

# OVERCOMER MINISTRIES

Hands reaching around the world...

"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us." Romans 8:37

## UNLEASHING THE KINGDOM

By Roy Ralph (Part One)

Matthew 24:14 says: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." People refer to this verse when they say they know it is the end time because the Gospel has been preached in the entire world. But notice what it really says. It says the Gospel of the Kingdom, not just the Gospel. Now, the Gospel of salvation is a part of the Gospel of the Kingdom, but not the fullness of the Gospel of the Kingdom. And it is the Gospel of the Kingdom that is to be preached, and preached as a witness to all nations, not just in every nation. And is the nations every nation as we know it or is it every nation group? There are many nation groups within a nation, even here in the United States. So what does it mean to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and how do we unleash this Kingdom as a witness? Remember, the Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached as a witness. So we must know what the kingdom is like and how it relates to us so we can reveal that kingdom to others. Also, is it the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God? While many people struggle with trying to understand the difference between the phrases, others have described them in the following manner. The Kingdom of Heaven is that place or realm of the Spirit where God is in complete authority. The Kingdom of God then is that expression of the Kingdom of Heaven through an individual to someone or for some divine purpose. For the sake of this message we will look at the scriptures to try to ascertain what the Lord was declaring the

Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God is like and how that reflects in society today.

## **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND**

Mark 1:15 and Matthew 4:17 says that as Jesus walked through the land He preached the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. In other words, as Jesus walked along, going from place to place, He was declaring that the Kingdom of Heaven was right there in their midst. He was the express image of God and was therefore the express image of what the Kingdom of Heaven was to be on earth. He modeled the Kingdom of Heaven for us. Then, in Luke 17:20-21 Jesus declared: “And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” The Kingdom of Heaven was walking in their midst and He was declaring that the Kingdom of God was within them and is therefore within us.

This is a great mystery. Yet it is one that we can begin to understand. In Matthew 13:11 the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke to the people in parables and Jesus said that “. . . it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.” Why did the disciples have the right to understand what Jesus was saying and the people did not? It was because they were following Him daily and wanting to understand and the people only wanted what they could receive from Him; healing, food, etc. This implies that, those who desire to truly know Him today and to walk in relationship with Him daily, have the right to understand what the Kingdom of God and Heaven is like and how to manifest it here on this earth as a witness to all people. God has given to us, the Body of Christ, the right to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven but we must open ourselves to His Spirit to

understand them. We can live our entire life without ever knowing those mysteries or we can search the scripture and find out what the Father originally intended for mankind.

## **NOT WITH OBSERVATION**

Notice also that the verse in Luke 17:21 said that the Kingdom of God didn't come with observation. It is something that grows within us. We don't observe that growth any more than a child observes their own growth or you can observe the growth of vegetation or fruit. Also we can't say it is here or there; it is in Missouri, Canada, or Israel, it is within you. Wherever you go, you take the Kingdom of God with you as long as you are going in Him! Too many people have moved from one place to another or one church to another looking for the Kingdom of God. When they have moved outside the purpose of God all they found were problems because they were not where they were supposed to be. They forgot that the Kingdom of God was within them and all they had to do was look within to find what they were looking for. The Kingdom of God is an unseen force or reality with us – but for what purpose?

By definition a Kingdom is the domain of the King. It is where the citizens reflect the culture and character of the King and His kingdom. I have had the privilege of traveling to a number of foreign countries and observing some of their culture and customs. Many of these things people do without thinking about them because they are such a part of their culture, their daily lives. They may or may not understand where the custom or expression came from; they simply do it because they were raised that way and know what it means to them. That is what the Lord is trying to get us to understand. That we become so accustomed to the culture and customs of the Kingdom of Heaven that we automatically do certain things without thinking about them. They are simply part of our culture, our lifestyle as Christians. How does this happen? Jesus gives us the

answer in Matthew 13:44-46. There He says: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Jesus is the one that went and sold all that He had for us. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:9 "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." And in 1 Cor. 6:20 "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Jesus was with God but made Himself of no reputation and humbled Himself to become a man that He might bring mankind back into relationship with the Father, (Phil. 2:5-8). He purchased us by laying down all that he was and had as a part of Heaven to become a man. He who was rich gave up His riches and became a man to bring us into the riches of heaven, the very riches He had laid down. That which Jesus revealed as He walked upon the earth is the lifestyle that each Christian should have today. There is an open heaven for us just as there was for Him. Jesus paid the price for creation because He found a treasure - us.

We may not see that treasure, or believe that we can be that treasure, but when we know Jesus as our personal Saviour, it is there. It is not observed by the natural eye, nor do we see that treasure, which is the Kingdom of God, growing within us. It is like the mustard seed that Jesus talked about in Matthew 13:31-32. It is small when it is planted but it begins to grow. You cannot see the growth, you just know that it grows and eventually it becomes a full tree that bears fruit and gives shade and rest. The Kingdom of God is the same within us. We know when it is planted as it comes at the time of salvation. We don't see it grow, but others will begin to notice a difference within us. Each day

there should be growth, even after it has grown to the point of giving fruit and rest to others. It will still continue to grow. It never stops growing within us until we are consumed by the presence of God and stand in His full image, Christ within doing the full will and purpose of God.

A fruit tree or vegetation doesn't strain or struggle to produce. It produces naturally, easily, as long as it has the right conditions for growth. It needs proper soil with the right nutrients, the right amount of sun and rain. We also need right conditions to produce the fruit of God. We need the proper soil – a pure heart that is tender and caring. We also need the sun and rain of God's love and provision coming upon us by the moving of the Holy Spirit. This is through Bible study, church attendance, prayer, etc. We must keep our "soil" right by removing the sins that beset us, (Heb. 11:1-2). We must allow the Holy Spirit to move within us to change us, correct us and to minister life to others. As we allow the Lord to operate through us in the gifts of the Spirit we are changed and so are those we minister to. (We will deal with this more later). The important thing to remember here is that if we never plant a seed, we will never reap a harvest. We must "till" up our land and watch over it to see a harvest. We must allow our hearts to be renewed daily and allow the seed of God to be planted daily to reap a harvest. We also need to understand that there is a difference between burying and planting. To bury something means to put it so deep that it never has an opportunity to grow. It never experiences the sunshine of God's love or the rain of His Spirit. To plant something means to plant it deep enough that it will receive the right amount of warmth and moisture to begin to germinate and grow. I learned this recently when I planted some lettuce and kale seeds. I planted some of them a little too deep and they never did produce. Then when I planted some tomato plants I didn't plant them deep enough and as they grew they fell over in the wind and didn't do well either.

Second Timothy 2:6 says: “The hardworking farmer must be first partaker of the crops” Now this is referring to a farmer eating some of his crops before he tries to sell them. I want to relate it to us as partaking of the character of Jesus before we try to create that character within others. We cannot give to others what we haven’t experienced ourselves. If we plant daily we will reap those things of the Spirit of God that produces life within us and then we can take the seed of that and be used of God to plant it within others. We will reap what we sow. As Jesus reigns in our lives through the Holy Spirit we produce the seed of God and the character of Christ and are used of God to reproduce the same things within others. A seed will only produce what it is. A grain of wheat will only produce wheat, tomato will produce tomatoes etc. The Holy Spirit will only produce the character of Christ, not evil thoughts or deeds.

## **OUR ENEMY ALSO SOWS SEED**

Mat 13:24-30 “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.” Notice that the man sowed good seed. This is what the Holy Spirit does. He sows good seed, the Word of God, within our hearts. However, there is another who sows seed and that is our enemy, the devil, and also our own soul, or desires, (see

James 1:14). The world tells us that some things are acceptable and we begin to rationalize that it is okay, at least for others. The word that is used for “tares” in this parable is a word that means “false wheat”. It is what the enemy sows within our minds as false doctrine or acceptance of things that are unscriptural as though they are okay. But the Bible and the Holy Spirit tells us differently. We must learn to follow the Spirit of God and declare the truth of His Word. However, this must be done in the love and character of Christ, not in judgment or criticism.

Jesus also said the Kingdom of Heaven “is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” (Matthew 13:33) Leaven in scripture is usually a type of sin or evil. Yet, here Jesus used the properties of leaven to express what both the Kingdom of Heaven and the world can do to an individual. When we allow sin to reign in our lives it will eventually darken our whole thought life and cause us to live in total sin devoid of Christ. The reverse is also true. The more we allow the Kingdom of Heaven to have rule in our lives the more we will see the character of Christ grow within and manifest itself out of us. It will consume our whole being until we are fulfilling the ultimate purpose of God. In explaining the parable of the tares, Jesus said in verses 41-43 that: “The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Notice that the angels are gathering out of His Kingdom those things and those who offend. This means He is cleansing the body of Christ of those things that are not like Him. As we endure trials and situations of life today, He is cleansing us and thereby removing those things within us that offend Him. We are being cleansed today. Notice also that the righteous will

shine as the sun. The more the Kingdom of Heaven grows within us the more we will shine and bring glory to Him.

There is a lot more that can and will be said about unleashing of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it will have to wait until the next newsletter.

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