

The need for such a book as this has increased exponentially during recent years, to stand in contrast with those who are espousing *dominion by any means* in every area of life.

We agree that mountains are to be climbed and cities are to be gained. The method and manner is so very important. The emerging kingdom begins in the inner man:

*He who rules his spirit (is better than) he who takes a city.*<sup>1</sup>

Even a cursory look into the way that Jesus led should reveal the inappropriateness of operating the church by worldly, corporate business models, or to believe that He endorses “takeover” means and mentalities.

*“If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”*<sup>2</sup>

Learning Jesus, being taught by Him,<sup>3</sup> quickly reveals that the church<sup>4</sup> is not an entity to be operated, but a body for His present-day incarnate life—a body connected to and under the authority of the Head.

Jesus’ example was to lead by serving those who willingly followed. He is *a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*<sup>5</sup>

*You are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do His work and speak out for Him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference He made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.*<sup>6</sup>

It is a privilege to be *chosen for the high calling of priestly work*—in every generation, culture, and realm of life. We are to have *the mind of Christ*:

It is a kingdom principle that he who would rise up, into heavenly places; he who would move higher in Christ must seek the lowest of estates.

It is here, in the low places of the valley that the visitor of the heights of God’s splendor finds true satisfaction, walks in divine righteousness and experiences divine peace and heavenly joy –

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<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 16:32b

<sup>2</sup> John 18:36

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:17-24

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 16:18

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 7:17

<sup>6</sup> 1 Peter 2:9-10 TM

for in these is the kingdom of God and not on some plane beyond and invisible to the physical, temporal world of men about us.

For the child of God, the route, the direction towards effectiveness must always be downward, while the consequence of effectiveness moves us upward.

When we live as Jesus lived, as we notice what He noticed, place our priorities where His were placed, we find ourselves moving among the poor, the brokenhearted, to the captives and towards the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.<sup>7</sup> Such was the pre-determined agenda and the heart of the Son of God, the Savior, and such must ours be if we are to possess true, kingdom authority.

The pathway to authority is along the avenue of service. The way up, never forget, is the way down.

Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God<sup>8</sup> and made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Himself the form of a bondservant, and came in the likeness of men.<sup>9</sup>

Jesus proclaimed that “the works that I do He (who believes in Me) will do also; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to My Father.” Critical to the “doing” of greater works is that the believer does them in the same spirit as Christ worked—“of no reputation,” in the “form of a bondservant,” in the likeness of (common) men.”

The unsearchable riches of grace that accrue to believers can obscure God’s eternal purpose for His children, and the planet. That is, if we’re not careful, we can preach and teach a human-centered gospel: a gospel that emphasizes the benefits of salvation to us, and neglects what Father desires to accomplish in and through us, for Himself, and the benefit of others. Not only do we have an inheritance in Christ and in the heavenlies, but Father also has an inheritance in the saints.<sup>10</sup>

It can be hard for us to understand that His plan of salvation for humanity fulfills something in His plan for the cosmos, not just our eternal benefit. That is, there’s something that accrues to Him, for His delight, purposes, and satisfaction, as well as an inheritance that accrues to us. The plan of God is not just to “save us and get us to heaven.” God had, and has, a redemptive plan for this planet: to fill it with a quality of life that images Himself—that the very life of Jesus would be found in mortal flesh,<sup>11</sup> on planet earth, filling the earth with the glory of sonship, as the waters cover the sea.

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<sup>7</sup> Luke 4:18

<sup>8</sup> Philippians 2:6

<sup>9</sup> vv 7

<sup>10</sup> Eph. 1:18.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Cor. 4:11.

Yes, Father has always had a dream. Jesus is the firstfruit/seed fulfillment of that dream. And yet, there still remains a fulfillment in scope and scale that involves all of us as believers. The Seed that was sown in death and resurrection is to bear fruit and multiply in us and through us. As He was sent (apostolically seeded) into the world, so are we.

What is that dream?

That the world will be populated/filled with a caring, serving, kingdom of priests who are prophetically empowered by His death and resurrection life.

As the scriptures in the opening of this chapter plainly indicate, this was God's dream from the beginning of His calling a people (a nation) unto Himself at Sinai. The dream finds its realization in the glorious new covenant. There will literally be on earth, a new "nation"—a new people group, a new race, a new creation, a new citizenry whose nature is regal, whose service is priesthood, and whose empowerment is His resurrection life.

They will be governed by the Holy Spirit, serving One King, under His rule, representing His interests to humanity, and representing humanity's needs to the King: a royal priesthood of new creation beings, a never-before-seen race of humanity, testifying to the world by the quality of their life and existence that He is risen, and the new age has dawned. The end has begun. The kingdom is here: partial, but present.<sup>12</sup> God's dream is no longer a future hope, but a present reality. That dream is you and me, in Christ.

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<sup>12</sup> A present reality with a future consummation.