain.” This is evidence of life! James said, “show me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my works” (Jam. 2:18). For such difficult sayings, the 15th century reformation leader Martin Luther, branded the epistle of James an epistle of straw and ripped it out of his Bible. Is it not more feasible that Martin Luther’s theology which prevented him from understanding what James 2:18 meant, is the real theology of straw rather than the God-given and God-inspired words of the apostle James? Can we, like Martin Luther, just rip out the verses that do not fit what we think is right? Is that not what is being done by isolating 1 John 5:11-13 as being the “proof text” of possessing eternal life and ignoring the bulk of Scriptures which say otherwise?

I would like you to carefully consider the Biblical definition of grace, for it is not the wide-spread popular cliché of the wide-gate and broad-way gospel of “the unmerited favor of God.”

5485. χάρις charis, khar'-ece; from 5463; *graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstr. or concr.; lit., fig. or spiritual; espec. the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude);—acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-lous), joy liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy).* Strong's Concordance

SALVATION BEGINS IN THE SPIRIT,

“...THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT... YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”
John 3:5-7

Let us overlay Strong's “especially” twofold meaning of grace over our diagram of progressive salvation:

(what flows in)

(Grace is especially)

INTERNALIZED

“THE DIVINE INFLUENCE UPON THE HEART”

IS WORKED OUT IN THE SOUL,

“...WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION... Phil. 2:12-13
“...RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH-THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS...”
1 Pet. 1:9

(must flow out)

(Grace is especially)

EXTERNALIZED

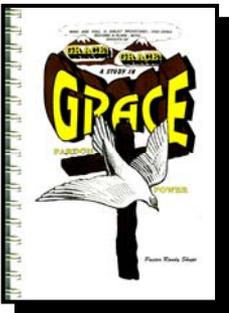
“ AND THE REFLECTION IN THE LIFE”

IS FINALIZED IN THE BODY

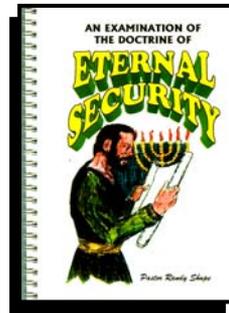
“...EAGERLY WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY...”
Rom. 8:23-24
“...WHEN THIS MORTAL HAS PUT ON IMMORTALITY...”
1 Cor. 15:54

God's grace, when it enters the heart as divine influence, is to flow back out and reflect itself in the life in a visible way. What is first internalized is to become externalized. This is all that the apostle John is expressing when he says repeatedly, “by this you know that you have eternal life.” You know life of Christ is in you when it reflects on the outside.

Grace is not just to be manifested as “pardon” it is also to be seen as “power.”



I encourage you to read these two books as an in-depth study on (1) true Biblical grace and (2) true Biblical eternal security. Both of these doctrines are being sorely perverted in the body of Christ by the broad-way advocates.



SALVATION

IS A PROGRESSIVE ACTION

**SALVATION
BEGINS
IN THE SPIRIT,**

**"...THAT
WHICH IS
BORN OF THE SPIRIT
IS SPIRIT...
"YOU MUST
BE BORN AGAIN."
John 3:5-7**

PAST

INTERNAL

This is the beginning of God's salvation. He begins on the inside and progresses to the outside. He first plants the seed of eternal life in the heart in the form of a promise and a hope for the life which is to come. It is God's grace as divine influence on the heart.

**IS WORKED
OUT IN THE SOUL,**

**"...RECEIVING
THE END
OF YOUR FAITH-
THE SALVATION
OF YOUR SOULS..."
1 Pet. 1:9
"...WORK OUT
YOUR OWN
SALVATION..."
Phil. 2:12-13**

PRESENT

EXTERNAL

What was internalized now is to become externalized. The divine influence of the heart now begins to show as a reflection in the life. We become like the Master, conformed into His image day by day as we walk with God's Spirit (Rom. 8:27-29, 2 Cor. 3:17-18)

**IS FINALIZED
IN THE BODY**

**"...EAGERLY WAITING
FOR THE ADOPTION,
THE REDEMPTION
OF OUR BODY..."
Rom. 8:23-24
"...WHEN THIS MORTAL
HAS PUT ON
IMMORTALITY..."
1 Cor. 15:54**

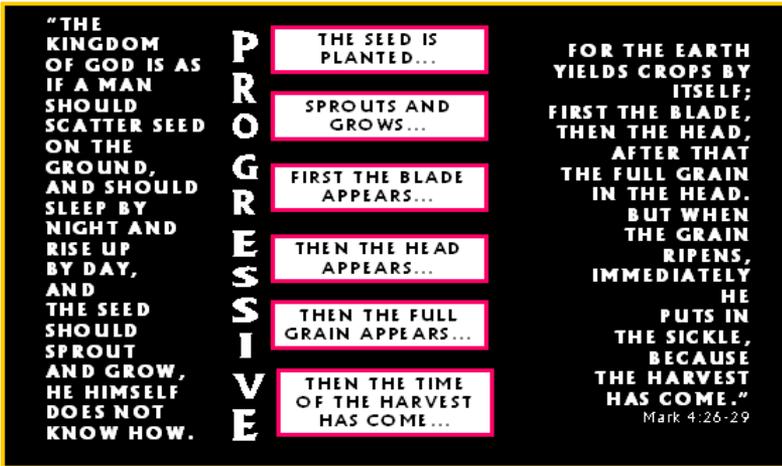
FUTURE

ETERNAL

At the end of our physical life of following after the Master ("My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life and they shall never perish"- Jn. 10:27-28), we will enter experientially into eternal life promised by the Master to His faithful sheep.

We cannot always live in the past nor can we yet live in the future. We must focus upon living in the present aspect of God's salvation, that of "working out our own salvation with fear and trembling," knowing that "it is God who works in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13). Notice we "work out" and God "works in."

We opened this chapter with the parable of the growing seed. It depicts, as Jesus says, the Kingdom of God from “seed to harvest.”



This parable also depicts the progressive salvation of the believer within the Kingdom of God. Take time to ponder what I have overlaid upon this Kingdom parable. It is the salvation of spirit, soul and body:



This diagram depicts the “internal, external and eternal” aspects of God’s complete plan of salvation for the complete man that He created. It takes a lifetime to complete it. By that statement I mean that His salvation will be worked out in us from birth (spiritual) to death (physical). Then, and only then, do we enter into a state of eternal life in the eternal Kingdom of God.

Study this diagram carefully for it portrays Kingdom priorities for God's people who live in this present evil age:



The born-again Christian has a mandate from God to "keep (guard) himself so that the wicked one does not touch him." Consider what Jesus said of His interaction with Satan:

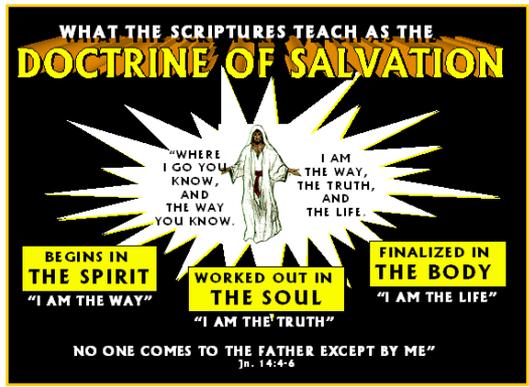
"...THE PRINCE (EVIL GENIUS, RULER) OF THE WORLD IS COMING. AND HE HAS NO CLAIM ON ME. HE HAS NOTHING IN COMMON WITH ME; THERE IS NOTHING IN ME THAT BELONGS TO HIM, AND HE HAS NO POWER OVER ME." John 14:30 Amp.

Earlier we looked at the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness in which Satan offered Him all the kingdoms of this world and their glory (Matt. 4:1-11). Jesus was able to reject Satan's offer of the kingdoms of this world because He had the Kingdom of God in His heart. This is how we too can guard ourselves from the wicked one so that he cannot touch us any more than he could touch Jesus. Consider Jesus' words carefully:

1. **HE (Satan) HAS NO CLAIM ON ME.**
2. **HE HAS NOTHING IN COMMON WITH ME;**
3. **THERE IS NOTHING IN ME THAT BELONGS TO HIM**
4. **HE HAS NO POWER OVER ME** John 14:30 Amp.

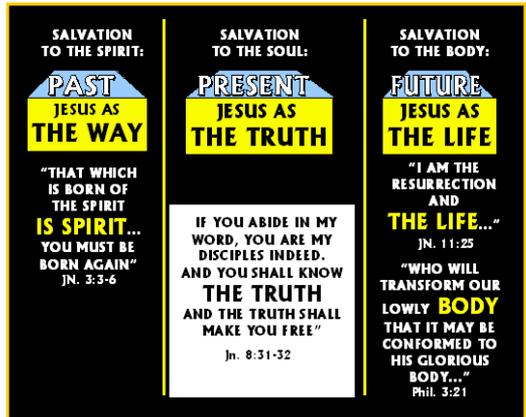
When Jesus said "My Kingdom is not of this world" (Jn.18:36) it was a proclamation of what was in His heart. It was God's Kingdom that was guarding His heart from the temptation and influence of the wicked one. All that Satan could offer to Jesus (or to us) is derived from the kingdoms of this world that are under his evil sway.

Jesus as “the Way, the Truth and the Life” best depicts God’s progressive plan of salvation. You cannot just embrace Him as “the Way.” This is just the beginning of God’s salvation: to be born of the spirit. God begins on the inside and then progressively works to the outside.



Consider these passages of Scripture which depict the progressive salvation of spirit, soul and body by Jesus in His triune role as the way, the truth and the life:

Notice it begins with the new birth and ends with a new life—eternal life in eternity when Jesus fulfills His final role as “the Resurrection and the Life.” Five times He states this resurrection of believer’s bodies will take place at “the last day” (Jn. 6:39-54). Paul states that God will confirm our body into the likeness of Jesus’ glorious body (Phil. 3:21)



Sandwiched in between these two events is Jesus as “the Truth.” This title of Jesus represents this present life on earth for the believer:

**“THEN JESUS SAID TO THOSE JEWS WHO BELIEVED HIM,
 “IF YOU ABIDE (CONTINUE) IN MY WORD, YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES INDEED.
 AND YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH,
 AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.”
 John 8:31-32**

The present emphasis for the believer is to come to know Jesus as “the Truth.” This is the pathway of discipleship, the “difficult way” that follows the new birth. It is difficult because we live in a world that continues to be ever increasingly under the sway of the wicked one as 1 John 5:18-19 tells us. God’s truth will set us free, but Satan’s lies will captivate us, even as believers. Only truth will set us free so that we can proclaim as did Jesus:

“...THE PRINCE (EVIL GENIUS, RULER) OF THE WORLD IS COMING. AND HE HAS NO CLAIM ON ME. HE HAS NOTHING IN COMMON WITH ME; THERE IS NOTHING IN ME THAT BELONGS TO HIM, AND HE HAS NO POWER OVER ME.” John 14:30 Amp.

Look at the two charts below, for they are not identical. The middle Scriptures pertaining to “truth” describe two kinds of believers:

We discussed these passages from John on the previous page. It depicts what God desires for every born-again believer: to continue in His Word so that they become set free from all bondage and enslavement that exists in “this present evil age.” Such pursuit of truth will guard the believer from the power of the wicked one who holds the whole world under his sway (1 Jn. 5:18-19).

SALVATION TO THE SPIRIT:	SALVATION TO THE SOUL:	SALVATION TO THE BODY:
PAST JESUS AS THE WAY	PRESENT JESUS AS THE TRUTH	FUTURE JESUS AS THE LIFE
“THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT... YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN” Jn. 3:3-6	IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD, YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES INDEED. AND YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE” Jn. 8:31-32	“I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE... ” Jn. 11:25 “WHO WILL TRANSFORM OUR LOWLY BODY THAT IT MAY BE CONFORMED TO HIS GLORIOUS BODY...” Phil. 3:21

Consider well the fact that James is speaking of a believer who “wanders from the truth.” That implies that he once walked in truth but now is walking away from truth that can set him free. Notice that if someone “turns him back” to following the truth, he will **“SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH** and cover a multitude of sins.”

SALVATION TO THE SPIRIT:	SALVATION TO THE SOUL:	SALVATION TO THE BODY:
PAST JESUS AS THE WAY	PRESENT JESUS AS THE TRUTH	FUTURE JESUS AS THE LIFE
“THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT... YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN” Jn. 3:3-6	“IF ANYONE AMONG YOU WANDERS FROM THE TRUTH AND SOMEONE TURNS HIM BACK, HE WILL SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH AND COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS.” James 5:19-20	“I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE... ” Jn. 11:25 “WHO WILL TRANSFORM OUR LOWLY BODY THAT IT MAY BE CONFORMED TO HIS GLORIOUS BODY...” Phil. 3:21

You will not find these passages from James 5:19-20 quoted by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel! To “save a soul from death” (the soul of a believer) is against the grain of the plan of salvation endorsed by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel. According to such teachers, the soul of the redeemed was saved at conversion and is unconditionally and eternally secure. Cover a multitude of sins? This too is contrary to what is taught by the wide-gate and broad-way gospel. Their position is “every sin I have ever committed or ever will commit is already under the blood of Jesus.” This pre-forgiveness of sins sounds good, but is not sound doctrine! James warns that the believer who wanders from the truth is in danger of losing his soul due to his sin. Only if he is turned back (repents) to the truth will he save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins which he has committed as a back-slidden believer.

“IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD, YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES INDEED. AND YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.”

Jn. 8:31-32

Each Scripture begins with an “IF”. They depict two kinds of believers, two ways of walking in this life as a believer, one in victory and the other in defeat. The difference is how each relates to truth.

“IF ANYONE AMONG YOU WANDERS FROM THE TRUTH AND SOMEONE TURNS HIM BACK, HE WILL SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH AND COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS.”

James 5:19-20

Jesus spoke of two kinds of virgins that were waiting for His return. One kind He called wise but the other foolish (Matt. 25:1-13). What makes the difference? I believe it is how the believer relates to truth. The wise continue in God’s Word and come to know truth that sets them free. The foolish follow a pathway of always wandering from the truth.

We can also overlay the teachings of Jesus from Matthew Chapter 7 in which He spoke of the house of the wise and the house of the foolish:



“THEREFORE WHOEVER HEARS THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOES THEM, I WILL LIKEN HIM TO A WISE MAN WHO BUILT HIS HOUSE ON THE ROCK: AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW AND BEAT ON THAT HOUSE; AND IT DID NOT FALL, FOR IT WAS FOUNDED ON THE ROCK. NOW EVERYONE WHO HEARS THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOES NOT DO THEM, WILL BE LIKE A FOOLISH MAN WHO BUILT HIS HOUSE ON THE SAND: AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW AND BEAT ON THAT HOUSE; AND IT FELL. AND GREAT WAS ITS FALL.”

Matt. 7:24-27

The sayings of Jesus constitute “the rock.” The sayings of men is a picture of “the sand.” Only God’s truth will stand in the midst of life’s trials. All else is but sinking sand. **168**

Pilate once asked Jesus, “what is truth?” (Jn.18:38). Jesus is “The Truth” (Jn. 14:6). God’s Word is truth designed to sanctify God’s people (Jn. 17:17). The Holy Spirit is called “The Spirit of truth” (Jn. 16:13). The church is to be “the pillar and the ground of the truth” (1st Tim. 3:15). We are not to be a people who “wander from the truth” but rather a people who are progressively being set free by the truth of God’s Word! Jesus gave this purpose for His coming into the world:

“FOR THIS CAUSE I WAS BORN, AND FOR THIS CAUSE I HAVE COME INTO THE WORLD, THAT I SHOULD BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH. EVERYONE WHO IS OF THE TRUTH HEARS MY VOICE.”

Jn. 18:37

For this same cause has the believer been born again – to bear witness to the truth!

The present emphasis of God in the life of the believer is on truth. In a sense, truth is Jesus’ middle name. God wants us to know Jesus completely, not just as “the Way” of salvation but also as “the Truth” that will set God’s people free from this present world.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH AS THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

BEGINS IN THE SPIRIT
“I AM THE WAY”

WORKED OUT IN THE SOUL
“I AM THE TRUTH”

FINALIZED IN THE BODY
“I AM THE LIFE”

NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT BY ME”
Jn. 14:6

“EXAMINE AND TEST AND EVALUATE YOUR OWN SELVES, TO SEE WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING TO YOUR FAITH AND SHOWING THE PROPER FRUITS OF IT. TEST AND PROVE YOUR OWN SELVES.”

2 Cor. 13: 5 Amplified

“IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD, YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES INDEED. AND YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.”

Jn. 8:31-32

We all need to take a sober look at our experience as a Christian. What is our testimony pertaining to truth?

“IF ANYONE AMONG YOU WANDERS FROM THE TRUTH AND SOMEONE TURNS HIM BACK, HE WILL SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH AND COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS.”

James 5:19-20

The Spirit of truth was sent to “guide us into all truth” (Jn. 16:13). Either we are following the leading of the Spirit of truth or we are in danger of spending our lives “wandering from the truth.”

Consider the three passages of Scripture in the center column:

SALVATION
IS A PROGRESSIVE ACTION

<p>SPIRIT THE HEART OF MAN</p> <p>"...UNLESS ONE IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE FLESH IS FLESH, AND THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT. DO NOT MARVEL THAT I SAID TO YOU "YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN." John 3:5-7</p>	<p>SOUL THE MIND, WILL, EMOTIONS OF MAN</p> <p>"...WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING; FOR IT IS GOD WHO WORKS IN YOU ..." Phil. 2:12-13</p> <p>"...RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH-THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS..." 1st Pet. 1:9</p> <p>"...WE ARE NOT OF THOSE WHO DRAW BACK TO PERDITION, BUT OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE TO THE SAVING OF THE SOUL." Heb. 10:39</p>	<p>BODY THE PHYSICAL OUTWARD MAN</p> <p>"...WE OURSELVES GROAN WITHIN OURSELVES, EAGERLY WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY..." Rom. 8:23-24</p> <p>"...WHEN THIS CORRUPTIBLE HAS PUT ON INCORRUPTION, AND THIS MORTAL HAS PUT ON IMMORTALITY, THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS THE SAYING... "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY." 1st Cor. 15:54</p>
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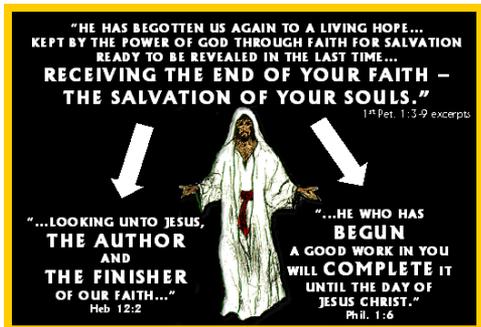
John spoke of a believer who wanders from the truth. If another believer turns him back to the truth from which he has wandered away, that person will “save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.” How far back can a believer go if he is not turned back? Paul said to believers in his day, “...we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10:9). Two points Paul makes:

1. IT IS POSSIBLE TO DRAW BACK ALL THE WAY TO PERDITION (“ETERNAL MISERY”).
2. THE BELIEVER IS TO BELIEVE TO THE SAVING OF THE SOUL.

The soul is not saved at the new birth, but rather the spirit. Jesus said, “...that which is born of the spirit is spirit” (Jn.3:6). Not only does Paul say that we need to “believe to the saving of the soul,” but Peter also states, “...receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation of your soul...” (1st Pet. 1:9). This is an important distinction to grasp! The soul is in the process of being saved. When will it be saved? At the end, not the beginning, of your faith. That is why Jesus is called “the **AUTHOR** and the **FINISHER of YOUR FAITH**” (Heb.12:2). That is also why Paul reminds us “...He who has **BEGUN** a good work in you **WILL COMPLETE IT** until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil.1:6). This is why Paul exhorts us to “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Phil.2:12-13). In this progressive pathway of salvation it is God who **WORKS IN** while you **WORK OUT**. We are God’s fellow workers in bringing salvation to our souls! God has a part and we have a part! What is our part? Let the Word tell us:

“BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO ACCORDING TO HIS ABUNDANT MERCY HAS BEGOTTEN US AGAIN TO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD, TO AN INHERITANCE INCORRUPTIBLE AND UNDEFILED AND THAT DOES NOT FADE AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN FOR YOU, WHO ARE KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD THROUGH FAITH FOR SALVATION READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME.”

The above single sentence should make perfect sense to you by now as we have considered what is the salvation of God. Peter speaks of the power of God at work in us through faith. Where does that faith lead us? To salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Peter goes on:



“IN THIS YOU GREATLY REJOICE, THOUGH NOW FOR A LITTLE WHILE, IF NEED BE, YOU HAVE BEEN GRIEVED BY VARIOUS TRIALS, THAT THE GENUINENESS OF YOUR FAITH, BEING MUCH MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD THAT PERISHES, THOUGH IT IS TESTED BY FIRE, MAY BE FOUND TO PRAISE, HONOR, AND GLORY AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN YOU LOVE. THOUGH NOW YOU DO NOT SEE HIM, YET BELIEVING, YOU REJOICE WITH JOY INEXPRESSIBLE AND FULL OF GLORY, RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH – THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS.”

What a flowing balanced perspective Peter presents as the salvation of God. How foreign the above is to the wide-gate and broad-way gospel! You do not find any of what that false gospel emphasizes as the important points of salvation. There is no talk of “once saved, always saved” or the presentation of salvation in a past completed tense. Neither do we find eternal life being presented as a present possession. What do you find as a present emphasis? Peter seeks to give vision for the purpose of trials on earth as being the “testing of the genuineness of your faith” so that when Jesus returns our faith will be to “praise, honor and glory.” What will it result in? The salvation of your soul! We go a little further and we read:

“THEREFORE GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND, BE SOBER, AND REST YOUR HOPE FULLY UPON THE GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT TO YOU AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST; AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN, NOT CONFORMING YOURSELVES TO THE FORMER LUSTS, AS IN YOUR IGNORANCE; BUT AS HE WHO CALLED YOU IS HOLY, YOU ALSO BE HOLY IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT, BECAUSE IT IS WRITTEN, ‘BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.’ ” 1 Pet. 1:1-16 excerpts

The first Chapter of Peter’s epistle is a litmus test for sound doctrine pertaining to the fullness of salvation. This is a full expression of what is the narrow gate and the difficult way. Read it often, test what you are hearing by it!

Another chapter I highly recommend as depicting a true pattern for biblical Christianity is the Third Chapter of Hebrews. This chapter contains the missing ingredients left out of the message of the wide-gate and broad-way gospel:

THEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and ^RHigh Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as ^RMoses also was faithful in all His house.

3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as ^RHe who built the house has more honor than the house.

4 For every house is built by someone, but ^RHe who built all things is God.

5 And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*,

6 but Christ as ^Ra Son over His own house, ^Rwhose house we are ^Rif we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope ^{*}firm to the end.

Danger of Hardening the Heart

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you will hear His voice,

8 *Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,*

In the day of trial in the wilderness,

9 *Where your fathers tested Me, proved Me,*

And saw My works forty years.

10 *Therefore I was angry with that generation,*

And said, 'They always go astray in their heart,

And they have not known My ways.'

11 *So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'*"

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

13 but ^Texhort one another daily, while it is called *"Today,"* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. *encourage*

14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

15 while it is said:

^R*"Today, if you will hear His voice,*

Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Ps. 95:7, 8

Hebrews 3:1-15

How important is the content of this chapter? Consider that in summarizing it, Paul states it to be a depiction of the same gospel which was preached to us as well as to them:

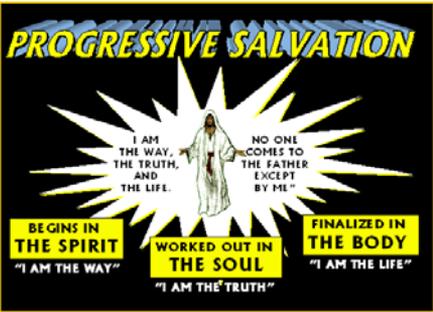
**"FOR INDEED
THE GOSPEL
WAS PREACHED TO US AS WELL AS TO THEM;
BUT THE WORD WHICH THEY HEARD DID NOT PROFIT THEM,
NOT BEING MIXED WITH FAITH IN THOSE WHO HEARD IT."
Heb. 4:2**

This is an incredible statement! What happened to the Children of Israel in Egypt, in the wilderness and in the Promise Land, contains a type and shadow of the true gospel message that has also been preached to us! If this is true, then the pattern laid out in Hebrews Chapter Three should typify what is to be found in the gospel message being preached to us today! I want to challenge you, dear reader, can the wide-gate and broad-way gospel be overlaid on Hebrews Chapter Three as a confirmation of the authenticity of its message? The answer is no. Hebrews Chapter Three is a clear denial of the contents of this watered-down version of the gospel.

Let me introduce you to a teaching diagram that I have used on many occasions to convey the various comparisons that exist between what happened to the children of Israel and what is to take place in the lives of those who comprise the church:

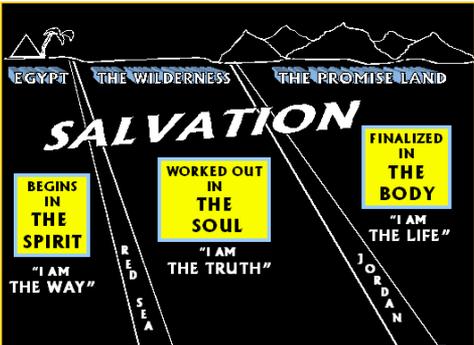


We have been learning about “progressive salvation” as well as a “progressive Kingdom.” The three divisions in this diagram (Egypt, the Wilderness, and the Promise Land) typify progressive salvation as well as the concept of the progressive Kingdom of God.

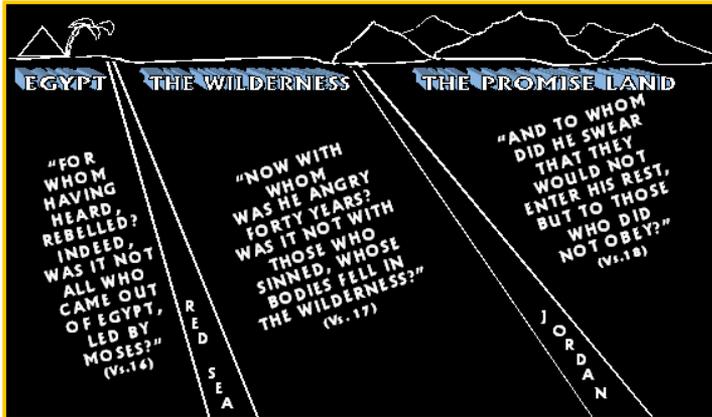


This chart is a synopsis of what we have established as “progressive salvation.” The three titles of Jesus found in John 14:6 portray how salvation is to be brought to the spirit, soul and body of the redeemed. All aspects of salvation cannot be placed under Jesus as the Way.

What I am presenting to you as “progressive salvation” can be overlaid on what happened to the Children of Israel as they progressed from Egypt to the Promise Land. Salvation began in Egypt, was to be worked out in the wilderness and finalized in the Promise Land.



Consider the testimony God bears of the children of Israel in Hebrews Chapter Three, and keep in mind that this is a picture of the gospel preached to us as well as to them:



It has been estimated that a mixed multitude of over three million people came up out of Egypt led by Moses. Forty years later, only two people over the age of twenty entered into the Promise Land:

"SO THE LORD'S ANGER WAS AROUSED ON THAT DAY, AND HE SWORE AN OATH, SAYING, 'SURELY, NONE OF THESE MEN WHO CAME UP FROM EGYPT, FROM TWENTY YEARS OLD AND ABOVE, SHALL SEE THE LAND...BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT WHOLLY FOLLOWED ME, EXCEPT CALEB...AND JOSHUA...FOR THEY HAVE WHOLLY FOLLOWED THE LORD.' SO THE LORD'S ANGER WAS AROUSED AGAINST ISRAEL, AND HE MADE THEM WANDER IN THE WILDERNESS FORTY YEARS, UNTIL ALL THE GENERATION THAT HAD DONE EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD WAS GONE."

Num. 32:10-13

We could easily use the words of Jesus as the moral to the above story: "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life and few there are who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). Two out of three million is certainly a picture of a narrow and difficult way. Because of their rebellion and disobedience the multitude turned an eleven-day journey into a forty-year nightmare! God had no problem getting His people out of Egypt, His difficulty was getting the ways of Egypt out of the people He delivered! Let us remember that this is a picture of "the gospel" that has been preached to us! It is the new birth that takes us out of the bondage of "Egypt" (the world), and out of the power of the cruel taskmaster, "Pharaoh" (Satan). God used the Red Sea to isolate His people from the power of Pharaoh and his army. A second body of water, the Jordan River, prevented His people from entering the Promised Land until they became a people who were willing to "wholly follow the Lord" as did Caleb and Joshua. Most of the multitude never made that choice! Is it possible that multitudes in the church are repeating this fatal sin?

Hebrews Chapter Three is not the only time that Paul uses the children of Israel as a negative example for the church. Look at these passages from his epistle to the Corinthians: →

Consider the two highlighted verses (6,11) for they clearly present the fact that what happened to the children of Israel can also happen to the church if it repeats the sins of Israel! Sandwiched in between those verses are warnings against those in the church repeating the sins of idolatry, sexual immorality, tempting Christ by presumptuous sin, and murmuring against God's corrective chastisement. The wide-gate and broad-way gospel teaches erroneous doctrines that in essence eliminate the children of Israel from even being our examples.

If what happened to the children of Israel could not happen to the church then Paul would be in error for using them as an illustration and warning to the church not to repeat their sins.

In the opening verses of this chapter Paul enumerates the spiritual equipment that all of the children of Israel received from God, including the immense fact that the spiritual Rock that followed them was Christ. Indeed, the gospel that was preached to us was also preached to them. However, the wilderness was as far as most of the children of Israel progressed. God records this testimony of them as a warning to us:

MOREOVER, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

³ all ate the same ^Rspiritual food, Ex. 16:4

⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies ^Rwere scattered in the wilderness. Num. 14:20, 27, 28-35

⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as ^Rthey also lusted. Num. 11:4, 34

⁷ ^RAnd do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ^R"The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 1 Cor. 5:11; 10:14 • Ex. 32:6

⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as ^Rsome of them did, and ^Rin one day twenty-three thousand fell; Num. 25:1-9 • Ps. 106:29

⁹ nor let us ^Ttempt Christ, as ^Rsome of them also tempted, and ^Rwere destroyed by serpents: test • Ex. 17:2, 7 • Num. 21:6-9

¹⁰ nor murmur, as ^Rsome of them also murmured, and ^Rwere destroyed by ^Rthe destroyer. Ex. 16:2 • Num. 14:37 • Ex. 12:23

¹¹ Now ^{*}all these things happened to them as examples, and ^Rthey were written for our ^Tadmonition, ^Ron whom the ends of the ages have come. Rom. 15:4 • instruction • Phil. 4:5

¹² Therefore ^Rlet him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. Rom. 11:20

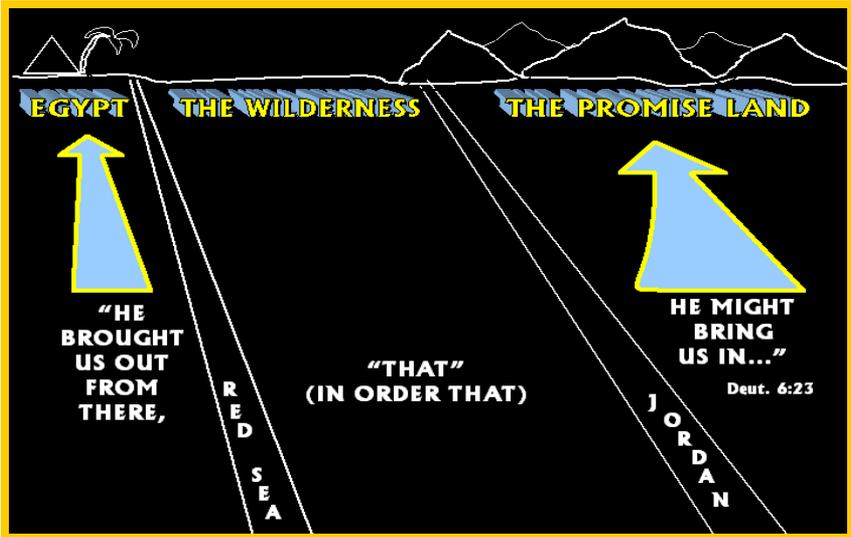
¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. 10:1-13

**"BUT WITH MOST OF THEM
GOD WAS NOT WELL PLEASED,
FOR THEIR BODIES WERE SCATTERED IN THE WILDERNESS.
NOW THESE THINGS BECAME OUR EXAMPLES..."**

1 Cor. 10:5

**“BUT WITH MOST OF THEM GOD WAS NOT WELL PLEASED,
FOR THEIR BODIES WERE SCATTERED IN THE WILDERNESS.
NOW THESE THINGS BECAME OUR EXAMPLES...”**

1 Cor. 10:5

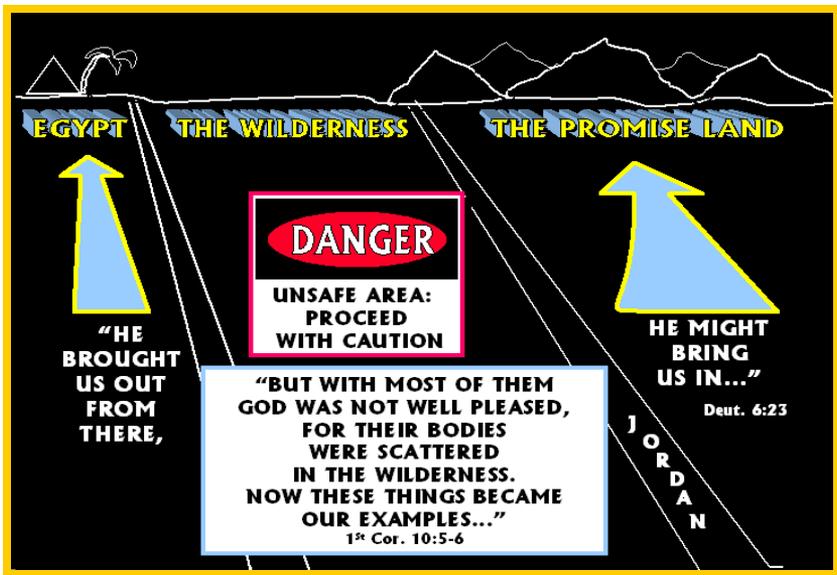


I have overlaid Deuteronomy 6:23 on our chart for it explicitly shows what was God's will for the children of Israel, and I might add, what is His will for the church. It is not God's will that His people die in "no man's land" (the wilderness). God had one purpose in mind for his people as Deuteronomy 6:23 plainly states. However, most of God's people never entered into God's best (the Promise Land). Rather we find "...their bodies were scattered in the wilderness." The wilderness did have purpose. It took place at Mt. Sinai when God sent His Kingdom law down to His delivered people in the form of the Ten Commandments. We know the outcome of that story. This is a picture of "the gospel preached to us", remember? Moses is first a type of Christ being sent to deliver God's people out of the bondage of Pharaoh's Egypt (Satan's world). In the wilderness, Moses becomes a type of the Holy Spirit sent down from God with Kingdom Law for God's people (the church). That is why Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit in this manner:

**“YOU ARE MANIFESTLY AN EPISTLE OF CHRIST...WRITTEN NOT WITH INK
BUT BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD, NOT ON TABLETS OF STONE
BUT ON TABLETS OF FLESH, THAT IS, OF THE HEART.”**

2 Cor. 3:3

If we, as members of the church, do not allow God's Kingdom laws to be written on the tablets of our heart, then we too are in danger of dying in a spiritual wilderness and bearing the same testimony that "...with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness." God's law follows God's grace! It is an integral part of the New Covenant as we have seen earlier in Hebrews Chapter Eight and verse Ten.



The wilderness is an unsafe area in which we need to proceed with caution always keeping in mind what happened to the the children of Israel who are our examples. The pattern above of “the gospel” does not harmonize with the wide-gate and broad-way message. We did not get it all when we got saved, nor are we divinely protected from our own choices by the popular doctrine of “unconditional eternal security.” God did not protect the children of Israel from their own choices that they made in the wilderness. They rebelled at God’s Ten Commandments and brought judgment upon themselves in which God swore that they would never enter into His rest:

“AND TO WITH WHOM WAS HE ANGRY FORTY YEARS? WAS IT NOT WITH THOSE WHO SINNED, WHOSE CORPSES FELL IN THE WILDERNESS? AND TO WHOM DID HE SWEAR THAT THEY WOULD NOT ENTER HIS REST, BUT TO THOSE WHO DID NOT OBEY? SO WE SEE THAT THEY COULD NOT ENTER IN BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF. THEREFORE, SINCE A PROMISE REMAINS OF ENTERING HIS REST, LET US FEAR LEST ANY OF YOU SEEM TO HAVE COME SHORT OF IT. FOR INDEED THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED TO US AS WELL AS TO THEM...”

Heb. 3:18-19, 4:1-2

Salvation is progressive. It begins with deliverance from “Egypt” and progresses to Kingdom laws being written on the tablets of the heart of the redeemed. The children of Israel refused God’s Laws and therefore they died in the wilderness in rebellion and unbelief even though they were initially delivered from Egypt. This is the gospel that is being preached to us. It is a gospel that is in perfect harmony with the testimony of the children of Israel. The wide-gate and broad-way gospel of “once saved, always saved” is contrary to Paul’s teachings in Hebrews Chapter Three and 1 Corinthians Chapter Ten. It is a different gospel than Paul preached (see Gal. 1:6-9).

There is much more to be considered in Hebrews Chapter Three as a pattern of the gospel preached to us:

6 but Christ as ^Ra Son over His own house,
^Rwhose house we are ^Rif we hold fast the
 confidence and the rejoicing of the hope
 *firm to the end. Heb. 1:2 • [1 Cor. 3:16] • [Matt. 10:22]

Danger of Hardening the Heart

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,
 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the
 rebellion,
 In the day of trial in the wilderness,
 9 Where your fathers tested Me, proved
 Me,

And saw My works forty years.
 10 Therefore I was angry with that
 generation,
 And said, ‘They always go astray in
 their heart,
 And they have not known My ways.’
 11 So I swore in My wrath,
 ‘They shall not enter My rest.’”

And saw My works forty years.
 10 Therefore I was angry with that
 generation,
 And said, ‘They always go astray in
 their heart,
 And they have not known My ways.’
 11 So I swore in My wrath,
 ‘They shall not enter My rest.’”

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of
 you an evil heart of unbelief in departing
 from the living God;

13 but ^{encourage} exhort one another daily, while it is
 called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened
 through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have become partakers of Christ
 if we hold the beginning of our confidence
 steadfast to the end.

Hebrews 3:6-14

Once again, let us overlay these verses from Hebrews Chapter Three
 over our diagram:



IF is the biggest little word in the Bible. There are 1,522 if's in the Bible, two of which are found in these verses from Hebrews Chapter Three. We are only Christ's house **IF** we continue "firm to the end." We are only partakers of Christ **IF** we remain "steadfast to the end." This is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Sandwiched right in the middle of these two if's is a severe warning written to the brethren—to the church of Jesus Christ. Paul believed that the church could repeat the sin of the children of Israel in that the deceitfulness of sin would cause them to depart from the living God.

**“FOR INDEED
THE GOSPEL
WAS PREACHED TO US AS WELL AS TO THEM;
BUT THE WORD WHICH THEY HEARD DID NOT PROFIT THEM,
NOT BEING MIXED WITH FAITH IN THOSE WHO HEARD IT.”
Heb. 4:2**



I cannot overstate the point that the above is a depiction of the gospel that is to be preached to us as it was to them. The type and shadow is inescapable. The children of Israel departed from the living God through unbelief and the deceitfulness of sin which hardened their hearts. Hear the words, "Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you..." The salvation of the children of Israel was not completed by the single act of being delivered from Egypt. This is a type and shadow of the gospel message of the new birth. Deliverance from Egypt is to be "...delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son..." (Col.1:13). The second stage of salvation was the giving of God's Kingdom law to His delivered people in the wilderness. Following the new birth by which we are delivered from the power of darkness, we enter the present ministry of the Holy Spirit sent to write God's law on the tablets of the heart (2 Cor. 3:3, Heb. 8:10). Our examples, the children of Israel, died in this stage of salvation through rebellion, unbelief, and by the deceitfulness of sin they departed from the living God. They never were allowed to enter the Promise Land which typifies the final stage of salvation.

Clearly stated is the call to persevere in faith "firm to the end", to be "steadfast to the end." We cannot just revel in the initial stage of salvation claiming "it is finished" when it has just begun. We face the wilderness just as the children of Israel did. The wilderness is where God intends for the flesh to be crucified. This is the work of God's law in our heart. The children of Israel remained a lawless people.



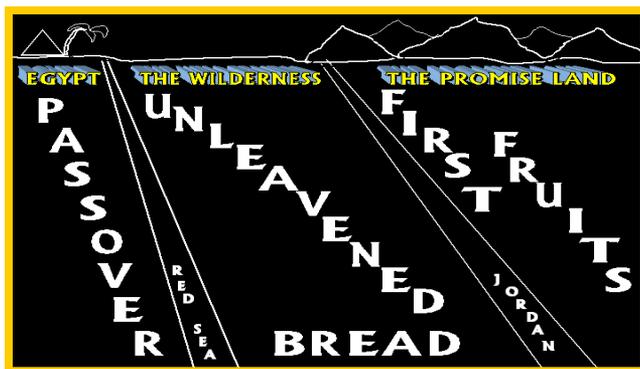
Who is going to be saved? According to Jesus it is “he who endures to the end” (Mat. 24:13). What lies at the end of your faith? According to the apostle Peter it is “...the salvation of your souls” (1 Pet. 1:9). The children of Israel, our examples, did not endure to the end, did they? Were their souls saved in the end just because God initially brought them out of Egypt? Did a people of whom God swore, “they always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways” (Heb. 3:10), still make it to heaven because God initially brought them out of Egypt? Did a people who hardened their hearts and departed from the living God through unbelief and the deceitfulness of sin still make it to heaven because God initially brought them out of Egypt? I think you can see the futility of such an argument.

Salvation began with deliverance from Pharaoh’s Egypt for the children of Israel and it begins for the New Covenant believer with deliverance from this present world that is under the sway of Satan. God was not finished with the children of Israel in this initial step of the gospel. He proceeded to isolate the children of Israel in the wilderness and to give them laws to live by just as God has clearly stated His intention to write His laws on the heart of every New Covenant believer (Heb. 8:10), as well as to be merciful to their sins and lawless deeds (Heb. 8:12). Consider well what God records of those whom He brought up out of Egypt who would not embrace the fullness of His covenant:

“...IN THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; BECAUSE THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DISREGARDED THEM, SAYS THE LORD.”

Heb. 8:9

One final thought before we leave this illustration. I have overlaid the first three Feasts of the Lord from Leviticus 23 on our diagram:



Where did the children of Israel celebrate the first Passover? It was in Egypt on the night that God brought them out of Egypt (Ex. 12:11-14, Ex. 12:41-42). The second Feast is Unleavened Bread and it lasts for seven days (Ex.12:15-20). Where did the children of Israel eat unleavened bread for seven days? In the wilderness. The third Feast is Firstfruits. Where did the children of Israel celebrate this Feast? They did not celebrate it at all and here is the reason why:

**“AND THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSES SAYING,
‘SPEAK TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND SAY TO THEM: ‘WHEN
YOU COME INTO THE LAND WHICH I GIVE TO YOU, AND REAP ITS
HARVEST, THEN YOU SHALL BRING A SHEAF OF THE FIRSTFRUITS...”**

Lev. 23:9-11

The children of Israel never were able to celebrate the third Feast of the Lord (Firstfruits) because they never entered the Promise Land where it was to be celebrated! Their rebellion, unbelief, hardness of heart, and deceitfulness of sin, prevented them from entering into the land where they could reap its harvest!

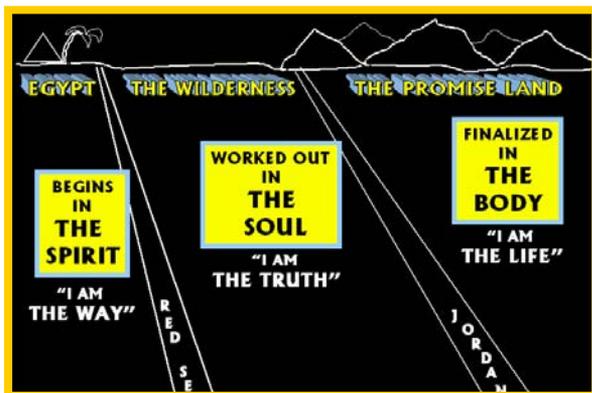
Passover is a depiction of the death of Christ. Unleavened bread in Scripture depicts sinless-ness. It was celebrated seven days. Seven is a picture of perfection. Jesus was sinless and perfect. He is not only our Passover Lamb but He is also the Unleavened Bread, the Bread of life. This Feast was a stumbling block for the children of Israel. They chose a life of leaven (sin) rather than setting their hearts upon becoming unleavened. Consider now how Paul preaches “the gospel” to the Gentile church at Corinth:

“DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENS THE WHOLE LUMP? THEREFORE PURGE OUT THE OLD LEAVEN, THAT YOU MAY BE A NEW LUMP, SINCE YOU TRULY ARE UNLEAVENED. FOR INDEED CHRIST, OUR PASSOVER WAS SACRIFICED FOR US. THEREFORE LET US KEEP THE FEAST, NOT WITH OLD LEAVEN, NOR WITH THE LEAVEN OF MALICE AND WICKEDNESS, BUT WITH THE UNLEAVENED BREAD OF SINCERITY AND TRUTH.” 1 Cor. 5:6-8

“DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENS THE WHOLE LUMP? THEREFORE PURGE OUT THE OLD LEAVEN, THAT YOU MAY BE A NEW LUMP, SINCE YOU TRULY ARE UNLEAVENED. FOR INDEED CHRIST, OUR PASSOVER WAS SACRIFICED FOR US. THEREFORE LET US KEEP THE FEAST, NOT WITH OLD LEAVEN, NOR WITH THE LEAVEN OF MALICE AND WICKEDNESS, BUT WITH THE UNLEAVENED BREAD OF SINCERITY AND TRUTH.” 1 Cor. 5:6-8

Paul is preaching the gospel to Gentiles like you and me and he is using the Feasts of the Lord to do so. Notice He does not just present Jesus as “our Passover sacrificed for us” but rather continues on right into the Feast of Unleavened Bread in which he calls God’s people to “purge out the old leaven”. Notice he tells God’s people to “keep the Feast.” In what manner are they to observe Unleavened Bread? They are to purge out all malice and wickedness and replace it with sincerity and truth.

Consider this diagram once again. Passover depicts Jesus as “The Way”, He is “our Passover sacrificed for us.” The second encounter with Jesus is in His role as “The Truth”. What follows Passover? It is Unleavened Bread. We are to keep this Feast with “sincerity and truth”.



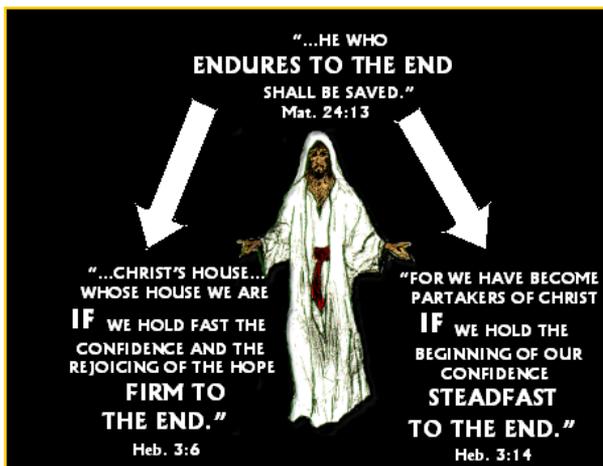
In this same epistle in which Paul presents the gospel using the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread, he also progresses to the third Feast, Firstfruits, and tells us of its significance in the life of the believer:

“BUT NOW CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, AND HAS BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP...IN CHRIST ALL SHALL BE MADE ALIVE. BUT EACH ONE IN HIS OWN ORDER:CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUITS, AFTERWARD THOSE WHO ARE HIS AT HIS COMING. THEN COMES THE END...” 1 Cor. 15:20-24

The third stage of salvation is typified by the Promise Land. It is Jesus fulfilling His role as “The Life.” The children of Israel died in the wilderness in their sins even though God brought them out of Egypt. They celebrated Passover, but they did not fulfill Unleavened Bread. Therefore they were not allowed to enter God’s rest. Paul warns all New Covenant believers:

“SINCE THEREFORE IT REMAINS THAT SOME MUST ENTER IT, AND THOSE TO WHOM IT WAS FIRST PREACHED DID NOT ENTER BECAUSE OF DISOBEDIENCE.... LET US THEREFORE BE DILIGENT TO ENTER THAT REST, LEST ANYONE FALL AFTER THE SAME EXAMPLE OF DISOBEDIENCE.”

Heb. 4:6,11



God requires God's people to persevere in the faith "firm to the end." It is he who endures to the end that will be saved. Paul warned us of the danger of "drawing back to perdition." The alternative is "believing unto the saving of the soul" (Heb.10:39). These are the two options that God has set before us as His people. He will not protect us from our own free will. As a follower of Christ, He has given us promises of protection:

"WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? SHALL TRIBULATION, OR DISTRESS, OR PERSECUTION, OR FAMINE, OR NAKEDNESS, OR PERIL, OR SWORD? AS IT IS WRITTEN: "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL DAY LONG; WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER." YET IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US. FOR I AM PERSUADED THAT NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE, NOR ANGELS NOR PRINCIPALITIES NOR POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATED THING, SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." Rom. 8:35-39

Read the above carefully, for it speaks not only of Christ's love for us, but also our love for Christ! As long as we "love Him who first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19), we will be perfectly secure from all that is in Satan's arsenal to bring against us. We need not fear Satan if we love God; and if we love Him we keep His commandments which in essence keeps us from the power of the wicked one! There is only one real source of danger that we face that is outside the protective hand of God:

"BEWARE, BRETHREN, LEST THERE BE IN ANY OF YOU AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD... LEST YOU BE HARDENED THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN." Heb. 3:12-13

It has been stated that, "We have met the enemy, and it is us." God will not protect us from ourselves. We can be our own worse enemy.



**“IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD-HOLD FAST TO MY TEACHINGS
AND LIVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEM-YOU ARE MY
DISCIPLES. AND YOU WILL KNOW THE TRUTH,
AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE.”** John 8:31-32 Amp.

I CAN LIVE IN THE MIDST OF SATAN’S KINGDOM BECAUSE THE KINGDOM OF GOD LIVES IN THE MIDST OF ME.

This is a statement of truth pertaining to the Kingdom of God that has the potential to set you free. You can be free from the folly of pursuing politically-based religious solutions for an earthly kingdom. Jesus said 2,000 years ago that His Kingdom was not of this world (Jn. 18:36), and He hasn’t changed His mind. God wants His people, in this country, to rescue Americans from America, not to try to rescue the nation itself! As God’s people, we do not have a mandate from God to eliminate pornography, abortion, homosexuality or any of the other ills that plague society. The cure for what ails America is, that by means of the new birth, the laws of the Kingdom of God would be written on the tablets of the heart, not legislated in the halls of congress. We are not planted here to legislate morality upon immorality. The ten commandments are to be written on the fleshly tablets of the heart, not in the schools or public buildings of a pagan-based society. The laws of God are for the people of God. His laws are to govern His Kingdom, not the kingdoms of this world! The apostles taught:

**“...THAT YOU MAY BECOME BLAMELESS AND HARMLESS,
CHILDREN OF GOD WITHOUT FAULT IN THE MIDST
OF A CROOKED AND PERVERSE GENERATION,
AMONG WHOM YOU SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD,
HOLDING FAST THE WORD OF LIFE...”**

Phil. 2:15-16

**“PURE AND UNDEFILED RELIGION BEFORE GOD AND THE FATHER IS THIS:
TO VISIT ORPHANS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR TROUBLE,
AND TO KEEP ONESELF UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD.”**

Jas. 1:27

Notice that we have no divine commission to remove the spots from the world, but rather to keep ourselves from being spotted by the world. We are to guard ourselves in such a way that the wicked one cannot touch us (1 Jn. 5:18-19).

The Christian life was meant to be very simple. To be so, it requires cultivating a mentality of the presence of the Kingdom of God in us. It begins with the fact that God has planted the seed of His Kingdom in our hearts by the new birth (1 Pet. 1:23-25). He then proceeds to write the laws of His Kingdom on the hearts of those within the Kingdom (Heb. 8:10). By those Kingdom laws, God wants us to guard our hearts from all influence of this present evil age which is under the sway of the wicked one (1 Jn. 5:18-19). He wants us to preach this Gospel of the Kingdom throughout the whole world (Matt. 24:14).

THE **INTERNAL** KINGDOM

“THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.”

THE **EXTERNAL** KINGDOM

**“THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD HAVE BECOME
THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST...”**

“AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.”

THE **ETERNAL** KINGDOM

**“THE SAINTS POSSESS THE KINGDOM
FOREVER, EVEN FOREVER AND EVER.”**

The Kingdom of God will progress through three stages, the final stage being the eternal one. Notice that as the Kingdom of God progresses, we as His saints progress with it. Presently, the Kingdom is internal, existing only within the hearts of God's people. It is a dispensation of time in which God desires to write His laws upon the hearts of His Kingdom subjects so that they would cease being a lawless people. However, the warning is clear, at the end of the age all who continue to live lawlessly will be removed from His Kingdom (Matt. 7:21-23, 13:41-43).

The second stage of God's Kingdom, the external one, will be established at the Millennial reign of Christ when He returns with His overcoming saints to rule and reign from Jerusalem for a thousand years. Jesus will seize, as the spoils of war, all of the kingdoms of this world. They will become “the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). He will have authority and dominion over the nations and will rule them with a rod of iron (Rev. 19:15). This is an important point to stress:

IT WILL TAKE THE IRON RULE OF JESUS CHRIST TO SUBDUE THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD.

Christianity does not have a present mandate from God to seek to make the kingdoms of this world into some form of the Kingdom of Christ. The American Religious Right movement is obsessed with this unbiblical objective! The present manifestation of the Kingdom of God is an internal one and will remain so until the return of Christ! The early church grew exceedingly under the evil dictatorship and immense persecution of Caesar Nero! A Christian president is not the answer for the church in America! Rather it is to cultivate the internal Kingdom of God so that His people will not be squeezed into the mold of this present evil age. The internal Kingdom of God is able to thrive in the midst of any environment, friendly or hostile.

What is true of the progressive nature of salvation (“internal, external and eternal”) is also true of the Kingdom of God. It too has an internal, external and eternal aspect:

THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS A PROGRESSIVE ACTION
THE INTERNAL KINGDOM

“MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD. IF MY KINGDOM WERE OF THIS WORLD, MY SERVANTS WOULD FIGHT, SO THAT I SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED TO THE JEWS; BUT NOW MY KINGDOM IS NOT FROM HERE.”

John 18:36

**“NOW WHEN HE WAS ASKED BY THE PHARISEES WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD WOULD COME, HE ANSWERED...
“THE KINGDOM OF GOD DOES NOT COME WITH OBSERVATION;
NOR WILL THEY SAY, “SEE HERE!” OR “SEE THERE!”
FOR INDEED THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.”**

Luke 17:20-21

THE EXTERNAL KINGDOM

“THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD HAVE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER!”

Rev. 11:15

“AND THE LORD SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH, IN THAT DAY IT SHALL BE...ALL THE NATIONS WHICH CAME AGAINST JERUSALEM SHALL GO UP FROM YEAR TO YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS...” Zech. 14:9,16

“AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.”

Rev. 20:4

THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

“THEN TO HIM WAS GIVEN 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 THE ONE WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED...BUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL RECEIVE THE KINGDOM, AND POSSESS THE KINGDOM FOREVER, EVEN FOREVER AND EVER...AND THE TIME CAME FOR THE SAINTS TO POSSESS THE KINGDOM...THEN THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION, AND THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOMS UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE, THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH. HIS KINGDOM IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM, AND ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM.”

Daniel 7: 14,18, 22, 27

The third stage of the Kingdom of God is the eternal one. Daniel's description is mind-boggling. Ponder it well for it will last forever:

“THEN TO HIM WAS GIVEN 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 THE ONE WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED...BUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL RECEIVE THE KINGDOM, AND POSSESS THE KINGDOM FOREVER, EVEN FOREVER AND EVER...AND THE TIME CAME FOR THE SAINTS TO POSSESS THE KINGDOM...THEN THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION, AND THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOMS UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE, THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH. HIS KINGDOM IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM, AND ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM.”

Daniel 7:14, 18, 22, 27



Jesus tells His disciples (and us) what it will take to rule and reign in the eternal Kingdom that Daniel describes. It will not be handed over to us on a silver platter due to God's saving grace as the broad-way gospel claims. Here is what Jesus told His disciples:



“BUT YOU ARE THOSE WHO HAVE CONTINUED WITH ME IN MY TRIALS. AND I BESTOW UPON YOU A KINGDOM, JUST AS MY FATHER BESTOWED ONE UPON ME, THAT YOU MAY EAT AND DRINK AT MY TABLE, IN MY KINGDOM, AND SIT ON THRONES...”

Luke 22:28-30

If we reign with Christ, it will be because we suffered and endured with Christ (2 Tim. 2:11-12). Jesus gives these promises conditionally to “those who have continued with Me in My trials.” Listen to His words pertaining to what we can expect our life on earth to be like if we choose to follow in His steps:

“IF THE WORLD HATES YOU, YOU KNOW THAT IT HATED ME BEFORE IT HATED YOU. IF YOU WERE OF THE WORLD, THE WORLD WOULD LOVE ITS OWN. YET BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, BUT I CHOSE YOU OUT OF THE WORLD, THEREFORE THE WORLD HATES YOU. REMEMBER THE WORD THAT I SAID TO YOU, A SERVANT IS NOT GREATER THAN HIS MASTER. IF THEY PERSECUTED ME, THEY WILL ALSO PERSECUTE YOU. IF THEY KEPT MY WORD, THEY WILL KEEP YOURS ALSO. BUT ALL THESE THINGS THEY WILL DO TO YOU FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT KNOW HIM WHO SENT ME.”

John 15:18-21

Jesus would not yield to Satan's offer of the kingdoms of this world, therefore he hated and persecuted Him relentlessly. Jesus went out "preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God." Most of the world, especially the religious world, hated Him for His message and persecuted Him unmercifully. What then can you or I expect if we also reject Satan's counterfeit kingdoms and go forth preaching the message of the Master "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand?" What can you expect from the world if you reject the idea of America being a divinely commissioned "New Israel?" What can you expect if you also reject the political gospel of "One Nation Under God" that is endorsed by the majority of Christians in this country? What can you expect if you choose not to follow the flow of patriotism that is presently being advocated as being in harmony with God's Word? You can expect to receive what Jesus said you would receive, hatred and persecution. However, it will be worth it all in the end! Jesus told His disciples:

**"BUT YOU ARE THOSE WHO HAVE CONTINUED WITH ME
IN MY TRIALS. AND I BESTOW UPON YOU A KINGDOM,
JUST AS MY FATHER BESTOWED ONE UPON ME,
THAT YOU MAY EAT AND DRINK AT MY TABLE,
IN MY KINGDOM, AND SIT ON THRONES..."**

Luke 22:28-30



**"...AND FROM
THE DAYS OF
JOHN THE BAPTIST UNTIL
THE PRESENT TIME
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN HAS
ENDURED VIOLENT ASSAULT,
AND VIOLENT MEN
SEIZE IT BY FORCE
AS A PRECIOUS PRIZE,
A SHARE IN THE HEAVENLY
KINGDOM IS SOUGHT FOR WITH
THE MOST ARDENT ZEAL
AND INTENSE EXERTION."**

Matt. 11:12-13 Amp.



John the Baptist began preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Jesus went forth with the same message. Those to whom it was preached grabbed hold of the vision and saw the Kingdom as "a precious prize to be sought for with the most ardent zeal and intense exertion." What has happened to such Kingdom vision here in America? It has been doctrinally set aside for an earthly vision, for the cherished traditions of men, for an ill-fated attempt by Christians to make America become the manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth. This was the error of the Puritans who believed America was to be the New Israel of God. I pray that by now you are seeing that this is not the gospel of Jesus Christ!

CHAPTER SIX

“THE UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM”

“SEE THAT YOU DO NOT REFUSE HIM WHO SPEAKS. FOR IF THEY DID NOT ESCAPE WHO REFUSED HIM ON EARTH, MUCH MORE SHALL WE NOT ESCAPE IF WE TURN AWAY FROM HIM WHO SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN, WHOSE VOICE THEN SHOOK THE EARTH;



BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED, SAYING, “YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN.” NOW THIS, “YET ONCE MORE,” INDICATES THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN.

THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN, LET US HAVE GRACE, BY WHICH WE MAY SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR. FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.”

Hebrews 12:25-29

I stress the fact that this is a present-tense proclamation, we are presently receiving a Kingdom which cannot be shaken, not that we will receive it in the future. What Paul is setting forth is for the present, not for the future.



“YOU ARE HERE”



“You are here” is a reality check. Although there is a progressiveness to the Kingdom of God as this diagram reveals, we are still in the initial stage of God’s Kingdom on earth. It is the internal Kingdom which abides in the heart of the born-again believer who has Kingdom vision.

THE **INTERNAL** KINGDOM

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU."

Luke 17:20-21

THE **EXTERNAL** KINGDOM

"THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD HAVE BECOME
THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST..."

Rev. 11:15

"AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED
WITH CHRIST FOR A THOUSAND YEARS."

Rev. 20:4

THE **ETERNAL** KINGDOM

"THE SAINTS POSSESS THE KINGDOM
FOREVER, EVEN FOREVER AND EVER."

Dan. 7: 18

We should be looking forward to the millennial reign of Christ when He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, but this is not the appointed time. We should be looking forward to what Daniel Chapter 7 portrays as the forever state of the Kingdom, but this is not the appointed time either.

We must for the present live in the initial stage of the Kingdom of God, the one which abides in the hearts of His people who have truly experienced the new birth. This present manifestation of the Kingdom is part of the unshakable Kingdom of God! Consider once more Paul's words of exhortation:

**"...BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED, SAYING,
"YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO
HEAVEN." NOW THIS, "YET ONCE MORE," INDICATES THE REMOVAL
OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT
ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY
REMAIN. THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH
CANNOT BE SHAKEN, LET US HAVE GRACE, BY WHICH WE MAY SERVE
GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR.
FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE."**

Hebrews 12:25-29

These are words recorded for you and me. They contain God's instructions for His people in this present age. They are written to a people who are (presently) receiving a Kingdom which cannot be shaken. This unshakable Kingdom is not to be relegated to a future event but rather is a present reality that began with this event:

**"HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS
AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE,
IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD,
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." Col. 1:13-14**

These verses demonstrate the proper preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom. Notice the forgiveness of sins by His blood is not the principle truth Paul sets forth but rather is secondary. Foremost on Paul's mind is the exchange of kingdoms that the believer receives by the hand of God. Why did God translate us into His Kingdom? He did so in order to deliver us from the power of darkness.

"HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE, IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." Col. 1:13-14

"...OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS, THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE..." Gal. 1:3-4

Note that God had a reason as to why Christ died for our sins. It was to deliver us from this present evil age. How is He going to accomplish that? He delivers us from the power of darkness by translating us into the Kingdom of His Son! Where must we abide to be safely delivered from the power of darkness? We must abide in the present manifestation of the Kingdom of God. I presented this chart to you in the last chapter. Consider it again for it will help you achieve the goal of living in the present with a vision for the future:

A VISION FOR THIS PRESENT LIFE

A VISION FOR THE LIFE TO COME

"THE PROGRESSIVE KINGDOM"



SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IN TIME

"THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE" Gal. 1:4

"HE WHO IS BORN OF GOD KEEPS HIMSELF AND THE WICKED ONE DOES NOT TOUCH HIM... WE KNOW THAT WE ARE OF GOD AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIES UNDER THE SWAY OF THE WICKED ONE."

1 Jn. 5:18-19



PHYSICAL KINGDOM IN TIMELESS ETERNITY

"THE AGES TO COME" Eph. 2:7

"WE LOOK FOR A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH IN WHICH RIGHTEOUSNESS DWELLS. THEREFORE LOOKING FORWARD TO THESE THINGS, BE DILIGENT TO BE FOUND BY HIM IN PEACE, WITHOUT SPOT AND BLAMELESS."

2 Pet. 3:13-14

John places a responsibility on the one who is born again to keep (guard) himself in such a manner that the wicked one cannot touch him. There is only one way to do that and it is by safely abiding in, and being content with the Kingdom of God. Notice in contrast, the whole world is under the sway of the wicked one.

This passage from the apostle Peter focuses our attention on the Kingdom which is to come, but note that he also emphasizes the need to work diligently to be found "in peace, without spot and blameless." The vision of the future should impact how we live in the present!

The more that the Kingdom of God abides in our hearts, the more we will be able to firmly reject the kingdoms of this world and all of their vain and temporal glory. Consider Paul's attitude toward this world:

"GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD GLORY EXCEPT IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHICH THE WORLD HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED TO ME, AND I TO THE WORLD." Gal. 6:14

Is not this what God wants for us as well, to be crucified to the world, and the world crucified to us? What else could Jesus be referring to when He said to all that would follow after Him:

"THEN HE SAID TO THEM ALL, "IF ANYONE DESIRES TO COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME."
Luke 9:23

To bear such a cross in this temporal life, we must hold dear the complete vision of the Kingdom of God. Here it is again:

FIRST THE **INTERNAL** KINGDOM

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD. IF MY KINGDOM WERE OF THIS WORLD, MY SERVANTS WOULD FIGHT, SO THAT I SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED TO THE JEWS; BUT NOW MY KINGDOM IS NOT FROM HERE." John 18:36

"NOW WHEN HE WAS ASKED BY THE PHARISEES WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD WOULD COME, HE ANSWERED... "THE KINGDOM OF GOD DOES NOT COME WITH OBSERVATION; NOR WILL THEY SAY, "SEE HERE!" OR "SEE THERE!"

FOR INDEED THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU." Luke 17:20-21

SECOND THE **EXTERNAL** KINGDOM

"THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD HAVE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER!" Rev. 11:15

"AND THE LORD SHALL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH, IN THAT DAY IT SHALL BE...ALL THE NATIONS WHICH CAME AGAINST JERUSALEM SHALL GO UP FROM YEAR TO YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS..." Zech. 14:9,16

"AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST FOR A THOUSAND YEARS." Rev. 20:4

THIRD THE **ETERNAL** KINGDOM

"THEN TO HIM WAS GIVEN 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 THE ONE WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED...BUT THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH SHALL RECEIVE THE KINGDOM, AND POSSESS THE KINGDOM FOREVER, EVEN FOREVER AND EVER...AND THE TIME CAME FOR THE SAINTS TO POSSESS THE KINGDOM...THEN THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION, AND THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOMS UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE, THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH. HIS KINGDOM IS AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM, AND HIS DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM." Daniel 7:14,18, 22, 27

Having laid the foundation of the importance of having Kingdom vision, let us return to our chapter text.

"...BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED, SAYING, "YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN."

NOW THIS, "YET ONCE MORE," INDICATES THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN.

THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN, LET US HAVE GRACE, BY WHICH WE MAY SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR. FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE."

Hebrews 12:25-29

There is much more contained within these verses than the fact that "we are receiving a Kingdom which cannot be shaken." God states that He is going to "shake not only the earth, but also heaven." He also tells us what is His objective in doing so:

"...THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT ("in order that") THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN."

The shaking of which God speaks is designed to remove "those things that are made." I believe this refers to all things that are made by Satan or man-made that are in opposition and conflict with the Kingdom of God. He is going to reveal what is not part of His "unshakable Kingdom" by shaking everything in heaven and on earth that have been created as substitutes for, or counterfeits of, His Kingdom. Let me illustrate by showing you things that are "in heaven and on earth" that God intends to shake to the core in these last days prior to His return. One area is in heaven and the other is on earth. One is of Satanic origin and the other is the creation of man under Satan's influence. These two passages will identify them for us:

"BEWARE LEST ANYONE CHEAT YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND EMPTY DECEIT, ACCORDING TO THE TRADITION OF MEN, ACCORDING TO THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD, AND NOT ACCORDING TO CHRIST." Col. 2:8-9



"FOR WE DO NOT WRESTLE AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST PRINCIPALITIES, AGAINST POWERS, AGAINST THE RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS AGE, AGAINST SPIRITUAL HOSTS OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES." Eph. 6:12



**“BEWARE
LEST ANYONE CHEAT YOU
THROUGH PHILOSOPHY
AND EMPTY DECEIT,
ACCORDING TO THE
TRADITION OF MEN,
ACCORDING TO THE BASIC
PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD,
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**“FOR WE DO NOT
WRESTLE AGAINST FLESH
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AGAINST PRINCIPALITIES,
AGAINST POWERS,
AGAINST THE RULERS OF
THE DARKNESS OF THIS
AGE, AGAINST SPIRITUAL
HOSTS OF WICKEDNESS
IN THE HEAVENLY
PLACES.”**

Eph. 6:12



**“...BUT NOW HE HAS
PROMISED,
SAYING,
“YET ONCE MORE
I SHAKE
NOT ONLY
THE EARTH,
BUT
ALSO HEAVEN.”**



1. PHILOSOPHY
2. EMPTY DECEIT
3. TRADITION OF MEN
4. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD

1. PRINCIPALITIES
2. POWERS
3. RULERS OF THE DARKNESS
4. WICKEDNESS IN HEAVENLY PLACES

The number 4 in Scripture numerics is the number of the world. Two examples are displayed above. Satan, as the wicked one, has the whole world under his sway or influence (1 Jn. 5:19). These two groupings of four each show us how he is keeping the world under his influence. He does so from the heavenlies with his hosts of wickedness and from earth itself by working through mankind which is alienated from God. Paul speaks of the latter as a warning to all believers:

“THIS I SAY, THEREFORE, AND TESTIFY IN THE LORD, THAT YOU SHOULD NO LONGER WALK AS THE REST OF THE GENTILES WALK, IN THE FUTILITY OF THEIR MIND, HAVING THEIR UNDERSTANDING DARKENED, BEING ALIENATED FROM THE LIFE OF GOD, BECAUSE OF THEIR IGNORANCE THAT IS IN THEM, BECAUSE OF THE HARDENING OF THE HEART; WHO, BEING PAST FEELING, HAVE GIVEN THEMSELVES OVER TO LICENTIOUSNESS, TO WORK WITH ALL UNCLEANNESS WITH GREEDINESS. BUT YOU HAVE NOT SO LEARNED CHRIST.”

Eph. 4:17-20

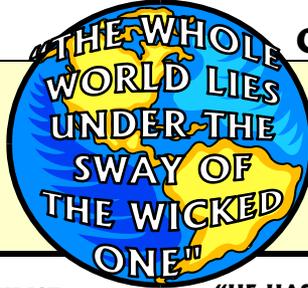
God is going to shake the earth of its “philosophy, empty deceit, tradition of men and the basic principles of the world.” If we, as God’s people, are still walking in the world’s “philosophy, empty deceit, tradition of men and the basic principles of the world,” then we are going to be shaken along with the rest of the world.

"...NOW THIS, "YET ONCE MORE," INDICATES THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN."

Hebrews 12:27

"THE KINGDOM

- 1. PHILOSOPHY**
- 2. EMPTY DECEIT**
- 3. THE TRADITION OF MEN**
- 4. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD**



OF DARKNESS"

- 1. PRINCIPALITIES**
- 2. POWERS**
- 3. RULERS OF THE DARKNESS**
- 4. WICKEDNESS IN HEAVENLY PLACES**

"...OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS, THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US FROM THIS PRESENT EVIL AGE..."

Gal. 1:3-4

"HE HAS DELIVERED US FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS AND TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF HIS LOVE, IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS."

Col. 1:13-14

Very graphically portrayed above are the things that Jesus has delivered us from by means of translating us into His Kingdom.

These are the things that God wants to purge completely from our lives.

Hear this:

GOD IS GOING TO SHAKE ALL THINGS THAT ARE STILL IN OUR LIVES BELONGING TO THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS AND REPLACE THEM WITH THINGS THAT BELONG TO HIS UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM.

As I wrote this statement it brought to mind a couple of old rock and roll tunes that I grew up with (but grew out of) entitled, "Whole Lot of Shakin' Going On" and "Shake Rattle and Roll." How much shaking is going on in your life? Is your marriage, as they say, "on the rocks?" Are your children, having grown up under your brand of Christianity, now "departing from the faith" in spite of the Scripture promising that "when they become old, they will not depart?" As a Christian, do you find yourself considering bankruptcy as a way out of your over indebtedness? Are you among those spinning their wheels in an attempt to eliminate abortion, pornography and homosexuality in our society only to see it increase all the more? Are you frustratingly still looking for the right political candidate who has all the right answers to the questions posed by the Religious Right? If so, get ready, for there is going to be, as the old rock and roll song says, a "whole lot of shaking going on!"

“THIS I SAY, THEREFORE, AND TESTIFY IN THE LORD, THAT YOU SHOULD NO LONGER WALK AS THE REST OF THE GENTILES WALK, IN THE FUTILITY OF THEIR MIND, HAVING THEIR UNDERSTANDING DARKENED, BEING ALIENATED FROM THE LIFE OF GOD, BECAUSE OF THEIR IGNORANCE THAT IS IN THEM, BECAUSE OF THE HARDENING OF THE HEART; WHO, BEING PAST FEELING, HAVE GIVEN THEMSELVES OVER TO LICENTIOUSNESS, TO WORK WITH ALL UNCLEANNESS WITH GREEDINESS. BUT YOU HAVE NOT SO LEARNED CHRIST.”

Eph. 4:17-20

How do the Gentiles walk that are under the sway of the wicked one?
Here are some examples;

PHILOSOPHY

Religious and secular humanism, evolution, and intellectualism.

THE TRADITION OF MEN

Religion or religiously-based patriotism, (4th of July celebrations in the church)
America as a God-ordained Christian nation, (“One nation Under God”, God’s New Israel,)
Pagan based celebrations of Christmas and Easter



EMPTY DECEIT

Madison Ave. propaganda, from the greedy merchants of the earth” 2 Pet. 2:3

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD

“All that is in the world that is not of the Father: is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.”
1 Jn. 2:15-16

These are dangerous influences to God’s people! We could spend a lot of time here amplifying these maladies, but we will not. Just know that such things are what God intends to shake to the core, and especially in the lives of His people. Consider once more the text we are pursuing:

“SEE THAT YOU DO NOT REFUSE HIM WHO SPEAKS. FOR IF THEY DID NOT ESCAPE WHO REFUSED HIM ON EARTH, MUCH MORE SHALL WE NOT ESCAPE IF WE TURN AWAY FROM HIM WHO SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN, WHOSE VOICE THEN SHOOK THE EARTH; BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED, SAYING, “YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN.” NOW THIS, “YET ONCE MORE,” INDICATES THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN.

Hebrews 12:25-27

God wants us not to “refuse Him who speaks”. How does He speak to us? The very epistle from which our text is taken tells us:

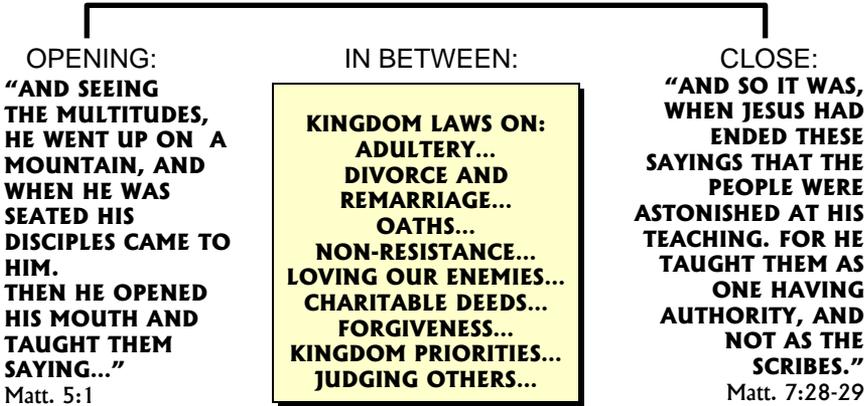
“GOD, WHO AT VARIOUS TIMES AND IN DIFFERENT WAYS SPOKE IN TIME PAST TO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS, HAS IN THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN TO US BY HIS SON...” Heb. 1:1-2

“THEREFORE THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS: “TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION...” Heb. 3:7-8

How does God speak to us? He speaks through His Son and through the Holy Spirit. How does He speak through Jesus and the Holy Spirit? He speaks by means of His written Word. Do you realize that Jesus **IS** the Word of God? (Jn. 1:1,14, Rev. 19:13). Do you also realize that the Holy Spirit authored the Word? (2 Pet.1:21). Are you aware that the Word of God is called “The Sword of the Spirit”? (Eph. 6:17).

Earlier, in chapter three of this book, we considered Matthew chapter 5-7 as an expression of how Jesus speaks to us. He summed up all that He taught in these three chapters with the phrase:

“THESE SAYINGS OF MINE” Matt. 7:24



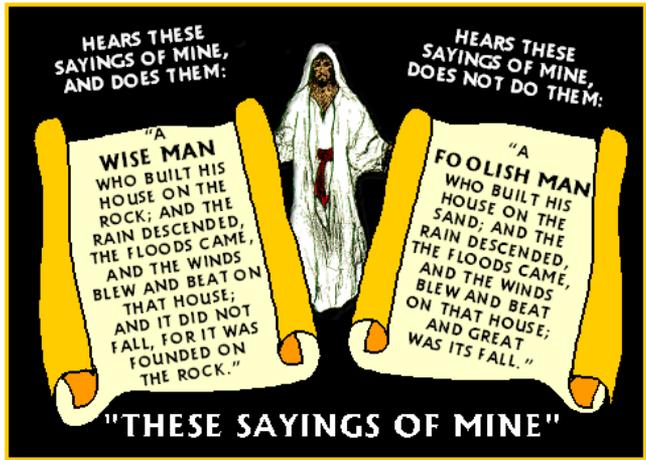
I am recommending these chapters as an on going source of meditation to you because they contain the cure for all that is in our lives that can be shaken. What lies in between the opening and closing verses are the principles that govern the Kingdom of God. As we have learned, they are the Kingdom laws that govern God’s unshakable Kingdom. It is such law that God wants to write on the hearts of all New Covenant believers (Heb.8:10). It is such Kingdom laws that will set apart the people of God from the priorities of the world. Jesus said, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” Has Jesus changed His mind over the last 2,000 years? I think not! It is God’s Kingdom laws are directly opposite to the laws that govern earthly kingdoms who are under the bondage of Satan’s rule. These Kingdom laws stand in direct opposition to all the “philosophy, empty deceit, tradition of men, and the basic principles of the world” which hold the world under the sway of the wicked one. Unless we, as God’s people, replace these things with God’s Kingdom laws, we are going to be among those who will be shaken by God’s last-day shaking of heaven and earth!

“COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, LEST YOU SHARE IN HER SINS, AND LEST YOU RECEIVE OF HER PLAGUES.”
 Rev. 18: 4

“COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN.”
 2 Cor. 6:17

Contained within the three chapters of Matthew that I recommended to you is this “moral to the story” which Jesus used to summarize all that He has said:

Note the reference to “these sayings of Mine” for they include all that He has said in chapters 5-7. The believer who hears these sayings of Jesus and does them is likened to a wise man who builds his house on a rock.



The man who “hears but does not do” is called a foolish man who builds his house on a foundation of sand. Sand is representative of things like “philosophy, empty deceit, tradition of men, and the basic principles of the world” rather than the basic principles of the Word.

Note that both houses, the house of the wise and the house of the foolish, receive “rain, floods, and wind” that beat on them. No one is immune to the trials and pressures of life, that come upon all.



For some, God will shake up the things that are in their lives that are not founded on the rock of His sayings! Only the house of the wise is able to stand up to the pounding of the “rain, floods, and wind” that God allows to come. The house of the foolish falls, and “great is its fall.” Why? Because its foundation was only sand, the sayings of men rather than the sayings of God.

When the results we experience are not according to the content of the promises of God such as “train up a child in the way that he is to go, and when he is old he will not depart from it”, then we must question the methods we are using to obtain the end result. We can be following the philosophy of this world and at the same time quoting the promises of God. We must embrace the principles that are attached to the promises God gives. You will not get the right results with the wrong philosophy. Do you believe in spanking a disobedient child? The Bible does (Prov. 13:24, 19:18). Do you believe in divorce? God hates it (Mal. 2:16). Do you believe homosexuality is an alternate lifestyle and that people are born that way? God condemns it and calls it sin (Rom.1:26-28). Do you watch violent movies? God hates those who feed on violence (Psm.11:5). There is a principle that says we reap only what we sow:

**“DO NOT BE DECEIVED, GOD IS NOT MOCKED;
FOR WHATEVER A MAN SOWS, THAT HE WILL ALSO REAP. FOR HE WHO
SOWS TO HIS FLESH WILL OF THE FLESH REAP CORRUPTION, BUT HE WHO
SOWS TO THE SPIRIT WILL OF THE SPIRIT REAP EVERLASTING LIFE.
AND LET US NOT GROW WEARY WHILE DOING GOOD,
FOR IN DUE SEASON WE SHALL REAP IF WE DO NOT LOSE HEART.”**

Gal. 6:7-9

Obviously, God is seeking to impart a note of sobriety to the aspect of sowing and reaping. Notice that it is prefaced by a warning against “being deceived” and “mocking God.” These are verses written to believers who choose to continue to “sow to the flesh.” The warning is that those who do so will end up reaping the corruption of the flesh instead of everlasting life (Gal. 6:8). I know that this premise is the opposite of today’s popular theology of unconditional eternal security. It is the doctrine coined with the cliché “once saved-always saved.” However, I believe such doctrines are the very breeding ground for (1) “being deceived” and (2) “mocking God.” Can you not hear Paul shouting, “What? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? (Rom. 6:1). Paul answers his own rhetorical question with an emphatic “Certainly not!” However, subtly this false doctrine of unconditional eternal security conveys the thought “Certainly so!”

Notice the positive aspect of the sowing and reaping principle; “He who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:8). This whole principle of sowing and reaping is tied to the previous chapter of Galatians in which Paul enumerates the 21 works of the flesh and the 9 fruits of the Spirit. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap the works of the flesh. If you sow to the Spirit, you will reap the fruit of the Spirit. We only reap what we sow! The fruits of the Spirit are not the gifts of the Spirit! We must sow if we are going to reap! This depicts the call to “Walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16), to be “Filled with the Spirit” (Eph.5:18), not to “Grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph.4:30), and to “Hear what the Spirit says...” (Rev. 3:13).

“DO NOT BE DECEIVED, GOD IS NOT MOCKED; FOR WHATEVER A MAN SOWS, THAT HE WILL ALSO REAP. FOR HE WHO SOWS TO HIS FLESH WILL OF THE FLESH REAP CORRUPTION, BUT HE WHO SOWS TO THE SPIRIT WILL OF THE SPIRIT REAP EVERLASTING LIFE. AND LET US NOT GROW WEARY WHILE DOING GOOD, FOR IN DUE SEASON WE SHALL REAP IF WE DO NOT LOSE HEART.” Gal. 6:7-9

If we understand the immense importance that the sowing and reaping principle plays in God’s Kingdom, both for the present manifestation and for the future, then look with me at yet another aspect of our chapter text:

“...SINCE WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN, LET US HAVE GRACE, BY WHICH WE MAY SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR...” Hebrews 12:25-29

This time I would like to draw your attention to Paul’s challenge to have a brand of grace which will enable us to “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” There is only one kind of grace that will achieve that objective:

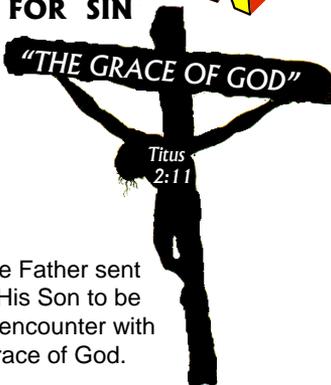
“THIS IS THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD IN WHICH WE STAND”

1 Pet. 5:12

GRACE THAT GIVES

PARDON AND

FOR SIN



God the Father sent Jesus His Son to be our first encounter with the grace of God.

GRACE THAT GIVES

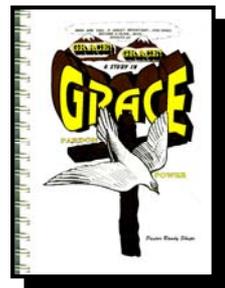
POWER OVER SIN



God the Father sent the Holy Spirit of grace to be our on going encounter with the grace of God.

Much too often, and especially in the broad-way gospel, only half of the grace of God is presented. Therefore His people walk in grace which pardons but not in grace containing power!

God wants His people to receive not only grace that pardons, but also grace that empowers. If you have never heard of such empowering grace then let me recommend once more to you this book I wrote on that very topic: _____→



CHAPTER SEVEN

"THE EPILOGUE"

At the final curtain of a play, one of the main actors usually comes forth to deliver an epilogue. Shakespeare believed that an epilogue enhanced the body of the play.



Webster defines an epilogue as:

"THE FINAL PART THAT SERVES TYPICALLY TO ROUND OUT OR COMPLETE THE DESIGN OF A LITERARY WORK, A SUMMARIZING POINT SET BEFORE THE AUDIENCE."

Here is what I believe Jesus, the main character of the story I have set before you, would deliver as an epilogue. It is a quote from the lips of God found in Jeremiah 21:8:

**"NOW YOU SHALL SAY TO THIS PEOPLE,
THUS SAYS THE LORD:
"BEHOLD,
I SET BEFORE YOU**

**THE
WAY
OF
LIFE**

"...NARROW IS THE GATE AND DIFFICULT IS THE WAY WHICH LEADS TO LIFE, AND THERE ARE FEW WHO FIND IT."

Matthew 7:14

AND



**THE
WAY
OF
DEATH"**

"...WIDE IS THE GATE, AND BROAD IS THE WAY THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND THERE ARE MANY WHO GO IN BY IT."

Matthew 7:13

As a minister, and as a teacher of God's Word, I want to address you, the reader of this book, personally. You are in one camp or the other. By that I simply mean that you are either on the pathway of life or you are on the pathway of death. There is no middle ground. There are only two choices that God sets before each one of us. Let us consider them both as we conclude this book.

**“SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU TODAY LIFE AND GOOD,
DEATH AND EVIL....I CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES
TODAY AGAINST YOU, THAT I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU
LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING;
THEREFORE CHOOSE LIFE...”**

Deut. 30:15,19

LIFE...

GOOD...

BLESSING...



DEATH...

EVIL...

CURSING...

**To those who are already
Christians, born again
believers through faith
in Jesus Christ:**

**To those who have not yet
chosen to become born
again believers through the
saving grace of Jesus Christ:**

I would like to begin with these
exhortative words of Peter:

I would like to begin my thoughts
with an invitation from the Lord
Himself:

**“FINALLY,
ALL OF YOU BE OF ONE MIND,
HAVING COMPASSION FOR ONE
ANOTHER,
LOVE AS BROTHERS,
BE TENDERHEARTED,
BE COURTEOUS;
NOT RETURNING EVIL FOR EVIL
OR REVILING FOR REVILING,
BUT ON THE CONTRARY
BLESSING, KNOWING THAT YOU
WERE CALLED TO THIS, THAT
YOU MAY INHERIT A BLESSING.
FOR**

**“COME NOW,
AND LET US REASON
TOGETHER,” SAYS THE LORD,
“THOUGH YOUR SINS ARE
LIKE SCARLET, THEY SHALL BE
WHITE AS SNOW; THOUGH
THEY BE RED LIKE CRIMSON,
THEY SHALL BE AS WOOL.
IF YOU ARE WILLING AND
OBEDIENT, YOU SHALL EAT
THE GOOD OF THE LAND; BUT
IF YOU REFUSE AND REBEL,
YOU SHALL BE DEVoured BY
THE SWORD”; FOR THE
MOUTH OF THE LORD HAS
SPOKEN.”**

Isa. 1:18-20

**HE WHO WOULD LOVE LIFE
AND SEE GOOD DAYS, LET HIM
REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM
EVIL, AND HIS LIPS FROM
SPEAKING GUILE LET HIM TURN
AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO
GOOD; LET HIM SPEAK PEACE
AND PURSUE IT. FOR THE EYES
OF THE LORD ARE ON THE
RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ARE
OPEN TO THEIR PRAYERS;
BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD
IS AGAINST THOSE
WHO DO EVIL.”**

1 Pet. 3:8-12

**“SEEK THE LORD WHILE
HE MAY BE FOUND,
CALL UPON HIM WHILE HE IS
NEAR. LET THE WICKED
FORSAKE HIS WAY, AND THE
UNRIGHTEOUS MAN HIS
THOUGHTS; LET HIM RETURN
TO THE LORD, AND HE WILL
HAVE MERCY ON HIM;
AND TO OUR GOD,
FOR HE WILL ABUNDANTLY
PARDON.”**

Isa. 55:6-7

**"SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU TODAY LIFE AND GOOD, DEATH AND EVIL....
I CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES TODAY AGAINST YOU, THAT I HAVE
SET BEFORE YOU LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING;
THEREFORE CHOOSE LIFE..."**

Deut. 30:15,19

LIFE...

GOOD...

BLESSING...

DEATH...

EVIL...

CURSING...



("to my Christian brethren" cont.)

("to those who are not..." cont.)

Paul has warned us that we, the Christians, will have a day in court with the Righteous Judge:

**"WE MAKE IT OUR AIM...
TO BE WELL PLEASING TO HIM,
FOR WE MUST ALL APPEAR
BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF
CHRIST, THAT EACH ONE MAY
RECEIVE THE THINGS DONE IN
THE BODY, ACCORDING TO
WHAT HE HAS DONE, WHETHER
GOOD OR BAD. KNOWING,
THEREFORE THE TERROR OF THE
LORD, WE PERSUADE MEN..."**

2 Cor. 5:9-11

**"...FOR WE SHALL ALL STAND
BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT
OF CHRIST...
EACH OF US SHALL
GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF
TO GOD."**

Rom. 14:10-12

This judgment is not for confessed sins that have been forgiven by means of godly sorrow and repentance. Rather the Judgment Seat of Christ will be a judgment for how we have lived as subjects of the Kingdom of God. Have we been law-keepers or law-breakers? Have we progressed beyond the initial blessing of the Lord as our Savior? Have we embraced the fullness of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives as "King, Lawgiver and (eventually) Judge?" (Isa. 33:22).

The God of the Bible is a Righteous Judge. No one will ever be able to charge Him with doing wrong for the Scriptures records "For true and righteous are all His judgments" (Rev.19:2). God does not send anyone to hell by His decision, but rather it is man's own choice (or the lack of making one) which makes hell his eternal abode. All through the Scriptures God calls man to choose between "life and death, good and evil, blessing and cursing". Consider His plea to people like yourself:

**"SAY TO THEM;
"AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD GOD,
I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN THE
DEATH OF THE WICKED, BUT
THAT THE WICKED TURN FROM
HIS WAY AND LIVE. TURN, TURN
FROM YOUR EVIL WAYS!
FOR WHY SHOULD YOU DIE...?"**

Ezek. 33:11

**"THE LORD...
IS LONGSUFFERING TOWARD US,
NOT WILLING THAT ANY PERISH
BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO
REPENTANCE." 1 Pet. 3:9**

We can see that passages like these show that God does not desire for any to perish in eternal hell fire, but many will, and it will be by their own choice that they go to this awful place of eternal torment. God says, "Choose..."

**“SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU TODAY LIFE AND GOOD, DEATH AND EVIL....
I CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES TODAY AGAINST YOU,
THAT I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING;
THEREFORE CHOOSE LIFE...”**

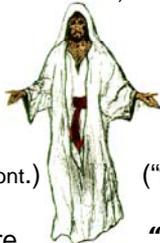
Deut. 30:15,19

LIFE...

GOOD...

BLESSING...

(“to my Christian brethren” cont.)



DEATH...

EVIL...

CURSING...

(“to those who are not...” cont.)

Perhaps, as a believer, you are living above sin such as we find enumerated in Galatians 5:19-21 and rightly so, we should! However, may I ask you, are you also abstaining from being “entangled in the affairs of this life” as we are admonished by Paul in 2nd Timothy 2:4? Is your citizenship in heaven or are you all wrapped up in the affairs of earthly citizenship and zealously seeking political solutions for what are spiritual problems? Are you living in the Kingdom of God or are you fighting for the kingdoms of this world through the Religious Right which isn’t even right religion? Do you have the right kind of faith such as we find in the “heroes of faith” chapter?:

**“ABRAHAM... WAITED
FOR THE CITY WHICH HAS
FOUNDATIONS, WHOSE BUILDER
AND MAKER IS GOD...
THEY CONFESSED THAT THEY
WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS
ON EARTH. FOR THOSE WHO SAY
SUCH THINGS DECLARE PLAINLY
THAT THEY SEEK A HOMETLAND.
AND TRULY IF THEY HAD CALLED
TO MIND THAT COUNTRY FROM
WHICH THEY HAD COME OUT,
THEY WOULD HAVE HAD
OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN.**



**“I WILL JUDGE YOU...EVERY
ONE ACCORDING TO HIS WAYS,
SAYS THE LORD GOD. REPENT,
AND TURN FROM ALL YOUR
TRANSGRESSIONS, SO THAT
INIQUITY WILL NOT BE YOUR
RUIN. CAST AWAY FROM YOU
ALL TRANSGRESSIONS WHICH
YOU HAVE COMMITTED, AND
GET YOURSELVES A NEW HEART
AND A NEW SPIRIT. FOR WHY
SHOULD YOU DIE? FOR I HAVE
NO PLEASURE IN THE DEATH
OF ONE WHO DIES,
SAYS THE LORD GOD.
THEREFORE TURN
AND LIVE!”**

Ezek. 18:30-32

The Scriptures I have quoted to you above come directly from the mouth of God as to what it takes to receive life! Note the heavy emphasis upon “repent, and turn.”

It would be worthwhile for you to compare the above quotes to the “salvation tract” that I printed on the first few pages of this book. What is missing? The call to “Repent and turn” from sin. Often in man’s paraphrasing of what God has said, the real thrust and emphasis is lost. Read what God has said in His Word!
It is His written Word which shall judge us (Jn. 12:48).

**“SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU TODAY LIFE AND GOOD, DEATH AND EVIL....
I CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES TODAY AGAINST YOU,
THAT I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING;
THEREFORE CHOOSE LIFE...”**

Deut. 30:15,19

LIFE...

DEATH...

GOOD...

EVIL...

BLESSING...

CURSING...

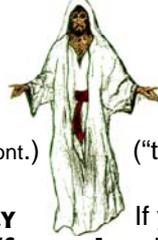
(“to my Christian brethren” cont.)

(“to those who are not...” cont.)

**BUT NOW THEY DESIRE A
BETTER, THAT IS, A HEAVENLY
COUNTRY. THEREFORE GOD IS
NOT ASHAMED TO BE CALLED
THEIR GOD, FOR HE HAS
PREPARED A CITY FOR THEM.”**

Heb. 11:10-16 excerpts

Notice that it is quite possible for God to be ashamed of His own people! What makes God ashamed of His own people? They are mindful of the country from which He has called them out! Dear believing friend, God calls us “the church” because it means “the called-out ones.” Abraham is called “the friend of God” (Jam.2:23). Is it not because He obeyed God’s command to “come out” from his own country and be content to have vision for a “better country, a heavenly one, whose builder and maker is God?” On what biblical authority does the Religious Right and the Moral Majority operate? The answer is none! They function by the constitution of the United States, not by the Word of God! This is one of Satan’s most clever and subtle deceptions that he has placed upon the American church! Take a hard look at this wayward emphasis of political-based Christianity. It is not a religious foundation based on the principles of the Kingdom of God!



If you have reached the point where you want to choose to repent and turn away from sin, then you are ready to receive God’s gift of righteousness. However, there is one more thing you need to ponder before committing your life to Christ. Jesus said, “count the cost”:

**“WHOEVER DOES NOT BEAR HIS
CROSS AND COME AFTER ME
CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE. FOR
WHICH OF YOU, INTENDING TO
BUILD A TOWER, DOES NOT SIT
DOWN FIRST AND COUNT THE
COST, WHETHER HE HAS
ENOUGH TO FINISH IT – LEST,
AFTER HE HAS LAID THE
FOUNDATION, AND IS NOT
ABLE TO FINISH IT, ALL WHO
SEE IT BEGIN TO MOCK HIM,
SAYING,
“THIS MAN BEGAN TO BUILD
AND WAS NOT ABLE
TO FINISH!”**

Luke 14:28-30

I stressed this point earlier in the book that Jesus is measuring people as potential disciples and not as potential converts. He wants His followers to count the cost attached to the gift of righteousness which leads to eternal life. Are you willing to become a subject of the Kingdom, regardless of the cost of following King Jesus?

**“SEE, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU TODAY LIFE AND GOOD, DEATH AND EVIL...
I CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH AS WITNESSES TODAY AGAINST YOU,
THAT I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING;
THEREFORE CHOOSE LIFE...”**

Deut. 30:15,19

LIFE...

GOOD...

BLESSING...

(“to my Christian brethren” cont.)

Who is going to be greatest in the Kingdom of God? Will it be the champions of the antiabortion movement? Will it be the champions of the anti-gay movement? Will it be those who labor in legal battles to get the ten commandments and prayer back in the schools? No to all the above! Jesus tells us who will be greatest and who will be least in the Kingdom of God:

“WHOEVER THEREFORE BREAKS ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE COMMANDMENTS, AND TEACHES MEN SO, SHALL BE CALLED LEAST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; BUT WHOEVER DOES AND TEACHES THEM, HE SHALL BE CALLED GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

Matt. 5:19

God’s rewards in His Kingdom are based on keeping His Kingdom commandments and not in keeping the cherished traditions of men which Jesus says, “makes the Word of God of no effect” (Mk. 7:13). One thing alone will be our judge in eternity:

“...HE WHO DOES NOT RECEIVE MY WORDS, HAS THAT WHICH JUDGES HIM – THE WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN WILL JUDGE HIM IN THE LAST DAY.”

Jn. 12:48

Pastor Randy Shupe

DEATH...

EVIL...

CURSING...

(“to those who are not...” cont.)

If you choose life, here is what you need to do:

“IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH THE LORD JESUS AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD HAS RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD YOU WILL BE SAVED.”

Rom. 10:9

“I ENTREAT YOUR FAVOR (GRACE) WITH MY WHOLE HEART; BE MERCIFUL TO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD. I THOUGHT ABOUT MY WAYS, AND TURNED MY FEET TO YOUR TESTIMONIES, I MADE HASTE AND DID NOT DELAY TO KEEP YOUR COMMANDMENTS.”

Psm. 119:58-60

“WASH ME THOROUGHLY FROM MY INIQUITY, AND CLEANSE ME FROM MY SIN.

FOR I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSIONS... AGAINST YOU, AND YOU ONLY, HAVE I SINNED...PURGE ME...WASH ME, AND I SHALL BE WHITER THAN SNOW...BLOT OUT ALL MY INIQUITIES...” Psm. 51:2-14 excerpts

“MOST ASSUREDLY, I SAY UNTO YOU, UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD...HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD...YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

Jn. 3:3-7 excerpts

If you have chosen (eternal) life over (eternal) death, and good over evil, God’s blessing instead of cursing, then welcome to the unshakable Kingdom of God!

Pastor Randy Shupe



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



"THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE TABERNACLE"
was founded in Pastor Shupe's home in 1980 after serving as a
lay teacher in the Assemblies of God for several years.

The church now resides in this building at
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Deeply impressed by the
illustrated teachings of the late
Clarence Larkin, and convinced that
"a picture is worth a thousand
words", Pastor Shupe has combined
his artistic talents with his God-given
gift of revelational teaching.

The illustrations in his books and
videos represent some of the visual
aids he prepares for the
feeding of his flock.



Pastor Randy Shupe

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THE NARROW-MINDED GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



Pastor Randy Shupe

TO NARROW –
“TO LIMIT, CONTRACT, DECREASE,
LESSEN, RESTRAIN...”

NARROW-MINDED-
“LACKING A BROAD PERSPECTIVE,
A LIMITED OR HAMPERED INTERPRETATION,
A LIMITED VIEW, TO BECOME LESS BROAD,
LESS LIBERAL IN THINKING,
VOID OF GENERALITIES”

Webster

Normally speaking, to be narrow-minded is not considered to be a positive attribute. We usually label people as being “narrow-minded” who are incapable or unwilling to consider a broader perspective of an issue. They are set in their limited view and no amount of sound logic, truth or reasoning will make any impact. They have, as one man comically described, “minds like concrete-thoroughly mixed up and firmly set”.

Taking into consideration Jesus’ description of the way of salvation as being one found only by a few, and factoring in Webster’s definition of “narrow” and “narrow-mindedness”, we can in a positive and respectful way conclude that Jesus is very narrow-minded when it comes to the pathway of salvation. However, quite the opposite is true of the modern-day preaching of the message of salvation. Most presentations of the gospel are quite broad-minded and liberally wide open, and I do not intend for that to be taken as a statement of approval. Although the broad-way of salvation is certainly more appealing to the masses than Jesus’ narrow view, this modern-day broad way to salvation leads rather unto destruction (“apoleia- eternal misery”) instead of the desired goal of eternal life.

The purpose of this booklet is to enable every true seeker of God to find what Jesus defines as the way of salvation.



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