

Some Kingdom Principles

If we were to compare the church of Christ where you attend with the church of Christ in Jerusalem in the New Testament, how much would we match up with them? The church in Jerusalem could be identified by its rapid, explosive, and spontaneous growth. Can the church you attend be identified like that?

If we are to reproduce the type of growth that is clearly demonstrated in the New Testament, we know that we must be careful how we build. Paul states, “By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds” (1 Corinthians 3:10).

I would like for you to make a little comparison with the church you attend and the church in Jerusalem. First I want to begin by exploring the New Testament’s pattern for the “Kingdom Principles.”

Jesus says in Matthew 13:31-32, “...The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; and this is smaller than all other seeds but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.” What is the nature of the mustard seed when it grows? In comparison to all other plants in the garden, the mustard plant is larger! So if we compare the kingdom to all other human organizations, Jesus says the kingdom should be larger.

When the mustard seed grows as it should, Jesus says the birds come and make their nests in it. What about the kingdom in your area? Do people feel like there is room for them? Or, do they feel like there are in cage? Do they feel welcome when they come to the kingdom, and want to make their nest (home) there?

When people come to the church we need to make sure we are just like that mustard seed! Start small, grow large, and make everyone feel comfortable, safe and secure enough in it that they would love to be part of the greatest thing on earth: THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD JESUS!!!

Jesus goes on and tells them in Matthew 13:33, “...The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.” If you look at the church where you attend is it like leaven? What happens when you put leaven in flour? Doesn’t the leaven cause the dough to rise and grow? What happens when you try to restrict flour with leaven in it?

The kingdom of our Lord is designed to grow unrestricted and continue to multiply. The very nature of the kingdom is to grow large and have spontaneous expansion. If growth is restricted or hindered, problems will be the natural result. If the kingdom is not allowed to spontaneously and continually expand, the very nature of the kingdom as leaven will cause problems. God designed His kingdom to grow and we need to recognize that fact!!!

The three-fold purpose of *The Unveiled Gospel* is as follows.....

1. To help our subscribers grow in their Bible knowledge through articles from various writers.
2. To offer our subscribers Biblical weekend seminars to encourage the faithful.
3. To assist our subscribers in evangelizing their own communities.

For more information, please call Danny @ 719-980-0587 or Tom @ 719-964-8493. You can also send an email to info@theunveiledgospel.org. You can also go to our website www.theunveiledgospel.org for more information.

To subscribe, send an email to danny@theunveiledgospel.org or tom@theunveiledgospel.org. Please include how many copies are need for congregational or personal subscriptions. Also, include address, contact name, phone number and email address. All subscriptions are free, however, donation will be accepted. Any donation make to this domestic mission work would be greatly appreciated. To donate, please send check or money order made out to *The Unveiled Gospel*, P.O. Box 132, Kim, CO 81049.

Now compare where you attend with the church in the book of Acts (just the Jerusalem church). According to the book of Acts on the very first day there were 3000 added to the church (2:41). Then there were people constantly (daily) added to their number (2:47). Just a short time later the church had 5000 men (4:4). If we do the math; assuming one woman for every man equals 10,000 in the church. If each man and woman had just one child equals 15,000 in attendance.

If you look at the kingdom in your area has its size tripled in the last 10 years? 20 years? If we are honest the kingdom where we live is smaller now than it was even 5 years ago. Brethren, there are many who have left the kingdom because the nature of the “mustard seed” and the “leaven” were missing. The more I am involved with evangelism the more my heart aches for those who have turned their backs on the sacred command.

It is our responsibility to be like the mustard seed and leaven. If where you worship does not compare well with the New Testament, then its time for something to change. If the kingdom where you are is not ready for growth like the church in Jerusalem, talk to your leaders and challenge them to do what is necessary for that growth. If you have not challenged yourself to become a worker in the kingdom then let me challenge you to make the necessary changed in your life so that those who are lost can be found.

~ Danny Aragon, church of Christ, Kim CO

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Attitudes Toward Sin & Error

2 Timothy 4:3-4 • Romans 3:23

WE CAN

➔ DENY THEM

➔ IGNORE THEM

➔ LIVE WITH THEM

➔ OPPOSE THEM

PHARISEES - Luke 18:11 • 1 John 1:8
AHAB - 1 Kings 18:17

BELSHAZZAR - Daniel 5 • Numbers 32:23
JEWS - Matthew 13:15 • 1 Timothy 4:16

PILATE - Matthew 25:15-25 • 2 John 9-11
CORINTH - 1 Cor. 5:1-2 • 2 Cor. 6:17

PAUL - Galatians 2;4-5 • 2 Timothy 4:7-8
CHRIST - Mat. 21:12 • Mat. 23:13-33

SIN OPPOSES TRUTH SO WE MUST OPPOSE SIN EVERYDAY!

The Staff of *The Unveiled Gospel* is happy to offer:

1. Gospel Meetings—designed to encourage the brethren
2. Weekend Seminars—designed to teach/encourage participants to be involved in evangelism.
3. Door-knocking Campaigns—designed to canvas the local area in order to look for people who are looking for Christ
4. Fill-in preaching/teaching—designed to help congregations during times of preacher absence.

To set-up one of these offers, please call Danny Aragon @ 719-980-0587 or Tom Wright @ 719-964-8493.

EVANGELISM—MINISTRY ACTIVITIES OF The Unveiled Gospel

September:

The Unveiled Gospel will meet with Home Missions a work of the Faith Village church of Christ in Wichita Falls, TX. Please pray for this effort as we discuss combining our efforts to establish an Evangelism Training Center in the South West.

October:

The Unveiled Gospel will be hosting a door knocking campaign in Sioux City, IA. Eight (8) students from the Bear Valley Bible Institute International from Denver, CO will be helping us in this campaign.

The Unveiled Gospel will be holding a campaign on October 13-15 to encourage the brethren to stand fast in God's word.

Danny Aragon will be speaking at the Pikes Peak church of Christ in Colorado Springs, CO on October 29, 2017. The subject for his talks will be "The Walk of Faith." If you are in the Colorado Springs area, you are invited to come and join them in this time of Bible study and worship.

SPECIAL SUPPORT NEEDED FOR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL IN UGANDA

For the specific information on what they need, the contact information is shown below.

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THIRTY SUGGESTIONS FOR BIBLE STUDY – SUGGESTION FIFTEEN

Suggestion fifteen for Bible study is that Christian teachers should train (if need be) their (Christian and/or non-Christian) students to ask only questions relevant to their study and then answer them (Acts 2.14-42). If not, the study may get side-tracked. In the reference Scripture, the apostle Peter preached a sermon to the house of Israel accusing them of the sin of crucifying the innocent Christ (vs.14-36). Replying, the penitent Jews instinctively asked Peter the most relevant question ever. Or, they asked what they should do about it. Peter told them (amongst other things) to repent and be baptized for God's forgiveness of all their sins (vs.37-42). Conversely, before returning to heaven, Jesus' disciples asked of Him if He was going to restore their (physical) kingdom to Israel at the time (Acts 1.6-8).

Therein, their question was irrelevant because Christ had come to earth to establish a new (spiritual) kingdom of heaven that was not of this world (John 18.36). Thus, the disciples still thought in the physical and temporal realm and had not yet fully learned how to think in the spiritual and eternal realm. Yet, Christ answered their question in a two-part mode. His total reply was meant to help transition their thinking from the physical and temporal realm of thought (concerning Old Testament Israel) over to the spiritual and eternal realm of thought (concerning the kingdom of heaven including the New Testament church). So Christ did not answer the disciples' question with a simple yes or no. Their question had to be answered in a way so as to transition it from one of irrelevance to one of relevance.

First, to purge their physical and temporal thinking, Jesus said they did not need to know times or epochs (like restoring Israel's kingdom to her) that (God) the Father has fixed by His own authority. Second, to awaken their spiritual and eternal thinking, He stated they would receive (spiritual) power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Via the power, the disciples would then become Jesus' witnesses (or martyrs unto death) throughout the world. Accordingly, the disciples eventually learned to think about the establishment of the kingdom of heaven instead of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Consequently, Christian teachers should teach and/or train their students to think just as Jesus taught His disciples how to think. That is how to get them to ask only relevant Bible study questions.

Tom Wright , church of Christ, Domestic Missionary

In August, Tom Wright traveled to the Fairview Church of Christ in Childress, TX to present a seminar on "Learning How To Understand The Bible." The seminar was well attended with several visitors from the community. One Bible study was set up, and plans were made to hold a community Bible study in the near future for Tom to teach those attending about the purpose of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the first century AD, and what happened to those gifts. If you would like to host this seminar and/or community Bible study in your area, please contact Tom.

Victory in Spirit

“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7).

People miss out on so many blessings that God offers because they remain limited by the flesh. Loving God takes the element of fear out of the equation as He has replaced timidity with His boldness for those who have trusted in His power. He has given His victory to whosoever should believe (John 3:16). When we believe in God we cannot believe in defeat. Yes, there will be troubles, trials and temptations, but faith in God replaces fear with divine assurance.

God has given us the Spirit of power that does not have the will to give up or give in, but will give all for the cause of Christ. Timothy was not going into battle limited by his own power. He was going to the battle with the power to stand firm in the faith that God “once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 1:3) that would provide him with victory. It is encouraging to know that once you have begun the good fight of faith, you are fighting with power that cannot be defeated.

God has also poured His Spirit of love into each Christian. God loves us so that we may gain the ability to love even when we are hated. When Jesus hung on the cross, He did not ask for the lives of His killers, but asked for their forgiveness (Luke 23:34). God has poured the same loving Spirit into His children through faith. He has enabled us to be strong enough to pray for those who persecute us, to ask for their forgiveness, and even want the best for them, even though they may be out to destroy us.

God has also poured into His children the Spirit of discipline. Like a soldier fighting for his life in a battle zone, like an athlete training to win the greatest race of his life and like a farmer who planted a seed and will work to see it produce fruit, we are living a disciplined life to win souls. We have been given the ability to deny our fleshly tendencies and to enter into suffering knowing that maintaining the attitude of Christ throughout our trials is what glorifies God. Our discipline is derived from the faith of Jesus that ultimately led Him to the right hand of God victorious. This is the Spirit of discipline God wants to guide our hearts, minds and hands to show the world that we are His: “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Romans 8:14). God has given His church the power to be victorious over Satan’s world.

~ Cub Orcutt, church of Christ, Azle TX

Living in the Limelight

Matthew 6 opens with Jesus issuing three warnings regarding the public practices of righteousness. He concluded the previous chapter drawing distinctions of how His followers were to follow higher standards than the religious leaders of His day. He builds upon these thoughts further by strongly emphasizing who we need to focus on pleasing in our daily practices. Many of us have a strong desire to live in the limelight, but this is not what pleases our Father in heaven.

Followers of Christ need not seek the limelight, but the light of Jesus. In Verses 1 – 18 of Matthew 6, Jesus teaches how we are to seek our reward from God and not men. This was *not* the practice of the hypocritical Pharisees that Jesus strongly admonished. The first practice concerns our generosity. Do we give to the poor so that men will say, “Look at him! He sure is a kindhearted provider to the needy.” This must not be our motive, because if it is, then God will not reward us. Our giving needs to be in secret (6:4) instead of our taking to the streets proclaiming “look at me! See how wonderful I am.” We will be rewarded by God in full when we give to the needy with the proper motive.

The same holds true when we go to our Father in prayer. Hypocrites love to be seen praying in the most public of places. They do so for the wrong reason. It is not to communicate with God, but to seek the limelight. This is not the prayer that pleases God. It is a purely selfish prayer pointing the spotlight on me. Jesus is not in any way dismissing the appropriate prayer in public, but only the misguided prayer that seeks to draw attention to the person praying. When we pray to be seen by men, then our only reward will be the attention we receive from them. When we approach God in a humble and honest manner then God will reward us.

Likewise, if, or when, we fast Jesus says do not make a spectacle of ourselves. Fasting is to be practiced to draw closer to God, not to be noticed by man. A brief or extended fast is not to be done out of sight. Jesus says we can go about our daily lives while fasting. However, it should not be obvious to those we encounter through the day. God knows what we are doing and why.

From whom do we want our reward, man or God? At times people may honor us for our giving, praying, and fasting, but let it not be because we sought out the honor they provide. This applies to many more activities than these three. We need to always be on guard, examining ourselves, and our motives. Are we doing them for glory of self or for the glory of God? Let us do it to be seen by God who sees what we do when no one is around. We should always seek the reward provided by God instead of looking to live in the limelight.

~ Terry Smalling, church of Christ, La Junta CO