

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 Three)

In part one we began to look at the scripture that 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." We discovered that the Gospel of Salvation is not the full Gospel of the Kingdom it is only where we start in our relationship with the Kingdom of God. We also saw that the Gospel of the Kingdom is to be preached for a witness. We then saw where Jesus said the Kingdom of God was within us and it will grow if we give it the right conditions. We also found that the Kingdom is the realm of the King and the citizens of the Kingdom manifest the culture and nature of the Kingdom. In part two we began to see the basis for unleashing the Kingdom was allowing God to change us to become like Jesus, expressing His nature and the culture of His Kingdom. We found that the character of God is what is needed and that God is loving and good, and He desires to do good things in and through us. We also saw that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit and what each of these means to us as the Body of Christ.

BECOME AS ONE OF US

Genesis 3:22 says: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:" The word "one" according to Strong's, is number 259 and it means "properly united, that

is one; or (as an original) first: alike.” God is saying that man became like Him knowing the difference between good and evil. God knew the difference between good and evil before creation. When He created Adam and Eve, they only knew good because they only knew the goodness of God. Until they disobeyed God and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they had only experienced good. What God is doing today is bringing us back to that goodness and helping us to become like Him, still knowing the difference but only choosing the good things of God.

Jesus knew the difference and He lived without sin. Jesus lived in such a way as to bring glory and honor to the Father and we are becoming what He was so we can bring the same glory and honor to the Father. Because of His lifestyle and His relationship with the Father, Jesus did many miracles. John tells us that not everything Jesus did was recorded, (John 21:25). Jesus also said we would do greater things than He did. How? By living in the same anointing and realm of the Spirit that Jesus lived in. Through knowing the difference between good and evil and choosing only good, or the goodness of God that is, the character of God, we will do greater works. This is not to say that we will only do miracles in Jesus name when we have become perfect. It isn't the fact that we have finally attained some status of perfection but that the Spirit of God within us helps us to do what is right and through Him the miracles and actions of God are manifested. Every moment of the day we have a choice to either allow the Spirit of God to move through us and accomplish the will of the Father or we can ignore the Spirit and do what pleases us.

Jeremiah 29:11 says: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end.” Jesus is the Prince of Peace and His thoughts of us are of peace, not trouble or sorrow. That doesn't mean we won't have trouble or sorrow. We are all tested in ways that will help us individually to grow

in relationship with Jesus if we allow it. One day Jesus told the disciples to get into a boat and go to the other side. He stayed where He was and spent time with the Father in prayer. During the night He began walking on the water to get to the other side, where He had told the disciples to go. There was a storm and when they saw Jesus, the disciples were struggling, fearing for their lives. Whether Jesus knew there would be a storm or not when He told them to get into the boat is debatable, but He does cause us to walk at times in places where there is a storm. He also allows storms to come upon us. These storms are not to destroy us but to bring us into a greater relationship with Him where we trust Him completely. Circumstances of life didn't affect Jesus, He stood in the character of God and chose what was right and good and that is what He is looking for in His body today. Romans 8:28 says that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose. If you love God and understand that you are called according to a purpose in Him, then no matter what storm comes your way God will turn it for good. He will cause good to come out of it. When we see the choice before us and we choose that which is right then God turns the tables as it were on the enemy of our soul and brings about good and peace.

GOD HONORS

In Matthew 22:2-14 Jesus gives us a parable about a king which made a marriage supper for his son. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited and they all had excuses and some even abused the servants. Therefore, he sent his army and destroyed them. Then he sent his servants into the highways to "gather together as many as they found" and to bring them into the marriage. When the time came for the wedding and the king saw the guests he saw one without a wedding garment on. He asked him why he didn't have a wedding garment on and the man stood speechless. So the king had him cast out "into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

We can see a number of things in this parable for us today. There are those who will not respond to the call of God to come to Him. Also, here is another example of the justice of God which we saw in part two. God's honor and justice must be vindicated in some way if there is no repentance. Repentance is perceived in this parable as the putting on of the wedding garment. When the man didn't put on the wedding garment there was no repentance. He desired the benefits of the wedding feast without the necessary change required. How many today want all that God has for them without making any change in their life, no repentance, no change.

We can also see the character of the king to honor his son in this parable. God has every intention of honoring His Son. It isn't just a desire on His part to honor His Son it is a part of His character. God places honor where honor is due. This applies to us in the same way. We must have a characteristic of honoring those God has placed in authority over us. Whether that is our parents, employers, ministers in the church, elders, or anyone else. God honors us in many ways and expects us to honor others. We may not appreciate what they do or say, but there should still be an attitude of honoring them as a creation of God.

Another thing that I see in this parable is that there were some that heard the call and responded. It makes me wonder if I am always listening to the call of God to come into His presence and to hear what He would say and then respond appropriately. That call may be to change something in my life or to give or say something to another person. It may be to honor someone in some way, to pray for them to see God heal them or correct a situation in their life, or even to help them through a coming trial. Jesus said He prayed for Peter and the disciples before they were severally tempted and so can we. God is a God of honor and we should be as well.

TEN VIRGINS

Matthew 25:1-13 is the parable of the ten virgins. Jesus said the Kingdom of Heaven was like these ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise and five of them were foolish. What was it that made them either wise or foolish? The wise had extra oil for their lamps while the foolish did not. This shows us the characteristic of discipline in preparing for the future, especially spiritually. Preparing for the future means preparing for whatever the Lord may bring our way. Or we could say it is always being ready for any test or trial or circumstance of life that may come our way, having our hearts always tuned to His heart. Having extra oil means we are always prepared with prayer, reading of the Word of God, and fasting. How often do we find ourselves in a situation and then think that we need to do some praying, fasting, and searching the Word of God for an answer instead of knowing we are prepared. Jesus said that when they bring us before authorities we didn't need to worry about what we would answer or say because the Holy Spirit would teach us in that hour what to say. (Luke 12:11-12) When we are prepared spiritually we don't need to worry about what to say or do, the Holy Spirit will prompt us and use us. It is when we haven't spent time with Him that we find it difficult to give a right answer to any problem or situation of life. The Bible says that Jesus was the Lamb of God before the foundation of the world. That means that God had prepared for the fall of Adam and Eve before He created them. We must be diligent in developing the characteristic of spiritual preparation.

PARABLE OF TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30 is the parable of the man traveling to a far country who gave his servants some talents. He gave ten talents to one, five to another, and one to the third. When he returned he told them to give account of what they had done with the talents they had received. The one with

ten had earned ten more, the one with five had earned five more, but the one with only one talent had hidden it in the earth. There are many things that can and have been said about this parable. The main thing to point out here is that the man had given each man a responsibility according to their ability and two of them had fulfilled that responsibility. God has given each of us talents, or abilities to use for His Kingdom. What are we doing with those abilities? Are we using them for the Kingdom of God and as we use them are we developing more? Or are we hiding them in the earth, our earth? We all have something that God says is valuable for His Kingdom, a gift that He has given us and He expects us to use that gift and even bring an increase. If we have an ability to properly handle finances, are we using that ability for the Kingdom of God and developing other gifts as well? What gift do we have and what are we doing with it? God has given each of us a valuable gift and as we use that gift we should also be developing another gift. We can look at this as natural gifts or abilities, godly characteristics, or spiritual gifts. We should all be developing new areas of our life and abilities each day.

We have received the five-fold ministry as well as other ministerial functions and we need to use them regularly. In this way we develop them and begin to develop other areas of ministry or character as well. A prophet can develop patience with others; an evangelist can see the value of the teacher and pastoral gifts, etc. Each one can develop other gifts and callings as they develop their own gifts and abilities. As we develop our ministry gift we need to also develop the right character that will enable that gift to become even more effective.

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus says that the Son of Man shall come with His holy angels and shall gather all nations before Him and separate them as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. Those that are blessed of the Father are those that gave Him food and drink by serving others. This is

actually a continuation of the previous parable. Jesus is saying that at the end of time the Lord will judge between those who serve Him and those who do not; those who love and serve Him by serving others and those who sit and relax waiting for the culmination of all things. In other words, those individuals that use what He has given them to bless others are blessed and those who hide their talent in the ground or their earth are not blessed. We can all come up with reasons to hide our gift, to not use it. Such as, we may feel others will reject us for some reason. We might fail and the person won't be healed. We might be wrong. However, we must always remember that as we exercise the gift the Lord has given us it is our responsibility to hear the Father correctly and step out in faith. It is His responsibility to bring about the results. Matthew 7:21 says "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doth the will of My Father which is in heaven." This speaks to us of being diligent with what the Lord has given us, stepping out in faith to see what God might do.

WHO IS THE GREATEST

One day the disciples came to Jesus and asked Him who was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? Jesus brought a little child to Him and said that unless we became like little children we would not enter into the Kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1-4) We must become like little children in humility, forgiveness, able to learn, to grow into the image set before us. Of course, we must make sure the image we are looking at is the image of the Lord and not of some other person or thing. That includes the image of our favorite preacher. It is okay to see the Christ within others and pattern our life after that image. Paul said to follow him as he followed Christ. We must see the Christ within others and begin to follow that example, not follow everything about a certain person. That would set them up as an idol and God will have no idols before Him.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Matthew 6:33 teaches us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to us. This means putting the things of God first in our lives. When we put other things first we begin to see lack in all that we have and do, there never seems to be an end to the difficulty and things that demand our time and energy as expressed in Haggai 1:8-11; 2:2:15-19. Putting the Kingdom of God first is seeking His face and favor each day. It is spending time with the Lord to hear what He may want us to say and to whom. What person we should pray for etc. This is not to say that we never do anything unless directed by the Lord, but to always be open to hear what He would say and to be used by the Spirit of God to accomplish His will. To be ready at any moment to speak to someone about the Kingdom of God or to pray for someone that has a need whether that need is obvious to us or not. The Holy Spirit knows the need of everyone we come in contact with and is able to meet that need through us as we give ourselves to Him.

Matthew 10:7 says it this way: “And as ye go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” We are to seek the Kingdom of God daily and His righteousness and the character of God will be added. However, that is still not unleashing the Kingdom of Heaven in the earth it is only unleashing it within you. Therefore we are to also go, preach, telling others that the kingdom of God is at hand. You may not feel you are a preacher and that is okay. What it is saying is that as we go to our jobs, shopping, dining, where ever we go and whatever we do we are to manifest the character and the Kingdom of God. We are to unleash what is within us toward others. Let them experience the reality of the Kingdom of God. This means we are to speak to them of the blessings of the Lord and to bring healing and deliverance to others. The power of God flows through those that know Jesus Christ and He is exhibiting that power more

each day through us as we seek His Kingdom and righteousness.

OLD AND NEW

Matthew 13:52 teaches us that those who are instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven bring out of their treasure things old and new. They bring forth past truths even as they continue to look for and experience new things in God. How are they instructed and how are those truths established in their lives? It is through daily seeking Him in their personal time of prayer and study. It is through giving of themselves to the local assembly of believers that can help others grow in Him. Hebrews tells us to not forsake the assembling of ourselves as we find ourselves in the last days and these are the last days, at least for us. It is through hearing the word preached and allowing that word to work within us that the truths of God are established within us. We can only draw from that which we have learned or experienced to help others and even help ourselves to know what to do in our times of struggle.

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

Matthew 16:19 tells us that Jesus has given us the keys of the Kingdom and we need to use them. What good are keys that we never use? This speaks of authority within the Body of Christ, which needs to be in operation on a daily basis through each of us. The authority is the authority of the Holy Spirit as He works in and through us. The authority we have isn't because of our personal righteousness or good moral character. The character we have been speaking of is the character of Christ that is established within us by the Spirit as we walk in union with Him. The Bible says our righteousness is as filthy rags. His righteousness is what pleases the Father and brings Him glory. The authority we have is the authority of the Holy Spirit invested in the body of Christ of which we are individual members. We are all members of that body and as we function together each one

fulfilling their individual purpose received from God the whole body brings glory and honor to the Father.

ACCOUNTABLE TO ONE ANOTHER

Then Matthew 18:23 speaks to us of being accountable to others. This can only happen as we are assembled with one another. A car factory has all the parts of many automobiles. All the parts are there gathered in one place. Yet until those parts are assembled no one is able to drive a car. It could be all the parts of the most expensive car in the world. Until it is assembled, it is simply gathered in one place. Too many Christians gather on a regular basis without ever being assembled to become what God created them to be. To accomplish that we must be assembled and that means each one doing their particular role in Christ and being accountable to others. That doesn't mean we have people who "lord it over" us. It means we submit to one another in the fear of the Lord to see the full measure of the Body of Christ come forth in power and authority revealing the glory of God. As we submit to others who are called of God to reproduce the life of Christ within, we will find that all the gifts of God will operate on a complete basis.

EUNUCHS

Matthew 19:12 speaks of eunuchs for the Kingdom of God. Eunuchs are people who are not able to reproduce themselves. These are the ones that God is using today to develop the Christ nature within the Body of Christ. It isn't those who long to have authority and power over people that God will use, but those who long only to see the Glory of God revealed in themselves and in others.

God is moving through His body today reproducing Himself and He is doing it with authority and power. We have the ability to use what He has given each of us and as we do so, we will develop other gifts and characteristics that will manifest all that Jesus is and all that He desires to do in the earth today. He is moving mightily in the earth today and we

can be a part of it or we can hide our gifts in the earth, which is unprofitable for the Kingdom and for ourselves. We will see more on unleashing the power and authority of the kingdom of God in the next chapter.

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