

**THE
KINGDOM
OF GOD**

Gerrit Verstraete

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD, by Gerrit Verstraete is a consolidated and amplified text comprising all previous texts about the Kingdom of God. These previous texts include: Glimpses of the Kingdom; Codex Rex - Part I, the Rule of the King, and Part II, The Church and the Kingdom of God; Righteousness of the King; Sermon on the Mount; and Proverbs of the Kingdom. All these documents are under copyright protection by both the author Gerrit Verstraete, and the publisher Christian Communications Centre.

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*seek first the Kingdom of God
and its right and just ways
in order that you may
receive an abundant life
in truth of the Kingdom of God
by the inner and outward
work of the Spirit of God
who will overwhelm you
and fill you with
eternal assurance
peace, joy and power
and keep your life balanced
in all the matters of faith
and daily living*

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Foreword

During the spring of 2003, I had a great desire to return once again to all my teachings on the Kingdom of God. The last time I updated all my files, files that comprise many years of teaching on the subject, was 2002. However, I have become increasingly aware, the Kingdom of God remains as elusive to the understanding of so many as it was when I first began teaching the kingdom in 1987. That is not to say, no one teaches the Kingdom of God, nor has anyone received any profound revelation of that kingdom anymore. That would be both presumptuous on my part and rather arrogant as well. I am indebted to great teachers on the subject and I am of course indebted to the word of God itself. In order to consolidate all my writings about the Kingdom of God, or at least most of them, I have chosen to amplify my writings as well, with a hope that the new material will be friendly, easy to understand, and a blessing to all who have chosen to "*seek first the kingdom and its righteousness.*"

Many of these writings have appeared in numerous newspaper columns I have written about faith for some ten years. In addition, I have been deeply moved by the many doors that God has opened all these years to teach His kingdom, from as far away as in-person teaching trips to Ghana, West Africa, to the Canadian Arctic, Mexico, and throughout Canada, to correspondence students in the Philippines, New Zealand, England, India, Portugal, the United States, Jamaica, and Nigeria. May the Lord bless each and everyone of those students as I have long since lost touch with them. Nevertheless, my faith encourages me to believe the seeds I have sown have been and will continue to be sufficiently watered bringing about a rich harvest of fruit.

When joined with my journey as a fine artist, the Kingdom of God remains a source of great inspiration to me in that I have determined to walk this journey in the footsteps of *the* Master as well as walk in the footsteps of masters. One road is the spiritual river from which I drink abundantly, the other the creative well from which I draw generously. By the grace of God I delight in harvesting wonderful results from both journeys, two journeys that do not travel in opposite directions, nor are even parallel, but two journeys that are one and the same, by faith and by the leading of the Spirit of God. Michelangelo and Canada's John Gould are two of the masters in whose footsteps I have chosen to walk. Both Michelangelo and John have been a real encouragement to me in keeping a written account of my creative and spiritual journey, as both artists were prolific writers themselves.

It is my confident prayer that each person who reads these teachings, will be strengthened, encouraged and blessed in these perilous times, as the present age, which we know as the "*age of grace,*" is about to end. When the age of grace will end I do not know. No one knows except the Father, and to speculate about *when* is both foolishness and presumption. That time is better left to God Himself, while we seek His kingdom in holiness and godliness of conduct, ensuring those whom God entrusts to us, are given their proper food in the proper time, and that which we feed them is *the* truth of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness.

"Maranatha, come quickly Lord Jesus!"

Gerrit V.L.Verstraete

Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada, March 2003

Objectives

To be clear about what my heart's motive is for this consolidated and amplified text about my teachings on the Kingdom of God, I agree with the objectives of another teacher, the apostle of the New testament and early church, who we know as Paul. He said:

"We proclaim Him, admonishing everyone, and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present every man and woman complete in Christ.

For this purpose we labour, according to His power which works mightily within us, that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge concerning the Kingdom of God "

(Colossians 1:28, 29 / 2:2,3)

Observations

I began my journey in Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God during the summer of 1986. It had been five years since I experienced that glorious re-birth into God's family, and when I read one day that Jesus had made my journey's aim very clear, I became thoroughly convinced that I needed to hear and understand what He had to say about my journey and its aims.

I wondered what the kingdom really was and where would I find it? And if I were looking for it, would I know what it was I was looking for and would I recognize it? Jesus said in Matthew 6:33 that my priority in life would be *"to seek first the Kingdom of God, and its righteousness."* Then He continued to assure me that if I did seek that kingdom, somehow all the issues of life: spiritual issues, material issues, mental issues, bodily issues, issues of relationships, discipline, wealth, health, love, endurance, faith, all of them and more, would be looked after.

The Kingdom of God would also provide me with a balanced life, a balance especially needed in these times when "winds of doctrines" and man-made religion blow like a never-ending storm and people are tossed to and fro in its grip, unable to discern what is of the Spirit of God and what is not, what are true manifestations of God's presence and what are impostors.

That journey to seek His kingdom has answered many of my questions and yet has not answered perhaps equally as many and more. However, to begin to share this journey with others, I can lay confident claim to having observed many attitudes and thoughts about life and spirituality, both attitudes and thoughts of my heart and mind, and those in the hearts and minds of others. Some of these observations were the result of careful and in-depth study of both the Scriptures and the myriad of doctrinal truth in the church. Needless to say, I do not profess to be the sole authority nor a leading voice in regards to the Kingdom of God, because there is yet so much to learn and so much to be *"tried in the furnace of the earth,"* which is that journey called

my life. Therefore, I encourage everyone who reads this text, to check for him or herself everything about the Kingdom of God in "*that most sure way*" we know as the Bible, the genuine record of God's will for mankind and the only true and authoritative copy of His covenant with Jesus for the men, women, and children, He calls His eternal family.

The following text is not intended to be a conventional "book." Instead it is a compilation of notes, headlines, observations, teaching, and short commentary, whose source is hundreds of pages I have written about the kingdom over a period of nearly twenty years. Throughout those years I have been blessed to *sit at the feet* of some of the greatest teachers who each in their own special way made a search for the Kingdom of God, their priority. These include: Bob Mumford, Charles Colson, John Bright, George Eldon Ladd, Kenneth Copeland, Leo Tolstoy, Leen La Rivière, Jeffrey Seif, and Albert Schweitzer.

When considered and studies as a whole, these writings form a mosaic that gives a clear picture about the Kingdom of God. It has been a real privilege to have been a part of creating this mosaic, and I have by no means exhausted the length and breadth of influence of this glorious kingdom, whose foundation was laid by Jesus Christ Himself. To Him I owe a heartfelt assurance that the cornerstone of that Kingdom, which He laid two millennia ago, is the best foundation ever on which to build my daily life.

Thus I begin with some observations that comprise what one could say is a *preamble* to the teachings about the Kingdom of God, or as one student of mine commented in gest one day, "is this another introduction to the introduction?"

The answer was then and is now - yes!

Observations along the way of God's Kingdom

1. Since the dawn of time mankind has searched for "the meaning of Life." He has searched for a life filled with peace, joy, love and power to change the circumstances of his life to affect his basic human needs of safety, provision, protection, security, esteem and relationship. That search remains at the core of each man and each woman's being. Therefore, men and women are essentially "searchers." It is *where* and *for what* they search that will determine the course of their lives and provide essential resources for the decisions they will make along the way.

2. In his search for "real answers," answers he believes must be tangible and material, that is, answers that can be touched and experienced, understood and felt, man always invariably remains restless because he discovers that life regardless of tangible material answers, points to a deeper need, and that need is his or her spiritual life with a deeply-rooted need for spiritual answers for daily living. As a result, men and women keep searching for answers.

3. As early as 6000 BC, according to the record of ancient scriptures, men and women were given a clear answer for a spiritual life. Mankind was given a clear choice for life. One choice was a *right* life of love, peace, joy and power. The other choice was a *wrong* life of fear, hatred, anxiety and defeat. One choice was called "the dominion of light," the other "the

dominion of darkness." The dominion of light required that men and women submit to the rule of the *Lord of light*, and the dominion of darkness required that men and women submit to the rule of the *lord of darkness*. The Lord of light, who is Jesus, said the choice would be a totally "others" motivated life, and the lord of darkness, who is Satan, said to choose him would be a choice of a totally "self" motivated life.

4. This search and subsequent choice of light or darkness are spoken about already in the Old Testament: *" I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I (God) have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days"* (Deuteronomy 30:19,20a)

5. Therefore, it remains every man and every woman's choice, and it must be your deliberate choice, a choice of your freewill, to choose life, namely the Kingdom of God. Your choice for eternity is to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ and to resist the temptation to submit to the deceptions of the kingdom of darkness.

6. The choice you make to satisfy a deeper spiritual need in your life, will affect not only your personal spiritual life but your material and physical life as well. Choose the Kingdom of God and you will have abundant life. Choose the kingdom of darkness and you will have abundant misery. The choice is clear and not mysterious.

7. The record of world history and the history of all civilizations and cultures, bear the terrible chronicles of man's disobedience to God's summons to submit to the Lord of light and to seek the Kingdom of God. Somehow in his rebellion and disobedience, man continues to prefer the choice of all the tantalizing appeals of the lord of darkness, who is Satan and his cohorts. Rebellion says, "I did it *my way*," whereas obedience says, "I did it *Thy way*." The choice is simple. The results of that choice are eternal.

8. Jesus Christ prepared the way for you to make the right choice and live in obedience to your choice of His Kingdom. He will be there all the time to help you walk in the ways of the Kingdom of God throughout all your days. He never leaves you to fend for yourself because He Himself taught that the only way to walk this journey of the kingdom is by faith and with the help of His Spirit. No one is called to walk the journey alone and ill-prepared.

9. Everyone has to make a choice. There is no neutral ground with "observation status" only. To reject one choice is automatic acceptance of the other choice. Reject the dominion of light and you are in the dominion of darkness. Everyone is encouraged to choose light and life today to make Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives and crown Him King over all attitudes, will, emotions, intellect, and possessions.

10. When you choose the dominion of light, you have chosen to submit to Jesus' discipleship training and you have chosen to give His Holy Spirit all the time and room He needs to teach you the fullness of the Kingdom of God so that you may live in total obedience and experience the abundant life of the Kingdom of God.

11. God has a *master plan*. God's master plan for your life is called the Kingdom of God, which includes the exaltation and worship of its King, Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, to whom God gave the Kingdom and all its citizens as an eternal inheritance (Hebrews 12:2, Ephesians 1:4).

12. The teachings and truth of the Kingdom of God are simple and clear. However, your journey of trial and temptation, victory and blessing, a journey you have chosen to walk in obedience to God, will be an adventure of faith that lasts a lifetime.

13. Man's journey of faith (be it faith in the ways of the Kingdom of God or faith in the systems of the kingdom of darkness) can be simplified and understood through man's basic need for **Community** and **Identity**, or *Communication* and *Identification*. At sometime in their busy lives, every living soul wants to know, "*who am I? Where did I come from and where am I going?*" The search for answers has fueled a very profitable business of consumer spending and advertising whose *merchants of perceived benefits* spend billions of dollars each year telling you, who you are and what you could be of only you bought their products and services.

14. Nevertheless, the answers to communication needs and identity problems are found in the Kingdom of God, especially the teachings of Jesus about that Kingdom. The answers are not complicated, but it is empty philosophies, man-made doctrines, and advertised lies, that make the answers complicated.

*"But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by His craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the **simplicity** and **purity** of devotion to Christ" (2 Cor.11:3).*

Instead of keeping our faith simple, religion has made our understanding complicated through man-made doctrines and endless dogma, that weary wrangling over words that accomplishes nothing but confusion and doubt As a result, two crises plague the spiritual journey of modern man. These are what I have called an *indentification* crisis and a *communication* crisis or communications breakdown. A closer look at both will help you understand the problem of both crises.

Two crises that plague the spiritual journey of modern man

1. An identification crisis

2. A communications breakdown

1. Identification crisis

By *identity* I mean who you think you are and who you think or believe you belong to. It is that sense of belonging that shapes your thoughts and your actions. You need to belong because that need to belong has been engraved on your spirit from the day you were born. You need to know who you are because that need to know has been growing in your mind since you were very young. Many people, especially when they are older, long to find their "roots" because it gives them a comfort or assurance that they were a *somebody* and that they belonged to *someone*.

Identity gives you significance. Many search for significance all their lives. For those who search for an identity in their spiritual lives, the need to belong is equally strong as it is in their natural lives to need to belong to family, friends, a husband or wife, a community, and a country.

Without belonging, without an identity you become spiritual and emotional drifters, and are easily persuaded to stray from truth, especially the truth of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the crisis of identity becomes probing questions of identity.

Who are you? Are you a child of God or a child of the devil?

Where do you belong? Do you belong with your natural family or your spiritual family?

Who is your family? What and who determine the way you think and the way you act?

Who are your teachers and mentors?

Who influences you to believe this is the real you?

What is the truth and what is not?

The answers to these questions find their roots in the Kingdom of God, as Jesus taught that Kingdom. And the best way to begin to understand the Kingdom of God is to study it in God's Word. The identity crisis is summarized in a simple question. Are you identified with citizenship in the Kingdom of God or with citizenship in the kingdom of darkness? The Bible begins to answer these questions in John 18:36, Matthew 6:33, Colossians 1:12,13, 2:11-17, 3:10,11, and Romans 8:15-17, just to name some places where you can begin to look.

One of the unique ways that Jesus taught on how to know the truth about your identity and where you belong is to look for the fruit that truth produces. In other words, Jesus teaches you to become "fruit inspectors."

Identification with the **kingdom of the world** produces bad fruit such as works programs. Yes, even the church is not immune from seeking its identity in the systems of the world. These are the programs and projects that somehow make you believe you can earn God's love and favour. If you don't actively participate in these works programs you will not be blessed. Whether these are prayer programs, Bible study programs, Sunday school programs, church building programs, fundraising programs, missions programs, and others, they are all impressed upon your life as legalism, that is, the rules of the church and denomination you belong to. No wonder, people stay away from church in droves because no sooner have they joined and become members, they are subjected to slavery to be kept in bondage to rules and "don's and don'ts," in fear of "losing their salvation," and even losing their identity as a child of God. When left to grow unchecked as bad fruit, this identification with the kingdom of darkness, also known as the kingdom of the world, produces the fruit of corruption and violence,

and a bitter hatred for those who do not identify with you because they believe something and someone else.

The fruit of the kingdom of the world also wants you to have a *master* mentality, that is, a mentality that says "you are the boss and you are in charge of your own destiny." Often this master mentality becomes tyrannical when people want to master you and others or "lord it over you and them," as the scriptures say. Religion lords it over people with a false identity that claims their relationship to God is determined by pious behaviour, hard work, religious observances, and faithfulness in money and deed to the cause of the denomination.

Identification, however, with the **Kingdom of God** produces good fruit. These are the people who seek justice according to the truth of God. These are the peacemakers, the humble and teachable, whose lives are filled with joy even when circumstances overwhelm them and adversity seems to stalk their daily routines. These are the people whose faith power is nothing more than a personal resolve to trust God, and not to entertain options of "plan B," or "plan C," just in case God doesn't come through. They love without conditions, and they have an enviable freedom in their spiritual journey often expressed in a freedom of worship and praise and prayer that somehow leaves them feeling "filled" and refreshed for another day. The fruit of the Kingdom of God also produces an identity that is *servant* motivated. You live to serve others as you encourage them to seek the Kingdom of God for their own lives. It is a servant mentality that always looks for ways to help someone else in his or her walk of faith.

Who are you? Are you a child of God or a child of the devil?

You are a child of God.

Where do you belong? Do you belong with your natural family or your spiritual family?

Who is your family?

You belong forever in the family of God, a family whose ties to one another go deeper than the ties to your natural family. It is your spiritual family, namely those who are also children of God, who remain your family forever.

What and who determine the way you think and the way you act?

Who are your teachers and mentors?

The servant teachers and servant leaders, the servant parents and servant friends, who upon careful inspection, display the fruit of the Kingdom of God, also knows as the "fruit of the Spirit," found in Galatians 5:22,23, and the "fruit of love," found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

Who influences you to believe this is the real you?

What is the truth and what is not?

These two questions are examined in the answers to a communications breakdown.

2. Communication breakdown

Communication is one of the most misunderstood words in relationships, especially in a relationship with God. In relationships, the true meaning of communication is "a sharing of

information between two people." Communication is not a monologue where you do all the talking in prayer, and where God remains silent except for what He has "said" in the Bible. Communication is community and fellowship, where mutual sharing is not only expected, it is a delight, like a great conversation with a close friend, or the intimate words shared between a husband and a wife. And so it is with God.

The reason many suffer from a communication breakdown is because there is no faith to believe a genuine sharing between God and a person. As a result, many seek for "voices" elsewhere, such as established "voices" of man-made doctrines and religious philosophy. But the questions that never seems to get answered are:

Who is talking to you and who are you talking to?

Does God talk to you personally?

Does God share more than He has already shared in words in the Bible?

How does God talk to you?

How do you talk to God?

God speaks to His children through the Bible, through Gifts of the Spirit such as prophecy, tongues and interpretation, knowledge and wisdom. But He also speaks through circumstances and events such as miraculous healings, miracles, and the "born-again" experience of so many. The Kingdom of God also gives every child of God the honour and right to hear God through the Holy Spirit, in a direct communication between two friends.

In the Kingdom of God, those questions are summarized in the simple question of: who dictates your life? The spirit of the world or the Spirit of God? (1 Corinthians 2:12 and Romans 8:14)

The heart and soul of your relationship with God is a personal encounter, every time you share with Him all your thoughts, your dreams, your needs, your joys and pains, everything, with a **full expectation** that He shares with you all He wants you to know. This sharing between the two of you, is personal and very real. You pray with an audible voice and He answers with that still small voice of the Holy Spirit in your heart. This is not a *thought-process*. This is a genuine two-way communication or living dialogue between you and God. Because so many have been deceived into believing this is not possible and that the "only sure way" is the written text of the Bible, many have never developed a "hearing ear," to hear the voice of the Spirit.

For that reason, the temptation to be led by the voices of the spirit of the world, is often more "believable" than to believe God to talk to you. Again, as in your indentity in the Kingdom of God, the fruit of who leads you will become evident.

*Led by the **spirit of the world*** produces bad fruit or fruit of the flesh such as greed, lust, selfishness, competition, personal motivation based on "things," things you own, things you want, etc., as well as a personal motivation based on success "at any cost".

*Led by the **Spirit of God*** produces good fruit, fruit that is identified in God's Word as fruit of the Spirit including Spiritual Gifts. This fruit produces patience, kindness, self-control, love, understanding, revelation, direction, guidance, assurance, encouragement, and wisdom, just to name some.

One special fruit, and one so desperately needed in the church is an ever increasing faith to believe and trust God for every aspect of life. God says that if you pray in the Spirit, also known as praying in tongues, your faith will be built up (Jude 20), and He also stresses that

your life should bear "fruit of the light," (Ephesians 5:9), which simply means you let your light shine, or you willingly share that fruit produced by being led by the Spirit of God.

15. What then is your highest calling or the greatest objective or good in the Kingdom of God and the leading of God's Holy Spirit? The highest good is to seek after the Kingdom of God and its righteousness. When Jesus said to "seek" the Kingdom first, He meant a "seeking" that presses into the understanding of God's Kingdom, with holy zeal and a deep hunger and thirst after the Kingdom's heart which is righteousness. The two are the same. To seek after the Kingdom is to seek after righteousness. Righteousness of the Kingdom is God's "right way" of having a meaningful and blessed relationship with His children. (Matthew 6: 33, John 8;31, Matthew 5:6)

16. To press into the understanding of the Kingdom of God means to study and know the Kingdom of God as revealed in God's Word and to trust the Holy Spirit as he leads you in that study. To understand the Kingdom of God is to know the King - Jesus. To know the King is to know God, the Father.

17. When this knowing and understanding begins to grow deep roots in you it will produce yet another precious fruit, namely the words that come out of your heart of knowing and understanding. These *words* are called praise and worship. In turn these words will produce faith to obey God. Whether you speak the words, sing them, write them, publically or in private, they are praise and worship nonetheless. To study and obey the King's rule is the highest form of worship

18. All this seeking of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness will lead to a life that is distinctly set apart from the traps and snares of the world. You will not only be different, you will know it and feel it. You will mature to see how upside-down the world really is and how much Jesus wants to turn it right-side up. One friend said, "it's like being speckled birds in a striped flock." This different, set-apart you, is a *sanctified* you. Sanctification just means separation. You are in the world but not of it. You are in the world, but you are led by the Spirit of God and not the spirit of the world. Life in the Kingdom of God is a **"sanctifying" life.**

There are seven attributes or characteristics about your sanctified life:

1. It is now and forever
2. It is progressive, usually appearing to be 3 steps ahead and 2 steps back.
3. It is rewarding
4. It is time consuming
5. It is thorough, and in time sanctification will permeate every aspect of your life, *sanctifying* you spirit, soul, and body - 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
6. It is gradual, and not simply and instant sanctification of being separated from things of the world. Usually, we give up things the hard way - very slowly.
7. God puts your sanctification to honourable use

19. Truth about "honourable use"....

Sanctification is honourable **use**, not what vessels are made of. (2 Timothy 2:20,21).

The world focusses on the outer work of appearances, worldly possessions, "things," and success. The Kingdom of God focusses on the inner work of the Holy Spirit to transform you into the image of Jesus Himself, regardless of worldly measure by which "spirituality" is measured. Therefore, "honourable use" is not what you are according to what the world says, but who you are according to what God says.

The Kingdom of God is **not** about turning **clay into gold**.

The Kingdom of God is *honourable use in whatever capacity* that use serves the King, regardless of what it is (you are) made of. From garbage duty and cleaning toilets to ruling kingdoms and being wise elders and church leaders, it is honourable **use** (not dishonourable **use**) that God desires in His Kingdom.

The notion and belief that those "born to clay," can "change to gold," through *works*, specifically works that range from Christian work-ethic to piety and religious observances, and the "do's and don'ts" of religion to achieve a "higher plane of being" or higher level of existence is none other than Hinduism and its caste system burdened with the deception of re-incarnation. How tragic that millions believe sanctification will turn them from clay into gold. Failure to turn into gold is the fuel of all religious bondage.

GLIMPSES OF THE KINGDOM - PART ONE

1. Kingdom facts
2. Righteousness, Peace, Joy and Power
3. Balance
4. Your witness

1. KINGDOM FACTS

1. The Gospel of the Kingdom was the primary **message of Jesus** (Matthew 4:23, 13:11, 24:14, 25:1, Luke 11:20, Acts 1:3)
2. The Gospel of the Kingdom must be **your** (and the **church's**) primary **message** (Matthew 10:7, 24:14)
3. The Gospel of the Kingdom is your Kingdom **lifestyle** (Matthew 6:33)
4. Your Kingdom **lifestyle** must be **evident** in righteousness, peace, joy and (faith) power (Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 4:20)
5. The Kingdom message and its righteousness is a benchmark of **endtime preaching**, namely a summons to the righteousness of the Kingdom as in the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:36-39) - It is not a *new* message.
6. The Kingdom lifestyle is a lifestyle "*in the Spirit*" (Romans 14:17)

This lifestyle in the Spirit includes:

1. It is a lifestyle not produced out your own abilities, but in response to God's love, you are empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the rule of the King (Zechariah 4:6, Ephesians 3:16)
2. It is a "*walk in the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:16,25) evidenced through
 - a) **the inner work** begins in the heart (1 Samuel 16:7) confessed by the mouth (Matthew 12:34) both in declaring what God's Word says and what you believe as revealed in God's Word.

- b) **the outer work** of obedience to the Spirit in deed (James 1:22) heart plus mouth plus hands (deeds) add up to your witness to others (Matthew 24:14, Acts 1:8) also known as the *sanctified life* including fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23)
- c) **signs and wonders**: your witness is confirmed by signs and wonders (Mark 16:20) including Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11,12)
- d) **joy when tested**: your life in the Spirit produces joy when tested (1 Peter 1:6-9)
- e) **evidence**: the inner (invisible) work and outer (visible) work of the Holy Spirit are evidence that your "*walk*" is truly "*led by the Spirit*" (Romans 8:14). Any other lifestyle is *rebellion*

2. RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE, JOY AND POWER

RPJP - a convenient way of remembering the essence of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is RPJP, the best "registered retirement savings plan" in existence.

The Kingdom of God is:

1. **R - Righteousness** (Romans 14:17, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 2:10, 1 John 3:7 - *A definition*: Psalm 122:9)
2. **P - Peace** (Romans 14:17, Luke 2:14, Isaiah 32:17,18, Ephesians 2:17, Acts 10:36)

The "*peace*" of the Kingdom of God is *peace in your heart*. It is a heart without conflict with God, totally at peace and fully trusting the Father. It is a *peace* knowing you are right with God. Natural peace comes with fear of that peace being broken or interrupted. Peace of the kingdom comes with assurance that it will never be broken.

3. **J - Joy** (Romans 14:17, Hebrews 12:2, Colossians 1:12, 3:1-4)

Joy is not happiness, although you may be happy as a result of Kingdom joy. *Joy* is a spiritual state of knowing the truth of the **finished work of Christ** and the **joy** of knowing that this finished work includes eternal life for you and eternal blessings both now and forever. It's the *joy* of knowing you are qualified to share in God's inheritance. It is a joy offered to you (set before you) by God based on His promise that peace is part of your inheritance (Hebrews 12:2, Colossians 1:12)

The source of such Kingdom joy is not "things".

The source of kingdom joy is...

1. Your life in Christ (1 Thessalonians 3:8,9, Galatians 2:20)
2. Your ability to enlarge your capacity for joy, through sorrow and experience
(John 16:20, Romans 5:3-5, James 1;2, Psalm 119:32-34)
3. The growth of your joy in times of persecution (James 1;2, Matthew 5:11,12)
4. Faith (Romans 15:13, Philippians 1:25)
5. Hope (Romans 5:2, 12:12, 1 John 3:1-3)
6. Joy of others (Romans 12:15)
7. Love of God and others (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, 13)
8. God Himself (Psalm 35:9, Isaiah 61:10, Luke 1:47, Romans 5:11, 15:13, Philippians 3:1, 4:4)

4. P - Power (1 Corinthians 4:20, Luke 9:1,2, Matthew 28:18,19)

Kingdom power is **faith power**. It is the **power of faith** to believe the Holy Spirit is with you all the time to enable you and help you walk in the power and authority of the believer. This faith power enables and empowers you to trust in a

1. faith to believe God for His Word for your life
2. faith to believe God for His Word for others
3. faith to believe you are able by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to obey God's Word
4. faith to believe you have authority in Jesus' name to carry out the commands of His Kingdom
- 5. You have authority and faith power to...**
 - a) Evangelize the world (Matthew 28:19)
 - b) Cast out demons (Luke 9:1)
 - c) Heal diseases (Luke 9:1)
 - d) In His name... (Mark 16:17,18) to further the cause of His Kingdom and its righteousness by
 - 1) taking authority over all the evil spiritual world
 - 2) taking authority over the world of communication including what you say and how you pray
 - 3) taking authority over the harmful animal world
 - 4) taking authority over the harmful chemical world of pollution
 - 5) taking authority over the sickness and disease world of infirmity
 - 6) faith that finds expression in you in complete trust in God, in Jesus, and in the Holy Spirit.

3. BALANCE (in teaching about and living in the Kingdom)

Balance, or *a balanced life*, is essential for the believer who does not wish to be torn between the extremes of faith often exhibited in the modern church. Even though God can and will perform miracles that cause even the unbeliever to stand in awe and wonder, over the full length of one's journey of life and faith it is balance that will keep you steady and focussed on what is true and what is emotional fervour or downright deception. The world does not need more miracles to convince society of the Kingdom of God. Instead it needs steady, secure, and dependable people whose collective witness is that God works from the "inside out," beginning with the issues and motives of the heart. God's inner work does not swing to and fro because of emotional highs and lows, highs and lows that depend solely on *for the moment* "tickling of ears" that appeal to the senses. What follows are some thoughts about balance that are essential to 'life in the Spirit.'

1. Balance will give you a very effective way to determine if that teaching, that leader, that thought or direction, is of God, or of the devil, or perhaps another person, or simply your own imagination.

2. If what you are questioning does NOT produce a Holy Spirit witness in you through an evidence of Righteousness, Peace, Joy and building of Faith (trust), **beware**, it is probably not God. For example: if there is too much emphasis on such "religious favourites" as sin-consciousness, "worm" theology, profit, fundraising, giving just to get, image building of leaders and spiritual celebrities especially in public media, etc., watch out.

3. As a wheel becomes "*off-balance*" when you move the centre "*off-centre*," so a believer becomes **off-balance** when all Biblical teaching does not line up with Kingdom teaching as taught by Jesus Himself in the Gospels. Teachings on healing, deliverance, blessings, Spiritual warfare, faith, etc., must line up with the priority of the Kingdom of God and its *manifested evidence* of **RPJP** - righteousness, peace, joy and faith power.

4. "*Things*" will cease to be sources of anxiety when instead you first seek after righteousness, peace, joy and power of the Kingdom.

5. *To remain balanced*, feed on the Word and receive teaching in **equal measure** dealing with all teaching topics. Study all the aspects of Kingdom life and don't "major" is just one or two, especially when those one or two are popular, such as healing and prosperity. Healing must be taught with repentance and forgiveness. Prosperity must be taught with generosity, victory with suffering, faith with patience, just to name a few.

6. Blessed are those teachers and pastors who will **feed their flock, a nutritious and "balanced" diet** of the Word (Luke 12:31-37, Matthew 24:45-47).

7. Balance in the Kingdom is Godly principles of the kingdom that make the difference and not the preference. Faith is not deciding which of the Kingdom's truths you prefer. It's all or nothing - no compromise.

8. Balance in the Kingdom is "**abiding in**," the words of Jesus, in other words, abiding is being "**sold out**" to righteousness, peace, joy and faith power, keeping as your primary focus the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom, in word and deed, and in a personal lifestyle advocated as good for others and lifestyle lived as good for you, realizing that abiding's primary benefit is not earthly treasure but heavenly treasure.

9. The Word you are commanded to sow in others, namely what you teach **and** live, is the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mark 4:26, 27, 30, Isaiah 55: 10, 11).

10. An example of balance in the Kingdom of God is Jesus, who sought only to do the will of the Father, and in obedience to that righteous will of God, sought the highest good of others, that is their eternal salvation.

4. YOUR WITNESS

You have been called to be a witness for Jesus Christ. Does that just mean you must go "out and witness to somebody? No, it does not. To be a witness for Jesus is not an evangelism or outreach program. To be a witness for Jesus means that people see in you the effect of your life's journey of seeking first the Kingdom of God. The effect of that journey must be evident in your manner of speech, conduct, the way you conduct business affairs, relationships, and all that matters in the life of every day people.

1. The Kingdom of God is RPJP, Righteousness, Peace, Joy and the Power of faith. Of these, Righteousness of the Kingdom is your witness that Jesus is truly present in your life, and not just the subject of your Sunday duties or religious observances. **His presence in you will be His witness through you.**

2. This "*presence*" of the Kingdom and its King Jesus in you, begins with a personal revelation of what **righteousness** truly means in your life. Only when you truly believe how "right" you are with God, and the rights you have as a Child of God, can you take those steps of faith that require **reconciliation, repentance and forgiveness** towards yourself and others. When you take these steps of faith you will experience the inner work of **release, recovery and freedom** in Christ, resulting in the outer evidence of **peace, joy and power of faith** which all together become that awesome witness to others that you are truly "translated from darkness to light" and that you are in Christ a new creation, a brand-new being.

3. Part of being a witness is to "**sow**" in others, reconciliation, repentance and forgiveness to bring about their growth of faith to believe for their abundant life of recovery, release and freedom in Christ. This is most commonly done in sharing with individuals and groups your "testimony" of how reconciliation, repentance and forgiveness, have affected your life in real and tangible ways, because you understand the revelation of the Kingdom's righteousness.

4. You must, however, continue to bear fruit from your personal Kingdom life, despite obstacles such as **rejection** from unreceptive and poor soil in which you have sown good seed, as well as the attempts of others to sow bad seed of **temptation** and **persecution** in your good soil. It is an even greater witness to others that despite these obstacles you will not compromise your faith in the teachings and person of Jesus.

5. The Kingdom of God to which you *bear or give witness* is not an abstract concept separate from its King Jesus. The Kingdom and Jesus are inseparable. To seek after the Kingdom is to seek after Jesus. To seek after Jesus Christ is to seek after His Kingdom. His Kingdom is His rule, His government, His leadership through the Holy Spirit, and your joyful willingness to submit to His rule.

GLIMPSES OF THE KINGDOM - PART TWO

1. The road to trust
2. A change of government
3. Free from anxiety

1. THE ROAD TO TRUST

The time factor:

Your road to trust is a lifelong journey that must include a firm understanding of **the time factor** (Galatians 3:26-29, Romans 4:16-22, 21).

Promise or vision and fulfilment, stepping out in faith and finishing a journey of faith, prayers offered and prayers answered, goals made and reached, dreams and dreams that come true, faith and fact, are separated by time - lots of time. They are separated by God's timetable.

Why? Because time teaches you to unconditionally and uncompromisingly trust and walk in a complete love relationship of trust in God. If the time factor is a "me now factor," its fruit will be doubt and impatience. If the time factor is "in God's time," its fruit will be trust and patience. However, many believe the road to trust according to God's time, is too slow and they become weary of living by faith. Many times they stumble. But as you grow, and stumble, and try again, God's **grace** is always sufficient to carry you through on the road to trust (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). In other words God does not condemn you, or consider you any less of a child of His just because you struggle on the road to trust. His favour (grace) will always help you.

You can obey someone you can trust (2 Chronicles 20:20)

Here are some examples of the time factor:

- 1. Abraham** The promise at age 75 (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-4, 17:1-10, 18:9,10,14)
Fulfilment (Isaac) at age 100 (Genesis 21:1-3)
Death (fulfilment incomplete) at age 175 (Genesis 25:7,8)
He trusted for **100 years** (Romans 4:20, Hebrews 11:8-10)
- 2. Moses** The promise at age 80 (Acts 7:23, 30, 42, Exodus 3:6-10,17)
Fulfilment from afar and death at age 120 (Deuteronomy 32:48-52, 34:1-7)
He trusted for **40 years** (Hebrews 11:24-27)

- 3. **Anna** The promise, married at age 17
Widowed 7 years later at age 24
Vision fulfilled at age 84
She trusted for **60 years** (Luke 2:36-38)
- 4. **Noah** He trusted for **100 years** (Genesis 5:32, 6:14, 7:6)
- 5. **You (Me)** The day of your rebirth when you decided to live by faith and in trust.

The road to trust is a life of faith

- 1. The road to trust is a life of **faith** (Romans 1:16,17, Habakkuk 2:4)
- 2. The road to trust (in God) begins with **discipline** (Hebrews 12:6,26-29)
- 3. The road to trust is a journey of **sacrifice** as you put your own abilities, desires, plans, understanding and resources on the "**altar of obedience**" and put your complete trust in Jesus. (Hebrews 12 :1)
- 4. The road to trust is filled with **change** to let God's shaking remove that costly and heavy self-motivated, self-centered load. Change requires complete trust in God (Hebrews 12:26-29)
- 5. Your Kingdom journey began with **THE BIGGEST CHANGE OF ALL** (Colossians 1:9-14) - **a change of government.**

2. A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT

1. Colossians 1:9-14

- 2. When God translated you from darkness to light, your "**old self**" **ceased to be** and a "**new you**" was born (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- 3. You are no longer ruled by the government of darkness, but by the government of Jesus.
- 4. The "king" of darkness, Satan, has no rule or authority over you unless you give him dominion and even then it is illegal for he does not own you.
- 5. Satan, or any demon cannot make you do anything against your will, because you're not his anymore.

6. Eventhough the kingdoms of the world lie in the power of Satan (1 John 5;19) their ultimate destiny is submission to Jesus Christ (Revelation 11:15)

7. Your authority in Christ is higher than the authority of earthly kingdoms and the kingdom of darkness (Matthew 28:18)

8. The rule of the kingdom of darkness does not govern you

that rule of darkness according to **Ephesians 2:1-3, 6;12** is governed by:

1. Death
2. Lawlessness (trespasses)
3. The world's ways (false gods, false values and counterfeit performances)
4. Counterfeit authority (of a prince not a King)
5. Rebellion (disobedience)
6. Materialism (lust of the flesh)
7. Vice (sex, drugs, alcohol, gambling, *desires of the flesh* such as homosexuality, lesbianism)
8. Intellectualism (humanism, atheism, *desires of the mind*, exaltation of knowledge, etc,)
9. Conflict (violence, abuse, *nature of wrath*)

Even when in times of temptation you stumble and fall, the rule of darkness cannot stop you from turning to God, repenting and receiving forgiveness, assurance, peace, joy and faith power. It is simply incapable of keeping you in any bondage. It must let go whenever the name of Jesus is invoked.

9. The Kingdom of God (also called the Kingdom of heaven) is the Kingdom of Jesus. It's the **King-Dom**, or "**King's Dominion**". It is the Dominion (Rule, Government) of Jesus over you (when you make Him Lord of your life).

10. **Deliverance is freedom** to experience **only the rule of Jesus** over your will, emotions and personality.

11. The road to trust begins as an **invisible change** (in your heart) and over time (lots of time - a lifetime) becomes evident as a **visible change** (in your lifestyle) - not to be confused with the **instant visibility** of deliverance, being filled with the Spirit and other Godly interventions.

12. Invisible change that ultimately manifests (manifest - to become apparent to sight and understanding) itself as visible change is called **sanctification** (a separation of one from another, from seeking first selfish things to seeking first the Kingdom, of being separated away from worldly matters towards Godly matters).

13. **How does this change of government take place or how do you get into the Kingdom of God?** By being **born again** (John 3:3, 7, 16).

14. Born again - Entrance or "born again" into the Kingdom of God is secured when you hear the Good News of the Gospel, and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour **in response to the summons** of that Gospel of the Kingdom and the invitation of Jesus to "*follow Him*". When you sincerely and with faith say "*yes*" to Jesus, you are instantly translated into His Kingdom. You become instantly subject to the rule of Jesus and are instantly delivered from the dominion of Satan. Having birthed new life of God into your spirit, Jesus qualified you for citizenship in God's Kingdom as well as qualified you to inherit the fullness of the Kingdom's blessings to come. **You are now "in Christ"**.

3. FREE FROM ANXIETY

1. (John 8:32) Freedom in the Kingdom of God is freedom from anxiety (Matthew 6:34).
2. Anxiety is replaced by assurance, peace, joy and a belief that somehow God will turn everything for your good (Romans 8:28)
3. Often reason and intellect, confirmed by circumstances, turn **trust into mistrust**. The road to trust is a journey of life where the Holy Spirit helps you to **turn mistrust into trust** (in God) **again**.
4. Jesus walked in total trust in His Father and therefore had no anxiety about the events and circumstances of tomorrow. He asks you to do the same (1 John 2:2).
5. Freedom from anxiety means you choose not to worry about tomorrow, nor do you let fear rule your thoughts. Even the worst that could happen to you (death) does not compare to the best (eternal life) that is yours.
6. Freedom (from all fear, anxiety, worry about finances, needs, concern about others, dire straits of the world etc) is the King's **guarantee** to you in his Kingdom now and forever (John 8:36)

GLIMPSES OF THE KINGDOM - PART THREE

1. Preamble to Codex Rex
2. Codex Rex

1. PREAMBLE TO CODEX REX

Remember what I said in my "objectives" at the beginning of these detailed writings about the Kingdom of God.? When I first began "seeking" the Kingdom, I wondered what the kingdom really was and where would I find it? And if I were looking for it, would I know what it was I was looking for and would I recognize it?

Therefore, as a preamble or foreword to the heart of the Kingdom's message, namely Jesus' *sermon on the mount*, ask yourself these questions and consider the answers given to each question. Each question and answer will help you take the right steps in a direction of knowing more intimately the Kingdom of God, and its King Jesus.

1. What is the Kingdom?

The Kingdom of God is the **rule of its King** (Jesus) in the lives of His willing subjects. This rule begins in the hearts of Kingdom citizens and from there it extends into all areas of day to day life (Luke 12:32, Colossians 1:13).

The Kingdom of God is not a matter primarily of **externals**, changes you can observe on the outside, but a matter of **internals**, a "*matter of the heart*," that require internal change before outer change can take place (Romams 14:17a).

2. Where is the Kingdom?

The Kingdom of God is present in the hearts of all believers (Luke 17:21), specifically those who are followers of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom is present in the lives of believers by work of the indwelling Holy Spirit who represents the King (Galatians 2:20) and lives in your heart. This Kingdom will be consummated, or come together "in every tribe and every tongue," over all the earth when Jesus returns (Revelation 11:15, 19:16)

First and foremost, the present authority or rule of the Kingdom of God is a Spiritual rule in the hearts of believers, where Jesus has dominion and has been given rule and authority in every aspect of the life of a believer (Matthew 6;10, 2 Corinthians 3:17).

When Jesus returns to inaugurate the millennial Kingdom it means He returns to extend His rule not just over the hearts of believers, but over all creation as well.

3. When is the Kingdom?

The Kingdom is both now and forever (Luke 11:20, Isaiah 9:7). The rule of the King, who is Jesus, and He alone, is constant and continual, and has been since Jesus launched the Kingdom in approximately AD 30, during His life, His death and at His resurrection, and later to be "launched" in you when you accepted the King. This rule will forever work in you as the King changes your character into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 8:29)

4. Why is the Kingdom?

The Kingdom is God's eternal plan which He conceived before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4, Matthew 25:34). **The Kingdom of God is the family of God.** Its purpose now while on earth and before Jesus returns, is to equip you to take the Good News of that kingdom to every tribe and nation of the world (Matthew 28:18-20).

5. What part do we play in the Kingdom of God?

The rule of Jesus Christ in the hearts of believers over a lifetime will change their character in conformity with His, all in preparation for eternity, that eternal place for the family of God, a place where we will live in spirit, soul, and resurrected body. Free from all self-rule, believers are free to serve the King, and thus reign and rule with Him when He returns to extend His dominion over all the earth (2 Timothy 2:11,12)

2. CODEX REX

Codex Rex are Latin words that mean "rule of the king." Codex Rex is an examination of the teachings of Jesus, known as the "sermon on the mount." The sermon on the mount is a precise outline of the teachings of Jesus about the Kingdom of God, what it is, and especially how it rules in the hearts of believers. As is the case with all Biblical teaching, the key to understanding what Jesus taught is found in the Holy Spirit, who "reveals" to you what Jesus meant. Listening to the Holy Spirit is as important or of greater importance than merely examining the scriptures in light of theology texts and reasonable and rational discussions about the Kingdom. However, it is best to study the Kingdom both from a perspective of what has been taught by others in the past *and* by listening to the Holy Spirit teach and apply it to you personally.

To help you understand the sermon on the mount, I have written the teachings of the Kingdom along an outline that is not doctrinal or dogmatic. It's simply a tool to help you understand. The outline is in two parts: one, the golden rule as taught in the sermon itself, and two, its application and meaning to the church of today. This, therefore, is what the content of **Codex Rex**, or "rule of the king," is all about:

One: the golden rule as taught in the sermon itself

1. Government beyond the year 2000
2. One King
3. Two Covenants
4. Three Promises
5. Four Principles
6. Five Absolutes
7. Ten Attitudes
8. Fifteen Constitutional Laws
9. Training/walking in Righteousness
10. The Charter of Justice
11. The Golden Rule

Two: the Kingdom's application and meaning to the church of today

1. The Age of Promise
2. The Age of Deliverance
3. The Age of Freedom
4. The Age of Judgement
5. The Age of Glory

CODEX REX - THE GOLDEN RULE

An indepth study of the Kingdom of God, based on the "sermon on the mount" by Jesus Christ and recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.

PART ONE - THE RULE OF THE KING

Introduction

Codex Rex is the Law of the King, or the Code of Law (*Codex*) of the King (*Rex*). *Codex Rex* is the legal system of justice in the Kingdom of God,¹ based on a solid, unchangeable foundation of absolute justice, that is never wrong or in question. *Codex Rex* is the just rule of the King of the Kingdom of God. The King's name is Jesus Christ. His rule as King is forever just and righteous. Righteous rule is always right. It is God's perfect will to establish the right (righteous) and just rule of His Son Jesus Christ, in the hearts of all men and women, and over all creation.

To *seek* after this Kingdom of God and the righteous and just rule of Jesus Christ, is the highest calling of every human being.²

To *apply* this right and just rule in one's life, is the greatest response of love towards Father God, Creator of heaven and earth.

To *obey* this right and just rule, is the greatest act of submission to the King, Jesus Christ.³ There is no greater life than to live and walk in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who enables everyone who believes, to know the treasures of the Kingdom of God, even its deepest secrets. As a result, one experiences the greatest freedom ever. This is a freedom in Christ that brings hope, joy, peace, love, deliverance, and healing. Freedom "in Christ" includes all the special promises that accompany citizenship in the Kingdom of God, and membership in God's family.⁴

Codex Rex is not about religion. Religion is blind obedience to set rules and regulations. *Codex Rex* is about a law of Kingdom love, in relationship to a heavenly Father. Religion is a code of law that merits obedience with favour and status, and disobedience with fear and punishment. *Codex Rex* is a code of relationship.⁵

Obedience to *Codex Rex* is not a demand, but a willing service of every child of God, who truly believes he or she is "in Christ," and who believe the miraculous translation from darkness to light, from death to life, from bondage to liberty, is a confirmed fact, and not a wish for the future. The eternal bond between God and His children, because of Jesus Christ, is a one-of-a-kind relationship, whose character and conduct is *Codex Rex*, the law of the King.

¹ Isaiah 9:6,7

² Matthew 6:33

³ 2 John 6, to love God is to obey God

⁴ Hebrews 6:9

⁵ Romans 7:22, 8:1-9,16,17

GOVERNMENT BEYOND THE YEAR 2000

Codex Rex began in 1986, as a personal study of the Kingdom of God. Since then, I have not been able to put it down. Repeatedly, this study keeps reminding me, that the Kingdom of God is the primary message of the ministry of Jesus.⁶

He began with the Gospel of the Kingdom, demonstrated its eternal power with great signs and wonders, and continued to teach in parables,⁷ the in-depth mysteries of the Kingdom of God. After his death and resurrection, in the closing moments before the end of His public ministry, He gave a final charge to His disciples, "appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God," (Acts 1:3).

All these "things, concerning the Kingdom of God," Jesus taught to prepare His followers for the coming of that Kingdom. The Kingdom of God came with power and authority, when Jesus ministered on earth. It entered the hearts of men and women who believed, to remain there as the great liberating force of God's Kingdom, through the presence of His Holy Spirit.

In their hearts, the Spirit of Jesus will grow fruit of the Spirit, and prepare a people, ready for the return of the King. They are a people, who will remain occupied with the sole task of taking the Gospel of the Kingdom to every nation of the world. Because of the glorious hope of His return to establish His Kingdom over every tribe and nation, His followers, the church, patiently endure the trials of the journey, yet rejoice in its many victories along the way.

The Kingdom of God is the heart of government beyond the year 2000.⁸

This government began 2000 years ago. It began in the hearts of the disciples of Jesus Christ, during His earthly ministry, and continued after He ascended into heaven. Today, it lives in His church, and is the core of faith, now and beyond the year 2000 - a core that will, one day, be the foundation of all government forever.

Codex Rex is the eternal justice system of a new world government⁹ based on the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and shaped by the following principles that make up the content of this teaching. They are:

1. The eternal truth of *One King*
2. The inheritance of *Two Covenants*
3. The hope of *Three Promises*
4. The condition of *Four Principles*

⁶ Isaiah 7:14, 9:6,7; Matthew 4:23, 24:14; Luke 4:18,19; Acts 1:3, 28:30,31; Colossians 1:13

⁷ Kingdom parables: Matthew 13:5,24; 31,33; 44,45,47; 18:23

⁸ Revelation 11:15, 19:6,16

⁹ Isaiah 9:7

5. The power of *Five Absolutes*
6. The upside down world of *Ten Attitudes*
7. The examination through *Fifteen Laws*
8. The conclusion of *Training and Walking in Righteousness*

Codex Rex is the eternal rule of Jesus Christ through absolute righteousness ¹⁰ (He is always right), with a peace that surpasses understanding, a joy that simply will not end, even during the darkest days, and with a power that overcomes obstacles of will and emotions, circumstances and feelings, to give you that "blessed assurance" of the King.

ONE KING

Codex Rex is the rule of one King.

There is only one King in the Kingdom of God. His name is Jesus Christ. To be more specific, He is, according to the apostle Peter, "the Christ, the Son of the living God," (Matthew 16:16).

Many ancient and contemporary religions teach the way "up the mountain" to God, is marked by many roads. Some roads are through a special prophet, some through great religious leaders, dead or alive, some through a system of beliefs and legal works, and others through pagan rites and religious ceremonies. However, all those roads lead to only one end - a dead end. Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me," (John 14:6). There is only one way to God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Jesus proved He is the *only* truth, the *only* way, and the *only* light of God's resurrection power, to accomplish what no man had ever done before. He died, and God Himself, rose Jesus from the dead ¹¹ to demonstrate forever, that all the words Jesus spoke throughout His earthly ministry, and all the Kingdom ways He taught, are forever true.

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace. On the throne of David and over His Kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this," (Isaiah 9:6,7).

¹⁰ Romans 14:17,18; 1 Corinthians 4:20; Nehemiah 8:10; Luke 4:43; 1 John 3:8; John 14:12; Isaiah 32:17; Hosea 10:12

¹¹ Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 1:18-23

TWO COVENANTS

Codex Rex is a justice system, whose roots date back to a time when God made two very special agreements (covenants) between Himself and mankind, as well as between Himself and Jesus. God made two covenants ¹² with His people. Both covenants came with incredible blessings; one came with a curse.

The first covenant was an agreement between God and man.

A *superior* God made a covenant (agreement) with an *inferior* man. Nevertheless, it was a good covenant. In His covenant with man, God promised to bless man if he would obey His laws. Disobedience brought a curse upon man. However, to demonstrate His love and mercy, God provided a sacrificial system to "atone for," or "cover up" the disobedience of man. Disobedience is rebellion. Rebellion is sin. A specially appointed priesthood administered numerous sacrifices and ceremonies, as specified according to the law. To ensure God's people would remember His law, God wrote His law (commandments) on tablets of stone, during a unique encounter between God and Moses, on Mount Sinai.

The *Old Testament* is a written record of the success and failure of God's people to obey God's law. The *Old Testament* is a record of how God honoured His covenant with man, despite their relentless rebellion and disobedience. Through all the *Old Testament* years, the first covenant, and its required blood sacrifice of animals, pointed directly at a special and future, human sacrifice, who would pay the price for all mankind. His name is Jesus Christ.

Despite a promise of abundant blessings, the first covenant was unable to do one thing; to write the law upon "the hearts of people" instead of merely on "tablets of stone." The first covenant could only demand a change of behaviour, as a result of obedience to God's law.¹³

Unless the heart is changed, behaviour is governed by only a change of mind. The mind can be persuaded to obey or disobey at random. Behaviour is relevant to the mind's approval or disapproval of reasons for change.

The mind must be renewed through the action of a regenerated, new-born heart. Only when there is a heart change, can the mind be renewed and resulting behaviour be acceptable to God. A change of heart is binding. A change of mind is not. Writing the law on "tablets of stone," may change a person's mind, but writing the law on the "tablets of the heart," is not subject to circumstances or a mind "tossed to and fro." What the old covenant could not do, the new covenant could; it could change hearts.

The miracle of the second covenant, referred to by Jesus as a "better covenant," is far greater than the miracle of the first.¹⁴ The first had an imperfect partner, destined to fail, namely man. The miracle of the second covenant was a partnership, not made between a *superior* God

¹² Hebrews 9:15-22, 10:10

¹³ Hebrews 10:1,2, 7:18,19

¹⁴ Hebrews 10:19,20

and an *inferior* man, but a covenant partnership between a *superior* God and *superior* man. The second covenant was made between God and the perfect Son of Man, the Son of God, who is Jesus Christ. He became the blood sacrifice to satisfy God's love conditions. He became the blood sacrifice to cancel God's plans to inflict eternal wrath upon all mankind, as punishment for his sins. Only "in Christ," would mankind find hope and assurance of deliverance from God's wrath. When you believe in Jesus Christ, you are born again, and your life is now "in Him."

In Him you are the recipient of all the blessings of a new and better covenant.

The second covenant of God is made with Jesus.

When you become a member of God's family, through the new birth and faith in Jesus, you inherit the benefits of the covenant God made with Jesus. Through the new birth, the terms and conditions of God's commandments are now "written" upon your heart. These blessings are yours forever. Their curse is removed through the shed blood of Jesus. The letter to the *Hebrews* in the *New Testament*, is an exhaustive revelation of that new and better covenant.

No longer would the terms of a covenant be strict obedience, unable to be fulfilled by any man. Instead, it would be a response of love, because the terms of the new covenant, its price and requirements, were paid by Jesus Christ. He was the only man able to fulfill the demands of God's law. Jesus has set you free from one covenant, to birth you into a new covenant. Now you are able to walk by faith, in the full enjoyment of all God's promises. Your response is not an inability to obey, but an ability, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to obey and commit to deep love and admiration for Jesus and the Father. From that love and admiration flow a joy of obedience, a peace of understanding, and a "sacrifice" of praise and worship.

Through the new or second covenant, God is finally able to establish His eternal Kingdom upon the earth.¹⁵ That Kingdom's agenda is first the establishment of God's rule in the hearts of people. Only after it is written on the hearts of men, can the Kingdom's rule (government) spread in justice and power to all the corners of the world, and prepare God's people for the return of their glorious King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The new covenant promises a "better deal," a spiritual deal.

A spiritual "deal" is "better" than a material deal, because spirit is the original substance from which all material is created. The first covenant promise of material blessings does not compare with the second covenant promise of spiritual blessings. Your membership by adoption, into the eternal and invisible Kingdom of God, is the "fountain" of spiritual blessings from which flows every material blessing, in such great abundance, you will not be able to contain them all. You will yearn to "overflow" in generosity towards others. When the invisible becomes visible; when the invisible Kingdom of God becomes a visible Kingdom, upon the return of Jesus, God will demonstrate its eternal presence through a supernatural abundance of blessings. For example, fruit trees will have a complete and abundant fruit-bearing cycle every month, twelve months of the year.

The new covenant is legal because Jesus shed His blood, and "signed" the "better deal" with that blood, to assure believers of all its blessings. God's will is to "set you apart," (to make you "holy") for Himself. This new covenant guarantees God's will to adopt you, re-create you, and declare you right and holy before Him.¹⁶

¹⁵ Hebrews 8:6, 10-13

¹⁶ Hebrews 7:22-27, Ephesians 1:5-7

As a clear and visible sign of this new covenant and the invisible Kingdom, God gives you His Holy Spirit. His Holy Spirit works His gifts and "fruit of the Spirit," through you. As a result, you become living proof that the Kingdom of God has come. You are living proof that *Codex Rex*, and the character and conduct of the Kingdom of God, have taken dominion in your life. It is a life whose reason for living is not material or positional gain. Instead, it is a life that seeks a daily increase of the Kingdom's righteousness, justice, peace, joy, power and eternal love. It is a life that will please the King through a relationship fueled by faith in God whose eternal home and glorious mansions are your destiny. Jesus signed the new covenant with His own blood. God the Father, ratified (justified) the new covenant by accepting Christ's signature of blood. As first proof that all these events surrounding the new covenant, are true, God rose Jesus Christ from death, emptied Christ's tomb in 33AD, and seated Christ with Him in heaven. As additional proof of God's acceptance of Christ's blood signature, God gave Jesus the Holy Spirit, in order to pour that Spirit out over all who believe. The Holy Spirit is your sign and proof that the new covenant is real, and worth living for. Evidence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life is manifest in inner, heart change to affect outer behaviour. Instead of an outer "circumcision of the flesh," the Spirit works an inner "circumcision of the heart."

"God is faithful, reliable, trustworthy, and therefore ever true to His promises, and He can be depended upon; by Him you were called into companionship and participation with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," (verse 9 of 1 Corinthians 1:2-9)

(See Appendix I)

THREE PROMISES

Codex Rex is founded on a three-fold, binding promise of God, to implement and complete His plans for an eternal Kingdom. His Son Jesus Christ will reign over this Kingdom forever.

Promise One: I will be your God

"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God," (to Abraham in Genesis 17:7,8).

"And behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you," (to Jacob in Genesis 28:15).

"And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise," (to all believers in Galatians 3:29).

Promise Two: You will be My people

" Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians," (Exodus 6:7).

" Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (Exodus 19:5,6).

Promise Three: I will dwell in your midst

" And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their God," (Exodus 29:45,46).

These promises of many ages ago bring *hope*, "In the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promises long ages ago, (Titus 1:2). And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers," (Acts 26:6).

This hope finds further *assurance* in the truth that God is faithful to His promises. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful," (Hebrews 10:23).

The promises of long ago found their fulfilment in the birth and life of Jesus Christ,¹⁷ when He announced, that as surely as He cast out demons by the finger of God, He gave proof that the Kingdom of God had come.

"But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you," (Luke 11:20).

However, the Kingdom of God establishes its eternal rule first in the hearts of men.

"For behold the Kingdom of God is in your midst, within you and surrounding you," (Luke 17:21, Amplified).

Upon the return of King Jesus Christ to this earth, His right and just Kingdom rule, which is the government of the Kingdom of God, will be established over all the earth, to fulfill all God's promises of long ago. ¹⁸

" And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there was no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them'," (Revelation 21:1-7, 11:15, 19:6,16).

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for a revelation of the Lord's eternal government. Blessed are those who submit themselves to His just and righteous rule. Blessed are those who walk daily in the Spirit of His love and grace, to catch a glimpse of the Kingdom of God.

¹⁷ Luke 2:11

¹⁸ Acts 2:36

Surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, God testifies of His eternal plan throughout history, as He unfolds His Kingdom wisdom for all ages, in the great promises of His Holy Word. Blessed are those who believe. Blessed are those who believe in the eternal God and Father, who is faithful to His Word of power, to bring about all He has promised.

FOUR PRINCIPLES

Codex Rex comprises four fundamental legal principles, as a framework for all teaching of the right and just rule of Jesus Christ, and the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

Legal Principle One: Absolutes

The solid rock on which the entire Kingdom's legal system of government, beyond the year 2000, stands, is a series of five basic articles. These are the *absolutes* of the Kingdom of God. Absolutes are binding articles that are eternal and irrevocable (unalterable, unchanging and that cannot be recalled or rescinded by God or man).¹⁹

All world governments and civilizations, who abolished God's absolute rule to adopt relevant law, have failed to survive, and will continue to collapse. History bears the tragic record.

Legal Principle Two: Examination

The means whereby the Kingdom's legal system is applied to a believer's life, is not by strict adherence to outward rules and regulations of the old covenant in the *Old Testament*. The Kingdom is applied by careful *examination* of a believer's heart (the new covenant of the *New Testament*).²⁰

Examination exposes the true intent of the heart and directs the believer to turn to God's ways, not in fear of condemnation or punishment, but out of deep love for God and the freedom His rule brings.

Legal Principle Three: The Infilling Holy Spirit

To live in perfect obedience to *Codex Rex* is not a matter of personal strength, knowledge, wealth, abilities, or virtuous and noble works. Instead obedience is a "delight" to do God's will.

¹⁹ Hebrews 13:8, 1: 2,3,12

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, Hebrews 4:12

"I delight to do Your will," (Psalm 40:8).

The believer is empowered by the infilling of the Holy Spirit.²¹

He brings constant refreshment and assurance to enable every believer to walk in the liberating truth of the Kingdom of God. As a result, the believer's response to *Codex Rex* is not to earn God's favour through works, but to offer "obedience" as a "sacrifice" of praise and worship to God Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, for the free gift of salvation and the Kingdom of God.

Legal Principle Four: Born Again

To enter into perfect obedience to *Codex Rex* and citizenship in the Kingdom of God, you must be "born again." ²² Perhaps the greatest of all Kingdom mysteries is this "new birth" accomplished in you, by the Holy Spirit. Impossible to conceive in the natural, a man and a woman who believe, are "born again" (re-created) with a new heart - a heart that is right again with God.²³

Two thousand years ago. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, was puzzled by this great mystery of the Kingdom of God.

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God'... 'I say unto you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into 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 3:3,5-7).

Through Kingdom *absolutes* you will stand on solid rock, as God's truth never changes. Through the King's examination you will be introduced to the greatest of all freedoms - the freedom of His abiding Spirit in you. His Holy Spirit teaches and guides you into a greater revelation of the King, the Father, and His eternal Kingdom. Through the "new birth" you are set free from all condemnation, fear, and guilt. God now sees you and receives you, as "washed clean" (forgiven, justified), and rightful heirs to the Kingdom He has prepared, before the foundation of the world.

²¹ Jeremiah 31:33,34; Zechariah 4:6; John 16:13-15; Acts 1:5,8

²² John 3:3

²³ 2 Corinthians 5:17

FIVE ABSOLUTES

Codex Rex contains five basic, irrevocable (cannot be changed by God or man), and binding *articles*, that form the eternal *absolutes* of the Kingdom of God. These absolutes are the core of Judeo-Christian law.

Absolute One - the *command* to love God and Him alone.

"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is One! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up," (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).²⁴

Absolute Two - the *commitment* to be devoted to God and all His ways.

"And now Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you; but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good," (Deuteronomy 10:12,13).

Absolute Three - the *compulsion* to include your neighbour and yourself in God's great love commandment

"And He (Jesus, as He quotes the *Old Testament*) said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole law and the Prophets," (Matthew 22:37-40).

The first three absolutes are contained in the *Law and Prophets* of the *Old Testament*. These absolutes are the fulfillment of what the *Old Testament* commanded, and what was spoken by the Prophets. These three absolutes formed the solid foundation of the Kingdom of God, as revealed in the *Old Testament*, and were taught as mandatory obedience for the people of Israel. To these three absolutes, God adds two more, to fulfill the *New Testament*, and to be taught as mandatory obedience for all who are citizens of the Kingdom, including the people of Israel.

²⁴ 1 John 5:1-3, this (love) law covers all commandments of God
Exodus 34:14, God is a jealous God, not wanting to share you with any other "god."
Romans 7:2-6, sharing your life with any other "god" is called "spiritual adultery."

When Jesus cried from the cross, "It is finished,"²⁵ obedience to the absolutes of the Law and the Prophets (the Old Covenant) was fulfilled, not by an imperfect man, but by a perfect man, the Son of Man, who is the Son of God - Jesus. His loving sacrifice brought justice to God's legal requirement, to punish man's rebellion with eternal death. With justice done, God declared man reconciled to Himself, and offered man eternal life in Christ. The way into the "Holy of Holies" was open again. The time had come for a new and better covenant. Faith in Jesus fulfills the mandatory obedience of the new covenant.

Absolute Four - the *commission* to demonstrate your love for God, yourself, and your neighbour, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and not in your own power.

"For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God... and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in *demonstration*²⁶ of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God," (1 Corinthians 1:18, 2:4).

Absolute Five - the *completion* of absolutes of *Codex Rex*, adds to the great law of love and its demonstration, faith (belief) in the power and authority of the Name of Jesus.

"And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us," (1 John 3:23).

"And these signs will accompany those who have believed in My name; they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover," (Mark 16:17,18).

The above five absolutes form the foundation upon which you live a life of unlimited service and unquestioning obedience to the Father. These absolutes will prepare you for the examination of the Holy Spirit, to conform you to *Codex Rex*, the complete laws of the Kingdom of God. Your service and obedience are not a matter of outward behaviour, in response to the demands of the "letter" of the law, but a matter of inner love for the "letter" of the Spirit, in response to God's promise of freedom from the "letter" of the law.

Obedience is no longer the sacrifice of a change of behaviour through *Old Testament* law, but a change of heart in response to Kingdom Law (*Codex Rex*), resulting in a change of behaviour.²⁷

²⁵ John 19:30

²⁶ Caution; this ministry of demonstrating God's power should, if at all possible, confine itself to ministry of "men to men," and "women to women."

²⁷ Hebrews 8:10-12, Jeremiah 31:33

Outward change is a temporary process that, with the best of personal discipline, will yield only hardship as you strive to obey daily the commands of God. At times you may succeed. At times you will fail. But inner change, the change of one's heart, is a permanent change brought about by the Spirit of Jesus. From a changed heart, the "river" ²⁸ of living water flows to affect your outward behaviour, without fear of failure, or condemnation brought on by trial and temptation.

From this "river" of living water flows a freedom to worship, freedom to love and obey God, and freedom to love one another, with grace and justice.

This is the way of the King. This is the absolute truth of the Kingdom of God, against which no opposition can stand. It is the power of God. It is the fulfillment of *Codex Rex*, as revealed by Jesus, in Matthew 5:17-20.

TEN ATTITUDES

Codex Rex is the rule of a Kingdom, with Godly foundations, and a Godly people of *character, conduct, influence and perseverance*. These attitudes, found in the Kingdom teachings of Jesus Christ, are often called the "*Beattitudes*" of Matthew 5:1-16.

Together these "*Beattitudes*" comprise ten "Be-Attitudes" reflected in the *character* of a believer, the *conduct* of a believer, the *influence* of a believer, and his or her *perseverance*.

A "change of heart" means you have, or aim to "be" like these "attitudes," in the way you live each and every day.

The Kingdom of God is characterized by the new nature of its citizens. This nature is no longer rooted in sin. This new nature is free from the bondage (control, government) of sin. This new nature has its roots in righteousness. A righteousness that is right before God, has rights with God, and does right like God.²⁹

Kingdom citizens now must reflect and grow in the nature of Jesus Himself, in true *Godly character, Godly conduct, Godly influence and Godly perseverance*.

In ***Character***, Kingdom citizens are: **(1)**, poor in spirit, through the evaluation of their own self-assurance and self-sufficiency. Kingdom citizens **(2)**, mourn for their actions with a repentance that permits true sorrow. Kingdom citizens **(3)**, hunger and thirst for the Spiritual health, that comes as a result of being baptised and filled with the Spirit of God. Kingdom citizens must be without guile or pretense in the **(4)**, purity of their hearts before God (Matthew 5:3,4,6,8).

In ***Conduct***, Kingdom citizens must be: **(5)**, meek in their teachable spirit, with **(6)**, mercy, and full of compassion. Kingdom citizens must extend mercy without judgement or condemnation. Kingdom citizens must be **(7)**, peacemakers, as they bring a quieting influence in times of strife and opposition as well as in situations of conflict (Matthew 5:5,7,9).

²⁸ From a "well" of John 4:14, to a "river" of John 7:38,39

²⁹ Colossians 1:9-14, 23, 2:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

In *Influence*, Kingdom citizens must be like (8), salt to preserve the integrity of their character, as they influence others. Kingdom citizens must demonstrate real and visible influence as (9), true light, that is humbly shed upon the lives of others, and in a dark world in which they live (Matthew 5:13-16).

In *Perseverance*, Kingdom citizens must be loyal subjects to the King. Kingdom citizens must remain (10), steadfast and sincere, with a joyful and glad disposition, amidst persecution, insults, rejection, false witness, slander, accusation, and the divisive work of the enemy, and his attempt to undermine Kingdom work (Matthew 5:10-12).

These ten *attitudes* are the fertile ground of your heart, into which the Holy Spirit sows the seeds of God's powerful Word.

From this seed, the Holy Spirit grows fruits of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, against such things there is no law," (Galatians 5:22,23).

The ultimate witness to the world, that this Jesus, whom you confess to be your Saviour and Lord, is true, is the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, as He shapes your character with poverty, mourning, hunger, thirst, and purity of heart. He shapes your conduct with meekness, mercy, and peacemaking. He shapes your influence with preserving salt and visible light. He shapes your perseverance, with faithfulness, despite opposition and persecution.

The world will think you've gone crazy, advocating such seemingly harsh qualities and unreal virtues, but you will understand the true meaning of these "Be-Attitudes." You know, that for those who will diligently seek the Kingdom, these "Be-Attitudes" are the keys of the Kingdom. These are the keys to everlasting freedom.

And so begins the Lord's "Sermon on the Mount," with opening remarks known as the "*Beattitudes*" - the "attitude of being" a disciple of Jesus. Jesus came to teach an attitude of Kingdom character, conduct, influence and perseverance.

These attitudes reflect the true heart of the followers of Jesus. In the end, regardless of circumstances and events, there will be a "crown of life" waiting for the followers of Jesus, as a heavenly reward in the eternal Kingdom of God. Even though you may not see everything clearly, the Holy Spirit will increase your glimpses daily of the Kingdom and its majestic glory to come. His revelation of the keys to the Kingdom will remain as substance of your faith and hope. This is faith in Jesus, and the hope of glory, that makes true disciples of Jesus embrace the "*Beattitudes*" with holy zeal, sincere abandonment, and a deep commitment to Jesus.

Kingdom *character* results in Kingdom *conduct*.

Kingdom *conduct* results in Kingdom *influence*.

Kingdom character and Kingdom conduct require Kingdom *perseverance* in order to result in Kingdom influence of preserving salt and visible light.

FIFTEEN KINGDOM LAWS

Codex Rex comprises fifteen "laws" of the Kingdom of God, as outlined by Jesus Christ in His "Sermon on the Mount." The full text of that Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew chapters 5 through 7, with a condensed version in Luke 6:20-49.

These fifteen "laws" are not a legal code requiring strict obedience. They are the life-and-freedom giving, truth of the Kingdom of God, used by the Holy Spirit to examine the motives of your heart. This examination is God's way of revealing the real *you to you*.

This examination has the exclusive purpose of showing you, what stands in your way of receiving God's Kingdom blessings of righteousness, peace, joy and power of life, in submission to the rule (government) of Jesus Christ.³⁰ By examining your heart, the Holy Spirit will point out to you a specific need in your life, a need that requires obedience to the commandments of God. In examining these "laws," it is very important to understand the Holy Spirit's intent.

When you read and study one of these "laws", the Holy Spirit will show you why you are in disobedience to this "law," and what reason you harbour in your heart to walk in rebellion to God. But, instead of condemnation, He, lovingly and graciously, shows your need for obedience. When you obey that "still small voice" of the Spirit, peace, joy, and quietness will flood your spirit, and you will know that wonderful sense of assurance that, despite the sins and mistakes of life, you belong to the family of God.

1. Law *one* - shows your need for *repentance, forgiveness* and *reconciliation*, exposed by the "law of anger."

Matthew 5:21-26, exposes *anger* in your heart. Is your heart filled with expressed or repressed anger, justified or unjustified anger? Examples of anger in your heart, are broken trust and betrayed friendships, just to name two. Obedience must be immediate through repentance, confession and restitution. Anger is spiritual cancer. You must deal with that anger immediately.

2. Law *two* - shows your need for *divine surgery*, exposed by the "law of purity."

Matthew 5:27-30, exposes *hidden lusts and desires* of your heart. It exposes your tendency to nurse those lusts and desires, and to feed on them, with self-pity and self-gratification. Evidence of such self-pity and self-gratification is often compulsive buying habits, gambling, drinking and other binding habits, to name some. Obedience means: cutting out or cutting off everything that feeds those lusts. No surgery is too severe.

³⁰ Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20

3. Law *three* - shows your need for *faithfulness to your choice of Jesus Christ*, exposed by the "law of faithfulness."

Matthew 5:31-37, exposes *unfaithfulness* in your heart to the Word, the Law, the Will of God, and unfaithfulness to a committed life to Jesus. The line between trusting worldly methods or God's methods is clear. Faith is trust in God's ways. You choose Jesus Christ; chose nothing else to "supplement" your faith in Him, such as "faith" in the systems of the world. Do not commit spiritual "adultery."³¹ Obedience means: deep commitment beyond just the letter of the Law to a forever-abiding intent of your heart.

4. Law *four* - shows your need for *right attitudes*, exposed by the "law of non-resistance."

Matthew 5:38-42, exposes your *impulse and gut reactions*, based on wrong attitudes. Before we know all the facts, our minds race with the prospect of suing individuals, corporations, institutions, and governments. God is the executor of revenge, because only He can dispense just vengeance. Obedience means: dealing with any spirit of rebellion, resentment, and independence. Replace them with love, justice and compassion. Obedience is a matter of flexibility or non-resistance, a willingness and eagerness to submit to God's "potter's hands," and be shaped and moulded as He sees fit.

5. Law *five* - shows your need for *perfect love*, exposed by the "law of perfect love."

Matthew 5:43-48, exposes your *partiality* to loving others, as "perfectly" as God loves you. It exposes your *conditional* love towards others, in contrast to God's *unconditional* love for you. The heart of missions, as well as living amongst your fellow citizens in any community on the planet, is unconditional love. Obedience means: loving impartially and unconditionally, as God loves you and all mankind. Perfect love is a heart-love for God, yourself, His children, and even your enemies.

6. Law *six* - shows your need for *pure motives*, exposed by the "law of pure motives."

Matthew 6:1-18, exposes your *true motives* as you respond to God's Word. Are your motives, rituals, routines, and works-oriented performances strictly for favour and earthly recognition? Do you believe religious observance is assurance of salvation? Does your ego demand outward recognition in the church? Obedience means: replacing those untrue motives

³¹ Romans 7:2-6

with pure humble motives to serve the King of Kings and His people. Servants may appear "last" on earth, but they are "first" in the Kingdom of God.

7. Law *seven* - shows your need for a *generous heart* towards heavenly treasure, exposed by the "law of finances."

Matthew 6:19-23, exposes the *focus of your heart* on temporal, earthly treasures. God's Word says those earthly treasures are no more than treasures of hay, stubble, and wood. Obedience begins with building and using Kingdom materials to gather and build eternal treasure. Heaven's treasures are not the material of things and possessions; they are the lives of people on earth. You sow with a priority of spreading His Kingdom righteousness and justice, to reap a harvest of rich fruit of righteousness (Hosea 10:12, Hebrews 12:11, Isaiah 32:17). The earthly manifestation of heaven's eternal treasure is peace, quietness, confidence, trust, and assurance. Therefore, be generous with all your resources to improve the lives of others, so they too may know the King, and walk in the same blessings you so eagerly desire.

8. Law *eight* - shows your need for *contentment*, exposed by the "law of trust and security."

Matthew 6:24-34, exposes the degree of *contentment* in your heart, and the dependence of your heart's peace on the "things" of this world. Obedience means: total trust in God (despite circumstances), and a walk in freedom from fear, anxiety, poverty or success, lack or plenty, acceptance or rejection by man. True Kingdom prosperity is contentment with God's provision.

Whether times are plenty or scarce, God meets all your needs. When He requires little of you, you need little. When He requires much of you, you need much. With every calling is the full provision of the Father and the complete equipping, in His strength, of your spirit, your soul, and your body to fulfill the task He asks of you.

9. Law *nine* - shows your need for *rightful judgement*, exposed by the "law of rightful judgement."

Matthew 7:1-5, exposes your *callous judgements* of others, before you even judge yourself. Sometimes we judge with words; sometimes we judge with a condescending "look of the eyes." This is an examination of your judging mouth and eyes. Obedience means: judging yourself first, and then, with compassion and the same gracious and compassionate Kingdom standards, judge others.

10. Law *ten* - shows your need for *wisdom in Spiritual guidance*, exposed by the "law of discernment."

Matthew 7:6, exposes your need for God's special *Spiritual guidance* of the Holy Spirit, in speaking and dealing with people. Obedience means: sharing your heavenly treasure on ready hearts, and not the hearts of stone, of those who do not want to listen and whose agendas are self-serving. Sharing is not about simply exchanging data, information, facts, and figures for the sake of interest or argument. Sharing is truth spoken into the lives of people who are willing to "have ears to hear."

11. Law *eleven* - shows your need for *responsibility*, exposed by the "law of responsibility."

Matthew 7:7-12, exposes *resistance* in your heart to the "Golden Rule" of the Kingdom, which is the summary of all God's law and will. God requires you to be responsible for whoever comes to you to ask, seek, or knock for the Kingdom's truth. Obedience means: a humble walk in the Father's wisdom, as *you* ask first, and then, open your hearts to those who ask you. The "Golden Rule" of the Kingdom of God, is an attitude of the heart matched by a believing faith, that as you bless others, just as you wish to be blessed, so the Father will bless you.

12. Law *twelve* - shows your need for a *decrease of self*, exposed by the "law of abundant life."

Matthew 7:13,14, exposes your need for a *decrease of yourself*, through the narrow gate of God's pruning. It's the narrow gate of God's discipline and God's shaking. Obedience means: freedom from all emotional, spiritual, mental, and physical baggage, to trust and run free in the Kingdom's abundant life. The narrow way of Jesus is the only way to abundant life of the Kingdom. With your rules and your ways, entrance through the narrow gate, is restricted. There is no room in His Kingdom for a will contrary to God's will. Stripped of your will, you enter committed to His will.

13. Law *thirteen* - shows your need for *protection of your spiritual life*, exposed by the "law of roots and fruits."

Matthew 7:15-20, exposes the hidden dangers of *self-deception* and the *deception of others*, from which you must protect yourself. You must protect the most valuable of Kingdom possessions - your free and abundant life in the Holy Spirit. Obedience means: constant inspection of all fruit of self-effort and self-congratulation, and the careful examination of the fruit of others who attempt to influence you.

14. Law *fourteen* - shows your need for *obedience*, exposed by the "law of obedience."

Matthew 7:21-23, exposes *disobedience*. Obedience means: giving God permission (regardless of how much it hurts), to line up your will with His right and perfect will. To obey is to obey His Word. God said so, and you love Him enough to obey instantly without question. In His mercy, God gave us a written copy of His word - the Scriptures. Obedience begins with knowing the Scriptures in order to discern the character and will of God.

15. Law *fifteen* - shows your need to be *vessels of honour*, exposed by the "law of the building code."

Matthew 7:24-27, exposes the need for *genuine and lasting change* in your heart to affect what you do in life. Obedience means: abiding (to continue, go on with) in the words of Jesus (*Codex Rex*), and building your life on the foundations of a just and righteous rule of Jesus, namely His righteous Kingdom government.

This new law of the Kingdom (*Codex Rex*) points to a need for a new righteousness. Not a righteousness of strict obedience to laws, but a righteousness of faith. A righteousness of faith, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to enable you to willingly yield your will in submission to His examination, and set you completely free.

The keys of the Kingdom (Matthew 16:19) are Biblical truths, with which you *unlock* the powers of heaven, to bring Kingdom results in your daily life. Keys of the Kingdom also *lock* the powers of this world, that try to prevent you from walking in the freedom God has given you in the Kingdom of God, both now and forever.

TRAINED AND WALKING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Codex Rex is the rule of the Kingdom of God. It is a just system of Godly law, with which Jesus governs the hearts of His followers today, and will govern the kingdoms of this world tomorrow, when He returns..

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide an abundance of teaching as they clarify and expand, as well as illustrate how Godly rule provides the right ground in which righteousness can grow a rich harvest. Only Matthew 5:1-7:29 and Luke 6:20-49, record the actual "Sermon on the Mount" of Jesus. The other two Gospels of Mark and John, take this great Kingdom instruction, and frame it with the life of Jesus, as our living example through His holy life, death, resurrection and ascension. As such, the four Gospels, in their individuality and harmony, are a wealth of teaching and a source of great revelation about the Kingdom of God and its righteous rule.

In every believer's life there comes a time for a special, quality decision, to allow the Holy Spirit freedom to mature *teaching* into *training*.

Teaching equips you to "know about the water."

Training equips you to "walk on the water."³² It is through training you are stretched, scratched, bruised, broken, and humbled, until the genuine righteousness of the Kingdom shines in and through you, as light in a dark place. Building on the Kingdom teachings of four Gospels, the *New Testament* apostles wrote a series of letters and epistles to train you in the application of the Kingdom's message, to every area of life. You must be trained to apply the Kingdom's righteousness in your marriage, family, labour relations, trade dealings, commercial deals, economics, personal relationships, government, and the church.³³

This training includes the inner disciplines of Godly emotions, Godly will, and Godly intellect. This training also includes the self-control of bodily behaviour. As many are taught, so many must be trained in Kingdom living, to become a true witness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The test of teaching and training is *walking* in the results of such teaching and training.³⁴ Results may not necessarily be quantitative, but should be qualitative. Nevertheless, results must be a proclamation, in word and deed, of the Kingdom's liberating truth.

Teaching and training in the Kingdom's righteousness demand a response, that must result in actual change. That change must become evident in the way you walk through life. Your walk of faith must demonstrate results of change, in response to the King's rule in your life. For that reason, Kingdom citizens must be *taught and trained to walk* in the just and righteous rule of Jesus.³⁵ For that reason, Jesus, the just and righteous King, examines your heart with His Kingdom laws of divine rule.

With your highest good in mind, Jesus, the great examiner, permits you to see what is in your heart. He exposes attitudes, bondages, and beliefs that keep you from His highest good for you.

His highest good is the Kingdom's righteousness, peace, joy, power and love, reserved forever for God's people, a highest good that assures God as your eternal Father in eternal fellowship (community) with you.

His examination of your heart through the Holy Spirit is His "Government beyond the year 2000." It is *the* way in which Jesus brings you to freedom on the Kingdom road, to total trust in God. Let Him examine you freely, and without fear or condemnation, as He shapes you to be a Kingdom of Godly people.

Your response to His examination, is the way of His Government and His rule from now and forever more, beyond the year 2000.³⁶

THE GOLDEN RULE

³² 1 Peter 1:6,7

³³ 2 Peter 1:3-8; James 1:1-4

³⁴ 2 Peter 1:10,11; Hebrews 5:11 - 6:2

³⁵ James 3:13

³⁶ Romans 12:12; Romans 12:1,2

Nowhere is the application of *Codex Rex* more apparent than in the management of daily affairs. Every day you make decisions that affect your life, both short and long term. Often the decisions you make affect the lives of others as well. As a father, mother, student, labourer, business leader, community leader, and government leader, you must make endless decisions, large and small. Nowhere is the need for quality, right decisions more necessary than in the management of decisions that affect relationships. The summary of *Codex Rex* is its application to the management of decisions that affect every individual.

The "Golden Rule" is the application of *Codex Rex* in making decisions.³⁷

Somehow, your faith in *One King*, your understanding of *Two Covenants*, and your trust in God's *Three Promises*, must end in quality decisions for life.

Somehow, your acceptance of *Four Principles*, your commitment to *Five Absolutes*, and your submission to *Ten Attitudes*, must give authority to the implementation of your decisions.

Somehow, your determination to apply the Kingdom's *Fifteen Laws*, in diligent *Training and Walking in Righteousness*, must give your decisions a power and authority that bring honour to God.

Somehow, your willingness to submit to God's examination of your heart, must bring you to a clear and simple life, in which the "Golden Rule" is applied, whenever you are called upon to make a decision. Therefore, it is mandatory, that all decisions be made with careful consideration of *Codex Rex*, the rule of the Kingdom and the heart of Jesus.

The "Golden Rule" for decisions that honour *Codex Rex*, is summed up in one word - love. But such love is not a love as the world understands it. Love, as God understands it, is justice.³⁸ Justice is Righteousness. Or, put in another way: justice is always the right decision based on God's will. God's love for you was demonstrated in His right decision to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus for you. Your love for others is a decision, that demonstrates your right decision to accept Jesus Christ as Lord of your life.

It is precisely because your "right decisions," that the Kingdom of God visibly stands in stark contrast to the world. The world attempts to make decisions based on right and wrong. No man is wise enough to make such a decision. No man is innocent enough to make such a decision. In every dispute, in every situation that requires a decision, every man and woman, are both right and wrong to different degrees, but right and wrong nevertheless.

The Law says *right or wrong*. Right, or "good," motivates man to do more good works. The more "right" he is, and the more "good" he does, the more proud he becomes. Wrong, or "evil," motivates man to live in fear of punishment and condemnation. The more "wrong" he is, and the more "evil" he does, the worse he feels. To deal with the inevitable guilt as a result of "wrong," or "evil" choices, he sears his conscience, hardens his heart to commit further wrong, and justifies his actions. The reality of having to make decisions between right and wrong, between good and evil, is the ground in which seeds are sown that produce divided families, divided communities, and divided countries.

Solomon had to deal with precisely such a case thousands of years ago. The words of 1 Kings 3:5-14, record the seemingly bizarre incident of a dead baby. Faced with an incredible decision, Solomon had to decide what was just - not who was right or wrong. Many will

³⁷ Colossians 3:15-17

³⁸ 1 John 2:5,6, 4:7-11, 5:3

remember the story of two women, and their two children. One child had died accidentally; the other was alive. One was about to lose her living baby to a woman who lied about the tragic circumstances of her dead child. Everyone forgets *both* women were equally wrong. Both were harlots, whores, whose children were the fruit of commercial sex. Yet, the deciding factor in Solomon's decision was not right versus wrong. The deciding factor was *Codex Rex* - the intent of the women's hearts. One lied about the identity of the living baby, in order to claim that child. The real mother of the living child displayed true heart-love. When Solomon exposed their hearts through an attempt to cut the living child in half, the real mother begged to spare the child, and give it to the other woman.

Because of the incredible wisdom God had given him, Solomon discerned the very intent of the women's hearts, and as a result applied the "Golden Rule," the rule of the Kingdom of God - to judge, not according to legality of the law, but according to the true intent of the law by discerning the intent of the women's hearts. With Godly wisdom, Solomon made a "right choice," and restored the living child to its real mother.

Knowing the intent of the heart will enable you to receive the Holy Spirit's leading to make right decisions.

When, in 1986, I began studying and teaching the Kingdom of God, I also began writing a complete study course about that Kingdom. The written course material went through many revisions over the following years. Eight years later, I found myself in a similar position as Solomon, to demonstrate the "Golden Rule" through the application of *Codex Rex*. The events surrounded my tenure as Executive Director of a professional theatre. For two and a half years, I had to make some of the most difficult decisions of my career and life. They were decisions that dealt with management of people's lives, in the theatre's ministry and business environment. Many decisions were made in order to deal with major confrontations instigated by immature people, and the effects of their right and wrong decisions.

Each time, I prayed and asked the Lord to give me "right" and "just" decisions. Each time, I listened to both sides in the dispute, hoping I would remain impartial. Many times, I knew the decision would not be, who was "right" and who was "wrong," but what decision would be "just," in view of the intent of the hearts of those in dispute.

Often, I let all parties concerned know they were *both* right and *both* wrong.

Each time, God answered my prayer and gave me a "just" decision. The result was lasting peace in the work place.

It is easier and more productive, to make quality decisions in times of peace, than in times of conflict. Most of the time, when there was peace in the theatre, our productivity increased. Some agreed with my decisions; some did not. Nevertheless, God fully supported every time I prayed and declared my desire to apply the "Golden Rule." He brought about the effect of *Codex Rex*, including peace, joy, and strength to continue managing the theatre, with right choices. For all who continued to *teach, train, and walk* with me, during those exciting theatre years, the road to freedom and trust in the Kingdom of God, became a genuine adventure of faith.³⁹

³⁹ 1 John 5:8; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Isaiah 54: 14-17; Isaiah 9:6,7; Hebrews 4:12; Romans 8:14, and 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

PART TWO

THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Introduction

1. The Simplicity of it all

Solomon (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

Shakespeare (Much Ado About Nothing - 1698-99)

Paul (2 Corinthians 11:3)

Jesus (John 7:37-39, 8:31,32)

2. The Commission of (preaching) Righteousness

(Matthew 28:19,20, 24:14, 37, 2 Peter 2:5)

The **Kingdom of God** is the total message of the Bible. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the all-inclusive message of salvation (Genesis 12:1, Hebrews 11:10, Revelation 21:2)

It is a theme, a Plan of Redemption, a plan of salvation in Jesus Christ whose focus is a people of God **summoned to live under Jesus Christ's rule** in a hope of faith whose anchor is the coming (again) **Kingdom of God** and its returning King.

The Church and the Kingdom are the historical setting in which "**Codex Rex**" is and will be established.

The Gospel of the Kingdom and "Codex Rex" are the sole components of the message of Jesus, for which Jesus was anointed (Matthew 4:23, 6:33, 13:11,19,44,45, 24:14., Luke 4:18,19., John 8:31,32,36., Acts 1:3, 28:31)

3. Free at last

1. No longer **BOUND BY THE PAST** including the bondage of sin consciousness, illegal ties, fear, shame, guilt, generational ties, and a false ID crisis.

2. No longer **CONSUMED BY THE PRESENT** including a consumer mentality that only encourages trends of upwardly mobile, success motivated, results orientated, making it, servitude to mammon, power, wealth and worldly influence.

3. No longer **IGNORANT OF THE FUTURE**

Only a vision of the future in the Kingdom of God will set you free from the past and present (Romans 4:16 - 21, more than babies in the sky - Hebrews 11:8-16)

To help you understand the role of the church in the Kingdom of God, it is helpful to look at the total revelation of God in Jesus, in man, and throughout history, as a number of "ages," or as the scriptures affirms, "seasons," which are periods of time in which attributes of God and the work of the Holy Spirit of God are especially evident in special areas. It is not the believer's task to figure when precisely what the calendar dates are of such "ages." Instead, believers look by faith for patterns of historical and spiritual revelation that enable them to grow and mature in faith as the evidence of God's work becomes overwhelming.

For that reason I have divided my commentary on such "ages" into:

1. The age of promise
2. The age of deliverance
3. The age of freedom
4. The age of judgement
5. The age of glory

Theologically, each age is a unique dispensation or "pouring out" of God's revelation upon the church. Experientially there is a little bit of each "age" in the believer at all times. Historically it is a proven fact that indeed God has given and continues to give promise, deliverance, freedom, judgement and glory.

1. THE AGE OF PROMISE

This is the age of the promise of the Kingdom *to come* (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6,7), an age that began in the *shadowlands* of Old Testament times and was ratified at Mt.Sinai. It was an unprecedented age in which God's love was demonstrated amidst the judgement of a history that chronicled man's uniquely personal and varied relationships to God, his disobedience to God and the consequences of his actions. It was also an age in which the true identity of the Messiah was prophesied. He would be a servant King. He would be a suffering servant who would usher in the Kingdom of God in the hill country of Galilee and throughout Israel. When He ushered in that Kingdom sometime during AD 30 to AD 33, He left earth for heaven to prepare for the final homecoming of the family of God, with a promise He would return. Until then, He left us His Spirit to enable and equip us to live our daily lives in the true light of that Kingdom. The age of promise includes:

1. Shadowlands
2. Sinai roots
3. The judgement of history
4. A demonstration of love
5. The Servant mystery
6. A Kingdom perspective of suffering
7. Pointing ahead

8. The Son of Man

1. Shadowlands - The Old Testament

(Hebrews 8:5, Colossians 2:17, Romans 15:4, Luke 24:27)

As a shadow of "The Kingdom to come...", the **Kingdom of God** is rooted in Israel's whole notion of herself as a chosen people of God and therefore woven into the fabric of her faith from the beginning (Isaiah 9:7 and confirmed in her covenant with God.

There are three covenants God with with man to assure His kingdom would come.

1. **Abrahamic** (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:5,6,18, 17:1-10)

2. **Mosaic** (Exodus 3:6-15)

3. **Davidic** (2 Samuel 7:5-16)

It is a Kingdom of people to whom God says,

I will be your God

You will be my people and

I will dwell in your midst

It is also a Kingdom of people who despite three profound covenants between God and man, would still wander in disobedience and point to the brutal reality that without the Spirit of God, no amount of covenants between God and man would ensure the coming of the Kingdom if that "coming" relied solely on man's obedience. Man has been and is a covenant breaker. God it not. These three covenants pointed to a need for another covenant, a holy covenant between God and Jesus His Son, to ensure no one would ever again break covenant with God again. Jesus was and is a covenant keeper.

Why then is there such a proliferation of teaching about the "shadows," when too many churches and ministries preach and teach out of the shadows of Old Testament with an endless list of "how-to" examples of behaviour-modification methods? Is this a peculiar and North American only mindset? Why does the New Testament, modern church look so much like an Old Testament, "shadowlands," ministry? The answer lies in what has been mistakenly believed to be the "victory" of the church, the victorious church, and the victory of individual believers. Old Testament typology and accounts of real people project a method that equates obedience with victory. Victory is measured in success, power, wealth, and health. If you obey you "get the blessings of Abraham," and if you don't you don't. It's famous passage is Deuteronomy 28 - 30, the blessing and the curse chapter. This is one of the most marketable passages in the Bible. It puts victory squarely in your lap if you obey. Those who fall short of victory are therefore those who disobey. Even little or no faith is considered a form of disobedience. Offering victory as a result of obedience is very palatable and remains an opportune way to create all sorts of programs, methods, and products to accomplish such obedience and victory. It's the fuel of the market-driven church. But does it line up with the Kingdom of God?

There is a divine mystery about *victory* that is revealed in the teachings by Jesus about the Kingdom of God. Victory is not the result of obedience, but the result of suffering, or if you will, "obedience unto death." This is not a suffering because of sickness and disease, because Jesus is the Healer and not the "inflictor." He came to heal the family of God, spirit, soul and body. Yes, the blessings of Abraham are yours, but they are the fruit of an inner work called a "change of heart," and not the result of an outer work called obedience. Suffering will never be

popular, especially when you must suffer for the Kingdom of God, whose suffering is a "suffering of change," namely a change of your personality or that decrease and "death" of self, to conform to the personality of Jesus Christ. We hate change, especially change of self, and we will fight change with all sorts of programs and excuses.

2. Sinai Roots

And it all begins at Sinai. God called Israel out of Egypt to gather them at Sinai to teach them His ways. God appeared to over 1 million people, instead of just to one person as if usually the claim of leaders of other religions. At Sinai God issued the **summons to Kingdom obedience**. At Sinai begins the special revelation of the **Kingdom of God, as a people of God, called to live under the rule of God** (Exodus 19:5,6). God had in a historical act, through grace and not any one person or group of people's merit, chosen Israel, entered into covenant with her, and by making Israel His people, present her as a shadow of the **Kingdom of God** to come. Israel is the prelude to a new love covenant that God would make through Jesus, and through that covenant extend the call of the **Kingdom of God** to **all who believe**, both Jew and Gentile (John 3:16a).

Israel's hope was **rooted in a faith** that began at Sinai and launched her on a course of **eternal destiny in the Kingdom of God**. To her, and later to all who believe, would belong the destiny of a Kingdom, a Kingdom of:

1. Of abundance ("milk and honey") - Exodus 3:8,17
2. A mighty nation - Genesis 12:2
3. God would defend and protect her - Numbers 23:21-24, 24:8,9
4. God would make the people great - Numbers 23:9,10, 24:5,7
5. Of abundant peace and plenty - Genesis 49:25,26, Deuteronomy 33:13-17
6. With a divine leader appointed by God whom all would serve - Genesis 49:10, Numbers 24:17-19 (for example in the Old Testament shadow of David lay the New Testament reality of Jesus)
7. To serve God's purposes - Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:18

Grounded in these 7 promises was the substance of Israel's faith. This is what would sustain her through centuries of temptations and trials.

Israel's temptations and trials, however, became another faith, a **faith in a Godly plan to do man's will and not God's will** - namely a destiny of earthly possessions and a territorial kingdom to be led by God's choice of a great man, a prophet or king such as Saul, David, and Solomon. Israel's faith became a worldly faith to believe for a promise not of a Kingdom of God, but a "golden age of Israel."

Israel could not see that the **Kingdom of God** was **not of this earth**, yet would one day include the whole earth.

3. The Judgement of History

The entire course of events chronicled in the Old Testament is a **demonstration** of the continuous **Judgement of History**, a judgement that dooms to failure anything man does in his own strength and by his own will, and not according to the rule of the **Kingdom of God**, namely "in Christ" and with His anointing. Although success may seem like victory as was the case during David and Solomon's reign (the 80 year "golden age" of Israel) judgement and doom or failure nevertheless were eminent as the golden age deteriorated from godly kings into division, exile and eventual dispersion. This became the pattern for all of history for future civilizations and nations who chose to walk in the footsteps of Israel. (John 16:8).

4. A Demonstration of Love

The Old Testament is a **demonstration** of God's love and faithfulness (Heb: *hesed* - a word very unfamiliar to western thinking because it means, "unbreakable, covenant love") to His covenant promise of a Redeemer, Messiah king (Jesus, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6,7) who would deliver man from Satan's dominion over man's will and free man to do God's will, to live in liberty and love in the Kingdom of Promise, and experience the Kingdom's RPJP, Righteousness, Peace, Joy and Power in the Spirit.

The Old Testament is a **demonstration** that even in the absence of an earthly kingdom, a legal and religious kingdom that thrives on Parasitical law and denominational rule or control is no substitute either, for ultimately these will, like the succession of Old Testament kings, divide and not unite a people, or a nation, or faith and even divide the church. Our modern age has so many denominations and ministries because the church failed to grasp the true meaning of the Kingdom of God, despite overwhelming evidence in the Old Testament *shadowlands* account that man-made doctrines and man-made "kingdoms" divide and fall.

5. The Servant Mystery

The mystery of the Kingdom: The only access to the Kingdom of God is through **death and resurrection**, grounded by faith in a King who died and rose for us, a faith for which we must suffer until His return. This had its roots already in the Old testament's shadow of "**the suffering servant**" as prophesied by Isaiah, and being a shadow of Jesus and His Church.

But, Israel misunderstood "**the suffering servant**" as introduced by Isaiah (Isaiah 52:13- 53:13). She thought "the suffering servant" was the nation of Israel itself, who would suffer in her persecution and dispersion, while she stood in the belief "the Messiah" would be a "**Redeemer and Mighty Deliverer**," to lead the nation into a triumphant victory parade over other nations and peoples., and not a Messiah who was a servant who would suffer death.

Therefore when Jesus came as a *suffering servant*, they (the Jews) killed Him. When God raised Him from the dead, they (the Jews) disbelieved even more. Religious authorities now purposed to continue persecution of the followers of Jesus, the Church. The idea of Jesus as

a suffering servant leader of a major world faith, a leader who who suffered and died, is still a stumbling block and anathema today, as is the concept of a believer in a "suffering church." It is especially tough on the modern, 21st Century, Laodicean church (Revelation 3:14 - 22). The modern, contemporary Christian will fight and resist a change of personality, that is, a change of an inner self into the true image of Christ. Some manage to "keep up appearances" by changing their outer man, until they get too old to "contain" it any longer, a phenomenon that occurs frequently in older people. However, not having suffered the change of the inner man or woman, they become angry, grumpy, critical, and bitter old people. Sickness and disease serve to aggravate such people further, giving no hope to believe for comfort and healing.

Yet, even though at the coming of the suffering servant, the stage was set to step out of the **Shadowlands** and into the light of the New Testament, that is the real **Kingdom of God**, who are the people of God, a chosen remnant, we find ourselves **learning the same lesson again**, as we step from shadows into the light and back into the shadows again.

6. A Kingdom perspective of suffering

The affluent North American (Post Modern) church rejects the notion of being a "suffering servant." One simply cannot market and sell a suffering church - it's not good for business. Instead the church favours the image of a "victorious church." However, the true and only victory is the victory we have as we undergo, individually, our change of personality, fueled by the change of our inner self. We do not want to give up our ways for God's ways. We do not want to become loving and compassionate when people rub us the wrong way. We do not want to become forgiving when others have deeply hurt us. We do not want to change the way Jesus says we must change in order to inherit the Kingdom (Matthew 5,6,7). For that we must suffer. It is precisely that change of inner self that constitutes a Kingdom perspective of suffering. This perspective was brought to my attention in the Fall of 2000, when I listened to a senior medical doctor in a large general hospital. He was guest speaker at a small group of hospital chaplains, of which I am one. He is a Christian and his perspective is birthed out of many years of gently leading over one thousand terminally ill patients to the end.

To "suffer" is to undergo a change of personality. The person (in its wholeness) you once were, you no longer are. For example, old people who are in the care of a hospital, nursing home or hospice, undergo or "suffer" a process of "de-personalization." They are at the mercy of doctors, staff, volunteers, and family who perform some of the most basic functions of human existence (eating, washing, grooming, bowel and urinal movements, etc.) functions that originally served to preserve a person's dignity, but now cannot be controlled any longer and requiring twenty-four hour assistance. My father suffered this de-personalization when he became paralyzed from the waist down in his old age. He was placed in excellent care but suffered much until he went home to Jesus in February 2003. This de-personalization is a form of deep suffering that lies beyond the suffering of pain of sickness, disease and even persecution. Even though suffering because of outward circumstances such as sickness, disease, aging, poverty, persecution, etc., can be severe and very painful, Kingdom suffering ventures deeper. It is suffering because the Kingdom requires a change of personality. This is the essence of Paul's

suffering in Romans 7:15 -25. This suffering, however, is not reserved for simply the "senior" years. It begins the day you are re-created at the moment of your new birth in Christ.

Fighting the changing effects of new birth is the most frequent reason for a believer's doubts, fears, and anxieties. Our greatest example of Kingdom suffering is Jesus Christ. He calls the church to suffer with Him (Romans 8:17)

Jesus suffered not just because He was whipped, beaten and crucified on a cross. As painful as that was, other servants of God have suffered similar deaths. The list in Hebrews 11:35-38 remains as a chilling account of a suffering believer. Torture, mocking, scourging, chains, imprisonment, stoning, sawing in two, execution by sword, and temptation, marked their suffering as they became destitute, afflicted, and were ill-treated, while they wandered in deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes. The suffering that caused Jesus to bleed while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, was a deeper inner suffering. **Jesus became someone other than who He originally was.** He was the sinless Son of God and He became sin for us. In the process He had to suffer much. And He did it willingly for us.

The suffering of Jesus included:

1. Jesus as the Son of God suffered a change of personality when He emptied Himself of all heavenly and divine attributes to become fully man as the Son of Man (Philippians 2:5-8).

2. Jesus suffered as a "lamb that was slain," a suffering that changed Jesus to actually become sin for us. He became sin in all its gruesome characteristics, yet He did not commit any sin - ever. (Isaiah 53:7; Revelation 5:6,9; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3. Jesus also suffered the physical and mental agony of being beaten for His faith in God, crucified as a result of His faith and trust, and the mental agony of being separated from God, having never experienced such separation before (Matthew 27:46).

4. Jesus is our "advocate" in heaven, yet He still suffers our weaknesses and pains, things we share "with Him," until the end, namely when He returns (Hebrews 4:15, 1 John 2:1, Romans 8:17, 1 Peter 4:13).

Just as parents "suffer" when their child suffers (how many fathers and mothers have not felt the pain of a child's illness, a fractured arm, or a bloodied nose because of a bully in school?), and so the church, namely those who are the true followers of Jesus, must suffer as a suffering servant. Even if the smallest member of the church suffers, we all suffer.

Again, as painful as it may be, Kingdom suffering is not to be confused with suffering in the body such as sickness, pain, lack, etc. For that reason and because we must suffer a change of personality, we can be rich yet poor, see yet be blind, healed yet sick, or poor in the natural yet rich in Christ, bound in chains in man's prisons yet free in Christ. This is the paradox of the Laodecean and Philadelphian church of Revelation 3:7-22.

Such Kingdom suffering sheds new light on communion (1 Corinthians 11:24-30) for as we remember Christ's death we remember our death "of self," and the suffering change of our personality.

7. Pointing Ahead

Therefore, the shadows of the Old Testament *shadowlands* point to the light of the facts of the New Testament Community of Faith...

1. Israel as a people and a chosen nation *points to* the Church as a new and fulfilled Israel and chosen Remnant*
2. A covenant between a pure God and impure man *points to* a better covenant between a pure God and the pure Son of God
3. A righteousness of law *points to* a righteousness of faith
4. A temple built with human hands *points to* a temple of the Spirit which is the human spirit, soul and body, where the Spirit of God now dwells.
5. Circumcision of the flesh *points to* circumcision of the heart
6. A kingdom of territory *points to* a Kingdom of God
7. Rule by law *points to* rule by examination of motives of the heart
8. Earthy justice through judges and kings *point to* Jesus, the only righteous judge and king who imparts absolute justice.
9. The people of God as Israel *point to* the people of God as the Church

** it must be remembered that at no time was God ever "finished" with Israel only to replace Israel with the church. God has a binding eternal covenant with Israel. Israel remains God eternal family, but Israel was incomplete as the family of God until the believers in Jesus were "added to the family," as well as the "fullness of the age," when the Jews will fulfill Israel's final destiny when she accepts Jesus as Lord.*

8. The Son of Man

Israel's **Messianic Hope** of a mighty Redeemer and Deliverer had become a complete and intense longing for **political independence**. Had Jesus linked with that hope, He would have had mass national following. Many followed Him for political reasons only - to be free from Rome. **Many follow Him today for the same reason** - to be free from earthly responsibility, work and dependence on "Rome's banks," or political extremism which declares the "democratic and free west" in culture, economics, and politics, to be the "Kingdom now." Hence the appearance of "Kingdom now" teaching, which goes even further to imply, that the Kingdom of God, is the new Israel, who is the United States.

A Messiah King, who would suffer and die was the last thing in the world that Jewish nationalism expected or wanted.

Jesus applied the title "**Son of Man**" to Himself more than any other title. **It was a Messianic Title Designated for the Mighty Messiah Deliverer**, whereas "Son of God" was not. There had been many who called themselves "sons of God," and even today there are those in the camp of "Kingdom now" following who claim to be the "manifest sons of God." with a reputation of political might and military power, but "son of man" was something truly Messianic. Even the disciples did not call Jesus the "Son of Man".

Daniel 7:9-14 gave us a first encounter with the "**Son of Man**"

Mark 14:61,62 is an example of one of many times the Lord uses the designated Messianic title for Himself.

Israel believed the "Son of Man" would be the pre-existent, eternally existing, "heavenly man" (of Daniel 7:9-14) who would be more god than man. Jesus claimed to be that "heavenly man" when He called Himself the "Son of Man". But, He was NOT what the people expected in the "Son of Man", their Messiah.

Nevertheless, Israel, had great expectations....

Jesus could have easily fulfilled Israel's messianic, "Son of Man", "Heavenly Man" expectation (Matthew 26:53,54) if He had chosen to become their Mighty Deliverer and crushed Rome to once again establish the glory years of David. He would have been the greatest national hero with the greatest cult following ever. He would have met Israel's mistaken expectations of an earthly Kingdom of God.

But He came to fulfill Scripture and assert Himself as the "Son of Man" who MUST suffer and die (Mark 8:31, 9:12,31, 10:33,45 and Isaiah 52), a "son of man" Messiah whose victory would not be at the front of a conquering army, but on a cross. The concept of "**victory is a cross**" is a historical and theological oxymoron and did not fulfill the Scriptures according to those Israelites who fed on the apocalyptic dream of a Mighty Redeemer Deliverer, their Messiah King. Victory through crucifixion of "self" is also an oxymoron to many Christians. They simply cannot accept such a contradiction and therefore feel much more "at home" in the militant, sword-swinging, armour-clad, works & programs fed, name-it-and-claim-it arena of Old Testament *shadowlands*.

That a **victorious Church** in the Kingdom of God, is a people for whom the cross is death of self and a suffering through denial, rejection, alienation, ridicule and even persecution (often to death) is for many NOT the fulfillment of Scripture in a **heavenly Church** of world domination, one system advocacy, recipient of all wealth (now) and militant occupancy.

Jesus will usher that in when He returns.

The Church will not and cannot usher that in now, before Christ's return.

Judaism has seen an endless historic parade of "God-men", "Divine Kings" and "Living Messiahs" who swarmed and roamed the ancient pagan world. Israel's Messiah would not be (in their eyes) a mere man, a carpenter's son, simply anointed as a "Son of God". Theirs would be the ultimate deliverer, the "son of man."

For centuries Israel held a Messiah Deliverer as "Redeeming God" and a "Son of Man" in balance, yet Judaism could not systematically bring the two INTO ONE. Jesus did and that is the mystery of Jesus.

Therefore....

1. They (Israel) could only recognize Jesus as a man.
2. Consider Him blasphemous in proclaiming Himself to be the "Son of Man" and direct descendant of God as the "Son of God"
3. They condemned Him to die for those claims (John 19:7)
4. They believed a true Messiah would not let the notion of suffering and death take place as a means to fulfillment of God's promises to Israel (Matthew 27:41-43).
5. It ensured His rejection, ridicule and crucifixion.
6. It ensured rejection, ridicule and persecution and suffering for His followers, who would be known as the Church.
7. It remained deeply embedded in Judaism that the Messiah was not a suffering servant and in the book of Acts it becomes evident that this concept of a suffering servant is not popular with today's (Western, North American) Christianity who would rather the Church was NOT a suffering servant of the Kingdom until Christ's return. Instead, the contemporary church promotes the same redemptive work (Messiah / Church) as Judaism, namely success, prosperity, possession, acquisition and victory.

Therefore it remains (for many) a Kingdom mystery, as to how the Messiah's Church could, as a Suffering Church be victorious and prosper. **Few would find this "the narrow gate" and the "narrow way,"** where true and lasting victory and prosperity begin in the spirit and soul of a man through total submission to Codex Rex whose only and real engagement in battle is for the heart and mind. Circumstantial pursuits, that is, merely outward earthly accomplishments of victory and prosperity are a non-priority, and will for those who by faith seek after the Kingdom of God, be "added to them" as God recognizes and meets the need of the individual. God is better at recognizing our needs than we are as we often mistake our needs for wants and our desires. The contemporary church is a wanting church, but is it needy? **The task remains a summons to the rule of Jesus, not a summons to the rule of His benefits.**

2. THE AGE OF DELIVERANCE

The age of deliverance is our present age. It is an unprecedented time for the people of God, a time that will stretch and challenge us to remain faithful and endure to the end. It is an age that is synonymous with freedom, even freedom in the middle of a wicked and perverse generation, a freedom not *of* the world, yet available to those who "in Christ" live *in* the world. The age of freedom will be examined a bit later. It is an age that is marked by the reality of a *tension* that presses even more for a need for *endurance*, and an *urgency* to remain *faithful* despite the sometimes overwhelming temptation to compromise on the message and practise of the Kingdom of God. It is a time to remain diligent and watchful for those doctrines of man that do not and cannot produce that benchmark of Kingdom life, namely RPJP, righteousness, peace, joy and power of the Spirit.

It may appear to be too bold an assertion to make, but despite her supposed freedom in Christ, the Body of Christ, that is the church, needs deliverance (again) because she is:

1. Bound by the Past, that is held prisoner by sin consciousness, illegal ties, fear, shame, guilt, generational ties, and a chronic identity crisis, with no self-esteem, that chooses to wander in the wilderness of shadowlands.

2. Consumed by the Present, that holds the church ransom for consumerism, materialism, capitalism, upwardly mobile careers, success, "making it," power, wealth, Mammon, and lots of "things".

3. Ignorant of the Future, that keeps the church blind to abundant life in the Eternal Kingdom life, life beyond death, and the resurrection. Too often believers press for healing when in fact the "only way to go," is "home." Eternal youth and prosperity are the elixirs of modern life but not the assurance of eternal life.

Only a vision of the future will free you from bondage of the past and the tyranny of the present (Romans 4:16-21, Hebrews 11:8-16, more than "babies in the sky.").

But it is in Jesus that the church can find deliverance from all bondage of evil, judgement and power a bondage that that kept the Kingdom from coming throughout Old Testament times, but came nevertheless when at last Jesus said "it's here, right in your midst and in your heart"(Luke 4:18-21).

Deliverance came when Jesus birthed the Kingdom of God into humanity. It was a birth that we will look at as:

1. Birthed in time
2. The journey of faith
3. The Messiah has come
4. Divine summons
5. What sort of a kingdom?
6. The call of the Kingdom of God
7. Who is the remnant?
8. A new covenant people
9. The victorious church

10. The age of deliverance as an age of *tension*
11. The age of deliverance as an age of *endurance*
12. The age of deliverance as an age of *urgency*
13. The age of deliverance as an age of *faithfulness*
14. Power from on high
15. The cross and victory
16. The alignment of Biblical truth

1. Birthed in Time

According to Mark 1:14,15, Jesus fulfilled the entire Old Testament. Mark's reference to "the Gospel of God (v.14) is the Kingdom of God, birthed in time (Genesis 1:1) and now fulfilled in AD 1. (Luke 2:11, Isaiah 9:6).

Just like its shadow the Old testament, the New Testament Kingdom of God is not an earthly territorial kingdom, but a people, a faithful remnant who have stood with endurance as Christ's church, through the judgement of history, and who have not bowed their knees to any other god. Even though there is yet to be a "coming" of the Kingdom, namely the return of its king Jesus Christ, it is fundamental to understanding the Christian faith that we believe the kingdom *has* come. It's here. It was birthed in time in history during the ministry of Jesus.

2. The Journey of Faith

For that reason, our entire journey is wrapped up in Luke 1:17, that is:

*"to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children (**reconciliation**), and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous (**repentance**), so as to make ready (**redemption**) a people prepared (**sanctification**) for the Lord (**consummation**)"* This is our Kingdom journey of faith.

On our journey, we, the Church of Jesus Christ, are the *Forerunner*, running ahead of the coming of the King, to announce His Kingdom has come, and summon man to its rule, through **obedience motivated by righteousness**. Evidence of true obedience, an obedience moved not by works but by righteousness, is found in our readiness and willingness to live in reconciliation, repentance, redemption, sanctification and consummation.

By faith the Church knows the Kingdom's greatest mystery, a mystery that reveals a church who in her suffering will not only **be** victorious, but already **is victorious** because regardless of persecution and suffering there is nothing Satan can do to reverse Calvary, nor put Jesus Christ back into the grave, nor stop the fulfillment of Luke 1:17

The Kingdom has come

The King will come again

These two are absolutes and are irreversable. Neither powers in heaven, on earth, or below the earth can alter the Kingdom course of action God has chosen.

3. The Messiah has come (Eschatology - meaning: *future things*)

The focus of the Church is its **head**, Jesus Christ (Mark 1:14,15)

A Church victorious, whose members (a kingdom whose citizens) would suffer and die is the last thing in the world that western materialism expects or wants, wheather such "victory in death" is as a result of persecution or as a result of a personal change of personality to conform to Christ. Israel's faith and her apocalyptic hope was in a "Messiah Deliverer," who would, as a "**son of man**", be heaven's choice for this special mission, of victory in a material world. Little did they understand the primary inner work of the Kingdom of God.

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ is indeed the promised Messiah, the Hope of Israel, and the fulfillment of all Israel's hope, a Messiah who came to set up the Kingdom of God among men. But His Kingdom work begins on the inside of His followers. His followers, also known as the Remnant, who are the remnant of Israel plus all who believe who are the Church, are commissioned to take the Good News Gospel of the Kingdom to all the world, especially to those people who do not have the foundations of Israel's hope and faith, and bring them "Christ, the hope of Glory " (Colossians 1:27). Yet. among many believers there remains a persistent belief that the Kingdom of God is an earthly kingdom, either established by Jesus, or established by man to be handed over to Jesus when He returns.

However, Jesus Christ did not come....

1. Simply to usher in a new ethic, a new code of behaviour.
2. Just to replace a covenant of works with a covenant of grace
3. To usher in a God of love as distinctly different from an Old Testament God of wrath and judgement.
4. A radical obedience over a status quo obedience.
5. Non-Jewish versus Jewish
6. A new religion versus and old religion

What binds the Old Testament together with the New Testament is Jesus Christ and the dynamic truth of the rule of God. The Kingdom of God HAS come. God HAS acted. The old order *for Israel* is finished. It was completed and fulfilled by the new order *for the world* namely the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Kingdom of God for Israel has become the Kingdom of Christ for the Church. The Servant King is here and HAS BEGUN His work to set up His Kingdom amongst men.

That a **victorious Church**, the Kingdom of God, is a people for whom the cross is death of self, a suffering of denial, rejection, alienation, ridicule and even persecution, and a suffering of personal change, is for many NOT the fulfillment of Scripture in a **heavenly Church** of world domination, one system advocacy, recipient of all wealth (now) and militant occupancy of every culture and nation. Jesus will usher that in when He returns. **The Church will not and cannot usher that in now, before Christ's return.**

4. Divine Summons

Jesus Christ summons men and women to **the Kingdom of the Servant**. That summons is described in the Beattitudes of Matthew 5:1-16 , which we have examined in Codex Rex - the rule of the King.

In addition to what's written in the Beattitudes consider the following interpretations of those Beattitudes:

1. The Kingdom is a Kingdom of meek and lowly leaders who are "last" and "servants of all" (Mark 9:35, John 13:14-17, Matthew 11:28-30).
2. A Kingdom that welcomes the "hungry" and the "thirsty" (Matthew. 5:3-12, Luke 6:20-23)
3. No one will get into the Kingdom because of their wealth (Mark 10:17-23).
4. External Righteousness does NOT qualify for citizenship in the Kingdom (Matthew 21:31) only a righteousness of faith that motivates obedience.
5. The Kingdom belongs to those stripped of all pride who have become as little children (Mark 10:14) eager to receive as a child who demands, *"I like it. I want it. Give it to me!"* (1 Corinthians 1:26)
6. It's a Kingdom of complete self-denial, counting its tremendous cost of "dying to self" as worthy (Mark 10:29, Matthew 19:29, Luke 18:29)
7. It's a Kingdom without any real earthly place called home (Matthew 8:20, Luke 9:38)
8. You will be hated for belonging to it (Mark 13:13, Matthew 10:22)
9. You will be persecuted for it (Luke 6:22, Matthew 5:10,11)
10. There will be no retaliation, only a turning of the cheek (Matthew 5:39, Isaiah 50:6)
11. There will be no other destiny but to take up your cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 10:38, Luke 14:27, Mark 8:34)
12. There will be no other call but to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 8:11,12, 22:1-10, Luke14:15-24) to the Jew and to the whole world (Romans 9:17) in a calling that is "lived out" wherever God calls you and in whatever profession or duty.
13. A calling that calls you to be a servant like the Servant Jesus (Isaiah 42:6, 49:6)
14. To be a light to the world (Matthew 5:14)

15. To accept wholeheartedly and in faith, the Servant's Task (Matthew 28:19,20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8)

When it was revealed by the Holy Spirit to Jesus and His followers, His prophetic church, to know and see who God really was, it was given Jesus and the church to understand that such a God would establish His Kingdom not with battle, glory, national victory, and earthly success, but with the devotion, death and denial of self, and the substitutionary sacrifice of the Servant Jesus and the true suffering of His church.

Jesus understood **and the church must understand**, that the nature of God the Father is a God who would fulfill the redemption promise through a miraculous **incarnation**, when the word became flesh, through **kenosis**, an emptying of self, and through **Spiritual conception** of a divine birth, that were all fulfilled in a servant to the people and a servant to the Father's will, who was none other than the Son of God. It was God's pattern and plan for "the promised mighty Deliverer." Jesus understood that pattern, **and the church must understand that *the Servant is the truest and final Messianic pattern.***

The King, the Messiah-Prince, Jesus Christ, must come as a suffering Servant of God, as the true identity of a Messiah of the Remnant in order to set up the Kingdom of God. All the glory of that Kingdom can only be reached through the doorway of the cross of the Servant.

5. What sort of a Kingdom?

How does this pattern of a Messiah, who is a suffering servant, apply to the teachings about the Kingdom of God? What sort of a Kingdom is it and who is the Remnant?

What sort of a Church are we to be?

The Kingdom of God is the present dominion (also called rule or government) of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men and the future dominion of Christ over all creation. The pattern of His rule is one of victory in suffering and the pattern of the church is victory in suffering. It is mandatory that we understand what Kingdom "suffering" is and that we not be swayed by doctrines of man about suffering such as sickness, disease, and calamity, but that we believe Kingdom suffering is the change we "suffer" from being no longer "ourselves," but instead like Jesus Christ. For that, the Kingdom of God is now.

1. It came when Jesus came (Luke 4:21)
2. Jesus came to make actual the victorious rule of God over His people which Israel's faith had long awaited in her hope for a Messiah.
3. The Kingdom of God is a **present, here and now fact**. The Old Testament's **future tense** which proclaimed "behold the days (of the Kingdom) are coming...," is now the New Testament **present tense**. that claims the Kingdom is "at hand" (Mark 1:15). When Jesus prayed, "Thy Kingdom come," He did not mean it was coming

some time in the future. He prayed the Kingdom, now here, would manifest or become evident in the lives of His followers.

4. In fact: the Kingdom of God has *intruded* into the world

- 1) It is at hand - Mark 1:15
- 2) Its realm is greater than Solomon and Jonah - Luke 11:31,32
- 3) Greater than the temple and the law - Matthew 12:6-8
- 4) The Servant King is now on the scene - Luke 4:17-21
- 5) His works may be seen by all - Matthew 11:2-6
- 6) This is the day longed for in the past, yet not seen - but now can be seen in the lives of God's people - Luke 1:23,24
- 7) No longer any need to look for signs, it's among us - Luke 17:21
- 8) Signs and wonders are proof the Kingdom is here - Luke 16:19-31

Miracles are the proof that the power of the Kingdom of God has come to combat the evil power of this age. Beginning with Jesus and continuing with His church, the power of the Kingdom of God has invaded the world, and to signal the end-time struggle has begun, whose victory, guaranteed by Jesus, is eminent and inevitable.

- 9) Although small at first, the Kingdom's growth and goal are a great harvest of many people - Matthew 13:31-33, Mark 4:26-29

10) The Kingdom of God is NOW and it is very REAL

Men are called to the service of that Kingdom. Jesus Christ, through His church, extends the call. The call is urgent. The call is a radical decision for the Kingdom and the King's rule - Luke 12:36, Revelation 3:20, Matthew 13:45,46

6. The Call of the Kingdom of God

These are some of the attributes of the call of the Kingdom of God:

1. It stands at the door and knocks (Luke 12:36, Revelation 3:20)
2. It is urgent and of highest priority (Matthew 13:45,46)
3. It overrides all earthly relationships (Luke 14:26)
4. It transcends all earthly concerns (Matthew 6:33)
5. It requires divine surgery (Mark 9:47)
6. There is no turning back (Luke 9:47)
7. It requires perfection (meaning completion) as God is perfect (Matthew 5:48)
8. It means to say "yes" to the Kingdom of God, and to submit to its rule is faith (Mark 1:15, Romans 3:22)
9. It is a call to Righteousness, not of works, law, moral improvements, bursts of zeal and piety, or self-improvement, instead it is a Righteousness of faith
10. It is a call to be a people, not a territory, of obedience of faith, motivated by righteousness of faith. Faith is not void of works, but the road to *works of faith*.

11. It is a call to **do the works of Christ** (Matthew 25:31-46) Not to be a carpenter, but to do the works of faith believing in the anointed (Christ) One of God (Jesus) and His anointing to break the bonds and strongholds, AND that He has passed that anointing on to you when He calls you to minister in His name and power. Those who receive a prophet will receive a prophet's rewards. When people do receive you as anointed to preach, teach etc of God, the anointing will not flow to set the captive free, and heal the sick etc.
- not
12. It is a call to **reform (re-birth) the heart, NOT reform society.** For a non-Christian world (a reality till Jesus returns) will not and cannot submit to the rule of the Kingdom, nor can it be made to do so. In a non-Christian world, the "ethics" of Jesus are simply not practical or relevant. The "ethics" of the Kingdom of God are first and foremost submission to the rule of the Kingdom, which is only possible through re-birth.

We (the church) issue the call, the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8) and when men respond, the Holy Spirit brings about the new birth (John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17)

13. It is a call to "eschatological living" (living with a keen sense of the future or end-times) in a hope of faith, that *lives* as if tomorrow is the time of Christ's return.
14. It is a call to proclaim individual salvation (seek the Kingdom) AND the social Gospel (seek the Kingdom's righteousness)
15. It is a call to summon men to one gospel of the Kingdom which is salvation through Jesus Christ and to enter that kingdom and be obedient to the demands of the righteousness of that Kingdom, and suffer in its service.

7. Who is the Remnant?

The Remnant is the Church, the Body of Christ, the Community of believers, called out as a Remnant of Old Israel and including those called out of the whole (Gentile) world

In calling men to the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ came to "call out" a remnant. Not everyone would believe despite the call of Jesus to everyone who would hear. The Remnant is the *ekklesia*, which is Greek for the "called out ones," the Church. In fact, the precise Greek means "called out *to rule*")

The church was founded on **no date** such as Peter's confession, or on Pentecost, and observes **no formal anniversary**. It began in those few disciples who were obedient to the summons of the Kingdom under the old covenant in the Old Testament, as these disciples longed for the true Israel of God's promise and purpose.

Jesus laid the foundation of a New Israel, a Spiritual Israel who would be given its true destiny (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 37). It would be a **true Remnant** (those "called out

of the Old Testament Israel and out of the Gentile world) **the Church**, divorced from natural, geographic, cultural and economic lines (Matthew 8:11, 21:43, Luke 14:15-24)

The Church is THE TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD (Galatians 6:16) A REMNANT CHOSEN BY GRACE (Romans 11:15), A REMNANT WHO "IN CHRIST" ARE ALL ABRAHAM'S SEED AND HEIRS TO THE PROMISE (Galatians 3:29).

The Remnant, THE CHURCH is...

1. The true 12 tribes of Israel (James 1:1), the brethren (James 5:19)
2. A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to exhibit God's glory as God's chosen people (1 Peter 2:9,10, Isaiah 49:6)
3. A Kingdom of priests (Revelation 1:6, 5:10, Exodus 19:6)
4. As Israel was the "wife of God", so the Church is the "bride of Christ" (Ephesians 5:22,23, Revelation 21:2, 9-11)
5. As Israel was often spoken of as "a servant" (a body of people as *servant*), so the church, the remnant is "the body of Christ" (1Corinthians 12:27)
6. From roots of Jesse, stump of David, tree of Israel, to branches of Jesus, so the Kingdom of God grew from Israel to the Spiritual Israel (John 15:5, Isaiah 6:13)
7. The remnant church is "In Christ" positionally and with His anointing (Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Colossians 1:28)
8. **The People of the New Covenant**

The Old Testament covenant bound the 12 tribes into the nation of Israel.

The New Testament covenant binds the remnant from every tribe, tongue and nation into the new Spiritual Israel, the Church

(Exodus 24:1-11, Isaiah 42:6,7 49:8-10, 55:3, 54:9,10, Jeremiah 31:31-34, 1 Corinthians 11:25, Luke 22:20, Hebrews 8:6-13, 2 Corinthians 3:4-6, Galatians 3:26-29)

8. A New Covenant People

In the upper room is the New Covenant revealed and made actual, as prophesied by Jeremiah and all the prophets. Here among the followers of Jesus is birthed the New Israel, to whom is given a new law, which is not according to outward observance but a law that exposes THE INTENT OF THE HEART, the intent Jesus exposed in His sermon on the mount (Matthew 5:17-20). It is the Law of the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2, 10)

The inward morality of the Sermon on the Mount is connected to the inward law of the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah.

THE LAST OLD COVENANT SUPPER WAS THE FIRST NEW COVENANT MEAL. That New Covenant meal revealed the "heart" of the Kingdom of God.

A New Covenant of the Heart (Matthew 5:17-19)

A New Covenant for those who have been crucified in Christ and in whom He now lives

(Galatians 2:20)

A New Covenant for those baptised into His death and resurrected into His life (Romans 6:1-11)

A New Covenant for those who have put off the old and put on the new (Colossians 3:9,10)

A New Covenant for those who are born again (John 3:3)

A New Covenant for those who are "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 16:13)

A New Covenant for those who rely on NO external law, but have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5)

A Remnant, the Church, a people of the New Covenant

These are the people of the Kingdom of God. These are the Remnant who are the Church, the true disciples of Jesus Christ, who will inherit all the Kingdom promises, and whose glory to be revealed does not compare with what the world has to offer, yet a world that will cause the church to suffer as she stands for the Kingdom and its righteousness, its summons, and its life.

9. The Victorious Church

Here then stands the New Testament Church, the New Israel, the Remnant, and the Eschatological (end times) Community, already living in the "Age to Come", and full of hope, proclaiming the Kingdom of God in the entire world and summoning men to the rule of Codex Rex. The Church is the missionary people of the Kingdom of God, on a mission whose outcome beyond the cross is guaranteed. Jesus won the decision, but the cosmic struggle continues. Nevertheless, the Church, the Kingdom of God moves on to its inevitable triumph.

This triumph of the remnant, victorious church includes:

- 1) the unconditional surrender of the enemy
- 2) the restoration of all creation, that is the entire natural created order, under the Kingdom's (and its King's) divine domain (Acts 3:21).
- 3) Submission of all powers in heaven and on earth to the Name of Jesus, that is, to the full authority of Jesus, (1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Philippians 2:10, Isaiah 45:23).

There are other names that describe certain characteristics of the Age of Deliverance, characteristics such as "age of *tension*," and the "age of *endurance*, the age of *urgency*, and the age of *faithfulness*." Even though believers are delivered from the power, control, and "dominion" of darkness, believers are "delivered" daily from the temptations of the flesh, the struggles of spiritual warfare, and the effect of sin which "so easily entangles us." To walk in continual deliverance, the present age requires believers to combat the tensions of the age with a faith that practises endurance, urgency, and faithfulness. A look at these characteristics of the age of deliverance will help believers understand the nature of the times in which they live, and encourage them to stand firm in their faith as they trust God for every aspect of their lives. The age in which we live has become a time of great tension

10. An Age of Tension

The early New Testament Church proclaimed what Christ **had won and done**, and lived to prepare a people for His return (Luke 1:7, 11:20) as a witness to **a Kingdom already set up**. She was not deluded with grandeur in that she would be **the one who would set up that Kingdom**. The victory had already been won and the church would pay a bloody price for living such a victorious faith. **Yet, therein, in that victory, lay the seeds of the Church's extreme tension, a tension that often appears as a contradiction, but is in fact truth.**

The Kingdom *had come* and is *yet to come*.

The Victory *is won* and victory is *not yet won*.

The price *has been paid* yet *many will continue to pay the price*.

Given all authority and power yet unable to produce total victory.

Victorious over sin yet unable to live sinless.

Herein lies the paradox: *The Church against which the "gates of hell" could not prevail (Matthew 16:18) yet was unable to prevail against "Rome".*

The Church simply had no way to defeat the power of Rome and produce the promised victory. She could...

- 1) Obey the Great Commission
- 2) Reach, Teach, Preach and Send
- 3) Make Disciples
- 4) Heal the Sick, Raise the dead
- 5) Defend her faith unto death
- 6) Fight in Spiritual Warfare, yet not produce the Kingdom of God

It must be understood again and again, that while victory motivated the Church and there were no signs of defeatism and despair in her mission, there is in all the New Testament no brave talk of winning the world for Christ and of ushering in His Kingdom. Not a syllable.

The New Testament Church could never be successful as a visible, proud, conquering, militant Church, as the world understands such success.

The New Testament Church must remain the **Church of the Suffering Servant, a Martyr Church**.

Therefore the visible Church today, must like Israel of old be.....

- 1) Drink of Christ's cup (Mark 10:38,39)
- 2) Be purged (Romans 2:5, 14:10, 1 Corinthians 3:13, 4:5, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 13:24-30) and she must be judged.
- 3) Take up Christ's cross (Mark 8:34)
- 4) Gird up the loins of its mind (1 Peter 1:13)
- 5) Have its robes washed (Revelation 7:14)
- 6) Like Israel, produce a true remnant (John 8:3b, Matthew 25:40,41)

In this tense expectancy of the eminent, the New testament Church lived. The New Testament Church to this present day, lives in tension between its confidence that the

victory of the Kingdom of God had already been made actual in Christ, and its eager expectation of the victory which as yet no human can see (except by faith).

It is fitting that the New Testament should close with an *Apocalypse* to heighten that tension, as the apocalypse (the book of Revelation) accounts for the thrashing death agony of the beast and the birth pangs of a new creation.

But because it has been 2000 years, that tension has waned. At best *expectation rests on survival*, but does not rest on Christ's soon return. The church has ceased to be expectant. There are simply too many problems, too many programs, and too much baggage. It is at best a survival that aims to live at peace with a secular world. Maintaining the *status quo* of the church has become hard work and a formidable marketing challenge.

Have we, the Church, *ceased to be intruders* because suffering is the hallmark of a victorious church and we simply don't want to suffer? Hence that tension demands endurance.

11. An Age of Endurance

The early Church (of the book of Acts) had no misunderstanding about her identity. Birthed by Jesus and by the Spirit of God, she understood herself as....

1. The Successor of Israel
2. The True Remnant
3. The People of the New Covenant
4. The People of the Kingdom of God
5. The People of the Messiah
6. The Church with a Servant Mission
7. The Eschatological (end of time) Community

We cannot archaize and fossilize the Church over 2000 years. We are the New testament Church and that we must remain, living between suffering, militancy and ultimate victory. We are the same Church of 2000 years ago, and we have the same Gospel of the Kingdom as they did.

Our biggest enemy is still sin.

Given all the tools to create a new heaven and a new earth, man straightway constructed a new hell. Man has sinned in his total failure in righteousness. A world of justice and peace is totally beyond man's grasp. The world, society and man is beyond reforming. **Because of such sin, there is still...**

1. The present **judgement of history**
2. The future eternal **judgement of God**

Salvation in Christ is man's **only hope**. The **Kingdom of God** is man's **only solution**. The **Church** is man's **only place to hear the summons** of God. (Romans 10:13-17)

Let man renounce old allegiances and find life as children in the Kingdom of God. The Church must proclaim the **Rule of God**, to summon men through faith to **submit to that rule**, to announce **the Kingdom HAS come**, and that longed-for **Salvation is possible through Christ**.

Man's deepest yearning...

Although man cannot identify the (Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 4:20) source of that yearning nor know its reason, man nevertheless searches for the (*RPJP of the*) Kingdom of God. For the hope of it (*the Kingdom and its RPJP*) is engraved in the very necessity of man's nature, and he can no more escape it than he can escape himself.

There is a remarkable coincidence between the **vision of the Kingdom of God** and that goal which **most men deeply desire** today.

A vision of life and the Kingdom of God is what most men deeply desire, including:

1. Total end to violence and war with "swords beaten into plowshares," when at last global peace becomes reality (Micah 4:3, Isaiah 2:4, 11:9).
2. A healthy fertile planet. Deserts will "rejoice and blossom as a rose" (Isaiah 35:1)
3. A time of unimagined plenty of crops, natural resources, water, fresh air, etc., (Amos 9:13-15) and an end to grinding poverty worldwide.
4. Complete freedom from fear (Micah 4:4)
5. At last, a just and moral world order and a righteous global government completely free from those who know no justice and who only know bribery and corruption (Isaiah 9:7, 11:2-5)
6. The New World Order that lasts and is not discarded by populist vote and the persuasion of shrewd politicians (Isaiah 9:7 "forever").

It is the **major error of modern man** to desire a moral world order and look to false gods to give it to him. No other God can do the above other than God, the Father of Jesus Christ.

There can never be a just Kingdom, a moral world order until men renounce their allegiance to lesser powers and substitute gods. For until men can find some redemptive community - the true Church of Jesus Christ - which is capable of bridging the schism of society and uniting western and eastern cultures, and all races and all classes within them - under a righteous rule, a world of peace and justice must forever remain a dream. And until men do, they remain **trapped in the fires of the judgement of history**.

12. An Age of Urgency

1. The Church must proclaim again, as in the early days of the New Testament Church, **the urgency of the end of time**.
2. The Church must proclaim **the Kingdom of God** and its **Righteousness** and **summon men** to its rule.
3. The Church must be **fully aware of the New testament tension** she lives in today.

The Church lies between her strangement from the present age and her imprisonment by it, between a victory declared and a victory she finds impossible to produce.

4. The New Age cannot be produced by the visible church in terms of aggressive action. The churches are themselves prisoners of this present age. To think that the organized, institutional church can usher in the Kingdom of God, and present Jesus with a new world order is close to *Ecclesiastical Self-Deification*.

5. Even the two most likely options are not possible. Namely,

1. Nihilism: to give up all hope and responsibility for this world and retire from it only to let it go its suicidal journey to hell.

2. Post-modernism: with every means conquer the world for Christ and make it a better place to live.

What is the church to do? Where does the Church go from here? The church must remain faithful to its original and only mandate, that is, to proclaim the Kingdom of God and summon man to the kingdom's righteousness, which is the right and just rule of Jesus Christ in the hearts of mankind.

13. An Age of Faithfulness

There is no strategy for world conquest mapped out in the New Testament, and no program of political and social action is ever suggested. The New Testament does not advocate an ecumenical organization to foster further solidarity in the church. Much is taught in the New Testament about how one should live under **Codex Rex**, but the New Testament does not teaching how to escape the "eschatological tension" nor is there even any hint that this tension should be escaped. The church is part of that tension until Jesus returns.

There is no program given, except to BE church, and to be faithful as church.

The Church is to be God's holy community, the true remnant, a people of the New Covenant, **the successor to the calling and destiny of Israel.**

As the true Israel, the Church is to carry on Israel's mission and, like Israel, to be the children and holy people of God. We are called to be "a peculiar people" who stand out in the crowds of history as a people whose faithfulness is based not so much on the present predicament of world events, but on the eternal promise of a kingdom whose reality far exceeds human imagination, yet remains as a destiny of God's hole people, a people who...

1. Have received God's Grace and respond to that grace with Obedience
2. Bound to Christ and the family of God through the sacrament of the New Covenant
3. Live in loving fellowship with one another
4. Embody (be a witness) before the world His righteous rule (Codex Rex).
5. Are God's chosen servant of God's purposes in history

6. Sole heir of the promise of the Kingdom
7. Are an organism - a people of faith
8. An invisible church, yet a visible people

Therefore the church is to....

1. **BE** church as the expectant community who knows and believes His return is real and very close, and whose hope and vision is the city of God eternal.
2. **ACT** as church and heed the Servant Missionary calling - to summon men to the righteous rule of the King.
3. **PROCLAIM** the message of the Kingdom

1. A summons to faith and faithfulness
2. A summons to obedience
3. A summons to a healing community: a true community (church) of Jesus who heals by wrapping itself (like good blood cells) around a hurt member, not reject him or her.
4. A summons to salvation in Christ
5. A summons to willful submission to His yoke
6. A summons to a **Recreated** heart, **Renewed** mind and **Resurrected** body

The proclamation of the Kingdom is the only hope for the world and its peoples.

4. To be and **PRODUCE** in the world, the true Israel of God's purpose, the Covenant people of His Kingdom
5. **TO BE A PEOPLE** in the world over whom God rules totally.
6. To **NURTURE OTHERS** (make disciples) into Sanctification
7. To **EXHIBIT** the righteousness (*RPJP*) of the Kingdom before the world in matters of private morals and human relationships.

Because the true church is righteous before God, IT HAS THE RIGHT TO PRONOUNCE JUDGEMENT (not judge) AND CALL TO REPENTANCE ALL WHO SIN.

8. To **ENGAGE** in Spiritual Warfare for the minds of people, not geographic boundaries, in order to add to the invisible church, seen only in its true Agape love for each other.

9. To permit the "judgement of history" to test our real faith and show forth the true followers of Jesus Christ. Time and circumstances will reveal our attitude, behaviour and true intent of the heart.

10. To be a truly victorious church.

The Church's path of victory is no triumphant faith which moves from conquest to conquest till all men have been won for Christ. Nor are we promised in the treading of any of it, immunity from the blows of adversity, or even from physical defeat. On the contrary, it is a faith that must be walked in the continual tension between that which we have been promised and commanded to do and what we are not and cannot do. The New Testament church lives in precisely that tension and could find no course to follow save to lay down herself and take up her cross. **That indeed will be her proper course until Jesus comes back.** Victory is to take your cross, follow Jesus and live in the Spirit without fear, grumbling or discontentment.

14. How do we accomplish all the above?

With "power from on high" according to an outpouring and infilling, that is, "the baptism of" the Holy Spirit, taught in Acts 1:1-8, 2:1-21

15. The Cross and Victory

The cross, therefore, has been and must be the church's path of victory (Mark 8:34). Salvation's cross (of Jesus) is behind us. The **Suffering Servant's Cross** of the church is before us today. That cross is whatever ridicule, slander, alienation, rejection and persecution we suffer for...

1. "Crossing" our will with the Father's will (**the inner cross**) as we suffer the consequences of our unwillingness to change.

2. "Crossing" the Kingdom's will with the world's will (**the outer cross**) as we suffer the consequences of putting our faith in the methods and systems of the world.

For the inner cross there is healing and deliverance. For the outer cross there is patience and endurance Our Christian faith is not to protect us from history but to endure history and walk with assurance through its dark valleys.

The purpose of God for today is not to give us fat bodies, inactive minds, in a comfortable earthly society, but to discipline our spirit, if need be, at the cost of our bodies (all that represents self, feelings and circumstances), to make us obedient servants of His Kingdom.

3. That we lay down our unrighteousness, and abandon easy righteousness, so that the righteousness of the Kingdom may rule in us
4. That we lay down all pride and prejudice and fear in order that the "brotherhood," the family of God, the community of the Kingdom of God may encompass us totally
5. That even in the fiery trials of history, we should die to ourselves and rise again a people of greater faith
6. That we truly surrender everything in faith to Jesus Christ and fully trust His righteous rule over us, and His destiny (plan) for you individually as well as corporately.
7. That we walk by faith believing that not only was Jesus anointed to set the captives free and break the yoke, so we are as His ambassadors with His Spirit in us, anointed to do likewise.

The cross and victory are one.

16. The Alignment of Biblical Truth

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and **all these things** shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). The Kingdom of God and your right relationship to God through Jesus Christ, will result in an **obedience motivated by righteousness**. Only such obedience will bring all Biblical teaching about "things" into proper alignment with the Kingdom's truth, so that **all these things** that were promised to be provided for you according to the Word of God, will no longer be sought after as a reward for works, religious duty, religious observance, and methods from "the shadowlands." This is the balanced understanding of the Word.

How then does one walk in alignment to the truth of the Kingdom and its righteousness, and produce an obedience because of righteousness? By taking (receiving and believing) the kingdom God has given to you.

1. You must take God's gift of **love** to *receive it (the Kingdom)*
2. You must take God's gift of **faith** to *believe it*
3. You must take God's gift of **hope** to *endure in hard times*
4. You must take God's gift of **grace** to *continue*
5. You must take God's gifts of **the Spirit** to *bear lasting fruit*
6. You must take God's gift of **healing** to *remain strong*
7. You must take God's gift of **miracles** to *affirm it*
8. You must take God's gift of **the Body of Christ** (the church) to *confirm the reality of the Kingdom in your daily life.*
9. You must take God's gift of **earthly relationships** to *demonstrate it (the Kingdom)*
10. You must take God's gift of **power** to *resist opposition to it*
11. You must take God's gift of **prosperity** to *spread it*

12. You must take God's gift of **Jesus' life and blood** to *pay for it*
13. You must take God's gift of **the Holy Spirit** to *seal it*
14. You must take God's gift of **His Word** to *grow in it*
15. You must take God's gift of **relationship with Him** to *enjoy it (Kingdom) forever*
16. You must take God's gift of **creativity** to *celebrate the Kingdom's beauty*

Everything you need to walk in the truth of God's Kingdom and its righteousness comes from God as a gift. You can bring nothing of your own - no method, skill, program or talent.

3. THE AGE OF FREEDOM

I trust all these "ages" are not too confusing for those who desire to study the Kingdom of God. But as I mentioned before, in studying the role of the church in the Kingdom of God, it is helpful to know exactly where we are. Believers, that is, those who are followers of Jesus, live in a special age, which is the present age somewhere between the old age which was the "age of promise," and the "age of glory," when Jesus returns to inaugurate the fulfillment of all promises of the kingdom. There are only two promises yet to be fulfilled at the end of the present age. One promise is the promise of judgment during the "age of judgment," and the other is the promise of glory, during the eternal "age of glory," when Jesus returns and the Father gives us a new heaven and a new earth. The present age in which we live is the "age of deliverance," when believers embrace deliverance from the curse of sin and death, to embrace the freedom Jesus promised. Hence, the name "age of freedom," as a synonym for the "age of deliverance." Regrettably, too few realize how truly free they are, choosing instead to accept religious dogma and doctrine that leave them bound in the *shadowlands*, barely a Jordan River's width from bondage in Egypt.

Therefore the church and all who serve in their holy calling, must continue to proclaim with boldness and teach with diligence the Kingdom of God, and summon people to live in this present "age of deliverance" with faith and courage. The teachings about the Kingdom of God, include a number of reasons why we teach that kingdom.

Reasons for teaching the Kingdom of God and freedom:

- 1. Obedience** - Simply put, Jesus commands us to teach the kingdom and our response can only be to obey (Matthew 14:14) to spread the good news of **Freedom in Christ**
- 2. Blessing** - How blessed we are when we teach the kingdom, to discover who we really are ourselves "in Christ" (Colossians 2:2), which in turn will strengthen our resolve to invite others to become "in Christ," as well.
- 3. Delight** - Psalm 40:8 declares if no other reason than delight to serve the Lord.
- 4. Balance** - Teaching the kingdom will be an insurance or guarantee of balanced teaching to everyone who eagerly seeks after Biblical / Spiritual truth (Matthew 6:33).
- 5. No compromise** - A summons to kingdom life will never be popular or "won" by popularity contests. The choice includes a determination to never compromise on the teachings of Jesus as incorporated in *Codex Rex*, the rule of the King.
- 6. Justice and righteousness** - The Kingdom of God is the only true evidence of what a just and fair society should look and act like, because the Kingdom of God is inward *and* outward. The Kingdom of God is the rule of Jesus Christ, that is, His Righteous rule.
 - a. in your heart and life now (the invasion)
 - b. over all the earth to come (occupation)
- 7. Ever growing faith** - The Gospel of the Kingdom is God's summons to man to submit to that rule through an ever growing faith in Jesus Christ
- 8. From this Gospel and your faith in Jesus flow all the issues of life** (1 John 1:1)
- 9. Codex Rex is the study of the rule of Jesus to build faith to obey** (Romans 10:17)

so **10. True and lasting freedom** - Only the Kingdom of God can deliver the freedom we earnestly seek and desire

The Age of Freedom is one in which we walk in the abundant life of the Spirit, both now amidst "a crooked generation," and forever in the eternal ago of glory to come.

We are robbed of our freedom by anger. Aggravation, intimidation, accusation, and fear that all cause us to become angry, are the devil's favourite weapons. Anger, as Jesus taught, has roots. The degree of your freedom is the degree to which you will let the Holy Spirit pull up those roots and get rid of them. The roots of anger has its origins in a battle between a **worldly value system** and a **Kingdom value system**. Although the difference between the two is clear, I have not always seen those differences so clearly. Spiritual blindness will hinder you from seeing clearly. Spiritual blindness is the result of unforgiveness, bitterness, and self-justification, because we chose to remain angry. Let's examine the two value systems that cause so much trouble for the believer. Some values look and feel the same in both systems, and that is why the world's systems can appear to be so true, yet are not.

Worldly value system

what I do
who I am
what I believe for.
If they bring
disappointment, failure,
lament, etc., I somehow
blame God or myself
(its source: word of
faith, religion).
If all I have done and
would like to do
is **achieve**, then life is
never fulfilling or rich
because **discontentment**
and the desire for **more**
are the motives of a
worldly value system
This is a life **exposed** to
the wind, rain and floods
on **this side** of the narrow
gate (Matt.7:25, 13-29)
One is life
One is "coping"

Sacrifice
Achievement (I will be)
results in:
discontentment

Kingdom value system

what I do
who I am
what I believe for.
If they bring
disappointment, failure,
lament, etc., it should
not matter.
(its source: word of
truth, Spirit of truth,
who continues to set me
free). If all I have done is
to **obey**, then life is
always fulfilling and rich
because **contentment** and
the desire to **serve**
are the motives of a
Kingdom value system
This is a life **hidden** in Christ
sheltered from wind, rain, and
floods on the **other side** of the
narrow gate (Col.3:1-4,3)
the other is abundant life
the other is true freedom

Obedience
Success (I already am)
results in:
contentment

lack	abundance
disappointment	satisfaction
striving for (works)	rest (in service)
because I am not yet	because I am there
but one day will be	already "in Christ" forever

Nevertheless, having experienced abundant life at the other side of the narrow gate, temptation will not stop even if it means tempting us to go back through the narrow gate and end up just being able to cope. It's that same old tension of two kingdoms and two value systems in which we live during this present age. Being tempted to go back through the narrow gate is an action I would have never considered as possible. As if the belief that "once in always in," is not true. Yes, we are assured we are "always in" when speaking of salvation, but when it comes to living an abundant life in the Spirit, we seem to be able to swing "in and out" readily, depending on our mood and circumstances. Could this be the tension of life Paul speaks of in the things he wanted to do but did not do (Romans 7:15-21)?

Sometimes we "fall asleep" at the wheel of life because the value system of the world dulls us into a false security. It is as if we have been "asleep" for many years with manifestations of our sleepiness in the natural with such reasons as fatigue and burn-out, yet not asleep enough to be unconscious as we realized the hand of God was still upon us and His anointing still flowed when we stepped out in faith to minister to someone else. Freedom means deliverance from all sleepiness, and a release into abundant life with a clear mind, awake and intune with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

But now we see, we are awake because such an "awakening" has come in the **Kingdom value system**. It was as if God could not implement the "awakening" until we had seen its prevention because of a worldly value system that kept us sleepy. Now, however, we will reap contentment, satisfaction, rest, and abundant life. Now we know why our faith was so dry and our prayer so limited. Now we know we will be able to hear the Spirit again, as much as we used to.

Needless, this does not mean you harboured a rebellious will that desired to disobey or even stop seeking the Kingdom of God. He knows from countless hours of prayer you wanted nothing more than serve and follow Jesus. You were not living in wilfull sin. But you could not see that despite your heart's desire to serve and follow Jesus, you still had so much anger that the road to true freedom remained blocked. But now that you have seen the roots of anger in the world's value system when compared to roots of joy and contentment in the kingdom's value system, you will be thankful that the "crooked has been made straight, the rough smooth" and you are free at last (Isaiah 40:3,4).

4. THE AGE OF JUDGEMENT

It remains a paradox that while the follower of Jesus Christ lives in freedom from fear and condemnation, forgiven and redeemed, to be judged no more, to be loved and cared for forever, he or she will still be destined in this present time to live in an age and society that cannot offer freedom in any form. There is, however, a judgment coming. Society in which we live, or our present civilization will not only be judged eventually at the throne of God, but also judged each day as civilization after civilization rises and falls throughout the course of history. Judgment in the present age is a judgment of history. This judgment will escalate in the Apocalypse of the book of **Revelation** as earth, nature, man's institutions, governments, and worldly systems, undergo a gradually first and then escalating judgment of the Tribulation period, at the end of which final judgment is given to individuals as to their eternal destiny. The book of Revelation teaches the "age of judgment" comprises the following specific judgments that will be poured out over the earth:

The Seal judgments
The Trumpet judgments
The Bowl judgments
The judgment of two Babylons
Aramageddon
The Great White Throne Judgement

The Judgment of History, as we review this judgment from what we studied before, is a present day judgment upon the world's value systems.

The entire course of events chronicled in the Old Testament is a **demonstration** of the continuous **Judgement of History** that dooms to failure anything man does in his own strength and by his own will, and not according to the rule of the **Kingdom of God**, namely "in Christ," and with His anointing. Although success may seem victorious as appeared to be in David and Solomon's lives, judgement and doom or failure were eminent as the "golden age" of Israel's glory years declined from kings to division, into exile and dispersion, only to become the pattern for all of history for future civilizations and nations who walk in the footsteps of Israel. (John 16:8).

Will believers be subject to the judgments of history?

Yes, because we live in the world and can be affected by it. Christians can lose millions in stock market speculation. Christians are killed in wars. We are affected by decisions of our governments, our organizations and our institutions. However, this is not an eternal judgment of course.

Will believers have to endure the judgments listed in the book of Revelation?

Some say yes, others no. No one is quite sure when the "seal" and "trumpet" judgments begin. In some countries where disease, famine and war leave millions destitute, especially the children, it would seem the "seal" and "trumpet" judgments have begun. However, Revelation makes it clear, the "bowl" judgments are God's final wrath poured out on all who remain. That certainly is not the believer. We will have been "raptured" out of the mess before the "bowl" judgments begin.

History has always been judged and will always stand as a judge of man's behaviour, especially his inhumanity to fellow man, disobedience to God, and his abuse of all the resources God has given so abundantly. That is why civilizations rise and fall. There is no civilization, as "civilized," democratic and free as it may appear to be, that is immune from this judgment.

Even though we cannot escape the judgment of history, the church has an urgent task to summon the world to the Kingdom and its righteousness and escape eternal judgment to come. The judgment of history does not compare with the final "bowl" judgments and God's wrath when He judges all who said "no" to the Kingdom, to be doomed to live without Him forever.

Judgment may make the church sound harsh and vindictive, but it must not be so. It must be compassion for the lost, love for all, and a passion to share the freedom we experience "in Christ," that move our hearts to be salt and light wherever Jesus has "planted" us. Even though there is a judgment of history that precedes final judgment, our present age is still an age of grace in which we reach out with love and tenderness towards all who remain so hopelessly bound by the value systems of the world and the effects of sin.

5. THE AGE OF GLORY

There is not a whole lot that can be said about the "age of glory," as it is yet to come, but it is becoming increasingly evident we are getting very close to that great and glorious day when all will be done and all creation enters her rest (Romans 4:16b - 21, **8:18-21**, Hebrews 11:8-16).

When the sons and daughters of God are revealed, their freedom will be the greatest worship ever, as they enter into their glory. It will be a time of unprecedented joy as the Kingdom of God is at last consummated with these promises held in trust by the church and God's family, for so long. This "age of glory" includes:

1. The City of God

(the vision for eternal **faith, hope and love** - Revelation 21:2-7)

2. Reign and Rule with Him

(the eternal **commissions** - 2 Tim.2:12, Rev.20:6)

3. A New Heaven and a New Earth

(the eternal **inheritance** - Rev.21:1)

4. Codex Rex Forever

(the eternal truth requiring obedience, Matthew 24:14, Colossians 2:2)

These are the things (vision, commission, inheritance and truth) Abraham **saw by the Spirit** of God and **heard by the Word** of God. These are the things that produced Abraham's **unshakeable faith**.

God **forgive** us for everytime we look away from the eternal vision and look towards the temptations of the world.

God **strengthen** us with joy to see and hear more clearly.

GLIMPSES OF THE KINGDOM

PART FOUR

1. Abiding faith
2. The new nature of Kingdom citizens
3. The pattern for mature Christian living

1. ABIDING FAITH

1. The word "**abide**" means "**continue**" (John 8:31,32). Jesus said that the mark of a **true disciple**, or the quality of a real follower is the degree to which he or she "continues" in the teachings of Jesus Christ regarding the Kingdom of God.

2. Abiding or "continuing" is **abiding faith** - a faith that continues and grows regardless of circumstances or events.

3. Those who "*abide*" will experience **real and lasting freedom** from the curse of the law, a curse that includes: condemnation, fear, guilt, shame, low self-esteem, anxiety, and worry, just to name some (John 16:33 , 8:36).

4. *Abiding* is not discipling or academic study in doctrines, creeds, church order, systems, laws and traditions. Nor is *Abiding* simply adhering to a legal code of behaviour and cultural conditioning, whose goal is behaviour modification. **Abiding is an abiding and continuing relationship with the King through His Lordship over you.**

5. **Spiritual growth is accomplished by "abiding"**

6. **Spiritual freedom** is the result of spiritual growth in the truth of the Kingdom of God. As the Holy Spirit leads you to discover that Kingdom, He reveals the "*giver*" of that truth to you. His name is Jesus Christ and it **Jesus Christ who sets you free**, not your religious duty, compliance with divine law, or observance of religious ceremony.

7. Abiding faith must grow from "**milk**" to "**meat**" (Hebrews 5:12,13,14)

8. Growth is necessary to enable you to make **quality decisions** based on the **wisdom** of the rule of Jesus, as He governs your affairs for which you must take responsibility when you make decisions that affect your life.

9. To abide in Jesus is a choice:

1. You must choose freedom or bondage

Freedom is the choice of trust (Romans 8:15). Bondage is the choice of fear (Proverbs 29:25).

2. You must choose desire and ability

Desire and ability are two different things. You may have the desire to abide in Jesus, but not the ability because you are in bondage to your own ideas, opinions, approval of others. The desire to abide is planted in you by an *incorruptible seed* (1 Peter 1:23).

Through abiding in the words of Jesus, **desire is turned into ability** to be changed into the character of Jesus.

Desire is given (through the new nature), **but character is developed.** Ability is a fruit of abiding.

3. You must choose to eliminate three hindrances (John 5:30)

1. Rebellion, which says, " *I won't* "

2. Resentment, which says, " *Why does this happen to me*" (often a result of discontentment)

3. Independence, which says, " *I'd rather do it myself*"

4. You must choose alignment (Romans 8:29)

As you continue to obey the rule of the Kingdom you are transformed into the image of Jesus. You are being changed to be more like Jesus and less of yourself (John 3:30).

Obedience is learned when the Holy Spirit aligns your will to the will of God, as painful as that may be at times (Luke 3:4-6).

Such alignment is often illustrated by the effect of alignment on the mountains, ravines, crooked ways, and rough roads of life.

High mountains of pride, selfishness, self-righteousness are *brought low by repentance*.

Ravines of low self-esteem, battered emotions, ignorance and unbelief must be *filled up* with the fruit of righteousness (Philippians 1:11, Hebrews 12:11).

Crooked ways of error, deception and incomplete teaching must be *made straight* with the entire counsel of the Word of God.

Rough roads of doubt, lack of faith, hopelessness and spiritual attack must be made *smooth* with the constant assurance of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16,17).

5. You must choose to abide by the rules

A disciple is a "learner", who acquires knowledge and skill by study, instruction and practise of rules (John 8:31). Freedom is learned by abiding in the governing principles of the Kingdom of God. Freedom is experienced through faith by the grace of God and not of works. Obedience is not motivated by rewards but by the righteousness you already are in Christ.

6. You must choose where to be a disciple

The choice is not to get you into heaven, but to get heaven into you (Matthew 11:29,30)

7. You must choose to abide in righteousness

(1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 2:8-10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Isaiah 32:17, Hebrews 12:5,6,10,11, Isaiah 54:14,17, 58:8b)

2. THE NEW NATURE OF KINGDOM CITIZENS

*"John (the Baptist) answered and said to them all, 'as for me, I baptize you with **water**; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and Fire**'" (Luke 3:16).*

When Jesus established His church here on earth, He left His followers with two of the most powerful signs or concrete evidence of His resurrection, life and return.

These signs are **Communion** and **Baptism**, also known as "sacraments," or "sacred events."

1. The Sacrament of Communion celebrates The New Covenant

Communion is the **shared Kingdom meal** where everyone who believes is welcome. Even unbelievers are invited, for it is the most opportune time to issue the summons to the Kingdom, graphically illustrated by the **bread** and **wine**, which is offered to all to eat and drink.

2. The Sacrament of Baptism celebrates identity " in Him "

Baptism, is the **shared Kingdom experience** where believers are given their identification "in Christ", an identification that assures each believer, he or she belongs to Him. The most common baptism is water baptism as practised by the church. Some practise it as a "sprinkling," some as "immersion." Some believe water baptism is for infants who are counted as "into the family of God" by the faith of their parents. Others believe water baptism is for believers only, whether young or older. Each believer must have made a freewill, conscious choice to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and the Son of God. The scriptures clearly teach water baptism for believers of their own choice and by immersion. However, the scriptures also speak of other "baptisms," such as baptisms of the Holy Spirit and with fire. What follows is a brief look at all three "baptisms."

THE THREE BAPTISM

1. Baptism with Water - *Receive your identity*

As you are immersed in water and raised again, so you are (just like Jesus was) crucified in Christ, dead and buried to be raised up into the new life as new creations in God's Kingdom (Romans 6:3-6, 7-11).

Your new identity must show fruit (Luke 3:8), which is a growing confidence and faith in your real identity, the one you truly are "in Christ."

Your baptism with water will impress upon you that you have received Kingdom identification with Jesus. Your King has made you "the redeemed".

2. Baptism with the Holy Spirit - *Release the Power*

As God's visible "temple" on earth (2 Corinthians 6:16, John 14:23), you begin the awesome task of being a witness for Jesus and an ambassador for His Kingdom. This cannot be done in one's own strength. One needs "power from above" - the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in you according to: Acts 1:5,8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Ephesians 1:3, 1 Corinthians 12:11)

Your baptism with the Holy Spirit will equip you to walk in the fullness of God's power. This power you will need to make *abiding* in the Kingdom, a living reality in your life and in your *witness* of the effect the Holy Spirit has on your life.

3. Baptism with Fire - *Relinquish your own hold*

This is not the *fire of judgement*, but the *fire of purification* (Matthew 5:10-12). It is a *refiner's fire* that burns away selfish motives, gain and self-reliance. It's a fire that produces more of Jesus and less of you (1 Peter 1:6,7, 1 Peter 4:12, James 1:2-4)

Your baptism with fire will launch you from mere life into supernatural life led by the Spirit of God, without the hindrances of a self-serving will.

However, when the scriptures speak about God as a "consuming fire," (Hebrews 12: 29), it is not the same as a purifying "fire" of the Holy Spirit. God's consuming fire is a fire of judgment that continually judges worldly systems and man's "created things" as unworthy and in need of "shaking" and outright removal (Hebrews 12:26-28) so that the only thing, the only "system" the only rule, that remains standing is the Kingdom of God. As the end times in which we now live progress towards the climax of Jesus' return, the summons of the Kingdom of God, remains a summons to trust God alone and not to put any trust in worldly assurances and systems of security. These will be shaken and will no longer work for individuals nor for society at large.

But when the Holy Spirit's purifying fire works in the hearts of believers, there is a wonderful change that takes place. There is no greater fruit that lasts, than the changed lives of those whom you introduce to Jesus and who considered Jesus because your new nature as a citizen of the Kingdom was full of assurance, peace, joy and faith power, a lifestyle to be envied.

There is no greater joy than enabling others by the power of the Holy Spirit to abide in the truth of the Kingdom as disciples of Jesus, just as you have committed your new nature to be a discipling nature.

3. THE PATTERN FOR MATURE CHRISTIAN LIVING

Here are some thoughts that will help you understand what mature Christian living looks like and how the work of the Holy Spirit in maturing you works from the inside out, beginning in the heart and working from the heart to affect outward behaviour.

1. The more teachable you are, the greater disciple you will be.
2. Total kingdom freedom is committed slavery to the Kingdom and its righteousness.
3. The highest form of worship is to study in order to obey.
4. Obedience is motivated by the righteousness you are.
5. The righteousness you are is the way of trust in God.
6. The pattern for mature and victorious Christian living is the pattern Jesus gave in His *Sermon on the Mount* - it is Codex Rex revealed, believed and lived.
7. Righteousness **is** living by Codex Rex, the rule of the King.
8. Seeking after the Kingdom of God and seeking after the Kingdom's righteousness are **one and the same**. The two are inseparable.
9. Righteousness **is** the mature and victorious life of a Christian.
10. A mature and victorious Christian life affects every part of you.
 1. It *begins* with the new birth - you are **born again**. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 2. it *continues* with **renewal of your mind**. (Ephesians 4:23, Romans 12:2)
 3. it *perseveres* as you offer your body a living sacrifice and let the Holy Spirit **mould your soul and body into vessels of honour**. (Romans 12:1, 1 Timothy 2:20,21). Also read Isaiah 61:3b, 10,11, and Matthew 6:33,34

4. MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM

1. **The Kingdom of God begins (mysteriously) within**

Matthew 13: 11,12 - The Kingdom's mysteries are ours to know and according to Luke 17:20,21 - The Kingdom of God is within **us** (KJV) in **our** midst (NASB) Emphasis on "us" and "our," speaking of that Kingdom within our hearts and not in the midst of a socio/political group, or physical territory.

The Jews in the days of Jesus (and before) and Christians to today, were and are too pre-occupied by looking for the Kingdom on the outside, a "coming" of the Kingdom **by Law**. This is Old Testament theology and not new covenant truth (Romans 8: 3-6; Hebrews 9: 9-14; Hebrews 10: 1,2; Colossians 2:10 - we are (incomplete in the Law but) complete in Christ) **Therefore we look for the Kingdom and the work (teaching) of the Kingdom (through the ministry work of the Holy Spirit) to the inside.**

This then (the mystery of the Kingdom's work on the inside) is the GOLDEN RULE by which we measure that work, as we study the Kingdom of God.

Jesus - Matthew 6:33

Paul - Romans 8:29 (for this we are predestined)

- Galatians 4:19

- Colossians 1:26-29

- Colossians 1: 12,13

- Philippians 3: 7-14 (the upward call - of being "transformed")

- 2 Timothy 1:9 (the holiness of that calling)

Jesus - John 8: 31,32,36 (Freedom - it's holy reward, now)

The Kingdom of God is the truth of Jesus's present day work **in us** through the Holy Spirit. **The truth** of the Kingdom within will bring **balance** to all other teachings, especially those teachings that so easily entangle us because they look like they are from the Spirit of God, but need careful examination in light of all scripture to be discerned as true. Teachings such as: "words from the Lord," prophecy concerning end times and direction for you, healing, gifts, the Holy Spirit, faith, etc. One can apply a simple "test" to all teaching when we proceed (in our study of the Kingdom) to ask....

"How will this (that which we study) form Christ in me?"

How will this (that which we study) help us to understand God's plan for me and us?

How will we know God's Kingdom plan for us (individually) that is, how will we be sown into this world as seed, beginning (and often ending) among those closest to you (spouse, children, family, church family, community) without being tempted by the "grandeur" of ministry calls or its convenient escape from being involved with people close to us.

GLIMPSES OF THE KINGDOM

PART FIVE

1. A Kingdom of Faith
2. Righteousness of the King

1. A KINDOM OF FAITH

ABRAHAM'S ROAD TO TRUST (Romans 4:9-24 and Hebrews 11:7-19)

As we begin to learn to trust God and a develop an “Abrahamic” kind of faith, we must develop a balance between the meaning of two very important scriptures about faith found in Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 4:17b. Abrahamic faith exercised must allow for the **unseen** and the **unfulfilled** (in our own lifetime), as well as the **seen** and **fulfilled**, for indeed God's ways, thoughts, and timetables are not our ways, our thoughts, and our timetables (Isaiah 55:8).

The reason God's ways are not always known to us is because we are often doubters instead of believers, even though we may earnestly desire to know His ways and know His thoughts, and we are in fact commanded to do so. Yet only the Holy Spirit knows the mind of the Father, so our faith must be a trust that the Holy Spirit will let us know when God deems it the right time to know. If God told us everything we wanted to know we would not believe Him anyways (Habakkuk 1:5).

Abraham's faith

Abraham's faith can best be described as comprising seven aspects of trust

1. **Obedience to God's call**, even when he did not know where that call would lead and yet he was called out to venture off into the unknown (Hebrews 11:8, 13-16), into the unseen and unfulfilled. There is a call of the Word of God, a summons to the Kingdom of God and a call to the Kingdom's righteousness. There is a call that is heard by spending time studying God's word and there is a direct call to go where God leads and to do what He says. That direct call is heard in prayer and a daily sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Interruptions of worldly affairs are not the norm. Spending time in intimacy with God is the norm, even when you undertake the tasks and chores of daily life. You must be in a place of sensitivity to hear the Spirit of Lord speak.

2. **Loneliness of a long-distance runner** is the journey of trust, yet when you undertake such a journey you will always be comforted by a cloud of witnesses who surround you (Hebrews 11:9; 12:1). These are the people who have walked by faith long before you as well as those who walk by faith as part of the family of God He has given you where you live. Yet, regardless of how many “surround” you, your journey of faith is **your** journey and yours alone. It means you ponder in your heart many of the ways in which you walk by faith and trust God, without making the details of your journey public knowledge. It’s that *two-o-clock in the morning* kind of faith.
3. **Steadfast hope for the unseen.** That *unseen* is the heavenly city, the Kingdom of God, (Hebrews 11:10,13-16) manifest on the inside of you long before it is visible on the outside, and it is the *unseen* which is the return of Jesus when He comes to establish His kingdom rule over everything and everyone created. It is the promise of a new heaven and a new earth.
4. **Trusting God to provide** even in the face of impossibility. Faith and trust look to God to fulfill all the promises of His word and the promises He makes to you through the leading of the Holy Spirit, even when circumstances look impossible (Hebrews 11:11,12).
5. **Offering it all back to Him,** even when solutions we have come up with seem to be “tailor-made” and just right to fix the problem. Often these are no more than temptations to do it your own way. Offering it back to God is more than praise and worship. It is “giving back” what He has given you as your sacrifice to show that your trust is in the Giver and not the gifts (Hebrews 11:17-19)
6. **Respect your partner** in faith in his or her own private journey of faith. God’s economy accounts for a power far greater than *two as one*. His power accounts for the inseparability of husband and wife. It is the power of agreement. (Hebrews 11:11, Deuteronomy 32:30). However, these “partners in faith” can also be the close friends God gives you, that even though you are not married (to them) you can still walk in the power of agreement.
7. **Even unto death.** You are willing to live by a type of Abrahamic faith and trust even in the face of unfulfilled promises, unrealized dreams and unseen visions (Hebrews 11:13, 19). In this passage “resurrection” is spoken of by faith. God will fulfill His promises now in this life or after you have been resurrected, but regardless of either, God can be trusted to fulfill His promises.

For this Abrahamic kind of faith, you will be persecuted, alienated, even ridiculed and rejected (Matthew 5:10-12). But you will not be subjected to these when you walk by another kind of faith, a “North-American” faith of well-being as a result of material and consumer prosperity, a faith in the measure of “things” to be your standard of spirituality, and not the “measure of Christ.” Yet, God’s blessings are countless even in the worst of times. The focus of our faith is not “what we get for it,” but the focus of our faith is He is worthy of our trust and faith.

To live this Abrahamic kind of faith is to be motivated to trust God because we have been made right with God. The fact that we have been made the *righteousness of God*, motivates us to trust Him completely, as did Abraham.

Such a faith and trust will enable you to account for a truth that Jesus said would set you free, a truth of the Kingdom that allows without hesitation to account for a balance between victory and defeat, between have and have-not, between prayers answered and prayers unanswered, and at last a liberating truth that accounts for things seen and unseen, known and unknown, without fear of “having missed it” somehow.

2. RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE KING

A SUMMONS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS (Matthew 24:37-39, and 2 Peter 2:5a)

This teaching about a **summons to righteousness** begins with an introduction and then looks at such aspects of *righteousness* as:

Introduction

1. **What is Righteousness?**
2. The **source** of Righteousness
3. The **call** of Righteousness
4. The **need** for Righteousness
5. The **extent** of Righteousness
6. The **battle** for Righteousness
7. The **teaching** of Righteousness
8. The **increase** of Righteousness
9. The **harvest** of Righteousness
10. **Deeper Life of the Spirit**

Conclusion

"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah, *a preacher of righteousness*. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah, *a preacher of righteousness*, entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matthew 24:37-39, *Italics* 2 Peter 2:5a)

One wonders why the Scriptures record Jesus as having said in Matthew 6:33, "seek first the Kingdom of God and its **righteousness**," not seek first healing, or prosperity, or wisdom, or holiness? The answer is because **righteousness** is the *well* from which you draw to become a *river* of living water from which will flow life. If you do not know or understand and believe

Kingdom righteousness, you cannot, you will not walk in the fullness of all God has for you (Isaiah 32:16-18)

For that reason, righteousness in you is not an option, it is a summons or command. It is a necessity (Matthew 5:20) The Kingdom's righteousness, that is, the righteousness you are, is the front line of faith for everyday life (Matthew 5:6,10, 6:1,33, Romans.8:10, Hebrews 5:12-14, 12:11, Daniel 12:3)

The evidence of (your) knowing, understanding and believing is your life of faith and trust, a life of rest and freedom from religious works (Hebrews 4:1-11)

INTRODUCTION

About 2000 BC, God called Abraham to a special destiny. He would become the father of all nations and the first in line for a people who God would call His own. A nation called Israel was born. The birth of Israel would not be without pain. Birthpains included years of captivity under Egyptian rule and oppression. Then with a great miracle of power, God delivered the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt, only to gather them in the wilderness at Mount Sinai. In a display of grandeur and divine power, God appeared and spoke to the entire nation of over two million people. From among them He called His servant Moses and summoned him to the mountain. For forty days and forty nights God spoke to Moses on the mountain. In carefully detailed plans God laid the foundation of the Kingdom of God.

Moses recorded all the Kingdom's laws and ordinances, whose dual design was first of all to point to the coming of Jesus Christ, the King and second to teach God's people obedience, the ultimate conduct of love. 2000 years later, Jesus completed the entire Kingdom law of Sinai, by deepening the requirement for obedience to motive of the heart as well as obedience of conduct. **Codex Rex**, the Law of the King, became the foundation stone for eternal Kingdom life. It would be a life of love, who's hallmark is obedience motivated by righteousness.

AT SINAI GOD REVEALED THE SUPREME MOTIVE FOR OBEDIENCE, WHICH IS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Righteousness in the Kingdom of God is the only true and lasting motive for obedience. Jesus said in *Matthew 6:33* that the highest priority of life is to seek the Kingdom of God and **its righteousness**. Although God's blessings of rewards, special gifts, and an inheritance are strong motives they should not be the primary motive for obedience. Rewards appeal to consumer desires of man and become potential ground for greed, discontent and even anger which stand in the way of living righteously (*James 1:19,20*). When God wishes to bless you, all you need to do is receive and thank Him for the blessings. But righteousness requires more than receiving. **It demands doing.** Once you have been made righteous by faith in Jesus Christ, you do not simply sit back and receive righteousness, **you live it.** You become an obedient citizen of God's Kingdom. Your first love is to live by **Codex Rex**, the law of the King. Such obedience to the will of the Father, when offered in joy and delight, will yield a rich harvest of Kingdom assurance, peace, joy and faith power. When your joy to do the will of the Father is only motivated by rewards and blessings, you will never persevere during times of trial and testing. Your love will simply grow cold. However, when your joy to obey the King is motivated by a personal understanding of your intimate relationship to God and your eternal place in His family, you will rejoice in living a holy life of worship. Only then does

everything you do become a true sacrifice of praise, whether it is work or leisure, study or play, creativity or rest. This intimate relationship between God and you is God's ultimate goal. He said He will be your God; you will be His people and He will be an intimate part of your life by forever dwelling in you and with you.

To understand Kingdom righteousness is to believe your right standing with God in Christ. Kingdom truth is righteousness as *the* motive for obedience. Error assumes reward is *the* motive for obedience. Make it your priority to **seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness** and you will grow into a disciple who truly pleases the Father, who in turn delights in you.

When you study the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and in response act upon its truth by faith, you will obtain steadfastness, encouragement and endurance to deal with all the tests and trials of life.

The Kingdom of God is real. Jesus the King is real. His government of justice (Codex Rex) is real. Heaven is real and so is your destiny in heaven as a child of God. Faith says the things of God you hope for shall come to pass. When the Holy Spirit examines your heart to expose your true motives, He is implementing the rule of Jesus Christ. Faith knows you will not be condemned for wrong motives. Faith says your right standing with God is secure and becomes the motive for obedience in response to to the Holy Spirit's examination. Repentance leads to peace, joy, assurance and a deep sense of God's eternal love for you. Faith responds and delights to do the will of the Father. You are free to live righteously.

1. WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS?

Righteousness is like many facets of a diamond that shine in brilliant testimony to God's eternal love and covenant faithfulness.

1. Righteousness is **right standing** with God based on the fair and just judgement of His Word (Galatians 3:24-26).

2. Righteousness is **attitude and behaviour** based totally on the right and just ways of God as revealed in His Word. His ways are always pure and holy (Matthew 5:6).

3. Righteousness is the **character of God**. God is righteous and Jesus Christ is the perfect example of living righteousness (Psalm 122:9, 2 Samuel 9:1).

4. Righteousness is right living through a **dedicated life** led by the Holy Spirit according to the Word of God (Romans 8:14).

5. Righteousness is *the* **motive for total obedience** (Psalm 1:1,2).

6. Righteousness is an understanding of the **rights and privileges** as a child of God, a citizen in His Kingdom (Hebrews 4:16, Romans 8:15).

7. Righteousness of the **Kingdom** is God-made *faith* not man-made *works*. Man's righteousness is *self-righteousness*, the root of pride (Galatians 1:1)

8. Righteousness is a **right relationship** with God. The assurance of this relationship to God is the heart of Holy Spirit motivated obedience because of.....

1. A one time event for all

The **Righteousness you have been made** through God's miraculous work in you *because of Jesus Christ* and not your own effort or rewards-motivated works (2 Corinthians 5:21). You heard the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ and the summons to His Kingdom's righteousness and you believed. The result was an *obedience of faith* in Jesus' finished work ,not obedience of works of your own merit (Romans 16:25,26).

2. A permanent truth for you

The **Righteousness you are** because you have been *adopted* by God into His eternal family (Romans 8:15, Ephesians 1:5).

3. A fixed truth yet progressively revealed to you

The **Rights you have** before God as *citizens* of His Kingdom and members of His family (Romans 8:16,17, Colossians 1:12,13)

4. A continual change

The **Righteousness you do** because now you believe and understand the *righteousness you have been made, the right standing you have and the rights you have*. You delight to obey the command to live holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1: 15,16, 1 John 3:7) and to respond to His love, with your love which is obedience (1 John 5:3, Matthew 22:37-39)

Definition of righteousness: Psalm 122:9, 2 Samuel 9: 1

If you obey because you believe you **have been** made right again with God, you are living in true Kingdom righteousness. If you obey because you believe **it will make** you right again and keep you right with God, you are living in *self-righteousness*. *Self-righteousness* is sin.

2. THE SOURCE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Although the study of righteousness is both rewarding and exciting, righteousness remains one of the mysteries of God that simply cannot be explained. To be right with God, the Creator of heaven, earth and man, because not what you did earned His favour, but what someone else did for you is equal a mystery, as is the trinity, born-again, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

There are times when scholarly criticism, reason and careful analysis just will not suffice. Instead you must humbly submit your understanding to God and pray, "*Truly Lord, Your ways*

are higher than mine. I do not understand, but I believe what you say in your Word to be absolute truth. Therefore I believe. Therefore I trust and obey". Such is righteousness.

God is always right. God is righteous. He created man righteous in His own image.

Mankind was originally created in total right standing with God. God said "*it was good*" when He created man (Genesis 1:31). Man enjoyed open fellowship with God in an atmosphere of mutual love and friendship. Adam and Eve were righteous (in right standing) before God and accordingly lived righteously in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were motivated to obey because they knew their intimate relationship to the Creator who had fashioned them. When tempted by the rewards offered by Satan, Adam and Eve chose to obey the devil and his lies. Because of this wrong choice, or act of disobedience, Adam and Eve were no longer in right (righteous) standing with God. Their initial act of disobedience became the curse of all mankind. All mankind had become *un*righteous. As a result of *un*righteousness, *self*-righteousness was birthed into the human race. *Selfishness* is a belief that man ultimately controls his own fate; man has all the answers and can determine his own destiny. Rewards became the only motive for living to please self. Because of *self*-righteousness, man could no longer live righteously before God. All that man did had become unacceptable to God. Even their attempts to please God or "*the gods*" was nothing but insult upon insult to the One who created them in His own image. Only perfect obedience could earn a certain measure of righteousness (Deuteronomy 7:25) but no man was able to maintain such obedience for his entire life in order to be assured a right standing with God.

The act of Adam's disobedience is called "*original sin*" which simply means the origin of *un*righteousness was with Adam. The source of mankind's wrong relationship with God was Adam. Original sin infected the entire human race and gave man his "*sin nature*". Sin nature is the complete inability to do any kind of good that would please God and restore the original right relationship (Romans 1:25, Ephesians 2:1-3). The fruit of man's sin nature is eternal doom or eternal separation from God.

God, however, is righteous. His righteousness is forever. God has always been right, is always right and always will be right. Because God is always right that means His judgements and decisions are always right. His righteousness demands that mankind's disobedience not go unpunished. True justice demands that sin be punished. Man's rebellion deserves punishment in daily life as well as eternal punishment of separation from God's presence. Eternal punishment is called hell. Eternal presence is called heaven.

Were it not for God's love, the history of mankind would eventually wind up in termination and doom with planet earth returning to the dark empty void it once was, and the spirits of all who lived and died, wandering in eternal torment looking for relief.

God's righteous love also demanded that He would not leave man in his fallen, *un*righteous state. But what was the solution? Justice must be done. Sin must be paid for. The solution is the heart of the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Jesus Christ, God's own Son, offered Himself to the Father as the one and only sacrifice that could pay for man's sin. Only Jesus could satisfy God's righteous will to punish sin. God decreed that justice would indeed be done through the substitutionary sacrifice of His only Son. God gave Jesus to be sacrificed for man's *un*righteousness. Ultimate sacrifice is eternal death. Jesus would have to die and suffer separation from His Father. Once that price was paid, God declared justice was done. However, Jesus paid the price for man's rebellion **as an innocent man**. Death could not forever keep Him. God raised Jesus from the dead as living proof of His eternal plan for a glorious Kingdom and His glorious family, just as He had promised He would.

The death of Jesus Christ decreed that justice was done. The resurrection of Jesus Christ decreed that mankind was in right relationship to the Father again. If people heard and believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they were restored to a personal *righteous* relationship to God. When an individual chooses to believe in Jesus Christ, he or she is saved from eternal death. In fact that individual becomes "*born again*". God's Word declares that such a believer has become a "*new creation*", restored to full relationship with God (John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17).

When you believe that Jesus is the Son of God who paid the full price for man's rebellion and that God raised Him from the dead, you are saved from punishment for the wrong choice of self (Romans 10:9,10). Instead, you are a new creature. It means the old *unrighteous* person is dead as far as God is concerned, and the new *righteous* person lives. In Christ (because of Christ) you are a new creation. You have been made right with God. You are rightfully a member of His family, a citizen in His Kingdom. You now have Kingdom rights before God. **You have been made the righteousness of God** (2 Corinthians 5:21).

In fact, *unrighteousness* has no more dominion over you. You are no longer unable to respond to God's love. The rule of Satan was broken in your life. You were set free in the Kingdom of Jesus. He is now your rightful King and ruler. You have been "*translated from darkness into light*" (Colossians 1:13). You have changed governments. Jesus now governs you. Satan, or any demon in hell cannot hold you against your will and keep you from obeying God.

The Holy Spirit continually assures you that your right standing with God is real and secure (Romans 8:14-17). The *righteousness* He made you is a fact. Satan cannot make you *unrighteous* again. **Jesus Christ is the source of your righteousness.** For that reason you hunger and thirst for a righteous life. You eagerly seek to live in Kingdom righteousness with delight and complete obedience. Regardless of suffering, oppression, persecution and hardship, your motive for obedience is faith and assurance of your right standing with God, made possible through Jesus Christ. **Your motive for obedience is righteousness.** Your eternal destiny is secure. Your eternal reward is so great, all earthly benefits and temporal rewards pale by comparison. Who can fathom the glory of the Kingdom to come?

The Holy Spirit is determined to give you strength to obey, confidence to go on, patience to wait, assurance for hope, and an increase in revelation of who you really are. You are a child of God, legally adopted into His family. The Kingdom is yours forever. How you respond to that by faith is inseparable from what you believe. Your belief must have a response. That response to Jesus Christ, the source of your righteousness, is unquestioning obedience.

" I delight to do Thy will, O my God. Thy law is within my heart". (Psalm 40:8)

3. THE CALL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Jesus calls His disciples, His followers to righteousness

1. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His "*Sermon on the Mount*" (CODEX REX - Matthew chapters 5 - 7), instructed all believers to place two objectives highest on the list of life's priorities.

2. In fact, a believer's whole life must be consumed with "*hunger and thirst*" in pursuit of these **two objectives**. They are the greatest motives for Godly living.
3. They are a summons to the **rule of the Kingdom** of God and a summons to **righteousness** (Matthew 6:33).
4. The **summons** to the rule of the Kingdom of God **is a call** to righteousness.
5. The **call to righteousness** is a summons to live a life of obedience to rule of Jesus Christ.

4. THE NEED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness is a necessity for a believer's daily life

1. The summons to righteousness is the result of a real need for righteous **obedient living**.
2. Righteous obedient living is a lifestyle that dates back as early as the introduction of Sinaic law, with an obedience that enables a person to make **right decisions**, (Deuteronomy 16:18,19-21, 17:8,9).
3. God's children must grow up from **milk** of the Word to **meat** of the Word, so that they may know exactly how the need for righteousness is met with clear knowledge of **what is right and what is wrong**.

*"For everyone who partakes only of **milk** is not accustomed to the **word of righteousness** for he is a babe". (Hebrews 5:13)*

*"But **solid food** (the need for the word of righteousness - v.13) is for the mature, who because of practise, have their senses trained to discern good and evil". (Hebrews 5:14)*

5. THE EXTENT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness affects every area of a person's life

"And it will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, just as He commanded us".(Deuteronomy 6:25)

1. The call to and need for righteousness **affects every area of life**. *"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your **spirit and soul and body** be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ". (1 Thessalonians 5:23)*

2. The summons to "seek after righteousness" (Matthew 6:33) and the need for righteousness to make right decisions, **apply to the total person** in spirit, soul and body.

3. To separate any one area as more important (for righteousness) than the other is a **mistake** whose roots are not Hebrew but Greek philosophy where the Gnostics advocated precisely such **division** of spirit, soul and body, with the assumption that "spirit" was more important than soul and body.

4. The **extent of righteousness**, however, is obedience to God's Word and the leading of His Holy Spirit in your **spirit, soul and body** also known as your heart, mind and strength.

1. Righteousness in spirit takes place when you are born again. The day you believed in Jesus Christ was the day you became a new creation. Your spirit man or spirit woman became totally right with God. You were instantly made righteous with God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). You are in right standing with God. Obedience means you believe it really happened the day you believed and received Jesus as Lord of your life. **Obedience means never doubting your re-birth into the Kingdom of God.**

2. Righteousness in soul is a process known as "sanctification". Sanctification means separation unto God. Sanctification happens when you obey the righteous Kingdom rule (CODEX REX) of Jesus Christ through the renewing of your soul. The soul is the seat of your will whose authority is over your emotions, intellect and thought processes (Ephesians 4:23). **Obedience is knowing God's will and subjecting your will (soul - emotions, intellect, thought processes) to His will.** God's will is His Word, the Scriptures.

3. Righteousness in body is the effect sanctification has on your body, namely your feelings, speech, habits, deeds and your behaviour. You offer your body as a holy and living sacrifice to God. **Obedience is an act of worship in feelings, speech, habits, deeds and behaviour** Everything you say and do in obedience with your body brings praise and honour to God (Romans 12:1)

5. Righteousness in spirit, soul and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23) *"sanctifies you entirely"*. Peter calls sanctification, **"holiness"** (1 Peter 1:15,16).

6. To obey the call to righteousness and recognize the need for righteousness to affect every area of your life, **you must continue to seek after a greater understanding of precisely what Kingdom righteousness is.** You must trust the Holy Spirit to guide you to live that righteous life. The submission of spirit, soul and body in obedience to God's will is motivated by the revelation of your right standing with God.

7. **Such submission means you are a slave again.** (Romans 6:19, Galatians 1:10)

1. The extent of righteousness is so important, writers of the New Testament, inspired by the Holy Spirit, refer to the righteous life of the Kingdom as **slavery**. In fact, you become **slaves of righteousness**. you become **bond-slaves** of the Lord Jesus Christ, totally committed to obey His rule in every area of your life. The apostle Paul calls himself a **prisoner** of Christ (Ephesians 4:1).

No longer a slave to sin, bound by sin's merciless control, but slaves to Jesus, bound to His merciful righteousness.

2. The relationship is so intimate, you are *in Him*, and He is *in you*. The two are inseparable. The righteousness you believe you are and the righteousness that affect all your life are proof that the Bible is true and the Bible's testimony of the *righteous* Son of God, can be trusted and obeyed.

3. When you were made the righteousness of God because of faith in Jesus, you proclaimed "**death**" to your own righteousness (of works and selfish ambition). This "**death**" made you forever indebted to Jesus who became **unrighteousness** for you so that you could be **right with God**.

4. The true **bond-slave** of Jesus is committed to obedience. A bond-slave of Jesus has no desire to do his or her own will. Instead you desire to do nothing but the Master's will. A bond-slave is daily stirred with the excitement of abiding in the teachings of Jesus and obeying His rule. A bond-slave knows the Master treats him well. So well, in fact, the Master has made you an heir of the Kingdom and all its promised possessions. A bond-slave is right with his Master, without debt, guilt, shame or fear.

5. Therefore you are either enslaved to Jesus or to the devil (sin and self). There is no middle ground. It's either or, enslaved to freedom or enslaved to bondage (this exposes the root need for all deliverance)

6. A bond-slave of Jesus (a *slave to righteousness*) has....

1. offered his spirit to Jesus for re-birth (John 3:3)
2. offered his mind (will) for renewal (Ephesians 4:23)
3. offered his body as an instrument of worship (Romans 12:1)

7. Everything a bond-slave does is not determined by bodily feelings or desires, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit who gladly shapes those feelings and desires into Godly feelings and desires.

8. True freedom according to Jesus is a "paradox" (a statement seemingly absurd or contradictory, yet in fact true. Hebrew bloc-logic has no difficulty in seemingly opposed ideas being one and the same).

To be free in Jesus Christ is to be a slave again.

9. Freedom is living out your commitment (enslavement) to the righteous ways of the Kingdom in obedience to the rule of Jesus. (John 8:36, Galatians 4:7, Romans 1:1)

10. Applied freedom is a challenge to daily life.

1. Joined to Jesus (slaves to Him and His righteousness) means you cannot commit "spiritual adultery" (joined to the *un*righteous ways of the worl - Romans 7:1-4)

2. The Holy Spirit is your empowerment to live out your enslavement to the Kingdom and its righteousness - (Romans 8:2,10).

3. Your flesh ("**flesh**" spelled backwards is **His** or **Her self**) and its desires will battle your sanctification (**the primary reason for spiritual warfare**) until death parts you from your flesh and selfish desires. (Romans 7:5-25)

4. This freedom will require endurance with expectation and obedience without always understanding. But faith says, you are forever enslaved and yet totally free from slavery to sin and unrighteousness. **Unrighteousness has no more power over you to hold you against your will to obey God.**

6. THE BATTLE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. A solemn warning - *Colossians 2:4,8*

The world is full of ideas, opinions, and libraries of books on how to live "*the right life*". Info-Commercials expound their virtues. They will fuel your selfishness and cause you to believe **you deserve** all the benefits of life, rather than giving praise and thanksgiving to God, because **He gave life and its benefits to you**. You did not earn it or deserve it, but because of your enslavement to Jesus, you have inherited **all God's riches, beginning with eternal life**.

2. A solemn warning is issued in *Colossians 2:4,8* not to be deceived or enslaved by...

1. Persuasive argument (the *salesman's* method)

2. Philosophy (the *academic's* method)

3. Deception and empty promises (*manufacturer's* method)

4. Traditions of men (the *religious'* method)

5. Elementary principles of the world* (the *banker's* method)

* *world systems and methods governed by evil spirits and man's own pride and selfish greed, believing and positioning man as master of his own destiny.*

3. Only the *seeker of the Kingdom* and its righteousness, the true bond-slave of Jesus Christ will experience the incredible blessing of being free (John 8:31,32). Free to have *no anxiety* about life's needs, *no fear* about deficits and global warming, with *no worries* about a quest for personal fulfilment and great and noble achievements according to the standards of the world , *nor cares* about any future promises of God. It is the only believable definition of freedom - to be **carefree** and **careless**.

7. THE TEACHING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. The days of Noah - *Matthew 24:37, 2 Peter 2:5*

The end of time (meaning the present age in which man lives as the age comes closer and closer to the end) will be marked by an increase in the need and call to teach and preach the Kingdom of God and its righteousness. God again summons His people to live right and make right decisions based on His Kingdom ways.

God will raise up a prophetic voice to summon men once again to obedience to the rule of Jesus Christ and the precious intimate relationship between Father and son, Master and bond-slave, King and citizen.

2. As Noah, in a time of "*eating, drinking and marrying*", was a **preacher of righteousness**, so the **Church** must proclaim in word and deed that her obedience is motivated by righteousness not reward.

It will not be a popular message in an age when times of "*eating, drinking and marriage*" are considered to be good times by many, in the pursuit of consumer greed. Many will turn a blind eye to the corruption of the world, child labour and slavery, and exploitation of entire countries, who provide for that consumer need. Many will not heed the message of the Kingdom.

3. The new Seekers in the days of Noah

The summons to obedience motivated by righteousness is a divine summons to earnestly seek after the truth of the Kingdom of God. God's children must be thoroughly grounded in faith in the meat of the Word, the **word of righteousness** (Hebrews 5:13), to build up their faith to endure the difficult times to come.

Jesus defines "*seeking first*" as "*abiding*" in His teachings (John 8:31,32).

4. To seek is.....

1. to *immerse* oneself in the teachings of Jesus

2. to *hunger and thirst* for deeper meaning
3. to have an *attitude* and *will* for total submission
4. to have *faith* that your righteousness is assured
5. to have a *mind* made up to obey Jesus at all cost

5. Only freedom from worldly pressures, worldly standards and worldly circumstances **will sustain** a true disciple of Jesus through times of pressure, persecution, hardship and loneliness. Such is the journey of true seekers. **Such is the heart of faith whose hope is fulfilled by the assurance of right standing with God.**

6. Therefore seek the Kingdom and its righteousness with....

1. All your heart (Psalm 119:2)
2. All your mind (Romans 12:2)
3. All your will (Joshua 24:15)
4. All your emotions (Matthew 4,12)

7. Therefore by faith and obedience overcome temptations to....

1. Consistently ignore God's calling (Proverbs 1:24)
2. Despise the advice of God (Proverbs 1:30a)
3. Refuse God's correction (Proverbs 1:30b)
4. Fail to seek Him diligently in His Word (Proverbs 1:29)

8. Therefore make your "seeking" a journey of

1. Believing in God's existence (Hebrews 11:6)
2. Repentance of known sin (Acts 3:19)
3. Seek Him early (Song of Solomon 7:12)
4. Seek Him daily (Isaiah 58:2)
5. Seek Him diligently (Proverbs 8:17)
6. Seek the Father through Jesus (John 14:9)
7. Seek Him for forgiveness (Matthew 5:23,24, Mark 11:25,26)
8. Seek Him by living righteously (Isaiah 58:2)
9. Seek Him in the fast (Joel 2:12)
10. Seek Him in praise (Psalm 22:3)
11. Seek Him in His Word (John 14:23)
12. Seek Him in prayer (Jeremiah 29:12, 13)
13. Seek Him in giving (tithing) (Malachi 3:6-11)
14. Seek Him by loving others (1 John 4:7)

8. THE INCREASE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 9:7, " *There will be no end to the **increase** of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His Kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on forevermore. The zeal of the Lord will accomplish this.*

Your enslavement to Jesus and His righteousness will forever increase. The life you now live in obedience must forever be a demonstration that you are yielding every aspect of your life to Him.

1. Increase of teaching in righteousness

The teaching of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness is given in Matthew 5:1-7:29 and Luke 6:20-49. All four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record the demonstration of that Kingdom teaching in the life of Jesus Christ. He not only taught the Kingdom, He lived it through daily demonstration with a power that truly set the captives free (Luke 4:18,19). Jesus was a living example of righteousness in His holy life, death, resurrection and ascension (Romans 3:25,26). To increase in righteousness you must increase in abiding in the teachings of Jesus.

2. Increase of training in righteousness

You must mature from teaching to training. Teaching equips you to "*know*". Training equips you to "*do*". You must increase in training by stepping out in faith more and more each day, believing God for His Word to come to pass in your life. Regardless of mistakes and the times you stumble, you get up and try again. As faith increases, so will your commitment to "*do*" what God teaches you.

Building on the teachings of Jesus in the four Gospels, the balance of the New Testament is devoted to a detailed pattern for Kingdom life as the Kingdom's good news began to spread. Training includes **inner disciplines** of Godly emotions, will, attitudes, intellect, and **bodily behaviour or conduct** (outer disciplines) in every aspect of daily life from marriage and family to labour, trade, commerce, finances, relationships, leisure, the arts, government and church.

3. Increase of walking in righteousness

The test of teaching and training is walking without ever looking back. Walking in righteousness is not a quantitative life, but a qualitative life. **Teaching and training demand a response that results in actual change.** Obedience, motivated by righteousness will change you. Your walk of righteousness will affect what you think and believe and what you say and do. This is true discipleship. Your walk of righteousness is a walk of assurance that you are right with God, a walk that continues day and night.

With your highest good in mind, namely the assurance, peace, joy and power of the Kingdom, Jesus permits you to see the motives and attitudes in your heart that keep you from

increasing in teaching, training and walking in righteousness. **His examination** of your heart by the Holy Spirit, is **His Way** to bring you to lasting freedom, albeit slavery to Him.

4. Increase in sowing righteousness

*" Sow with a view to righteousness (not reward), reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to **rain righteousness on you**". (Hosea 10:12, bracket added)*

If you will sow kindness, peace, assurance, joy, patience, gentleness, love, self-control (Galatians 5:22,23), quietness and confidence (Isaiah 32:17) into the lives of others, by what you say and do, Jesus will not only **reign in you**, He will "**rain**" upon you all the blessings of His Kingdom. You sow righteousness by living the same standards you teach and share with others.

Reward is what you get for what you did.

Reward motivation will always cause you to question if you did enough of the things that merit reward (works) or if you did it (works) right.

Obedience motivation, by the righteousness you have been made, will make you trust God to meet all your needs (Philippians 4:19), trusting He knows exactly what your needs are, needs as distinct from (your) wants.

9. THE HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The "rain" of righteousness (Hosea 10:12) amounts to "all these things added to you" (Matthew 6:33) if you will seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and live in obedience motivated by the full understanding and belief in your right standing with God.

The generous extent of God's "rain" of righteousness upon you is abundantly promised in His Word. This is the end time harvest promised to those who trust and obey....

1. Peace, quietness, confidence, assurance (Isaiah 32:17)
2. Wisdom (Proverbs 2:7)
3. Intimacy (Proverbs 3:32)
4. Goodwill (Proverbs 14:9)
5. A clear road ahead (Proverbs 15:19 KJV)
6. All the blessings of God (Psalm 5:12)
7. God's attention (Psalm 34:15, 1 Peter 3:12)
8. Deliverance from affliction (Psalm 34:19)
9. God's strength (Psalm 34:17)

10. Inherit the land (Psalm 37:29)
11. Rewards (Psalm 58:11, Matthew 10:41)
12. Desires will be granted (Proverbs 10:24) (see v.22)
13. Deliverance (Proverbs 11:8)
14. Never shaken (Proverbs 10:30)
15. Enough to eat (Proverbs 13:25) *satisfaction* based on needs met not just want
16. Answered prayer (Proverbs 15:29)
17. Freedom from legalism in God's Word (1 Timothy 1:9)
18. Much wealth (Proverbs 15:6)
19. Great results because of prayer (James 5:16)
20. Healing (James 5:16)
21. Restoration and forgiveness (James 5:15)

10. DEEPER LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

"The Spirit is life because of Righteousness" - Romans 8:10 NKJV

"The spirit is alive because of righteousness" - NASB

"The spirit is alive because of the righteousness that He imputes to you" - AMPL

The Holy Spirit is the source of life for your spirit. The Holy Spirit brings life into your spirit because of righteousness. It's the law of Almighty God (Romans 8:2). The Holy Spirit brings life to your spirit, mind, will, intellect, emotions and even your body (Romans 8:11)

Freedom in Christ means you should **not feel condemned** because you **are not condemned** for the things you did in the past and have done in the present to satisfy selfishness despite the fact you fully desire to obey the Lord and do the things His Holy Spirit asks you.

Your past and present are forgiven, You have been made right with God because of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)

If, however, you walk according to the leading of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:5) and focus your mind with a determination to do things God's way, you will experience life. If you will seek after the Kingdom of God and its **righteousness** (Matthew 6:33) you will experience life.

The Holy Spirit will bring His life to bear in your life (Romans 8:6).

His life is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians 5:23), assurance (Romans 8:16,17) and hope (Ephesians 1:12-14).

That Holy Spirit-promised and enabling life (not condemnation) is yours because of righteousness. Because you have been made right with God through Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21) you must believe that God has made you right with Him and He will reward you with the Spirit's life if you will diligently seek after the Kingdom and its righteousness (Hebrews 11:6).

The deeper life of the Spirit is to live by the law of the Spirit of Life. This means you joyfully accept and believe by faith that all God's goodness through the Spirit is yours because you are right with God. **It's the law. You must obey that law.** Motivated by the righteousness you are, you delight to obey the law that *commands you to accept and believe you right standing with God and live accordingly*. Do not listen to voices of the past and present who condemn you. Listen to the voice of the Scriptures that say you are a child of God, chosen for eternity with Him.

To disobey is to walk in condemnation, accusation and unbelief.

To obey is to walk in peace and freedom, not giving a care about what happened in the past or what may happen in the present or future.

CONCLUSION

Obedience motivated by righteousness is obedience as a result of understanding and believing you are right with God. It is understanding and belief you have rights as God's children. It is your desire and will to live right as His Holy Spirit teaches you.

Yes, there are many rewards in the *harvest of righteousness*, but rewards are not your motive. For **rewards** are subject to **God's timing**. His timing does not always agree with yours. Eventhough the rewards are yours, He may withhold some of them for reasons you only find out later, sometimes much later. However, righteousness is now. **Obedience** is subject to **your timing**. Your timing is now.

The awesome revelation of your true identity in Christ before God is your motive. Revelation of that identity comes from committed time of study and prayer in God's Word.

Rewards only motivate works. Righteousness motivates obedience out of pure delight and ultimate desire to let your life of faith be a pleasure to the Father. Such obedience brings Him the highest form of worship and glory. Such obedience is loving God. Such obedience is freedom.

Appendix I

THE COVENANT AS A "CODE OF RELATIONSHIP"

Covenant: An unbreakable agreement to live by the intent of one's heart, a declaration of purpose and commitment of one's will, often ratified by a symbol, such as: blood, a blood sacrifice, exchange of gifts, exchange of vows, or rings. A covenant is a commitment to the choice one makes for the terms of duration of such a covenant, often a life-time (such as marriage), and not a commitment to the option of walking away from the commitment.

God demonstrated His intent of heart by giving mankind His Son, Jesus Christ. God, in Christ, declared His commitment to the eternal Kingdom of God, the family of man, and His commitment to the choice of eternal righteousness, peace, joy and power for His followers.

The first covenant was given to Moses on *Mount Sinai*.

The second covenant was given to Jesus on the *Mount of Beattitudes* (just outside Capernaum in the land of Israel).

Old Testament - the first covenant, on *Mount Sinai*

A covenant between God and (imperfect) man.

Written as a "Law in Letters," (on tablets of stone - *Codex Sinaicus*).

This covenant required ritual blood sacrifices of animals.

This covenant required obedient behaviour to the "letter of the law."

This covenant provided "atonement," - a "covering up" of sins committed against God.

This covenant was "incomplete," because it could not change the heart of man.

This covenant was "a shadow" of the eternal Kingdom of God, to come.

The outward sign of this covenant was circumcision.

New Testament - the second covenant, on the *Mount of Beattitudes*

A covenant between God and (perfect) Jesus Christ.

The new covenant fulfills the first covenant, therefore making the first (old) covenant terms and demands of sacrifice, no longer valid.

Written as a "Law in of the Spirit," (on tablets of the heart - *Codex Rex*)

This covenant required a one-time blood sacrifice of a man, Jesus Christ, God's own Son, accomplished on a cross on *Golgotha*, in the year 33 AD.

This covenant required obedience through a response of love to exposure of the "intent of the heart."

This covenant provided "justification," - a "forgiveness" of sins committed against God, and removal of all charges of guilt against a person because of sin.

This covenant was "complete," because it changes the heart of man through re-birth.

This covenant is proof the eternal Kingdom of God, *has come*.

The outward sign of this covenant is evidence of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, who is the Holy Spirit of God.

Appendix II

A CHARTER OF JUSTICE

A Kingdom pattern for leadership in the home, community, church, and government, beyond the year 2000

DEFINITION OF CHARTER

A Formal Document, by which leadership, such as a government, grants special rights and privileges to its people - rights and privileges that conform to a just and upright standard of character, and quality values, that are morally right and justified according to a divine law, whose foundation is absolute truth that never changes.

DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

The Authoritative Administration and jurisdiction according to a charter of justice, exercised by an appointed leader over a group of people, who will lead by that charter's just and upright standards, in submission to the equitable, just, wise, and compassionate counsel of other leaders, whose character, conduct, influence, and perseverance, are in obedience to divine absolute law.

DEFINITION OF GOVERNMENT

The Authoritative Administration and jurisdiction, the right to govern according to such a charter of justice, exercised by a group of elected representatives over a group of people, and who will govern by that charter's just and upright standard through the equitable, just, wise and compassionate counsel of leadership, whose character, conduct, influence and perseverance are in obedience to divine absolute law.

THE FOUNDATION OF JUSTICE

Is a series of absolutes: namely, the command to love God and Him alone, and to include in that supreme love command, our neighbours and ourselves, and to demonstrate that love towards God, towards our neighbours and ourselves, through faith in and obedience to His absolute truth that never changes.

THE METHOD OF LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT

To determine by examination the intent of a person's heart, and expose the hindrances to justice namely: anger, impure motives, unfaithfulness, resistance to justice, selfish love, selfish

motives, false trust and security in money and possessions, callous judgements, wrong discernment of truth, irresponsibility, resentment, rebellion and personal independence, disobedience, and the dishonour of life and relationships according to the divine law of God.

To promote by transformation the corresponding actions of repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, purity, faithfulness, right attitudes, perfect love, pure motives, generosity and contentment, right judgements, wisdom, responsibility, protection, selflessness, obedience, compassion, and the honour of life and relationships according to the divine law of God.

THE OBJECTIVES OF LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT

To provide for its people a place to live and work, in a family and community of justice, peace, joy, and effectiveness, with quietness, confidence, and kindness that will bring glory and honour to God.

THE QUALITY OF JUST LEADERSHIP

Men and women who lead and govern according to the Kingdom's "Charter of Justice," are men and women submitted and committed to leadership and a government of justice, whose source of justice is the pattern of the eternal Kingdom of God and its supreme ruler, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who reigns and rules in the hearts of men and women, through new life in Him.

Such leaders will demonstrate justice according to God's Word, and will be empowered and enabled to lead and govern, empowered by God's Holy Spirit to do God's will as a witness of leadership's conformity of heart and life, to the divine law of God, whose absolute truth never changes.

This must be the pattern of leadership and government beyond the year 2000, a pattern that will serve as the building code for a family, a nation, and a people of justice, to be a nation and a people of righteousness both individually and collectively, as the family of God. They will be a nation and a people grounded in personal faith, and a personal relationship with God, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whose image they have been made - an image of justice and servant love.

Appendix III

PROVERBS OF THE KINGDOM

One hundred sayings taken from everyday life of Jesus Christ intended to serve as practical guidelines for living in assurance, peace, joy and confidence

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favourable year of the Lord. Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18,19,21).

"That the people may know skill and godly wisdom and instruction, discern and comprehend the Kingdom words of understanding and insight, receive instruction in wise Kingdom dealing and the discipline of wise Kingdom thoughtfulness, righteousness, justice and integrity; that prudence may be given to the simple, and knowledge, discretion and discernment to the youth; the wise also may hear and increase in Kingdom learning, and the person of understanding acquire skill and attain to sound counsels so that he may be able to steer his course rightly" (Proverbs 1:2-5 Amplified Bible - the word Kingdom was added for emphasis).

"attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is Christ Himself" (Colossians 2:2b NASB).

As Jesus was anointed to carry the plain and simple good news of the Kingdom of God in word and deed, so are you anointed to do the same.

INTRODUCTION

He spoke plain and simple words, in a language everyone understood. He chose illustrations from everyday life. He taught with authority and lived by example. He used no sophisticated teaching methods nor owned impressive ministry buildings. He validated His ministry with power to heal and set the captives free. He spoke about a Kingdom many knew and waited for with great expectation. He spoke about eternal love and a sinless, guiltless, and reconciled relationship between God and His children. He called it the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God. But these words were not for the casual listener. To know and believe the fulness of His words, you must follow Him daily and listen to His voice. For that reason He issued a summons to all men and women to follow Him, become His disciples and submit to His rule. Only then will He truly set you free forever. Only then will you know lasting peace, unending joy, comforting assurance and overcoming faith in the Kingdom of God. These are the teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the King of God's Kingdom. These *Proverbs of the Kingdom* are a humble attempt, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to capture the plain and simple, life-giving truth of His words.

The purpose of *Proverbs of the Kingdom* is that the reader might know Godly wisdom, and allow that wisdom to govern his or her life. The rule of the Lord Jesus Christ is His eternal

government of righteousness and justice as King of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is the eternal plan for an everlasting relationship of love between God and man. The rule of Jesus Christ begins by faith in the hearts of His followers. True followers believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that Father God raised Him from the dead to justify all mankind and declare those who believe righteous before God. When Jesus returns He will establish His rule over all nations, peoples, kingdoms and over all creation. The summons is given to all mankind to submit to His Kingdom rule and invite mankind into a relationship of love with the Father.

It is my prayer that these *Proverbs of the Kingdom* will bless you and help and comfort you in your journey of faith. I have selected a number of scriptures in which Jesus teaches the Kingdom of God, and have written those words in a style and content that reflects over ten years of teaching on the subject of the Kingdom of God. May the Spirit of Jesus stir your heart to submit fully and unconditionally to the Lorship of Jesus Christ and as a result grow strong in faith.

100 PROVERBS OF THE KINGDOM

(for scripture reference for each proverb, see page 126)

1. Greatness is measured by your willingness to obey even the seemly smallest of commandments of God and teach others to do likewise. To live and teach others that some commandments are irrelevant and insignificant for the times in which you live, is an insult to God deserving nothing less than silence in response to your prayers.
2. It is not enough to simply copy someone else's good deeds and virtuous living if your motive is recognition among men and favour with God. It is of greater worth to rise above mere copying of others to let your good deeds and virtuous living be the fruit of a pure heart whose desire is to give recognition to Jesus and bestow favour upon God.
3. The greatest vocation is worship and prayer. Your life will be rich in joy and peace when you ascribe all honour and glory to God the Father and dialogue with Him daily in fellowship of prayer.
4. What you do for God and the cause of His Kingdom is only of value when done in obedience to His calling. To do something simply because you know His Word says so and it must be done, is not enough. Did the Father tell you to do it? Only then does obedience bring peace and satisfaction.
5. To aspire to be great and influential and to be of world-wide reputation and acclaim is achieved only through servanthood. Servanthood is the purest calling in which obedience to the summons of God is of higher priority than the summons of man.
6. There is no mystery of life and the Kingdom of God so great that cannot be unlocked by the right key. You have been given the Holy Spirit of Jesus to know the secrets of a joyful, peaceful and quiet life. To know and apply those secrets you must understand the keys of God's Word and

unlock the chains that keep you from obeying His Word. Only then will the Kingdom of God and life's mysteries become your solutions and blessings.

7. Obedience of faith to God's call and application of His will to daily living are the keys to many blessings and the assurance that seed faith planted in your heart will grow and mature to please the Father.

8. Your Kingdom life must be nurtured by a Godly awareness that despite the fact you are surrounded by worldly attitudes and self-centred opinions, you can grow and mature in faith without the crippling influence of such attitudes and opinions.

9. Jesus and His angels will remove obstacles from your journey of faith. Any attempt on your part to assist the Lord is doomed to result in disappointment and cause hidden anger in your heart, the very cause of all bitterness, anxiety and fear.

10. The bright light of your Kingdom character, your Kingdom conduct and perseverance will only be of influence when it shines in righteousness. Righteousness is that quality of faith that knows you are in right standing before God. Righteousness of faith knows you have rights before Him as His children and desire to live right as the Father has commanded.

11. When you discover the true liberty of letting Jesus rule your life, you must stop at nothing to protect the Kingdom's treasures in your heart and pay whatever price to ensure your conduct is filled with joy.

12. Again, your search for the pearls of truth about life is worth every day of searching, every hour of prayer, every investment in money and resources, if indeed those pearls are found in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

13. The world offers many opinions, philosophies and directions for the good life. You must separate what is not of God from what is. Discard the wisdom of men and receive the superior wisdom of God. Ask Him to help you sort the many thoughts and questions in your life and keep only those that are good and upright according to His will.

14. The life force of God's eternal Kingdom is so precious and powerful it will resurrect values and disciplines of the past to give solid foundations to new thoughts and current ideas. A good leader will never discard the past because it is no longer fashionable or popular. You will stand on good ground when you raise a family on Godly principles both old and new.

15. Confident living in obedience as a child of God is like a key that both unlocks the powers of heaven to give you strength on earth and locks the powers of hell to keep you from stumbling on your journey.

16. The Holy Spirit makes the mysteries of the Kingdom of God simple to understand and its application to confident living plain to those who follow His leading. For those who do not submit their lives to the leading of the Holy Spirit, the mysteries of the Kingdom of God are obscure and vague, void of any life changing power. They become discouraged in prayer and

doubtful in believing God's promises. But those who are led by the Holy Spirit are assured and confident God fulfills His promises.

17. Your childlikeness blesses the Father most. Your dependency upon Him for all answers to your questions blesses Him. Your simple trust in Him for every step of life's journey blesses Him. It is good to know you can bless the Lord.

18. Your faith will increase when you believe that justice can only be executed by God. Let God settle accounts and deal with the people who ridicule you for your love of Him and reject you because you have chosen to live by a higher rule in your life.

19. Complete devotion to Jesus is possible only when your motive is to bring honour and glory to His name and not make yourself appear more holy through celibate deeds and denial of fellowship with others.

20. There is room in God's family for both early arrivals and latecomers. You will be blessed with peace and joy when you stop judging others for their maturity or immaturity in faith or whether they have been faithful followers most of their lives or just recent converts.

21. Do you secretly desire a place of importance both on earth and in heaven? Do you have secret thoughts that somehow your importance is a reflection of God's love and reward? Repent and trust God. He alone knows who occupies what position in His Kingdom. Regardless of position, His love is sufficient and equal for all. There are no insignificant positions in the Kingdom of God.

22. Sometimes evidence of obedience to God is most frequent in the unlikeliest of people. You'd think that those who grew up in Christian homes, attended church all their lives and those who occupy prominent positions in business and the community are the most Godly of people. In fact, greater obedience is often found amongst the poor, the destitute, the low of status and those with humble possessions.

23. If you persist in rebellion, resentment, independence and unforgiveness, the peace and joy of the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you. Your assurance will grow weak and faith will turn to doubt. Rewards in the Kingdom of God belong to those who live in obedience and who produce fruit of the Spirit.

24. Imagine a great wedding with all your relatives and friends in attendance. The day is full of celebration, comradery, reunions and of course the joy of seeing bride and groom dedicate their lives to each other. Imagine the sumptuous tables laden with food, endless cocktails and hors d'ouvers, and plenty of service staff so you will not have to lift a finger. Imagine a setting of soft, lush green meadows, a babbling brook and beautiful sunshine, lasting days upon days. Such is the Kingdom of God, beyond imagination yet reality nevertheless.

25. Beware of those who keep you from knowing God's treasures and enjoying the benefits of the Kingdom. Instead they promote religion rather than freedom under Christ's rule. They are

outside the Kingdom of God and speak with no knowledge, experience or wisdom of freedom in Jesus.

26. Be bold and courageous. Ask for opportunities to share the miraculous work Jesus has done in your life. Begin with friends and family, fellow workers and neighbours, even to the whole world if opportunity is given. Let them know and see the wonderful freedom Jesus gives.

27. Keep your minds focussed on the teachings of Jesus. Determine to walk in obedience to the will of God. Remain faithful in your prayer and study. Worship the Lord frequently and free of inhibitions. Love one another diligently. Such lamps will never dim.

28. Preparations for your eternal stay in the Kingdom of God began long before you were ever born. The Father has prepared a special place called "home" just for you and for His entire family. It's a place of supreme beauty and joy that has taken thousands of years of careful preparation just to make sure every detail is looked after from gardens to handsome rooms to a most impressive view.

29. Death is no longer the end of life and a terrible journey into the unknown. Instead it is a door through which you immediately pass into the presence of Jesus in His Kingdom palace.

30. No divine surgery is too severe to enable you to enjoy the freedom Jesus gives. Cut off and eliminate all thoughts, attitudes, feelings and desires that do not line up with His great Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matthew chapters 5 through 7.

31. To love God with all sincerity and faith from the heart is of greater value than any possession or any portion of wealth you are willing to give up.

32. To obtain everlasting Kingdom peace and joy, you must totally submit to the rule of Jesus over all your intentions, thoughts, emotions, will, intellect, words and deeds.

33. To obtain eternal life with Jesus Christ you must willingly experience a complete turn around *from* your old way of doing things and turn *to* God's way of doing things.

34. All that the Kingdom of God is supposed to be in assurance, peace, joy, love and abundant blessings has no comparable equal in this world. It is beyond imagination, but not beyond faith.

35. What more could one ask for than a King who rules in Godly power and wisdom, with justice and equity, gentleness and care, love and compassion forever.

36. No greater calling exists than to follow Jesus and share with whoever will listen the freedom that comes as a result of total submission to His loving leadership.

37. To admit one's absolute poverty in self-assurance and self-sufficiency is indeed the open door to God's abundant blessings.

- 38.** It does not matter what opinions you may have or what priorities you consider of utmost importance. What matters is a heart and will to please the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 39.** Telling people about Jesus Christ and His Kingdom is one thing. Showing them how to live in submission to His rule in every aspect of daily life is greater.
- 40.** Stories are for entertainment and at best for illustrating certain profound principles, but Kingdom truth is liberty and unfailing love to those who believe.
- 41.** How blessed is the believer who trusts the Holy Spirit to teach the life-giving and liberating truth about the Kingdom of God in clear and uncomplicated ways without the mystique and confusion of secret codes and subliminal messages of false religions.
- 42.** The message of the Kingdom of God is deliverance and freedom as a result of submission to the rule of Jesus Christ in every aspect of life. The power of the Kingdom's message results in healing of sickness and disease to become the visible evidence that the Kingdom of God is here.
- 43.** Good news of the upright and just rule of Jesus Christ is inseparable from the healing and comforting power of Jesus Christ.
- 44.** It is a promise to everyone who believes that they will catch glimpses of the glory of eternal life in the Kingdom of God even while they journey on this earth and before Jesus Christ returns to usher in that glory.
- 45.** Sharing the freedom truth of the Kingdom of God is of greater priority than even the most tradition-honoured and time-bound activity of man.
- 46.** Those who keep dwelling on the mistakes of the past, and those who continue to wish for the nostalgic securities of yesterday's practices and traditions will never experience the true freedom of God's peace, the joy of God's assurance, and the power of faith.
- 47.** When you see the power of God at work in healing sickness and disease as well as deliverance from demonic oppression, you know that the authority and reality of Jesus Christ is here to stay.
- 48.** Even when individuals, communities, and nations reject the truth of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, He is still here to work His power. Evidence to the contrary must never sway you from faith to believe His presence.
- 49.** The coming of God's Kingdom is a present-day reality. It means all those who believe will be radically changed from bondage to freedom, from sickness to health, from poverty to abundance, from conflict to peace, and from bitterness to love.
- 50.** Division is the primary weapon of destroying relationships. Division of opinion, division of purpose, division of faith and inequitable division of goods, are designed to kill hope, steal love and destroy fellowship.

51. Godly authority by which believers set the captives free, heal the sick, restore the brokenhearted, reconcile differences and turn division into unity, is concrete and indisputable evidence of the presence of Jesus Christ.

52. To walk by faith and trust in God's ways is of greater importance than being influenced by the pressures of circumstances and events.

53. Just because you do not always see immediate evidence, do not be afraid and doubt the blessings of the Kingdom have eluded you. It is God's source of continuous joy and your deep assurance that He will fulfil His promise of abundant blessing to you.

54. The truth of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom begin as seed. When planted in attitudes, thoughts, words and actions it will grow to produce a rich harvest of right attitudes, pure thoughts, encouraging words and Godly actions.

55. The truth of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom is like yeast. When added to the way you think and act it has a thoroughly penetrating influence to produce significant change and bring glory to God.

56. You will have good company in heaven including all believers from ages past, present and future. Some have famous names such as Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, the prophets and Paul. Others will be lesser known. Nevertheless, all are good company.

57. When that great company of believers gathers around the table of God, they will be red and yellow, black and white. They will represent every tribe and nation, every society and culture. Can you imagine the wealth of conversation and warmth of fellowship?

58. The bread of the Kingdom of God is the assurance that Jesus Christ paid for your sin once and for all. There is no hidden cost still to be paid. You are forgiven..

59. Bystanders, passive viewers and casual listeners cannot experience the healing and freedom of Jesus Christ. Only those who make a determined and aggressive effort to know the depth of truth in Jesus Christ will experience the fulness of the Kingdom's blessings.

60. Contrary to popular opinion, media coverage, spectacular performance and world-wide notoriety, the influence of Jesus Christ begins quietly and invisibly deep in the attitudes of your heart and thoughts of your mind.

61. Instead of running everywhere after self-acclaimed spiritual leaders or visiting distant shrines, the truth of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom is found in your heart as He affects life immediately around you.

62. The pure ways of children are innocent and trusting. That is how they capture the hearts of their fathers and mothers. You capture the heart of your heavenly Father when you trust Him as a child.

63. If the pure and innocently trusting ways of a child do not fuel the fires of your faith, you will miss the abundance of God's Kingdom blessings of assurance, peace, joy and faith power to overcome life's adversities.

64. If wealth of possessions and prominence are your security, you cannot experience true freedom in Jesus Christ. Instead of trusting His ways to bring abundance, you fear He will take all your wealth away.

65. To abandon earthly securities and earthly relationships for Christ's sake is difficult for those who do not understand or believe that Jesus alone gives security and relationships far greater than anything the world may offer. Jesus does not discard earthly securities and relationships. He simply requires that they be conformed to His will.

66. The question of how soon will God's Kingdom be established has a twofold answer. First, in the absence of Jesus, His rule is established by His Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. Second, when Jesus returns at the end of this present age He will establish His rule over all the earth.

67. As you look for blossoms and leaves to determine if a tree will bear fruit, so look towards present day events and circumstances that fulfil Bible prophecy to know the return of the Master is soon.

68. The sharing of bread and wine in holy communion is a living promise that one day you will share that same communion with Jesus in heaven.

69. The Kingdom and all its blessings of righteousness, peace, joy and faith power were given to Jesus so He in turn could give them to you. What great love and generosity!

70. Eternity is fellowship at the table of God and shared authority at the throne of God. From there we share His abundance and implement His justice over every individual, community and nation of the world, beginning with ourselves.

71. Jesus will never forget you. Even in the darkest of times or the most jubilant of circumstances His promises are yours and His will for your eternal glory shall come to pass.

72. All who patiently wait for the coming of the King and who do not grow cold in love or consent to return to the ways of the world, will not be disappointed.

73. To be poor in your own ability and knowledge to change circumstances is an asset in the Kingdom of God for it opens the door for God to work His power through you.

74. Repentance that permits true sorrow for sin is a mourning that brings deep comfort.

75. Meekness and gentleness are qualities of conduct that grow a teachable spirit in you.

76. Your character is strengthened because you hunger and thirst daily for Spiritual health through continual devotion and worship of the Father and the leadership of His Spirit.

77. When you extend kindness and love without condemnation and judgement to determine if someone really deserves it, you will experience true kindness and love yourself.

78. Do not pretend to be spiritual with ready answers, glib comments and impressive language. When such pretense is rejected you will see God's purposes and understand His ways more clearly.

79. To bring a quieting influence into situations of conflict and opposition is commendable Godly conduct. They will call you a peacemaker.

80. A joyful and glad disposition because God is faithful even when you are not, especially amidst persecution, rejection, slander, accusation and opposition, will yield abundance of steadfastness and sincerity.

81. You must preserve your integrity of Godly character in order to remain influential in people's lives. Such preservation is accomplished with a determination to always be as salt of faithfulness to God's word.

82. When you humbly cast true light of eternal freedom in Jesus Christ upon the lives of those who live in darkness your influence will be visible for many to see, both in your contentment and their freedom.

83. The rule of Jesus Christ in your life does not require strict adherence to outward rules and regulations, nor the submission to religious doctrines. Instead it requires obedience to the Spirit's examination of your heart and the exposure of your real motives. He will direct you to turn to God's ways without fear of condemnation or punishment and free you to obey the Father out of a deep love for His perfect will.

84. The command to love God and Him alone is an absolute of life, an irrevocable truth. Love is unquestioning obedience.

85. Your commitment to all God's ways is another absolute of life, an irrevocable truth.

86. The Holy Spirit will compel you and irresistibly urge you to let your love for God spill over into love for yourself and others.

87. You are commissioned to demonstrate your love for God through your love for yourself and others in ways that are commendable, honourable and charitable and thus bring glory to God.

88. Everything you purpose to do to demonstrate your love for God can only be achieved when you truly believe Jesus is with you to authorize and carry out the power of God.

89. Anger is spiritual cancer exposed through expressed and repressed anger, whether justified or not, in your heart. Such anger will reveal your need for repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation.

90. No surgery is too severe to cut off the hidden desires that feed lust based on self-pity and self-satisfaction.

91. Obedience is a deep commitment to the will of God beyond just the letter and formality of the law to a forever abiding intent of your heart.

92. Obedience deals with any attitude of rebellion, resentment and independence through flexibility, non-resistance and a willingness to submit to God's "potter's hands" and replace such attitudes with love, justice and compassion.

93. Perfect love is impartial. Perfect love reaches out without condition. Perfect love is a sincere love of obedience to God to obey His will for yourself, others and even your enemies.

94. Obedience replaces pretentious motives of ritual, routine, rewards-oriented submission, and worldly recognition with the pure and humble motives of servanthood.

95. Eternal treasure is peace, confidence, quietness, trust and assurance forever in you and others. You must use and generously sow Kingdom resources of talent and possessions to nourish increase of such treasure now and forever. All other treasures are earthly hay, stubble and wood that simply do not last.

96. True Kingdom prosperity is contentment with God's provision in times of plenty or scarcity on a journey of faith filled with freedom from fear and anxiety about tomorrow's needs.

97. Judge yourself first with God's grace and then with compassion and the same gracious Kingdom standards judge others.

98. Only speak the liberating truth of Jesus Christ to those who *"have ears to hear"*.

99. Remain diligent to inspect the fruit of your self-effort and be careful to examine the fruit of others who influence your life. The only standard by which such fruit is acceptable is the law of the Kingdom of God.

100. Genuine and lasting change in your life is the result of abiding in the words of Jesus and building your life on the foundations of the just and forever right rule of His Kingdom. To this end the Holy Spirit empowers you to willingly yield your will in submission to His examination and set you completely free.

Scripture References for Proverbs of the Kingdom

Note: the number of the **Proverb** is set in bold type.

From Matthew - **1.5:19 / 2.5:20 / 3.6:13 / 4.7:21 / 5.11:11 / 6.13:11 / 7.13:19 / 8.13:38 / 9.13:41 / 10.13:43 / 11.13:44 / 12.13:45,46 / 13.13:47-50 / 14.13:52 / 15.16:19 / 16.**(see Mark 4:11) / **17.18:1-4 / 18. 18:23 / 19.19:12 / 20.20:1 / 21.20:21 / 22.21:31 / 23.21:43 / 24.22:2 / 25.23:13 / 26.24:14 / 27.25:1 / 28.25:34**

From Mark - **29.9:1 / 30.9:47 / 31.12:34**

From John - **32.3:3,5 / 33.3:3,5 / 34.18:36**

From Luke - **35.1:32,33 / 36.4:43 / 37.6:20 / 38.7:28 / 39.8:1 / 40.8:10 / 41.8:10 / 42.9:2 / 43.9:11 / 44.9:27 / 45.9:60 / 46.9:62 / 47.10:9 / 48.10:11 / 49.1:2 / 50.11:17 / 51.11:20 / 52.12:31 / 53.12:32 / 54.13:18,19 / 55.13:20,21 / 56.13:28 / 57.13:29 / 58.14:15 / 59.16:16 / 60.17:20 / 61.17:21 / 62.18:16 / 63.18:17 / 64.18:24,25 / 65.18:29 / 66.19:11,12,15 / 67.21:31 / 68.22:16,18 / 69.22:29 / 70.22:30 / 71.23:42,43 / 72.23:51**

From the *Beattitudes* of Matthew - **73.5:3 / 74.5:4 / 75.5:5 / 76.5:6 / 77.5:7 / 78.5:8 / 79.5:9 / 80.5:10-12 / 81.5:13 / 82.5:14-16**

Other scriptures - **83.Heb.4:12 / 84.Ex.34:14, 1 John 5:1-3 / 85.Deut.10:12,13 / 86.Matt.22:37-40 / 87.1Cor.1:18,2:4 / 88.1 John 3:23, Mark 16:17,18 / 89.Matt.5:21-26 / 90.Matt.5:27-30 / 91.Matt.5:31-37 / 92.Matt.5:38-42 / 93.Matt.5:43-48 / 94.Matt.6:1-18 / 95.Matt.6:19-23, Is.32:17 / 96.Matt.6:24-34 / 97.Matt.7:1-5 / 98.Matt.7:6 / 99.Matt.7:15-20 / 100.Matt.7:24-27**

For example:

Proverb 1 - taken from Matthew, chapter 5, verse 19
in the scripture reference above, becomes: From Matthew - **1.5:19**
where **1** (in bold) is the proverb number and 5:19 the scripture from Matthew

Appendix IV

SERMON ON THE MOUNT by Jesus Christ - Expanded version

To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22)

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord", will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven (Matthew 7:21)

A MOUNTAIN OF FAITH

In 1994, I visited the *Mount of Beattitudes* near the town of Capernaum on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee in Israel. On the sides of these sloping hills overlooking the fertile valleys of Galilee, Jesus Christ, somewhere between 30 and 33 AD, delivered His sermon on the Kingdom of God. Surrounded by a multitude of people, He singled out His disciples, sat them down in the grass and on the rocks, and taught them the greatest secret of human existence - the Kingdom of God.

The message of the Kingdom of God was not a new message. It had been Israel's hope for thousands of years. Everyone looked forward to the fulfillment of the prophets who spoke of a Mighty Deliverer. That Deliverer would set Israel free and launch her eternal Golden Age as it was in the days of King David. Only this Golden Age would last beyond a millennium. Common belief in Jesus' days was in a Kingdom of God that would overthrow the current oppressors of Rome. Many would ask themselves, *"Is this Jesus the One? Is He the Mighty Deliverer?"* The air seemed pregnant with anticipation as this man from Galilee began His public teaching ministry. Mighty signs and wonders affirmed that this Jesus was not some ordinary prophet seeking to find a following for His cause. For three years Jesus taught the Kingdom of God.

For three years even His closest disciples, the chosen twelve, did not understand. They simply could not rid their minds of a hope in an earthly kingdom. Eventhough Jesus would say many times, *"My Kingdom is not of this earth"*, His followers chose to ignore the *not* in Jesus' words. In vain they tried to hail Him as King during an impromptu entry into Jerusalem. In vain they asked again and again, *"Is this the moment we've been waiting for? Is the time finally here to overthrow the wicked Herod, and the rid the land of Rome's legions? Here Lord, let me show You how to deal with the oppressors. I'll cut off one of his ears if he tries to touch you. Look Jesus, Your popularity is at an alltime high; grab the moment!"* But Jesus did not hear their mistaken notions of an earthly kingdom. Instead He patiently continued to lay a foundation for a heavenly kingdom. Little did people know that this heavenly kingdom called the Kingdom of God would one day be the only rule over heaven and earth.

But first there had to be a complete turn-around of people's thoughts and faith. In fact, to really understand what Jesus was talking about you need the mind of Jesus Himself. To have the mind of Jesus, that is His understanding, His knowledge and wisdom, you need the Spirit of Jesus. God had promised that this Spirit, the Holy Spirit, would be poured out on all mankind. To those who believe in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom. Not until Pentecost in 33AD, shortly after Jesus had returned to the Father to prepare the final stages of the Kingdom's eternal rule, was the promise of the Spirit fulfilled. Suddenly the minds and hearts of the disciples of Jesus were opened to understand what Jesus had taught them for three intense years. The task ahead was formidable. Would all of Israel believe? Would even the whole world believe? No, they would not. And why not? Because the error of understanding the Kingdom of God continued from the days of the apostles and into the early church.

Even today, that same error has permeated the beliefs of many. To understand the Kingdom of God, you **must** believe that Kingdom **has come**. You must believe that Jesus taught a *heavenly* Kingdom, whose government begins *on earth in the hearts of believers*. You must believe that the rule of that Kingdom is *a change of heart*, not to be confused with an automatic change of circumstances. Only a change of heart in submission to the Kingdom rule of Jesus will bring lasting change. That lasting change is **YOU**, not the people, events and governments around you. As **YOU** live to give evidence of a changed heart by faith in Jesus Christ through love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, through all kinds of trials, temptations, and unchanged adverse circumstances, will others catch a glimpse of the Kingdom of God in you.

Modern man has changed the requirements of the Kingdom to suit their belief in earthly change. Righteousness is the requirement of the Kingdom. Man has changed *righteousness* to earthly *reward*, when in fact the reward of righteousness is heavenly. Faith will change circumstances. Faith will change events. But faith is not the object of your affections or the subject of your worship. Obedience is. The *obedience of faith* is submission to the rule of Jesus in your heart and the hope and trust that He will return to establish this Kingdom on earth as well. Eventhough the Kingdom of God **has come** in the hearts of believers, it is still **to come** over all the peoples and nations of the world. Your reward **now** is complete **assurance** that you are a partaker of that eternal Kingdom to come because you believe that same Kingdom has already begun in your heart the moment you heard the Good News and believed in Jesus Christ. It is **assurance** that carries you through difficult times, seemingly unanswered prayer, dashed hopes and disappointments. Your reward **to come** is every blessing ever promised by God. Your reward to come is everything you have ever hoped for and even dreamed about as you read God's Word and heard His Spirit say, "*Well done My faithful servant. Enter into your rest and eternal reward!*"

For two thousand years, men have tried to explain this Kingdom. For two thousand years men have tried to develop moral codes based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, yet failed to see the secret of a need for absolute obedience and trust. Jesus Christ did not reveal this Kingdom blueprint simply for man to spend endless centuries arguing the fundamentals of its content. Did Jesus mean what He said? Can one take His words literally? Perhaps there is a hidden meaning, an allegory, a mere model for moral behaviour? Perhaps man should re-examine Christ's words and re-shape their meaning relevant to contemporary culture and society? Jesus Christ did not

deliver His *Sermon on the Mount* for consideration and possible acceptance into one's daily life. He gave this sermon as written proof of the Kingdom of God and a true purpose of that kingdom - the rule of its King.

The King does not require a *sacrifice* of endless hours of exegesis, creedal dogmatism and private interpretation. The King requires *obedience* and a *trust* that places His ways before man's ways. For that reason I have *expanded* the text of the *Sermon on the Mount* to demonstrate its everlasting truth, a truth when obeyed, will bring freedom. To understand the *Sermon on the Mount* one must always remember that Jesus teaches the Kingdom of God from a divine perspective, not an earthly perspective. His divine perspective is a perfect perspective, that is, a complete perspective which includes the fullness of creation and man. That perspective is man as spirit, soul and body. The understanding of Jesus' divine perspective of the Kingdom of God is simple. Man's life is only godlike when *obedience* is applied to spirit, soul and body. The three are inseparable. Obedience begins in your heart. *It is to the heart that Jesus speaks.*

To speak to a man's heart will affect his soul, including his will, his reason, his intellect and emotions. To speak to a man's heart and soul will affect his body which is his conduct, his speech and his behaviour. **The *Sermon on the Mount* speaks to the heart, the spirit of man.** When divine kingdom truth is revealed by the Spirit of God to the spirit of man, his only response must be *obedience of faith* to affect his will, reason, intellect, emotions, conduct, speech and behaviour in such a manner as to become a living demonstration that in fact Jesus' Kingdom truth has brought about lasting and genuine change. It is a demonstration in word and deed that a follower of Jesus Christ has given his entire life in humble submission to the righteous and just government of the King. That is the Kingdom of God, the fellowship of those who believe and *obey in trust* their eternal and God-anointed King and Lord, Jesus Christ.

To their hearts Jesus Christ speaks the words of the Kingdom of God in His *Sermon on the Mount*. **Of them** He requires no more than *obedience of faith* and complete *trust*. **To them** He offers a new eternal life with forgiveness and abundant love. **In them** He works a rebirth of heart, a renewal of soul and a commitment of body to follow the Master's footsteps in the Kingdom of God. The original sermon was given by Jesus Christ probably in the year 31 AD. For an additional thirty years it passed from person to person in the oral tradition of teaching. Around 60 AD the gospel writer Matthew compiled a written record of that sermon in chapters five, six and seven. I wrote this *expanded* text of the *Sermon on the Mount* using the original text and adding a summary of over twelve years of teaching and study of the Kingdom of God. Needless to say, regardless of how much one reads the word of God, no study is complete without *obedience of faith*, the greatest form of worship. You are invited to sit on the mountainside of faith and listen to the words of Jesus. It is my prayer you will hear what the Spirit of God says to you.

MATTHEW 5

1. When Jesus saw the multitudes who were following Him, He climbed the slopes of a nearby mountain and sat down. Then He called His disciples. They came and sat down next to Him to hear what He was about to say.

2. He began to teach them about the **Kingdom of God** or as it is also called, the Kingdom of heaven. He began His teaching with a series of *attitudes* of the heart to describe the *character, conduct, and influence* of those who choose to make the Kingdom of God their life and to *persevere* in obedience and trust. Jesus Christ said Kingdom citizens with such attitudes would be *blessed*. To be *blessed* is to be happy and the envy of others. To be *blessed* is to be spiritually prosperous with joy and satisfaction in God's favour, regardless of what circumstances of life may say to the contrary. To be *blessed* is to experience every day the *assurance* of a right standing with God and a deep inner *peace* overflowing with *joy* and *power of faith* as children of God. What follows are the words of Jesus Christ known as the *Sermon on the Mount* or the *message of the Kingdom of God*.

3. Blessed are the poor in spirit who realize the shortcomings in their character because of their own inability and insufficiency to obey and please God, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven when they turn to the Father who will give strength and ability in times of need.

4. Blessed are those who mourn for their stubborn character and disobedient actions with a repentance that shows true sorrow, for they shall be comforted by the Holy Spirit and assured they are children of God.

5. Blessed are those whose conduct is meek and gentle, and who because of their teachable spirit will remain willing to learn and be corrected when they stray, for they shall inherit the earth and all God's eternal promises.

6. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness of character and a spiritual health that demonstrates justice and fairness, wisdom and godliness, for they shall be satisfied to know that God is pleased.

7. Blessed are the merciful, full of compassionate conduct without judgement or condemnation, for they shall be treated likewise and receive mercy, knowing God's love will overcome all hardship.

8. Blessed are those whose character is without pretense and pure in heartfelt attitudes, for they shall see the presence of God evident in their lives at every turn and in every situation.

9. Blessed are the peacemakers whose conduct brings a quieting influence in times of strife and opposition and in situations of conflict, for they shall be recognized as true servants of the Lord and called sons of God.

10. Blessed are those who persevere in their loyalty to the King, especially when they have been persecuted for the sake of remaining true to their right standing with God and without doubt about the righteousness they have been made in Christ. For theirs is the honour that belongs to citizens of the Kingdom of God.

11. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you with rejection, slander, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, giving opportunity to the enemies of the Kingdom of God to undermine your faith in Jesus and undermine the power and authority you have in His name.

12. Rejoice, be glad, do not let their taunts and accusations get you down, for your reward in heaven is great. You are not alone when you suffer for Me, for so they persecuted the

prophets who were before you. They are now with Me and have already received their heavenly reward.

13. You are the salt of the earth, so preserve the integrity of your character in order to have a constructive influence on others. But if your character strays from godliness, how will you influence anyone? Your words mean nothing anymore and your actions do not reflect the Lord whom you say you serve. Your character becomes good for nothing, your name unreliable and untrustworthy, except to be rejected and ridiculed by men.

14. You are the light of the world. Kingdom citizens must have a positive influence on others that is real and visible in every aspect of daily life. As a city set on a hill cannot be hidden, so must the light of God's eternal truth in your life humbly offer honest solutions for the lives of others and bring the light of hope and love into a world trapped in darkness of despair and fear.

15. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under a peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. When your heavenly Father through His Spirit freely gives you answers to the mysteries of life, do not keep them for yourself. Share them openly and boldly with those who ask.

16. Let the light of your godly character, your godly conduct, your godly influence and your godly perseverance shine before men in such a way that they may see your obedience to the King as good works not done in your own strength but through the power of God's Holy Spirit, in order to bring glory to your Father who is in heaven.

17. Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. I am not here to tell you the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets are no longer valid. In fact they are valid. However, I will teach you to go one step further. I will teach you to make the Law and prophets a matter of not simply outward obedience, but commitment and faith of the heart.

18. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke, nor one condition for obedience shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Every aspect of the Law as it pertains to human conduct is valid.

19. Whoever then changes or invalidates one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others to make the Law relevant to current issues and times, shall be called least in the Kingdom of God; but whoever keeps the Law and teaches the rule of the King, shall be called great in the Kingdom of God.

20. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God. The way I rule as a righteous and just King in your life, is not by strict adherence to outward rules and regulations. That was the function of the Law. **I fulfill that Law by taking obedience a step further through the careful examination of a believer's heart.** The scribes and Pharisees obtained a measure of right standing with the Father because of their outward obedience to the Law.

But the Law does not expose the actual intent of the heart. A man may not commit a sin in deed, yet sin because of the intent of his heart. This is most important to understand. **Examination by My Spirit exposes the true intent of the heart** and will direct you to turn to God's ways, not in fear of condemnation or punishment, but out of deep love for God and the freedom He brings.

To live in perfect obedience is no longer the *sacrifice* of a change of behaviour through Old Testament Law. Perfect obedience is a change of heart in response to My words which will result in a change of behaviour. Thus I fulfill the Law and the Prophets. Outward change is a temporary process that, with the best of personal discipline, will only yield frustration and defeat

as you strive daily to obey the commands of God yet in your heart resent the demands of God's Law. But inner change, the change of one's heart, is a permanent change brought about by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will change your heart if you will believe in Me, and enable you to fulfill the greatest law. That law is to love God and to love your neighbour. To love God is to obey Him. When the Holy Spirit enables you to love God, you will in love obey Him. To focus the obedience of your love completely on God, fulfills the demands of the entire Law. From a changed heart, set free from rebellious attitudes, a river of living water will flow to affect your outward behaviour without fear of failure or the condemnation of trial and temptation. When you obey the Father and believe in Me, you will also believe all that was spoken about Me by the prophets. All that was spoken by the prophets about the times in which you live and the future of My Kingdom are true. I am the fulfillment of the prophets' words concerning the coming of My kingdom. I will also fulfill all that the prophets spoke about events to come. *These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show His bondservants the things which must shortly take place.* **My rule is life-giving truth of the Kingdom of God to examine the motives of your heart and set you free.** This examination has the exclusive purpose of showing you what stands in your way of the Kingdom's righteousness, peace, joy and power through submission to the rule of the King. By examining your heart, I fulfill the Law by revealing specific needs in your life that require trust and obedience to the commandments of God.

Having said that, let Me show you the way I examine your heart to expose hindrances of rebellion, resentment, independence, bitterness, unforgiveness and more. But I will also show you freedom through obedience.

21. You have heard from the 6th commandment of the Law in Exodus 20:13 and from Deuteronomy 16:18, that the ancients were told, *"You shall not commit murder"* and *"Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court"*.

22. To obey that law is one thing, but to fulfill it is another. Outward obedience may appear holy, but it is the heart that must be changed in order to experience real and lasting freedom. Therefore I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother in his heart, shall be guilty before the court; and whoever speaks out of an angry heart and says to his brother, *"Raca, you empty-headed idiot"*, shall be guilty before the supreme court as if he murdered the brother; and whoever in heated outburst shall give anyone a *"piece of their mind"* and say, *"You fool"*, shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell, a punishment deserved for those who kill, even if that murder is committed in the heart yet never acted upon in deed. **Because anger in your heart** is spiritual cancer. Spiritual cancer kills your will to do God's will. I want you to be free from spiritual cancer. Here is how you can be set free.

23. If you are presenting your offering at the altar, or before you go to church, or get together to pray and have fellowship with one another, and suddenly remember that your brother or sister in the Lord has something against you, there is strife and division between you and a fellow believer, and you can feel that anger rising in your heart towards that person,

24. leave your offering there before the altar, drop whatever you are doing, stop and consider My Kingdom way; first be reconciled to your brother, settle the argument, repair the damage and then come and present your offering and resume your former plans. If you harbour repressed feelings and thoughts of vengeance, repent. Do not give spiritual cancer room to incubate.

25. Even if the situation threatens to go to court, ***do not let anger in your heart rule your decisions***. Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Even if the other person was wrong and you were unjustly treated, forgive.

26. Truly I say to you, if you do not obey My kingdom way, you shall not come out of there, until you have paid up the last cent. You will not escape the spread of spiritual cancer. Until you have obeyed all the kingdom ways I have taught you about repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation, you cannot stop the spread of spiritual cancer in your spirit, soul and body. When your heart is exposed and you see the anger in it, obey immediately and you will be free.

27. Let Me show you another way in which I examine your heart. You have heard from the 7th commandment of the Law in Exodus 20:14 where it was said, "*You shall not commit adultery*". Well, the same Kingdom truth applies as in anger of the heart. You may not have committed the act of adultery;

28. But I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. I want to expose those **hidden lusts and sinful desires**, especially your tendency to nurse those lusts and desires while you feed on them with self-pity. You lust because you say, "*no one really understands me; someone else can meet my needs better than my husband or my wife*". So you fantasize about who is better than your spouse. The result is a pollution of heart and soul so great, the danger of thoughts becoming actions increases every day. The result of actions based on lusts and ungodly desires is irreparable damage of relationships that leaves lasting scars.

29. Obedience to My Kingdom way means ***cutting out or cutting off everything that feeds those lusts***. No surgery is too severe. And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. The price for purity may be severe, but freedom from guilt, shame and transmitted diseases is worth the price.

30. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell. No surgery is too severe. Let My Holy Spirit examine your heart and show you that submission to My divine surgery brings abundant life.

31. Again from the Old Testament Law it was said, "*Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal*", referring to both the legal procedure of divorce and the legal binding of oaths. First the legal procedure of divorce.

32. Don't be too eager to violate the commitment you made to your husband or wife. Perhaps your motive was not right to begin with. You said "yes" but in your heart you added the condition "*for as long as it works out*" or "*until I tire of her and find someone new*". But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, commits a serious error because he makes her commit adultery when she contemplates marrying someone else. Whoever marries or contemplates marrying a divorced woman participates in that same error and commits adultery too. But why do I single out marriage and divorce? Is one sin greater than another? No, it is not. Marriage is a direct reflection on the character of My Father in heaven.

33. My Father's character is one of faithfulness. You can fully depend on Him and trust Him in all He has said in His Word. The issue of marriage or divorce is one of faithfulness. **Faithfulness is commitment to the choice you have made.** This brings Me to the second legal

procedure of binding oaths. Again remember, you have heard that the ancients were told, *"You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord."*

34. Your choice is not an option to break a vow. But I say to you, consider all consequences when you make a commitment, or make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

35. or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. If you are going to commit yourself to a godly relationship, remember when you say *"I do, God helping me"*, or *"I swear on His Word"*, or *"in His name"*, it is a binding oath not subject to re-negotiation when circumstances change.

36. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Your head may say *"yes"*, but what does your heart say? You can promise the world but if your heart's intent is not to honour what you say, then what good is your *"yes"*? The reason this is so important is simple. The way you conduct yourself in the commitments you make is a direct reflection on the God you believe. How can you speak of a God of love who is faithful and trustworthy when you entertain **unfaithfulness in your heart?**

37. But let your statement be, *"Yes, yes"*, or *"No, no"*; and anything beyond these is of an evil intention. Evil is the intent to change the rules of relationships as you see fit. Evil is the intent of walking out of any binding agreement you have made. My Kingdom is a people of godly character, conduct, influence and perseverance who honour Me and experience peace and joy of that Kingdom because of a ***commitment to their binding choice*** of Me, the Father and one another.

38. Let me take My Kingdom rule in your heart a step deeper to show you how by loving exposure of **wrong attitudes** in your heart, I can show you the way to love and compassion, healing and deliverance. You have heard that the Law said in Exodus 21:23-25, *"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"*,

39. but I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. The Kingdom of God is not about vengeance, retribution and *"getting even"*. The Kingdom of God is about exposing rebellion, resentment and an independent spirit in your heart. These are the very things that will keep you from experiencing My freedom and your assurance of an eternal destiny.

40. Your life, your hope, your dreams, your ambitions are not wrapped up in the *"get-it-while-you-can"* attitude of the world. The more you are aware of the truth I bring about your eternal reward and place in the Kingdom of God, the less concerned you will be about the unfairness and injustices of the world. Your attitudes will change regarding a stand for your rights alone, getting even, how mistreated you really have been. When push comes to shove you can only depend on yourself. After all *"God helps those who help themselves"*. No! Instead **you must be free to be flexible**, allowing the Father to shape you any way He wills. Then if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, you are free to let him have your coat also.

41. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two. You are free to go the distance in forgiveness and kindness. You are free to give beyond just the required minimum.

42. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. Your eternal treasure is with Me, in My eternal Kingdom, in the new heaven and new earth. It doesn't compare with the things you want to hang on to so dearly on this earth. As I examine your heart and show you the attitudes that keep you from My peace and My joy, do not resist My work in you. Do not let gut reactions of self-defense and getting even, based on wrong

attitudes and wrong understanding of "*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*" prevent you from remaining *non-resistant, flexible, with a soft heart, yielding in My Father's hands*.

43. My rule in your life is to perfect you, which means to make you a complete person. That completeness is found in perfect love. Let Me explain. You have heard that it was said in Leviticus 19:16-18, "*You shall love your neighbour, and hate your enemy*". This law exposes **your capacity for love is only a conditional one**. You love those you like and cannot stand those you do not like. In fact you may even hate those who oppose you. But as I fulfill that law with unconditional love. I command you to do likewise. But there's more.

44. I say to you, love your *enemies*, and pray for those who persecute you including anyone who does not agree with you, fights against you, and who tries to slander your reputation. Why? Because to be complete through perfect love is to love unconditionally

45. in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. I am perfect love. I am unconditional love. As I am, so you must be to experience the freedom that comes from letting go of love's conditions, whether family, friend or enemy.

46. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? It is easy to love on the condition they love you back. It is easy to like those who like you. It is what the whole world does.

47. And, closer to home in your fellowship with believers, if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Don't they treat you with respect when you are a member of the same countryclub? That is no more than worldly, conditional love.

48. Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. You must be *complete in unconditional love* as I am towards you and am towards the world. I loved you when you were a sinner, and I love you now as a member of God's family. Therefore remove the dividing line between love and hate which is partiality. Partiality breeds a love that is doubtful and will eventually turn to hatred. Impartiality of unconditional love overcomes even the worst of times because there is nothing that can overcome the completeness of unconditional love.

MATTHEW 6

1. Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. What exactly is your motive? Do you perform religious rituals and routines for everyone to see just so they will call you spiritual? If all you want is people's acclaim and reward, you will get it with a good show, but your heavenly Father will not be impressed. He is not going to reward you for just a good performance. He wants to know the attitude of your heart. Do you perform church works of service just because you think it is the only way to be blessed by God? God's favour is not because you work for it. God's favour is yours because God gives it freely. God's favour is called grace. In actual fact, the righteousness God delights in, is a secret life based on an intimate relationship with Him. **God is interested in the secrets of your heart and not the performance of your public self.** Take for example three areas where the attitude of a secret heart is often overshadowed by religious pressure to perform publically, so everyone may see just how spiritual you are. These areas are **giving, prayer and fasting**, three vital ingredients of your spiritual life.

2. When therefore you give any amount of money to the ministry of the church, especially large amounts or other great gifts of property and possessions, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Do not let the whole world know. Why not give anonymously? Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. Sure, people will respond and name buildings after you and put your name high up on a plaque for all to see. But that is all you'll get, except perhaps for a tax receipt.

3. But when you give anything at all, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Do not pass your gift from hand to hand for all to see. Do not make a public spectacle of your giving. Do not wave your money high in the air passing it from left to right hand to make sure every one sees.

4. **Let your giving be a secret between you and the Father**, in order that the sole purpose of your secret gifts be to please Him. If that is your only motive, your Father in heaven, who sees the secret and true attitude of your heart towards giving, will repay you.

5. And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues, on street corners, at the front of a crowd and every time there is a call to prayer in the church, just so that they can be seen by everyone. They crave for media attention to look spiritual and perhaps gain some advantage and get stronger financial support for their cause. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. They may get what they perform so hard for, but the Father will not be pleased.

6. But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, **pray to your Father who is in secret**, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. Make prayer a private affair. After all, you may say all the right words publically, but God knows whether you believe any of them. **It is in private secret prayer where you receive the assurance your prayers are both heard and answered.**

7. And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Words do not impress God. Your softness in your heart towards Him does. Quality is a whole lot more important to God than quantity. One word in faith is more powerful than a dictionary of words. Replace those untrue motives of *bargaining with God* with pure and humble motives of obedience.

8. Therefore do not be like those who strive for public attention to their prayers; for your Father already knows what you need, even before you ask Him.

9. For example, let Me give you a model for your heart's true prayer. First pray to acknowledge God the Father above all else. Pray then, in this way:

"My Father who is in heaven, truly I honour Your name. There is no name greater. You are My God. You are my Father and Creator.

10. *May Your kingdom rule be established both in my heart and life as well as over all the earth. Only Your will matters on this earth as it matters in heaven.* Then continue pray for yourself and your loved ones.

11. *Give us this day our daily bread. Provide for me and my family all we need for safety, protection, provision and a peaceful life.*

12. *And forgive me my debt of always doing my will and not Yours. And even as I know You forgive me, I will obey Your command to forgive those who have wronged me regardless of how much they hurt me and my family.*

13. *Help me Lord not to be overcome by temptation and keep me from missing the mark as I trust Your Holy Spirit to warn me of the dangers that lie ahead. Give me the strength and faith to resist evil and be delivered from evil's deceitful ways.*

Then finish your prayer by returning to the source of all your comfort and joy, namely God Himself as you glorify Him with these words, *For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.*"

14. Remember the awesome power of forgiveness, both in your life and in the lives of others. Prayers of forgiveness are not enough. You must follow up with deeds that make it absolutely clear you have forgiven those who wronged you. It is the key to assurance of *your* forgiveness by God. For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15. But if you do not forgive men, the conduit to your heart is plugged. There is no place for God's grace and forgiveness to enter your heart. Then your Father will not forgive your transgressions even though He wants to.

16. In addition to a secret life of *giving* and *prayer* there is a secret life of *fasting*. Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Do not cry aloud that you are so spiritual because you are denying food for a day or a number of days. Do not boast about the length of your fast. Do not tell everyone that your fast is for such noble purposes you simply cannot be expected to do anything else such as look after your family or give your employer an honest day's work. Truly I say to you, **if that is the motive of your heart to be recognized as a spiritual giant,** you have your reward in full. They will recognize and honour you, but My Father will not.

17. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face. Look your best, smell nice as if you are not denying anything at all

18. so that you may not be *seen* fasting by men. It will not be obvious to anyone that you are fasting. Instead it will look like you are celebrating life. If that is your true motive, then your Father who is in secret and who sees in secret will repay you and grant you the purpose of your fast. **I will expose the true motive of your heart towards *giving, prayer and fasting*.** I will show you if you entertain religious rituals, reward performances, positioning for God's favour, desires for earthly recognition for influence and a deception that My anointing is for fame and prominence. The reason I will expose such attitudes is to set you free in the secret life of the Kingdom.

19. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. There is absolutely no security in the material treasures of earth. Even the most stable investments can suddenly fall when market conditions crash. Even the best of savings are subject to depreciation and inflation. Even if you believe your home is secure from predators because of advanced security systems, you will never know for sure.

20. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal. **Heaven's treasures are your investments in time and resources to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God.** A life saved is a life secure from moths, rust and thieves.

21. The issue is not how much you can save, but how generous you are with earthly treasures knowing heaven's treasures are more valuable and secure. Why hang on to what is insecure when you can hang on to what is secure? **If your heart is the King and His Kingdom, then your earthly treasure is at His disposal to use for whatever purpose He sees fit for His Kingdom.**

22. The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. If your relationship to earthly treasure and the spiritual power of money is Godly, then your whole life will be filled with the joy of giving.

23. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. When you put your trust in the power and control of money, you lose. What was once a generous heart towards possessions, now becomes darkened by fear of not having enough for the needs of tomorrow even when you already have a great abundance of possessions. Light shining on your giving has become darkness over your treasures. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness. It will eventually consume you with fear of loss, and expose your true relationship to earthly material treasure.

24. Your freedom is in the power of your choice. Make up your mind. Which master do you chose? The power of money to control your life or the power of God to control your life? You cannot have both. **As one decreases so the other must increase.** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. The power of money and the power of God are diametrically opposed. You cannot serve God and mammon. God gives riches so that He may use them for His glory and His Kingdom.

25. For what reason do you have to be anxious about the future. I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not eternal life more important than worrying about food and clothing for the body?

26. Even nature's animals understand this. Do they worry? Instinctively they know there will always be food. Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? Of course you are worth more than just animals. **But will you trust Him with your life?**

27. Whether you are burdened by the poverty syndrome of a victim mentality, the success syndrome of a dominance mentality or the non-deserving worm mentality of a lack of self-worth in God's eyes, what does it get you? And which of you by being anxious can add a single year to his life's span? Anxiety will shorten your life. Do *you* have anxiety in your heart? Why?

28. All you end up with is discontentment, fear of failure, fear of rejection and ridicule, worry and anxiety, and deeply rooted unbelief resulting in mistrust in the Father. And why are you anxious about clothing? Is anxiety about trend-setting fashions, peer acceptance based on brand names and belonging in the latest fad really worth the worry? Take a look at nature around you. God created every part of it. Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, and what about the bloom of a Spring meadow, the majesty of a ocean sunset, or the fabulous wealth and riches of Solomon,

29. yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. Even his wealth and riches cannot match the wonder and awesome splendour of nature's grand beauty.

30. But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, and so created nature to be a testimony to His trustworthiness, will He not much more do so for you. O men of little faith? Your journey of faith is not to worry about whether you will have enough for tomorrow. **Yours is a journey of faith and contentment knowing God will look after you now** on this earth, which is just a glimpse, a taste of what He has prepared for you in His Kingdom *to come*.

31. Don't worry. Do not be anxious then, saying, *"What shall we eat or what shall we drink? Or with what shall we clothe ourselves?"*

32. For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek. This is their lot in life, to worry about stock prices, money value, home safety, registered retirement savings and investment security believing somehow that the more they have the better off they will be, and the better prepared

they will be for the later years of life. In the end, the power of wealth rules their heart's attitudes and beliefs. Their priorities of life are backwards returning to a darkness of despair and fear. Why not rest secure and be content with His provision for your daily needs? You can trust Him because your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33. Your priority must simply be to serve the Lord with all your heart. Your priority is to make Kingdom matters of greatest importance. **The greatest Kingdom priority is to trust Jesus as He rules your life.** Your priority is to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. When you make the righteous, just, fair and equitable life of the Kingdom *your* life, somehow by God's mercy and grace and because of His unfailing love for you, all the pieces of life will fall in place, from the smallest need to the greatest of daily needs to the needs of your entire life.

34. The answer to my question of *whom you will serve* is simple. Serve Me and there will no longer be a need to be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. In fact, I charge you emphatically, *do not be anxious about tomorrow.*

MATTHEW 7

1. Let Me continue the examination of your heart. I must expose even more in order to let My truth set you free from the crippling effect of rebellion, resentment and independence. Remember, My desire for you is complete freedom to enjoy My peace and My joy for all eternity. **Therefore I must deal with the deepest secret attitudes of your heart.** Are you aware how callous your judgements can be of others? I say, *do not judge lest you be judged.*

2. The hardness and insensitivity with which you judge others will return in hardness and insensitivity of others towards you. What you sow you will reap. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Critics will always be criticized.

3. And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? You repeatedly point to the faults of others when you make even greater mistakes yourself. How can you help anyone constructively when you don't even know the answers yourself.

4. How can you say to your brother, *"Let me take the speck out of your eye"*, and behold, the log is in your own eye? How can you teach someone responsibility when you are irresponsible? How can you demand your children live by the moral standards of My Word when you live in violation of even the simplest of commands? Yet you judge *this young generation* having never judged yourself by the same measure.

5. You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. You are called to help, encourage, love and lift one another up. You may rebuke and correct based on the truth of My Word, but never with heartless judgement. **Never carry callous judgement in your heart** even when you are decent enough not to verbalize it. Eventually the venom of callous judgements will destroy your ability to reach out with love and compassion. Judge rightly and you will be judged rightly.

6. There is also a great need for Spiritual discernment. You must know the motive of your heart. How are you growing in the Spirit and what you may or may not share about My work in you. Not everything I expose or teach should be disclosed to others before you have had

the opportunity to apply them to your own life. Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

What you share with others are precious secrets of My Kingdom, not just interesting facts and useful information. Share with those who have *ears to hear* and not with those who have *hearts of stone*. My truth is not an option for consideration. My truth is to be obeyed. **Watch for a carelessness of words** about My Kingdom teaching. Beware of the temptation to debate and argue My truth. If you do not discern carefully when to speak and when to be quiet, you will find yourself repeatedly in positions where you cannot defend your beliefs. Others will turn on you and in the end the teachings of My kingdom will have little impact. In fact, Spiritual discernment will be of greater need as the times draw to a close. Share from the fruit I grow in you, not the seed I plant in you.

7. You will see that as I examine your heart I will also teach you responsibility for what I expose. You are responsible to express your faith and trust in the Father with actions that demonstrate your citizenship in His Kingdom. Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. How responsible are you in what you *ask, seek* and *knock*?

8. For everyone who asks receives. Ask for the things the Father freely gives. He gives eternal life, healing, wisdom, daily provision, forgiveness and the baptism of the Holy Spirit to those who ask. He who seeks finds. Search for God's face and not just His hands. Search for the truth for a mature life. Search for His answers to your questions and you will find what you are looking for. And to him who knocks it shall be opened. Earnestly pray for opportunities to knock on the doors of people's lives so you may share My eternal life with them and show them the treasures of heaven. **You are responsible for those whom the Father sends you and who ask, seek and knock about My Kingdom.**

9. Why would I *not* answer such questioning? Why would I *not* reveal such searching? Why would I *not* open to such knocking? I do not engage in the world's method of *bait and switch*, promise one thing and do another. Neither should you. Or what man is there among you, when his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone?

10. Or if he shall ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? No decent father does such a thing to his children. When you were a child and your father asked you to trust him and jump into his arms, he did not turn the other way just as you jumped, did he? No decent father would.

11. If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him! Even if you tempted your thoughts will ill will towards your children, you would not wish adverse circumstances on any of them, would you?

No! Your heart is towards their good. Why? Because you want the hearts of your children and others to be good towards you. **Again you will reap what you sow**, just as you did with the judgements in your heart.

12. Therefore, **however you want people to treat you, so treat them**, for this is the Law and the Prophets. In fact, you can summarize the entire Old Testament with the *Golden Rule* of the Kingdom of God. Ask, seek and knock with right, unselfish motives and you will be treated with unselfishness. Seek the highest good of others and they will seek the highest good for you. God sought your highest good, made you right again with Him and treats you accordingly as a

true child of Him in the deepest of eternal love and friendship. He asks you to treat others in the same way.

It may seem natural to want to resist change that brings about obedience to the *Golden Rule*, but My change in you is *supernatural*. If you will sincerely ask, seek and knock to overcome resistance to change, resistance to My truth, resistance to growing up, resistance to responsibility, submission and authority, I will bless you with many who are My instruments of favour towards you.

13. The great treasure and secret of my Kingdom favour towards you is *abundant life*. But you will not find the road to abundant life easy. Instead the journey is through a narrow gate. **A condition of life is that you collect much baggage along the way.** It is baggage that begins with exposing your heart's selfishness. The baggage of sin is heavy. I came to take your baggage so you need not carry fear, shame, unforgiveness, rejection, pain and loneliness any longer than it takes to come to Me with a repentant heart. I came to show you how you must *decrease* while I *increase* in your life. It is a narrow gate where you will find no room to carry your baggage. **It is the narrow gate of God's pruning, of God's loving discipline and God's shaking.** You have no choice but to enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. Too many still believe that you can go through life carrying the baggage of continuous sin and unrelenting rebellion to My Word. No you cannot! Beware of those who offer gain without pain, reward without sacrifice and righteousness without change.

14. For the gate to *abundant* life is small, and the way is narrow that leads to *abundant* life, and few are those who find it. Yet for those who discover the **pain of pressing through**, who experience **suffering because of faith and perseverance**, who know that *through many tribulations one enters the Kingdom of God*, who believe **pruning brings vigorous and healthy new life**, for them the narrow gate is **a willingness to let go** of every hindrance, every heart attitude and all behaviour that stands in the way of *abundant* life. As you accumulate baggage, do not be afraid to *enter by the narrow gate* as often as you need to in order to live in *abundant* life. My *abundant* life **now** is the assurance of your right standing with the Father, the seal of My Holy Spirit to mark you securely for eternal glory, My peace to endure life's rough roads, My joy to overcome the despair of all adverse circumstances and the power of my blood to protect you and keep you until My *abundant* life **to come**. That *abundant* life **to come** is forever with Me, the Father and all the family of God in a new earth and new heaven I have prepared for you.

15. But beware of those who will try to rob you of your abundant life. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Beware of those who deceive you. Beware of the dangers of self-deception, when you think you're so right and no one can speak truth to you any more or correct you in any Godly way. You must protect the most valuable of Kingdom possessions, namely your free and abundant life in the Holy Spirit.

16. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, not figs from thistles, are they? **Obedience means constant inspection of your fruit and the fruit of those who influence you.** Is there abundant evidence of the Spirit's fruit such as love, joy, peace, kindness, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control?

17. But the inspection goes deeper. My examination of your heart not only inspects **fruit** it inspects the **roots** from which that fruit grows. Is it not true that every good tree bears good

fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit? Why? Because a good tree has good roots and a bad tree has bad roots.

18. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. **Roots of bitterness** produce fruit of unforgiveness. **Roots of fear** produce fruit of discontentment. Roots of anger produce fruit of criticism. **Roots of doubt** produce fruit of rejection. There is only one cure. Cut the tree off at the roots and burn it so it may not produce bad fruit anymore.

19. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Cut off, uproot, throw away every teaching, every doctrine that attempts to fill your life with bad fruit and damage the abundance of your Spiritual life.

20. So then, when you are led by the Spirit of God, you will know yourself and the true intentions of your heart as well as others and the true intentions of their hearts by your and their fruits. Do not be afraid to be radical in protecting your Spiritual life from bad roots and bad fruits. My abundant life is too precious to waste on the entertainment of ear-tickling teachings and the deception of self-motivated truths. I call you to be a good tree with good roots and good fruit.

21. My Kingdom rule will even expose the very core of your heart. **That core is to obey Me or not obey Me.** Not everyone who says to Me, "*Lord, Lord*", will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Some plan to obey but have no intention of actually obeying. They will find many excuses as to why My Words appear to be too hard, too difficult to apply to daily life.

22. Many will say to Me on that day, "*Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?*" Some believe obedience is selective. Simply obey what is relevant to the times. But obedience to Me is unilateral. It covers all and every aspect of life, yesterday, today and forever.

23. And then I will declare to them, "*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practise lawlessness*". This is not eternal judgement of unbelievers, but a disapproval of believers in their Spiritual life, a disapproval that stops the flow of God's abundant life. Disobedience results in disapproval. **Obedience means giving God the room, no matter how much it hurts, to line up your will to His right and perfect will.** The highest form of worship is to study God's Word and the way of His Kingdom. For the heart of a believer who is lined up to God's right and perfect will, is a believer who's *delight is to obey* and do what the Holy Spirit has revealed through study of God's Word. In His great love and mercy God has granted you a written copy of His will for your life, namely the Holy Scriptures, so you may study them to show yourself approved before God and man. Approval is obedience.

24. Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who builds his house upon the rock. Having said all I have about the Kingdom of God and having shown you what is in your heart and exposed through the careful examination of My Holy Spirit, the true beliefs and attitudes that reside there, there remains a need to experience a **genuine and lasting change** from natural, selfish character to Godly character. I compare it to the building of a house with a choice of foundations and a choice of ground to build it on.

25. You will experience opposition to My Kingdom ways because My ways are selfless, birthed in sacrificial love. **I have come to turn an upside down world right side up again.** Many will resent and resist being told to turn right side up. Like rain, flood and wind they will try to undermine your foundation and destroy the work I am building in you. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did

not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. If your foundations are what I have taught you about the Kingdom in this sermon, no rain, wind and floods can destroy your abundant life.

26. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does *not* act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. Many will change until something better comes along or retain a hidden selfish agenda for change such as personal gain and power. For them change is neither genuine nor lasting. Their life is a rollercoaster of hot and cold, on and off again, never satisfied and never at peace.

27. Life will be a constant erosion of My abundance. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall. With what then will you build your house? **Obedience means abiding in My words and building your life on the foundations of My just and righteous rule.** For this is the government of the Kingdom of God, My righteous rule forever.

28. The result was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His thorough and revealing teaching about the Kingdom of God and the way God rules by exposing their hearts.

29. For He was teaching them as one having authority, having pierced their hearts with truth and having exposed all the hindrances that so easily afflicts their lives. Not as the scribes who simply delivered words as a schoolboy would his lesson, without life and conviction.

This new law of the Kingdom, this new way of truth and life, this abundant life points to **a need for a new righteousness.** Not a righteousness of strict external obedience to rules and regulations, but *a righteousness of faith in the heart* whose willingness to obey is not a duty but a delight.

The Kingdom of God is a righteousness of faith empowered by the Holy Spirit to enable you to lovingly, willingly and delightfully yield your will in total submission to His examination of your heart so that you may be completely set free. The keys of the Kingdom that I have given you are the Biblical truths with which you unlock the powers of heaven to bring an abundant life of righteousness, peace, joy and power in your daily life. These keys also lock the powers of the world to protect you from their deceiving, destroying ways and to prevent you from walking in the freedom that is yours to have in My Father's Kingdom. Therefore hear My words and do them so you may be the vessels of honour My Father created you to be.

But having listened to and studied all that Jesus said, you may want to ask, "*But where is the love of God in all of this?*" When you first read the *Sermon on the Mount*, the task of obedience seems formidable. Have you not simply traded one set of legalisms for another? Is the *Sermon on the Mount* no more than extreme legalism? Are in fact, the commands of Jesus far too difficult? After all, who is not guilty of harbouring wrong attitudes in their heart? Who is not guilty of disobeying the rule of the King daily? Nevertheless, your conscience burns within you knowing that Jesus does not rule simply until you've had enough. His rule is not a matter of daily discussion and decision as to whether you feel like obeying. As a matter of fact, if one could point to a chronic failure in the church, it is precisely a failure to obey the words of Jesus. The church in North America and other parts of the world has sunk deep into a dark pool of confectionary Christianity, looking for preachers and teachers who will tickle the ears of the sheep with cheap words of love and comfortable pews, and fill their sanctuaries with smooth velvet performances that stir the emotions but leave the spirit starving for the meat of the Word. **Jesus preached meat in His Sermon on the Mount.** Meat cannot be swallowed. It must first be

cut into smaller pieces and then chewed carefully in order to be digested into true nourishment. The words of Jesus are not soft and velvety. They are sharp as a two-edged sword piercing right through into your heart. But rather than leaving you naked in your rebellion and exposed to judgement, He forgives you. He heals you. He restores you. He lifts you up and strengthens you to carry on the journey of faith for yet another day. To cut the meat of His Word into small pieces and chewing them carefully for proper digestion and maximum nourishment is best said as "to abide".

Jesus said to *abide in His words*. To *abide* means to faithfully continue in His teachings every day, applying His Kingdom truth to every aspect of your life.

If you *abide*, you will know the truth and the truth will set you free from observing mere legalism and moral codes. Freedom is knowing that as you walk **by faith** with a genuine desire to follow in the Master's footsteps and let His examination of your heart go the full distance of lasting change, so you believe it is **by grace** you are able to fulfill the *Sermon on the Mount*. **God's grace is His unmerited favour**. You will never live perfectly enough according to the *Sermon on the Mount* to earn God's favour. No merit of your own is good enough to say, "God, I deserve those Kingdom blessings of yours". Unfortunately there are those in the church who have majored in the *unmerited* part of grace, leaving many believers agonizing in the *dirt of doubt* about their salvation. They have forgotten that the key word is *grace* or *favour*, not *unmerited*. Even though you cannot **earn** one favour from God, He **has given you** (which is His grace) all the eternal blessings of the Kingdom simply because you are His child.

That is the great mystery of the Kingdom of God. You don't obey and abide in the words of Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* because **you have to**. No! You obey and abide in the words of Jesus' **Sermon on the Mount** because **you want to**. It is your *delight*, not your *duty*. That is freedom! By God's grace you are free to live by faith without fear of failure. Instead you walk with confidence and assurance that this Kingdom Jesus spoke about, this Kingdom rule He asks you to submit to, is the best thing that ever happened to you. Why? because the end result is lasting and permanent change into the image of Jesus. You will be changed to be just like Him. And that is the Father's greatest pleasure. That is the very purpose for which He extends His grace to you, to ensure what He begins will come to perfect completion. Your perfect completion is the fulfillment of His love towards you.

Appendix V

Additional teachings about the Kingdom of God

12 STONES - A FOUNDATION FOR LIFE

References: Vol.I, No.10, 12 stones to repair a broken altar - 1988; Church On The Rock, 12 stones to repair a broken altar - Nov.1994; The Kingdom of God - 1987-2003; Church on the Rock - May 2004

Introduction:

Some Kingdom facts (from "Kingdom of God," page 21)

The Gospel of the Kingdom was the primary **message of Jesus** (Matthew 4:23, 13:11, 24:14, 25:1, Luke 11:20, Acts 1:3)

The Gospel of the Kingdom must be **your** (and the **church's**) primary **message** (Matthew 10:7, 24:14)

The Gospel of the Kingdom is your Kingdom **lifestyle** (Matthew 6:33)

Your Kingdom **lifestyle** must be **evident** in righteousness, peace, joy and (faith) power (Romans14:17, 1 Corinthians 4:20)

The Kingdom message and its righteousness is a benchmark of **endtime preaching**, namely a summons to the righteousness of the Kingdom as in the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:36-39) - It is not a *new* message.

The Kingdom lifestyle is a lifestyle "*in the Spirit*" (Romans 14:17)

An Old Testament shadow

1 Kings 18:30-32

Matthew 6:33 (New Testament light)

The time is 3000 years ago, a time when God's people, the Israelites, are divided into two kingdoms. The Golden Age of David (40 years) and Solomon (40 years) are long gone. The nation is divided into the **kingdom of Judah** in the south (2 tribes) and the **kingdom of Israel** in the north (10 tribes). Judah on the whole had good kings. Israel had bad kings. **Asa** is king of Judah and **Ahab** is king of Israel. The prophet for the times is **Elijah**. Ahab was the worst of them all (1 Ki.16:30,33).

Ahab is remembered for two things: **1)** his wickedness and **2)** his marriage to **Jezebel**, daughter of Ethbaal, the heathen king of the **Sidonians**, a people who worshipped **Baal**. Jezebel advanced Baal worship among God's people and killed off God's prophets.

To demonstrate God's power, Elijah declares a drought in the land and after 3 ½ years of drought God commissions Elijah to tell Ahab the drought will end. The end of the drought is to be marked by a phenomenal event - **a showdown on Carmel**.

Elijah issues a challenge to Ahab, to 450 prophets of Baal and to 400 prophets of **Asherah** (mother of Baal). The people of God are invited to witness the showdown. They are to gather on Mount Carmel. Elijah the prophet against a wicked king and 950 false prophets.

The resulting victory for God and God's prophet who built **a new altar of 12 stones** to commemorate the showdown event, should have sparked a national revival, but instead Elijah runs for his life, only a remnant of faithful Israelites remain, Ahab is killed in battle and succeeded by his wicked son Ahaziah, and Elijah passes the prophetic mantle to Elisha. Elijah experiences a direct ascension to God leaving the task of spiritual leadership to Elisha.

The 12 stones and story of Elijah are not an allegory with "deeper, hidden meaning," or a "step-by-step how to" instruction. They are simply a reminder, an Old Testament "shadow" of a New Testament "light" that helps us see the need to build a good and lasting foundation for everyday life.

12 stones

Stone 1. The Cornerstone - Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:20)

By Him ALL foundation stones are measured and laid TRUE to the pattern (plan) He gave. It is called the Kingdom of God. Jesus is the only cornerstone. There are no others although others may reflect, even teach, the values Jesus taught.

What is the measure of truth by which each stone is laid (in Jesus)?

The fruit such foundation stones bear from the inside out (the upside-down way of the Kingdom of God).

has the effect of: a true faith (no counterfeits)

Stone 2. Righteousness (Romans 14:17, 2 Cor.5:17-21)

you are righteous (2 Cor.5:21)

you have rights (kingdom / covenant rights)(Rom.8:17, Col.1:12)

you are right (you must live a right life) (1 Peter 1:14-16)

Righteousness has the effect of:

Assurance (Romans 8:16)

Peace (Isaiah 32:17)

Quietness (Isaiah 32:17)

Confidence (Isaiah 32:17)

Stone 3. Peace (Romans 14:17)

has the effect of:

Good decisions and quality decisions (Col. 3:15)

Freedom from fear - about being saved, Biblically / doctrinally correct (John 14:27)

Stone 4. Joy (Romans 14:17)

has the effect of:

Completeness found in fellowship (Col.1:1-4)

Agreement (Phil.2:2)

Love maintained (Phil. 2:2)

Unity (Phil.2:2)

Strength - physical and emotional (Neh.8:10)

Stone 5. Faith in Jesus (Romans 3:26)

has the effect of:

Continuous love for God's Word (Romans 10:17, Col.3:16)

Praise *under or in* pressure (1 Pet.1:7,8)

Stone 6. The Holy Spirit (1 Cor.4:20)

has the effect of:

Power through the Gifts (Acts 1:8, 1 Cor.12) - includes: prayer, intercession

Authority in Jesus (Mark 16:17,18) - includes: spiritual warfare

Personal growth and maturity (Jude 20)

Wisdom for life's decisions and directions (John 14:15-17, 26; John 16:13) - includes: actually hearing God

Stone 7. Trust (Matt.7:7,8,11; Mark 11:24; James 1:5,6)

Trust is the manifestation in you of faith in God and faith in Jesus (as in Stone 5) and a visible demonstration of your will, that is; your *willingness* to let your way and your control go, and willingly, voluntarily, submit to the rule of the King. Submission is a dirty word in our modern society because we believe submission means "invitation to abuse," when in fact Godly submission (to God, to Jesus, to the Holy Spirit) means "invitation to victory."

has the effect of: no more anxiety about the future (Matt.6:35), so relax, enjoy life, pursue your dreams, set your goals high, "stop and smell the roses," and quit taking yourself so seriously.

Stone 8. Anger Management (Matt. 3:8; 5:21-26; 6:14,15, Heb.3:1, 1 John 1:9)

Anger management is the cumulative effect of **confession, forgiveness, repentance, reconciliation, and restitution.**

has the effect of: sin (all that you do wrong) no longer holding you in its grip of fear and doubt (Romans 7:11, 6:14). No more "slow death" of despair, despondency, and hopelessness.

Stone 9. The Word (Matt.7:24-29, Heb.12,13, Matt. 5:37, Col.4:6)

1. God's Word - "I am the bread of life," (Is. 55:10, John 6:35) means the words of Jesus are a constant, daily "stirring" that puts you "up for the task of daily life.

2. Your word(s)

*has the effect of: a personal security and confidence in what you believe, say, and do because when you study and speak **truth**, you never have to worry about the things you said, or who you said them to, nor do you ever have to worry about having "covered up."*

Stone 10. Worship (Romans 12:1,2)

Worship is physical, emotional, intellectual as well as spiritual.

Worship always remains under the direct governance or control of the Holy Spirit, therefore, worship can mean silence, solitude, reflective, meditative, and passive, as well as active and visibly excitable, nor is worship restricted to the “highs” of a worship service or the mood manipulative effects of instrumentation.

has the effect of: connecting God’s Spirit to your spirit, to your soul, to your body, to give you an overall feeling of wellness, goodness, that somehow you are a whole person. It’s all about “feeling good” but without letting your feelings rule or take control.

Stone 11. Justice (Isaiah 9:7)

Impartiality and doing what is right according to the Kingdom of God (Matt.7:1-5)

*has the effect of: confidence and boldness and an **increase of peace** (more of stone 3 - Is.9:7) and a **solid reputation** with children, spouse, friends, and in the family (at large or extended), the church, community and relationships.*

Stone 12. Servanthood (Matt.6:19-24; 19:27-30)

Servanthood is the greatest mystery for modern man and contradicts **all** he stands for and believes in. It is from servanthood that all the other attitudes, behaviours, ambitions, and goals of life spring - hence I put it “last” in the list of foundation “stones” for a Kingdom life.

has the effect of: fulfillment - success, leadership, “on top,” as the Kingdom (the King) sees it

Noticeably absent from the above list: as individual “stones,” are the mistaken “works” of prayer, spiritual warfare, tithing, obedience, and other “Bible methods,” because the Kingdom of God is not a method or a “Jesus Code,” of behaviour. The Kingdom of God is a personal, individual relationship with Jesus from which spring all the issues of life and collectively make up the church of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

the pattern for mature Christian living

Here are some thoughts that will help you understand what mature Christian living looks like and how the work of the Holy Spirit in maturing you works from the inside out, beginning in the heart and working from the heart to affect outward behaviour.

1. The more teachable you are, the greater disciple you will be.
2. Total kingdom freedom is committed slavery to the Kingdom and its righteousness.
3. The highest form of worship is to study in order to obey.
4. Obedience is motivated by the righteousness you are.
5. The righteousness you are is the way of trust in God.
6. The pattern for mature and victorious Christian living is the pattern Jesus gave in His *Sermon on the Mount* - it is Codex Rex revealed, believed and lived.
7. Righteousness **is** living by Codex Rex, the rule of the King.
8. Seeking after the Kingdom of God and seeking after the Kingdom's righteousness are **one and the same**. The two are inseparable.
9. Righteousness **is** the mature and victorious life of a Christian.

10. A mature and victorious Christian life affects every part of you.

1. It *begins* with the new birth - you are **born again**. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

2. it *continues* with **renewal of your mind**. (Ephesians 4:23, Romans 12:2)

3. it *perseveres* as you offer your body a living sacrifice and let the Holy Spirit **mould your soul and body into vessels of honour**. (Romans 12:1, 1 Timothy 2:20,21. Also read Isaiah 61:3b, 10,11, and Matthew 6:33,34)

(Ref.note: the **12 stones to repair a broken altar** (from the original teaching of 1988) were: the word, love, faith, holiness, obedience, forgiveness, fellowship, commitment, hope, intercession, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the supernatural).