

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Age of Governance

GERRIT VERSTRAETE



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The Age of Governance,

By Gerrit Verstraete

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All spelling mistakes are intentional to verify that this document was not written by a robot

**This document was originally formatted in book dimensions.
There may be some inconsistencies in this PDF version of the original.
Thank you for your understanding.**

**Nevertheless, this document serves the purpose of being a comprehensive outline for
teaching about the Kingdom of God.**

This document is dedicated to all who hunger and thirst for truth.
You will be satisfied.

*“But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to
you. Therefore, do not be anxious.”*

Matthew 6:33,34

*“There is a Spiritwind blowing as in days of old, revived by an eternal current that calls ‘deep
unto deep,’ away from the shallows where we have wallowed, to return to an apostolic faith and a
church that will not compromise.”*

April 21, 2020; Ps.42:7

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PART ONE

GOVERNANCE OF THE KING

Introduction

This book is not a work of fiction. It is a work of faith. It is not meant to lay down laws, charge those who break those laws, nor judge anyone who chooses to live by their own laws. This book is meant to teach what Christ taught about the Kingdom of God and to demonstrate a lived-experience led by the Spirit of God, the outcome of which is freedom. My proposed methodology is to encourage a dialectic (discussion) that does not shy away from *contrairies* in a spirit of meaningful engagement that is neither argumentative nor unwilling to change.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD: The Age of Governance, is about an inquiry into the question of what is the Law of the King, who is Jesus Christ, and as an outcome of that inquiry, a greater understanding of how we are governed by God's love. Regrettably, these two words, *law* and *governance*, have become an anathema to people, because they have been so deeply disappointed by governments, institutions, and leadership at all levels of society, even as "close-to-home" as in interpersonal relationships, among whom the family has taken a severe beating.

That is not to say such disappointment is endemic to all society. I believe there have always been and still are people of honesty and integrity. But, it is not my mission to judge those who are not, nor is it my mission to exalt myself above those who choose to think differently.

Nevertheless, as my inquiry stretched over decades, I could not escape the fact that *law* and *governance* are essential to a life of peace and joy. Nor could I escape the fact, that if left to my own devices, any legal system of justice I propose, would by default be riddled with error and faulty premises, misunderstanding, if not flawed judgment itself. However, I do believe that no society can thrive if everyone is a law unto themselves. History clearly proves the fallacy of such a belief that claims they can and will succeed. I need, we need, a system of justice and mercy that is founded on and practiced in truth. That also means, some things are non-negotiable, which brought yet another unpopular word to the surface of my inquiry, *absolute*, as in absolute truth. Truth as absolute became the antithesis of our modern age through a permissiveness

that afforded everyone the liberty to tinker with that truth and make the abstract idea of relevancy a substitute or false truth.

For those reasons and others, I chose to write down my observations from decades of study and revelation, to compile a lengthy account, not as formal writing, but as a form of raw data to inform my conscience that the data's worth was not my devotion to a search for wisdom, but worth writing about because I chose to make it my lived-experience of faith.

In other words, were someone to ask, "*how's it working for you?*" I could answer with confidence that the evidence speaks for itself. That despite my imperfections, the truth of Divine law and governance, including "works of faith," have demonstrated imperical proof my actions were not of just my own doing. I had help.

But, does that make me a hardliner? I think not.

Yet, there is a hard line between what is truth and what is invention and speculation, or vain imaginations, especially in response to God's will.

The Kingdom of God embodies justice and mercy,¹ based on a solid, unchangeable foundation of absolute justice, that is never wrong or in question (that is, to be compromised). It is the just rule of the King, and his name is Jesus Christ. His rule is forever just. merciful, and righteous. Righteous rule is always right. I may challenge it, rebel against it, discount and ridicule it, or simply ignore it, but it will never be God's will to prove his governance right, over and over again, because we have conveniently chosen to change the rules to suit our lives and silence the voice of our conscience.

It is God's perfect will to establish the right and merciful (just) rule of His Son Jesus Christ, and to establish such governance 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 governance 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 God's kingdom, even its deepest secrets. As a result, we experience the greatest freedom ever. This is a freedom in Christ that brings hope, joy, peace, love, deliverance, and healing. It is a freedom the world cannot give.

Freedom in Christ includes all the special promises that accompany citizenship in God's kingdom, and free membership in God's family.⁴

¹ Isaiah 9:6,7

² Matthew 6:33

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

⁴ Hebrews 6:9

This book is therefore not about religion, that is, “religion” in context of bondage to old, often man-made, laws, that have been imposed by religious institutions and organizations. Religion is blind obedience to a set of rules and regulations. It’s not freedom.

This book is about governance of love and freedom in relationship to a heavenly Father. Whereas religion is a code of law that merits obedience with favour and status, and disobedience with the inevitable outcome of fear, condemnation, punishment, and eternal judgement.

This book is about a Divine relationship ⁵ of love.

However, and paradoxically, it is a love that finds fulfilment in obedience, not as a blind response to demand, but as a willing service of every child of God, who truly believes he or she is “in Christ,” and who believes the miraculous translation from darkness to light, from death to life, from bondage to liberty, is an absolute. It’s a new reality that is confirmed by lived-experience of true faith and not merely a wish for the future or fortune, nor an opiate for the masses. The eternal bond between God and His children is a one-of-a-kind relationship, whose character and conduct are embodied in understanding His Kingdom, and for that reason is called “the law” of the King. There is no other law like it.

To obey is to live in God’s revelation of freedom, unencumbered by stereotypes of law that have never set anyone free. God’s gift of freedom welcomes and embraces the true essence of governance, that is, a freewill choice to follow in the footsteps of the Master, who is the Christ, whose governance is revealed by the Spirit of God.

My inquiry began in 1986, as “Glimpses of the Kingdom,” in a personal study of the Kingdom of God. Since then, I have not been able to put it down.

Repeatedly, this study kept reminding me that the Kingdom of God was and remains the primary message of Jesus.⁶

He began with the *Gospel of the Kingdom*, and He demonstrated its eternal power with great signs and many wonders, and continued to teach its governance in a variety of parables,⁷ to reveal the in-depth mysteries of this Kingdom. After his death and resurrection, and 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).

Through them, now commissioned as Apostles, the charge extends to us. All these “things concerning the Kingdom of God,” Jesus taught and the church must teach, to prepare His followers for the coming of that Kingdom. It came with power and authority when Jesus ministered on earth. It entered the hearts of men and women who

⁵ Romans 7:22, 8:1-9,16,17

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

believed. And it remains there as the great liberating force of God's love through the presence of His Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Jesus will grow *fruit-of-the-Spirit* in our hearts and prepare us to become a people ready for the return of the King. Therefore, we are the people who will remain occupied with the sole task of taking this Gospel of the Kingdom to every nation of the world. Not in words only, but also in demonstration of lived-experience.

This Gospel is a call to discipleship. Discipleship is following in the footsteps of the Master with the glorious hope and expectancy of His return. His followers, the true church, patiently endure the trials of the journey yet rejoice in its many victories along the way.

His governance was prophesied for thousands of years and “became flesh” 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, a core that will one day be the foundation of all government forever. It’s called the Kingdom of God.

To this my raw data bears witness.

Since AD 1, and thereafter, we have been in *the Age of Governance*. God’s kingdom embodies the eternal justice system of a new world government,⁸ not to be confused with abstract theories and ideologies of pundits, politicians, world leaders, philosophers, sociologists, and free-thinkers, which have amounted to a lot of talk but of no substance whatsoever. Those who tried became dictators, tyrants, and despots, about whom history paints a bloodied canvas. I mean a “new” world government, that is a holy and merciful justice from the heart, based on the righteous governance of God’s kingdom. To that end, my raw data proposes to give shape to an understanding based on my guiding principles that make up the content of this book. 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*
5. The power of *Five Absolutes*
6. The upside down world of *Ten Attitudes*
7. The examination through *Fifteen Laws*
8. The conclusion of *Walking in Righteousness*

Ps: I have chosen not to revise every word in this book in compliance with political correctness. Instead, I have remained true to the way they were written 34 years ago as “glimpses,” with the reader’s understanding that “man,” implies all of

⁸ Isaiah 9:7

mankind, humankind, the family of man, and people, men, women and children. Nor does my raw data imply a particular gender distinction between a man and a woman. Both are positioned as equal before God.

The book is written in two parts.

Part One: *Governance of the King*, covers the teachings from 1986 to 2012, including the last update eight years ago, and a further edit in 2020.

Part Two: *The Church and the Kingdom of God*, covers many additional notes I have made over the years, to supplement Part One. They comprise more of an “outline” of the substance of my faith, rather than a sequential teaching series. Therefore, Part Two can be read and studied in any order as the reader wishes.

GOVERNANCE OF THE KING

ONE KING

Governance is the rule of one King. It is the eternal rule of Jesus Christ through absolute righteousness⁹

That means, He is always right, with a peace that surpasses understanding and a joy that simply will not end, even during the darkest days. It is a Divine, Spirit-led power that overcomes obstacles of will and emotions, circumstances and feelings, to give us that "blessed assurance" of the King.

There is only one King in the Kingdom of God. 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, rituals, 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, and that is through Jesus Christ and faith in Him.

⁹ 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

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 ¹⁰ 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).

TWO COVENANTS

God's governance is a covenantal justice system, whose roots date back thousands of years, to a time when God made two very special agreements (covenants) first between Himself and humankind, some 4000 years ago, and second between Himself and Jesus Christ, 2000 years ago. ¹¹ Both covenants came with incredible blessings; one, the first, came with a curse. Not only does it require faith to understand these covenants, it also takes radical critical thought to venture where rational people cannot go.

The first covenant was an agreement between God and human kind, between God and people. It stretches the imagination to think a *superior* God made a covenant (agreement) with an *inferior* people, in this case between God and a man named Abraham.

It was a good covenant. In His covenant with Abraham, God promised to bless mankind if he would obey His laws. However, disobedience brought a curse upon mankind as a consequence of disobedience. It helps to think of the word sin as disobedience or rebellion (against God).

However, to demonstrate His love and mercy, God, through Moses, 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 of God. To ensure God's people would remember His law, God wrote His law (commandments) on tablets of stone, during a unique encounter on Mount Sinai between God and Moses.

¹⁰ Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 1:18-23

¹¹ Hebrews 9:15-22, 10:10

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 the sin of mankind. His name is Jesus Christ.

Despite a promise of abundant blessings, the first covenant was unable to do one thing; that is, 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.¹²

Unless the heart is changed, behaviour is limited or 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 his or her 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 second, or 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.¹³ The first had an imperfect partner, namely man who was destined to fail. The miracle of the second covenant was a partnership, not made between a *superior* God 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 their sins. Only "in Christ," would mankind find hope and assurance of deliverance from God's wrath. When I believed in Jesus Christ, I

¹² Hebrews 10:1,2, 7:18,19

¹³ Hebrews 10:19,20

was born again, and my life is now "in Him." In Him, I am the recipient of all the blessings of a new and better covenant.

The second covenant of God is made with Jesus. When I became a member of God's family, through the new birth and faith in Jesus, I inherited the benefits of the covenant God made with Christ. Through the new birth, the terms and conditions of God's commandments are now "written" upon my heart. Kingdom blessings are mine forever, as they are yours when you believe. The curse of disobedience 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 new covenant be strict obedience, unable to be fulfilled by any man or woman. 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 us free from one covenant, to birth us into a new covenant. Now we are able to walk by faith, in the full enjoyment of all God's promises. Our 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.¹⁴ That Kingdom's agenda is first, to establish God's rule in the hearts of people, and second, only after it is written on the hearts of men, can Christ's rule (governance, government) spread its 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."
It is a Spiritual deal.

A spiritual "deal" is "better" than a material deal, because spirit is the original substance from which all material is created. Spiritual is forever, whereas material is temporal. It disappears with time. Secular is not spiritual; it is temporal.

The first covenant promise of material blessings does not compare with the second covenant promise of spiritual blessings. Our membership by adoption, into the

¹⁴ Hebrews 8:6, 10-13

eternal and invisible Kingdom of God, is the "fountain" of spiritual blessings from which flows every material blessing, in such great abundance, we will not be able to contain them all. We 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 us 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 us, re-create us, and declare us right and holy before Him.¹⁵

As a clear and visible sign of this new covenant and the invisible Kingdom, God gave us His gift of the Spirit. His Holy Spirit works His gifts and "fruit of the Spirit," through us. As a result, we become living proof that the Kingdom of God has come. We are living proof that the character and conduct of the Kingdom of God, have taken dominion in our lives. 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 our 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, were and are true, God rose Jesus Christ from death, emptied Christ's tomb in 33AD, and seated Christ with Him in heaven.

The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the living Christ are the foundation stones of the Christian faith. No other stones suffice.

As additional proof of God's acceptance of Christ's blood signature, God gave Jesus the Holy Spirit, in order empower all who believe. It's called "baptism of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is our 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."

¹⁵ Hebrews 7:22-27, Ephesians 1:5-7

"God is faithful, reliable, trustworthy, and therefore ever true to His promises, and He can be depended upon; by Him we are called into companionship and participation with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," (1 Corinthians 1:2-8,9, also see Appendix I)

THREE PROMISES

The Kingdom of God is founded on a three-fold, binding promise of God, to implement and complete His plans for an eternal Kingdom in which His Son Jesus Christ will reign 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 (Paul, the Apostle, wrote) 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,¹⁶ 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 and foremost in the hearts of men and women.

"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. ¹⁷

"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.

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.

¹⁶ Luke 2:11

¹⁷ Acts 2:36

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

The Kingdom of God 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 is used in context of God's holy will.

Principle One: Absolutes

The solid rock on which the entire Kingdom's governance 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).¹⁸

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.

(see "Five Absolutes")

Principle Two: Examination

The means whereby the Kingdom's governance 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*).¹⁹

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.

Principle Three: The Infilling Holy Spirit

To live in perfect obedience to Kingdom governance 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. "*I delight to do Your will,*" (Psalm 40:8).

The believer is empowered by the infilling of the Holy Spirit.²⁰ He brings constant refreshment and assurance to enable every believer to walk in the liberating truth of the Kingdom of God.

¹⁸ Hebrews 13:8, 1: 2,3,12

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

²⁰ Jeremiah 31:33,34; Zechariah 4:6; John 16:13-15; Acts 1:5,8

As a result, the believer's response 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.

Principle Four: Born Again

To enter into perfect obedience to God, and citizenship in the Kingdom of God, you must be "born again."²¹ Perhaps the greatest of all Kingdom mysteries is this "new birth" accomplished in us, 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.²²

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

FIVE ABSOLUTES

Similar to principle one, Governance of the Kingdom 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

²¹ John 3:3

²² 2 Corinthians 5:17

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).²³

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 our neighbours and ourselves 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.

When Jesus cried from the cross, "It is finished," ²⁴ 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, namely, 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

²³ 1 John 5:1-3, this (love) law covers all commandments of God

Ex 34:14, He 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."

²⁴ John 19:30

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 our love for God, ourselves, and our neighbours, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and not in our 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* ²⁵ 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 Kingdom Governance adds to the great law of love and its demonstration, our 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 mentioned five absolutes form the foundation upon which we live a life of unlimited service and unquestioning obedience to the Father. These absolutes will prepare us for the examination of the Holy Spirit, to conform us to God's Kingdom governance, which are all the laws of the Kingdom of God. Our 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 governance, resulting in a change of behaviour.²⁶

Outward change is a temporary process that, with the best of personal discipline, will yield only hardship as we daily strive to obey the commands of God. At times we may succeed. At times we will fail. But inner change, the change of our heart, is a permanent change brought about by the Spirit of Jesus. From a changed heart, the

²⁵ 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."

²⁶ Hebrews 8:10-12, Jeremiah 31:33

"river" ²⁷ of living water flows to affect our 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 mercy.

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 Kingdom law, as revealed by Jesus, in Matthew 5:17-20.

TEN ATTITUDES

Divine governance is the rule of a Kingdom, whose Godly foundations are made visible (known) through a Godly people of attitude, that is, attitudes of *character, conduct, influence and perseverance*. These attitudes are found in the Kingdom teachings of Jesus Christ, 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 by his or her *perseverance*.

A "change of heart" means we have, or aim to "be" like these "attitudes," in the way we 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, religion) 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.²⁸

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 a 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).

²⁷ From a "well" of John 4:14, to a "river" of John 7:38,39

²⁸ Colossians 1:9-14, 23, 2:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

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).

In *Influence*, Kingdom citizens must be like (8), salt to preserve the integrity of their character, as they influence others. Salt is also a reference to the covenantal relationship He has with his children. Kingdom citizens must demonstrate real and visible influence as (9), true light, that is humbly shed upon the lives of others, especially in a dark world in which we 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 our hearts, 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 is, that this Jesus, whom we confess to be our Saviour and Lord, is true, is indeed the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, as He shapes our character with poverty, mourning, hunger, thirst, and purity of heart. He shapes our conduct with meekness, mercy, and peacemaking. He shapes our influence with preserving salt and visible light. He shapes our perseverance, with faithfulness, despite opposition and persecution.

The world will think we've gone crazy. They will say such attitudes are harsh qualities and unreal virtues. But, we will understand the true meaning of these "*Be-Attitudes*."

For those who will diligently seek the Kingdom and its governance, 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 hearts of 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 we may not see everything clearly, the Holy Spirit will increase our daily glimpses of the Kingdom and its majestic glory to come. His revelation of the keys to the Kingdom will remain as substance of our 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

The Age of Governance comprises fifteen "laws" of the Kingdom of God as outlined by Jesus Christ in His "Sermon on the Mount." Once again, "law" is used in context of the liberating requirements of Kingdom governance and not legalities.

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. Kingdom laws are not suggestions or for consideration, perhaps even to bargain for less explicit revelation, or revised relevancy to the times in which we live. Any step in that direction is compromise that fails to recognize the incredible freedom we're being offered.

Calling them "kingdom laws" is not an outdated, archaic nomenclature for what is essentially an attitude of the heart. It's more than an attitude. It's a conviction of faith that posits nothing less than obedience to the King with the profound assurance that the King loves us beyond measure. Beyond measure is our pleasure to obey and do the will of God.

The following three paragraphs lie at the heart of understanding the entire Sermon on the Mount as governance in the Kingdom of God. It is precisely at this point where we often waver (and abandon our seeking) because we're not very keen on having our hearts exposed to ourselves.

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

This examination has the exclusive purpose of showing us what stands in our way of receiving God's Kingdom blessings of righteousness, peace, joy and power of life, in submission to the rule (governance) of Jesus Christ.²⁹ By examining our hearts the Holy Spirit will point out to us a specific need in our lives, 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 we read and study these "laws", the Holy Spirit will show us why we are in disobedience to this "law," and what reasons we harbour in our hearts to walk in rebellion to God. But, instead of condemnation, He, lovingly and graciously, shows us our need for obedience. When we obey that "still small voice" of the Spirit, peace, joy, and quietness will flood our spirit, and we will know that wonderful sense of assurance that, despite the sins and mistakes of life, we belong to the family of God.

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

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

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

Matthew 5:27-30, exposes *hidden lusts and desires* of my heart. It exposes my 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.

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

Matthew 5:31-37, exposes *unfaithfulness* in my 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. I choose Jesus Christ; and I choose nothing else to "supplement" my faith in Him, such as "faith" in the

²⁹ Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20

systems of the world. Do not commit spiritual "adultery." ³⁰ Obedience means: deep commitment beyond just the letter of the Law to a forever-abiding intent of my heart.

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

Matthew 5:38-42, exposes my *impulse and gut reactions* based on wrong attitudes. Before I know all the facts, my mind races 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 my need for *perfect love*, exposed by the "law of perfect love."

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

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

Matthew 6:1-18, exposes my *true motives* as I respond to God's Word. Are my motives, rituals, routines, and works-oriented performances strictly for favour and earthly recognition? Do I believe religious observance is assurance of salvation? Does my ego demand outward recognition in the church? Obedience means: replacing those untrue motives 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 my need for a *generous heart* towards heavenly treasure, exposed by the "law of finances."

³⁰ Romans 7:2-6

Matthew 6:19-23, exposes the *focus of my 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.

I must sow truth with a priority of spreading His Kingdom righteousness and mercy, 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, I must be generous with all my resources to improve the lives of others, so they too may know the King, and walk in the same blessings I so eagerly desire.

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

Matthew 6:24-34, exposes the degree of *contentment* in my heart, and the dependence of my 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 my needs. When He requires little of me, I need little. When He requires much of me, I need much. With every calling is the full provision of the Father and the complete equipping in His strength, of my spirit, my soul, and my body, to fulfill the task He asks of me.

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

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

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

Matthew 7:6, exposes my need for God's special *Spiritual guidance* of the Holy Spirit, in speaking and dealing with people. Obedience means: sharing my 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 my need for *responsibility*, exposed by the "law of responsibility."

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

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

Matthew 7:13,14, exposes my 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 my rules and my 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 my will, I enter committed to His will.

13. Law *thirteen* - shows my 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 I must protect myself. I must protect the most valuable of Kingdom possessions - my 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 me.

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

Matthew 7:21-23, exposes my *disobedience*. Obedience means: giving God permission (regardless of how much it hurts), to line up my will with His right and perfect will. To obey is to obey His Word. God said so, and I love Him enough to obey instantly without question. In His mercy, God gave me 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 my need to be *vessels of honour*, exposed by the "law of the building code."

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

This law of the Kingdom 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 me to willingly yield my will in submission to His examination, and set me completely free.

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

There was a man who came to Jesus and asked him what he must do to be saved. Jesus answered and said to walk in Kingdom governance. It was too much to ask, thought the man, so he turned around and walked away.

That leaves one big question.

"Is it even possible to consider the above fifteen 'laws' as reality? Who can possibly obey all these 'laws' and not fail any one of them?" The answer is, no one can. The *Old Testament* is substantive evidence that no one could obey such governance, not even prophets like Moses. But, the *New Testament* (new covenant) key is that I have not been commanded to obey in my own strength of determination, piety, upright and moral behaviour, and social action.

For me to die, is to die to myself (my own strength of determination, piety, upright and moral behaviour, and social action), and accept the precious gift I have been given to do precisely that; to die to myself and to live in Christ, as empowered by that precious gift, who is the Holy Spirit. I am baptized into His strength of

determination, His piety, His guidance for upright and moral behaviour, as well as social action), and His promise to reveal to me all that is true about Jesus.

TRAINING AND WALKING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Governance is the rule of the Kingdom of God. It is a just way of life according to God's will 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.

Therefore, in every believer's life there comes a time for a special, quality decision, to allow the Holy Spirit freedom to mature us through *teaching* into *training*, towards a lived-experience of freedom that surpasses all understanding.

Teaching equips us to "know *about* the water."

Training equips us to "walk on the water." ³¹

It is through training we are stretched, scratched, bruised, broken, and humbled, until the genuine righteousness of the Kingdom shines in and through us, 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 us in the application of the Kingdom's message, to every area of our lives. We must be trained to apply the Kingdom's righteousness in our marriage, family, labour relations, trade dealings, commercial deals, economics, personal relationships, government, and the church.³²

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

³¹ 1 Peter 1:6,7

³² 2 Peter 1:3-8; James 1:1-4

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.³³ Results may not necessarily be quantitative, but should be qualitative. Nevertheless, results must be a proclamation (demonstration) in word and deed, of the Kingdom's liberating truth in our hearts expressed by our hands.

Our teaching and training in Kingdom righteousness demands a response that must result in actual change. That change must become evident in the way we walk through life. Our walk of faith must demonstrate results of change in response to the King's rule in our lives. For that reason, Kingdom citizens must be *taught and trained to walk* in the just and righteous rule of Jesus.³⁴ For that reason, Jesus, the just and righteous King, examines our hearts with His Kingdom laws of divine rule.

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

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

His examination of our hearts through the Holy Spirit is His "governance." It is *the way and the life*, in which Jesus brings us to that glorious freedom on the Kingdom road, not tomorrow, but now, and to a total trust in God. Let Him examine us freely, and without fear or condemnation, as He shapes us to be a Kingdom of Godly people. Our response to His examination is the way of *His Government* and His rule from now and forever more.³⁵

THE GOLDEN RULE

Nowhere is the application of *governance* more apparent than in the management of daily affairs. Every day we make decisions that affect our lives, both short and long term. Often the decisions we make affect the lives of others as well. As a father, mother, student, labourer, business leader, community leader, and government leader, we 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.

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

³⁴ James 3:13

³⁵ Romans 12:12; Romans 12:1,2

The summary of *governance* is its application to the management of decisions that affect ourselves and every individual.

The "Golden Rule" is the application or practice of *the governance of Jesus* to make decisions empowered by *His Spirit*.³⁶

Somehow, and often by the mysterious ways of His Spirit.

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

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

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

Somehow, our willingness to submit to God's examination of our hearts, must bring us to a clear and simple life, in which the "Golden Rule" is applied, whenever we are called upon to make a decision. Therefore, it is mandatory, that all decisions be made with careful consideration of Jesus' teachings as the embodiment of the rule of the Kingdom and the heart of Jesus.

The "Golden Rule" for quality decisions that honour *His governance* 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 mercy.³⁷ Justice is righteousness and mercy. Or, put in another way: justice is always the right decision based on God's will. God's love for us was demonstrated in His right decision to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus for us. Our love for others is a decision that demonstrates our right decision to accept Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives.

It is precisely because our "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 or woman is wise enough to make such a decision. No woman or 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.

Human law says *right or wrong*. Right, or "good," motivates us to do more good works. The more "right" we are, and the more "good" we do, the more proud we become. Wrong, or "evil," motivates us to live in fear of punishment and condemnation. The more "wrong" we are, and the more "evil" we do, the worse we feel. To deal with

³⁶ Colossians 3:15-17

³⁷ 1 John 2:5,6, 4:7-11, 5:3

the inevitable guilt as a result of "wrong," or "evil" choices, we sear our conscience, harden our hearts to commit further wrong, and to justify our 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 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 sex-trade workers, 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 the truth, that is, the intent of each woman's heart. 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, with his decision to cut the living child in half, the real mother begged to spare the child and to give it to the other woman.

Because of the incredible wisdom God had given to Solomon, he 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 the legality of human law as right or wrong, 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 us to receive the Holy Spirit's leading to make right decisions.

In 1986, when I began studying and teaching the Kingdom of God, I also began writing a complete study course about that Kingdom. I called it "Glimpses of the Kingdom." Since that time, I have taught the course in person and through correspondence, with hope and prayer that the evidence of my life would not be a contradiction of what I had written. I have been blessed to share these "glimpses" in many countries. Yet, "glimpses" they remain fueled by a Spirit-led curiosity to discover the depth of God's love and the breadth of His Kingdom.

The written course material went through many revisions over succeeding years. Eight years later, I found myself in a similar position as Solomon, to demonstrate the

"Golden Rule" through the application of *governance*. 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, decisions affecting the theatre's mission, and excellence in a 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 or who was wrong, but what decision would be just, in view of the intent of the hearts of those in dispute.

With confidence of the Holy Spirit, I was not afraid to 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 me every time I prayed and declared my desire to apply the "Golden Rule." He brought about the effect of His governance, including peace, joy, and strength to continue managing the theatre with right choices.

For all who have continued with me to be taught and trained to walk by faith, the road to Kingdom freedom and trust in God, became and continues to be a genuine adventure of faith.³⁸

³⁸ 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

What follows are supplementary notes and observations to the original *"Glimpses of the Kingdom"* that were revealed in 1986, and which have grown over three decades to become a comprehensive list of commentary, observations, and footnotes to the original writings of the *"Kingdom of God"*. No intent has been made to follow any specific theological or expository order.

1. The Simplicity of it all

Solomon (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

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 "**Governance**" is and will be established.

The Gospel of the Kingdom and "Governance" 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** (sin consciousness, illegal ties, fear, shame, guilt, generational ties, ID crisis).

2. No longer **CONSUMED BY THE PRESENT** (consumer mentality, upwardly mobile, success motivated, results orientated, making it, servitude to money, 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 us free from the past and present (Romans 4:16 - 21, more than babies in the sky - Hebrews 11:8-16)

THE AGE OF PROMISE

The Promise of the Kingdom to Come (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6,7)

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

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

Mosaic (Exodus 3:6-15)

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

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 appears to over 1 million people (instead of just to one person, as has been the case in all other religions) and issues 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 governance of God** (Exodus 19:5,6). God had in one 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....

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 OT shadow of David lay the NT reality of Jesus)
7. To serve God's purposes - Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:18

of such was the substance of Israel's faith

Israel's temptation, however, became **faith in a Godly plan to do man's will** - namely a destiny of earthly possessions and a territorial kingdom to be led by God's choice of a great man (King) such as Saul, David, and Solomon.

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** that dooms to failure anything mankind does in his own strength and by his own will, and not according to the governance of the **Kingdom of God**, namely "in Christ" with His anointing. Although success may seem victorious (David, Solomon), judgement and doom or failures are eminent (from kings, to division, exile and dispersion), it became the pattern for all of history for future civilizations and nations who walked 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 (Hebrew: *hesed*) to His covenant promise of a Redeemer, Messiah king (Jesus, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6,7)

who would deliver mankind from Satanic dominion over their will and free mankind to do God's will, to live in liberty and love in the Kingdom of Promise.

The Old Testament is a **demonstration** that even in the absence of an earthly kingdom, a legal and religious kingdom (Pharasitical law, denominationalism) is no substitute either, because, ultimately these will be like the succession of *Old Testament* kings, to divide and not unite a people, a nation, a faith, and a church.

5. The Servant Mystery

The mystery of the Kingdom: The only access to the Kingdom of God is through **death** and **resurrection**, 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.

Israel misunderstood "**the suffering servant**" first introduced by Isaiah (Isaiah 52:13- 53:13). She thought "the suffering servant" was the nation of Israel who would suffer in her persecution and dispersion, believing "the Messiah" to be a "**Redeemer and Mighty Deliverer**" 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 the suffering-servant leader of a major world faith, who suffered and died, is still a stumbling block and anathema today, as is the concept of believers in a "suffering church." It remains especially tough on the modern, 21st Century, version of the ancient Laodicean church (Revelation 3:14 - 22).

The modern, contemporary Christian often still fights and resist a true 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 person, until they get too old to "contain" it any longer, a phenomenon that occurs frequently in older people.

I experienced that in my years when I ministered in what was then called "Old Age Homes." However, not having suffered the change of the inner man or woman, these seniors had become angry, grumpy, critical, and bitter old people. Loneliness, sickness and disease, aggravated them even further, with no hope to believe for comfort and healing. They were sad times when I saw people unable to contain the pain within. Many sat in far corners of the room, mumbling to themselves. Some cursed the very Saviour who had suffered for them.

Thus the stage was set for us to step out of **Shadowlands** of the *Old Testament* and into the light of the *New Testament*, that is the real **Kingdom of God**, who are the

people of God, a chosen remnant, with open doors to all who believe. Yet, as we step from shadows into the light we find ourselves **learning the same lessons again and 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" (institutionally). However, the true and only evidence of being an "overcomer" is our willingness to undergo our change of attitude (character), fueled by an inner change through the Holy Spirit. But, often 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 was a Christian and his perspective was birthed out many years of gently leading over one thousand terminally ill patients to the end. This is what he said.

To "suffer" is to undergo a change of character (attitude). The person in its wholeness we once were, we 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 functions (eating, washing, grooming, bowel and urinal movements, etc.) that once were integral to a person's dignity, but now cannot be controlled any longer and requires twenty-four hour assistance.

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, there is often a greater suffering that lies deep within the human spirit.

I will never forget what that doctor had said.

Kingdom suffering also ventures deeper. It is suffering because the Kingdom requires a change of self. 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 has suffered similar deaths. The list in Hebrews 11:35-38 is a chilling account of a suffering believer: torture, mocking, chains, scourging, imprisonment, stoning, sawing in two, execution by sword, and temptations that increased 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. In the process He had to suffer much. And He did it willingly for us.

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. (Isaiah 53:7; Revelation 5:6,9; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
3. 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 a father and mother have not felt the pain of a child's illness, a fractured arm, or a bloodied nose because of a bully in school?), 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 our bodies because of sickness, pain, lack, etc. We "suffer" the presence of unbelief, of rejection for the sake of Christ, alienation, shunning, ridicule, and social distancing. For that reason and because we must suffer Kingdom change, 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 sacramental 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

The shadows of the *Old Testament* Shadowlands point *to* the light of facts of the *New Testament* Community of Faith.

1. Israel / a chosen nation points *to* the Church / a new (not literal) Israel and a chosen Remnant.
2. A Covenant between a pure God and an impure man *to* a better Covenant between a pure God and the pure Son of God.
3. A righteousness of Law *to* a righteousness of faith
4. A temple built with human hands *to* a temple of the Spirit / the human spirit, soul and body
5. Circumcision of the flesh *to* circumcision of the heart
6. A kingdom of territory *to* a Kingdom of God
7. Rule by Law *to* Rule by examination of motive of the heart
8. Earthy judges and kings *to* Jesus, the only righteous judge and king
9. The people of God / Israel *to* the people of God / the Church

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."

A Messiah King, who would suffer and die was the last thing in the world that Jewish nationalism expected or wanted. In a modern church it's often the last thing people want, that is, to identify personally with the suffering servant. We prefer the part about victory.

Jesus applied the title "**Son of Man**" to Himself more than any other title. **It was Messianic title designated as the mighty Messiah Deliverer, that was of greater appeal**, whereas "Son of Man" was not. Even the disciples did not call Jesus the "Son of Man".

Daniel 7:9-14 gives us a first encounter with the "Son of Man," and Mark 14:61,62, is an example of one of many times Jesus uses the designated Messianic title, "Son of Man" to describe 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 had expected in the "Son of Man," their Messiah, Mighty-Deliverer.

Nevertheless, Israel did have great expectations.

Jesus could have fulfilled Israel's messianic, "Son of Man", "Heavenly Man" expectation (Matthew 26:53,54) if He had become their Mighty Deliverer and crushed Rome to establish again the glory years of David.

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), and whose victory would not be at the front of a conquering army, but on a cross.

The concept of "**victory is a cross**" did not fulfill the Scriptures for those Israelites, fed on the apocalyptic dream of a Mighty Redeemer Deliverer, their Messiah King.

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

Judaism had seen an endless parade of historic "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".

For centuries Israel held a Messiah-Deliverer to be a "Redeeming God" and a "Son of Man" in balance. Yet, Judaism could not systematically bring the two into one.

Therefore....

1. They could only recognize Jesus as a man
2. Consider Him blasphemous in proclaiming Himself to be the "Son of Man," and a direct descendant of God as the "Son of God," especially when he claimed to be God.
3. They condemned Him to die on a cross for those claims (John 19:7)
4. They believed a true Messiah would not let the notion of suffering and death take place (Matthew 27:41-43)
5. It ensured His rejection, ridicule and crucifixion.
6. It ensured rejection, ridicule, persecution, and suffering for His followers, the Church.
7. It therefore remained deeply embedded in Judaism, that the Messiah was not a suffering servant, and in the book of Acts it became evident that this concept of a suffering servant would remain unpopular with today's Christianity (Western, North American), who would rather the Church was not a suffering servant of the Kingdom until Christ's return.

Instead she promotes the same redemptive work (Messiah, Church) as Judaism, namely success, prosperity, possession, acquisition and victory.

Therefore it remains (for many) a Kingdom mystery, namely, how the Messiah's Church could, as a Suffering Church, be victorious and prosper.

Few would find "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 Kingdom governance, in the real battle for the heart and mind.

Circumstantial pursuits of victory and prosperity are a non-priority. **The task remains a summons to the governance of Jesus, and not a summons to the rule of His benefits.**

THE AGE OF DELIVERANCE

The Body of Christ, that is, the church, the fellowship of believers, needs deliverance because she is still:

Bound by the Past - sin consciousness, illegal ties, fear, shame, guilt, generational ties, identity crisis, no self-esteem, etc.

Consumed by the Present - consumerism, materialism, capitalism, upwardly mobile, success, "making it," power, wealth, Mammon.

Ignorant of the Future - Eternal Kingdom life, life beyond death, the resurrection of the body.

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

For Israel, such need of deliverance from all evil, judgement, and Spiritual power, had kept the Kingdom from coming, and had kept them from believing that the Kingdom had indeed come with Christ (Luke 4:18-21).

1. Birthed in Time

Mark 1:14,15 - Jesus fulfilled the entire Old Testament. 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, Is.9:6).

Just like its shadow was in 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. The Kingdom of God was never about imperialistic ideologies or national fervor.

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).*"

On that journey, the Church of Jesus Christ would be the Forerunner, running ahead of the coming of the King to announce His Kingdom governance and summon us to its rule, through obedience motivated by righteousness, evident in reconciliation, repentance, redemption, sanctification and consummation.

By faith the Church knows the Kingdom's great mystery, that in her suffering she not only will be victorious, she 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 irreversible)

3. The Messiah has come (Eschatology - Future Things)

The focus of the Church is its anointed and appointed **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.

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. Has Jesus disappointed us as we see the world in chaos? Are we tempted to run after new-world order mighty men?

Jesus Christ is indeed the **promised Messiah, the Hope of Israel**, the fulfillment of all Israel's hope, who came to set up the Kingdom of God among mankind. His followers (the Remnant of Israel and all who believe, namely 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 to bring them "Christ, the hope of Glory," (Colossians 1:27).

Jesus Christ did not come to...

1. Simply usher in a new ethic.
2. Just replace an old covenant of works with a new covenant of grace. He came to fulfill the old with the new. The old law still stands, but it is fulfilled by the new law of love.
3. Usher in a God of love as distinctly different from an Old Testament God of wrath and judgement.
4. Demand a radical obedience over a status quo obedience, even if such obedience meant civil disobedience.
5. Position Non-Jewish versus Jewish. The New Testament is essentially a Jewish book for all who believe.
6. Usher in 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, that is, governance of God. The Kingdom of God HAS come. God HAS acted. The **old sacrificial order for Israel** was finished. It was completed and fulfilled by the **new order for the world**, namely the Church of Jesus Christ and his once-for-all sacrifice.

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.

4. Divine Summons

Jesus Christ summons us to the Kingdom of The Servant. That summons is described in the Beattitudes . In addition to what is written there consider...

1. A Kingdom of meek and lowly leaders who are "last" and "servants of all" (Mark 9:35, John 13:14-17, Matt. 11:28-30)
2. A Kingdom that welcomes the "hungry" and the "thirsty" (Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-23)
3. Wealth will get no one into it (Mark 10:17-23)
4. External Righteousness does NOT qualify (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 demand, *"I like it. I want it. Give it to me!"* (1 Cor 1:26)
6. It's a Kingdom of complete self-denial, counting its tremendous cost (Mark 10:29, Matthew 19:29, Luke 18:29)
7. It's a Kingdom without a real earthly place called home (Matthew 8:20, Luke 9:38)
8. You will be hated for it (Mark 13:13, Matthew 10:2)
9. You will be persecuted for it (Luke 6:22, Matt. 5:10,11)
10. There will be no retaliation, only a turning of the cheek (Matthew 5:39, Isaiah 50:6)
11. No destiny but to take up your cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 10:38, Luke 14:27, Mark 8:34)
12. No call but to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 8:11,12, 22:1-10; Luke 14:15-24) to the Jew and to the whole world (Romans 9:17).
13. To be a servant like the Servant Jesus (Is. 42:6, 49:6)
14. To be a light to the world (Matthew 5:14)
15. To accept the Servant's Task (Matthew 28:19,20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8)

When it was granted to Jesus (as well as to His prophetic church) to see who God was and had always been, and would always be, it was given to Him (and the church) to understand that such a God would establish His Kingdom not with battle, glory, national victory, imperialistic dreams, self-proclaimed manifest destinies, and earthly success, but with the devotion, with abnegation (denial of self) and the vicarious (substitutionary) sacrifice of the Servant (Jesus and 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 (the unknown) **incarnation** (word become flesh), **kenosis** (emptying of self), and **Spiritual conception** (divine birth) ,all to be fulfilled in a Servant to the people and a servant to the Father's will. Jesus understood, 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, the Messiah of the Remnant in order to set up His Kingdom. The glory of that Kingdom can only be reached through the doorway of the cross of the Servant. And upon His shoulders will rest all governance.

5. What sort of a Kingdom?

What sort of a Kingdom and Who is the Remnant?

What sort of a Church?

It is the Kingdom of God which is the present dominion (rule, government) of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men and the future dominion of Christ over all creation

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.

3. The Kingdom of God is a **present, here and now fact**. The Old Testament's **future tense** ("behold the days are coming...") is now New Testament **present tense** ("at hand" - Mark 1:15)

4. 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
- Luke 1:23,24

7) No need to look for signs, it's among us
Luke 17:21

8) Signs and wonders are its proof - Luke 16:19-31. **Miracles are the proof that the power of the Kingdom of God has come to combat the evil powers of this age. Beginning with Jesus and continuing with His church, the power of the Kingdom of God has invaded the world, to signal that the end-time struggle has begun, and whose victory, guaranteed by Jesus, is eminent and inevitable.**

9) Although small at first, it's growth and goal is harvest (Matthew 13:31-33, Mark 4:26-29)

10) The Kingdom of God is NOW and REAL

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

6. The Call of the Kingdom of God

1. It stands at the door and knocks
(Luke 12:36, Rev. 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 (completion) as God is perfect
(Matt. 5:48)
8. To say "yes" to the Kingdom of God and to submit to its governance 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 (Matt. 25:31-46). Not be a carpenter, but to do the *works of faith* believing in the anointed one of God (Jesus Christ) and His anointing to break the bonds and strongholds, and that He has passed that anointing on to us when He calls us to minister in His name and power. Those who receive a prophet will receive a prophet's rewards. When people do not receive us as

anointed to preach, teach etc, of God, the anointing will not flow to set the captive free, and heal the sick.

12. It is a call to reform (re-birth) the heart, not reform society. For a non-Christian world (a reality until 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 governance of the Kingdom, which is only possible through Spiritual re-birth.
We (the church) issue the call, the Holy Spirit convicts others of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8) and when mankind responds, the Holy Spirit brings about the new birth (John 3:3, 2 Cor.5:17).
13. It is a call to "eschatological living" (future, end-times) in the 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 (that is to summon all to 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) Community of believers called out as a Remnant of Old Israel and the whole world who are the Gentiles.

In calling men and women to the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ came to "call out" a Remnant (for all, but, not everyone would believe). The Remnant is the *ekklesia*, the Church, the "called out ones" (the actual Greek means "called out to rule")

The church was not founded on a specific calendar date (such as the day of Peter's confession, or Pentecost, or Peter's succession) and therefore cannot observe a formal anniversary. It began over a period of time in those few disciples who were obedient to the summons of the Kingdom under the old covenant in the Old Testament longing 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. ethnic, and economic lines (Matthew 8:11, 21:43, Luke 14:15-24)

The Church is the true Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). She is a remnant chosen by grace (Romans 11:15), a remnant who "in Christ," are all Abraham's seed and heirs to the promises of God (Galatians 3:29).

In addition,

The Remnant, the Church is...

1. The true 12 tribes of Israel (James 1:1), that is "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 (Rev. 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 servants), so the church, the remnant is "the body of the Servant Christ" (1Corinthians 12:27).
6. From roots of Jesse, the stump of David, the 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 positionally secure "In Christ" and filled with His anointing (Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Colossians 1:28)
8. The People of the New Covenant, as the Old Testament covenant bound the 12 tribes into the nation of Israel, are bound by the new covenant.

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 the New Covenant was revealed and made actual as prophesied by Jeremiah and all the prophets. Here among the followers of Jesus was birthed the New Israel, to whom was given a new law of governance according to the *Intention of the Heart* (Matthew 5:17-20), 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 governance of the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah.

The last old covenant meal (Passover) was the first new covenant meal (the Lord's Supper).

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 Cor. 5:17, Romans 16:13)

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

A New Covenant for those who have been baptized in (the power of) the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5)

A New Covenant for a remnant, who are the Church, and 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 Kingdom promises, and whose glory to be revealed does not compare with what the world has to offer, or what is causes the church to suffer as she stands for the Kingdom and its righteousness, its summons, and its life.

9. The Victorious Church

Here stands the New Testament Church, the New Israel, the Remnant, and the Eschatological Community, already living in the "Age to Come", full of hope and proclaiming the Kingdom of God in the entire world and summoning mankind to the governance of the King.

The Church is the missionary people of the Kingdom of God, on a mission guaranteed beyond the cross. Jesus won the battle, but the cosmic struggle continues. And so, the Church, the Kingdom of God moves on to its inevitable triumph, which includes...

1) the unconditional surrender of the enemy

- 2) the restoration of all creation under the Kingdom's (and its King's) divine domain and governance (dominion) (Acts 3:21)
- 3) Submission of all powers in heaven and on earth to the Name of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:24-28, Philippians 2:10, Isaiah 45:23)

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. **Therein lay the seeds of the Church's extreme tension.**

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 pay the price**.

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

Victorious over sin yet **unable to live sinless**

A Paradox: The Church against which the "gates of hell" can not prevail (Matthew 16:18) yet unable to prevail against "Rome". The Church simply had no way to defeat the power of Rome and produce the promised victory. But, she could...

- 1) Obey the Great Commission
- 2) Reach, Teach, Preach, and Send
- 3) Make Disciples
- 4) Heal the Sick, Raise the dead, Cast out demons
- 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 a visible, proud, conquering Church, as the world understands such success.

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

The visible Church must be like Israel of old...

- 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 has 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 it (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 now rests on survival** but not on Christ's soon return. 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. Have we, the Church, **ceased to be intruders** because suffering is the hallmark of a victorious church, and we don't want to suffer?

11. An Age of Endurance

The early Church understood itself 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 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: the same **Apostolic faith**. The same **Spiritwind** of the Holy Spirit.

Our biggest enemy is still sin.

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

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 **Government of God**, to summon men through faith to **submit to that governance**, to announce **the Kingdom has come**, and that longed-for **Salvation is possible only through Christ**.

Man's deepest yearning...

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

The fruit of love is Righteousness, Peace, Joy, and Power in the Holy Spirit (RPJP).

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

A vision of life and the Kingdom of God

1. Total end to violence and war with swords beaten into plowshares (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 (Amos 9:13-15) and an end to grinding poverty worldwide.
4. Complete freedom from fear (Micah 4:4)

5. A just and moral world order and a righteous 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 (Isaiah 9:7 "forever")

It is a **major error of modern mankind** 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, which is 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 governance, 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 and women** to its governance.

3. The Church must be **fully aware of the New Testament tension** she lives in today. The Church lies between her present estrangement from the modern 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 it (the organized 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. Give up all hope and responsibility for this world. Retire from it and let it go its suicidal journey to hell (nihilism)
2. With every means conquer the world for Christ and make it a better place to live (post modernism).

So, what is the church to do?

Where does the Church go from here?

13. An Age of Faithfulness

There is no strategy for world conquest mapped out in the *New Testament*. No program of political and social action is ever suggested. No ecumenical organization is promoted to foster further solidarity in the church. Much is taught on how to live according to Kingdom governance but no teaching has been given to escape the "eschatological tension" nor any hint that it should be escaped.

There is no program given, except to BE 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. It makes us a peculiar people.

A Peculiar People who....

1. Received God's Grace and respond 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 before the world His righteous governance
5. Are God's chosen servant for 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
2. A summons to obedience
3. A summons to healing as 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 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 governs all in all.
6. To NURTURE OTHERS (make disciples) into or towards 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 (Divine summons) to pronounce judgement, that is, by speaking truth to correct false beliefs and immoral, unethical behaviour. and call to repentance all who sin. The church has no right to condemn, accuse, or to pronounce a final, eternal judgement upon anyone.)

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 until 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 our cross, follow Jesus and live in the Spirit without fear, grumbling or discontentment.

14. An age of Power from On High.

To accomplish all these things, we are empowered from on high to assure us that the power of the Holy Spirit is God's act of grace, not to bandon us to our own way of doing things, but to rely on a far better way, that is the way of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and His continual infilling to stay "topped up" with His power. (Acts 1:1-8, 2:1-21)

15. The Cross and Victory

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

1. "Crossing" and realigning our will with the Father's will
(the inner cross)
2. "Crossing" the Kingdom's will with the world's will (the
outer cross)

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 God may govern us.

4. That we lay down all pride and prejudice and fear, in order that the brotherhood, the sisterhood, 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 and corporately.

7. That we walk by faith believing that not only was Jesus anointed to set the captives free and break the yoke, He was anointed so we could be 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, or **obedience motivated by righteousness**, will bring all Biblical teaching into proper alignment to **all these things** that the Word of God teaches in relationship to His governance of people and over all the earth.

**This is the balanced understanding of the Word.
To walk in the truth of the Kingdom righteousness..**

1. You must take God's gift of **love**
to receive it (the Kingdom)
3. You must take God's gift of **faith**
to believe it
4. You must take God's gift of **hope**
to endure in hard times
5. You must take God's gift of **grace**
to continue
6. You must take God's gifts of **the Spirit**
to bear lasting fruit
7. You must take God's gift of **healing**
to remain strong
8. You must take God's gift of **miracles**
to affirm it
9. You must take God's gift of **the Body of Christ** (the church) *to confirm it (the Kingdom)*
10. You must take God's gift of **earthly relationships** *to demonstrate it (the Kingdom)*
11. 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
12. You must take God's gift of **the Holy Spirit**
to seal it
13. 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

** **note:** 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.*

THE AGE OF FREEDOM

Reasons for teaching the Kingdom of God:

1. **Obedience** - Matthew 14:14 to spread the good news of Freedom in Christ
2. **Blessing** - Colossians 2:2 ("In Christ" you are)
3. **Delight** - Psalm 40:8
4. **Balance** - (the insurance of) Matthew 6:33
5. **It will never be popular** or "won" by popularity contests.

The Kingdom of God is the governance of Jesus Christ (His Righteous rule)

1. in your heart and life now (the invasion)
2. over all the earth to come (the occupation)

The Gospel of the Kingdom is God's summons to us to submit to that governance through faith in Jesus Christ.

From this Gospel and our faith in Jesus flow all the issues of life (1 John 1:1)

Governance is the study of the government of Jesus to build faith to obey
(Romans 10:17)

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.

The roots of anger and rebellion have their origins in a battle between a **worldly value system** and a **Kingdom value system**. Although the difference between the two is clear, we do not always see those differences so clearly. It is best to show the two side by side in comparison.

Worldly value system

what I do
who I am

Kingdom value system

what I do
who I am

what I believe for <i>(these are, or look and feel the same in both systems)</i>	what I believe
If they bring failure, disappointment, lament, doubt, etc. I blame God or myself (its source: word of faith, religion that truth, continues to bind me)	If they bring failure, disappointment, lament, doubt, etc. It does not matter (its source: word of Spirit of truth, that continues to set me free)

If all I have done is to achieve , then life is never fulfilling or rich because discontentment and the desire for more are the motives of a worldly value system	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
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This is a life exposed to the wind, rain and floods on this side if the narrow gate (Matt.7:25, 13-29)	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)
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One is life One is illusion	The other is abundant life The other is real
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Sacrifice Achievement (I will be) results in: discontentment lack disappointment striving for (works) because I am not yet	Obedience Success (I already am) results in: contentment abundance satisfaction rest (in service) because I am
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There is a belief that "once in, always in," which is true when speaking of salvation. But, abundant life in the Spirit remains a battle of the mind, sometimes we feel "in," sometimes "out," sometimes we feel victorious, sometimes defeated. Is this the tension of life Paul speaks of in things he wanted to do but did not do ? (Romans 7:15-21).

Sometimes it may even feel like we've been spiritually asleep at the wheel, with manifestations in our natural lives such as fatigue and burnout, yet, not asleep enough to be unconscious. Our comfort and faith lies in God's faithfulness, as His hand is still upon us and His anointing continues to flow even if we don't always see it, especially not immediately.

But, now we see, we have been awakened because an "illumination" has come in our understanding of governance of the Kingdom of God based on a Kingdom value system. It was as if before, God could not implement the awakening until we had seen its true intention which had been clouded because of a worldly value system. Now, at last, 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 will know again that we are able to hear the Spirit again, as much as I used to.

Needless to say this sleepy portion of our journey was not an intentional will to disobey or even stop seeking the Kingdom of God. He knows from countless hours of prayer, we want nothing more than serve and follow Jesus. We were not living in wilfull sin. But, we could not see that, as if blinded (asleep) despite our heart's desire to serve and follow Jesus. We discovered we still had so much anger and our road to true freedom was blocked. But, having been delivered by practicing our faith in God's governance, now we see, and we are thankful, that the "crooked has been made straight, and the rough smooth" (Isaiah 40:3,4).

The examination of our hearts demonstrated that the reasons for our sleepiness were hindrances to faith, which when removed through repentance and healing (even healing of memories), by willingly embracing the governance of Christ, we have stepped into a Godly freedom without borders. **It is indeed the Age of Governance.**

THE AGE OF JUDGMENT

To repeat: Because the true church is righteous before God, it has the right to pronounce judgement (of beliefs and behaviour, but not eternal judgement) and call to repentance all who sin.

A Revelation

It remains a paradox that while we live in freedom from fear and condemnation, forgiveness and redemption, to be judged no more, to be loved and cared for forever, we still live in an age and society that will not only be eventually judged at the throne of

God, but also judged each day as civilization after civilization rises and falls throughout the course of history. This judgment will escalate according to the Apocalypse of the *Book of Revelation*, when earth, nature, mankind, and worldly systems, first undergo a gradual decline and second when they escalate towards judgement of the final Tribulation period.

Even though this book is not the place to discuss the *Book of Revelation*, suffice it to say that the events revealed in John's prophetic writings are not a chronological sequence of history, past, present, and future. Instead, the revelation is an enormous panorama that spans all of time and to be viewed in context of the revelation of the person of Christ.

The judgement of history and its inhabitants is revealed in a panorama of seal judgments, trumpet judgments, bowl judgments, the judgment of two Babylons, Armageddon, and the great judgment at the white throne of God. In what sequence these judgments take place and at what time in history is only known to God. Even Jesus did not know.

Therefore any speculation on our part to predict such judgments, regardless of frequently suggested with supporting Scripture, is a vain imagination.

The entire course of events chronicled in the *Old Testament* is a demonstration of the continuous *Judgement of History*, that dooms to failure anything mankind, and especially the plethora of false prophets, say and do in their own strength and by their own will, and not according to the governance of the Kingdom of God, namely, "in Christ," and with His anointing.

Although success may seem victorious at times as it was with David and Solomon, judgement and doom or failure were eminent, from kings to conflict, from division and exile, to dispersion.

This has been the pattern for all history and for future civilizations and nations who choose to walk in the old covenant footsteps of ancient Israel and not in the new covenant footsteps of Jesus Christ. (John 16:8)

THE AGE OF GLORY

1. The City of God

When the sons and daughters of God are revealed, this will be their freedom and their glory, in the abundant, eternal, setting called the *City of God*, not built with human hands: (Romans 4:16b - 21, 8:18-21, Hebrews 11:8-16). To this end we look with hope, faith and great expectation.

1. The City of God (our vision for eternal faith, hope and love – Rev. 21:2-7)

2. To reign and rule with Christ (our eternal **commission**, 2 Tim.2:12, Rev.20:6)

3. To inhabit a new Heaven and a new Earth (our eternal **inheritance** - Rev.21:1)

4. To establish Kingdom governance forever (the eternal truth requiring our 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 **abiding, unshakeable faith**.

2. Mysteries of the Kingdom: The Kingdom within:

The kingdom within, embodies the eternal unfolding of the length, width, height, and depth of God's love, and how that love is a river of living water that flows in two directions: from God to us and from us to God, and the evidence of both directions in our inner lives, and as well, to find undeniable expression in our outer lives.

Much of this remains a mystery...

1. That these mysteries are ours to know, spiritually and physically (Matthew 13: 11,12)
2. That the revelation and understanding of these mysteries begin in the heart. The Kingdom of God is within us and in our midst (Luke 17:20,21), referring to "in our hearts", or in our human spirit (Holy Spirit empowered conscience) and not in the midst of a cultural, socio-political, economic group, or physical territory.
3. The Jews in the days of Jesus (before and after) and many Christians today, have been and continue to be too pre-occupied by looking for the Kingdom on the outside, like a "coming" of a new earthly Kingdom **as** the manifest destiny of those chosen to lead the world and those who have lived good and religiously-lawful lives.
4. 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). These zealots fail to understand that our completeness is not of our own manifest doing, but a completeness in Christ, who by His Spirit equips us to His doing.

Therefore we look to the inside first, for the Kingdom and the work of teaching that Kingdom through the ministering work of the Holy Spirit..

This then, the mystery of the Kingdom's work on the inside, is the governance of Christ, by which we measure outer works as we continue to study and practice the Kingdom of God, in word and deed. For this we have been predestined (Romans 8:29)

The Kingdom of God is the truth of Jesus's present day work in and through us by the Holy Spirit.

Only the revelation of that truth within us will bring balance to all other teachings and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the more contested ones, such as: "words from the Lord," prophecies concerning end-times and direction for ourselves and others, gifts of healing, the gift of faith, and all the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, all in balance for Godly living.

As we continue our Kingdom journey and discover its principles of Divine governance, we must never forget to take stock of our lives and circumstances, and to always ask ourselves with a willing heart:

"How will that which I study, and how I live
what I believe, form Christ in me?"

"How will that which I study, and how I live
what I believe, help me to follow and understand God's plan for me?"

"How will I know God's Kingdom plan for me, that
is, to remain willingly teachable, and know how to follow in the apostles' footsteps, and sow the Kingdom's wisdom of my faith as lived-experience, into this world as the seeds of truth?

"How do I put my faith into practice, beginning with those closest to me (spouse, friends, children, family, church family, community, et al) without being tempted by the 'grandeur' of 'world-wide, global' ministry callings, only to conveniently escape from real life among real people in real time right where I live?"

"How will I respond when the Spirit of God exposes me to myself?

"Will I repent and experience freedom, or will I justify my heart's attitudes and remain in bondage to them?

(to be continued...)