

Let Jesus Reign

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Ye, as lively stones, are built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, that you should offer spiritual sacrifices, accepted by God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5).

Jesus Christ is always interested in building up His Body. The best way that He can do this is when His people allow Him to reign in their hearts by faith.

You can usually tell when people do not have Christ ruling on the throne of their hearts. They are detached from the power of God, so their lives appear to be empty. The moods, the attitudes, and the arguments are there. These demonstrations of negativity only serve to tear down the Body of Christ and to assist Satan’s kingdom by producing confusing counterfeits that afflict individual believers.

Under the reign of Jesus Christ, a believer lets the peace of God rule in his heart. Called into one Body (Colossians 3:15), he is thankful

as he submits to the heavenly King and to His government.

As this booklet will show, Christians who let Jesus reign take every opportunity to build up the Body of Christ. They allow God to breathe on their lives as they become part of God's great army, seeking and saving the lost, under the leading the Captain of the Lord of hosts.

Chapter One

ESTABLISHING THE RULE OF HEAVEN

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Do we really understand what the kingdom of God is? Really, it is the secret to our lives as believers. Wherever there is a kingdom, there is a king. Wherever there is a government, there is an administrator. According to 1 Corinthians 12, the government is the Corporate Body of Jesus Christ, the administrator is the Holy Spirit, and the King, of course, is Jesus Christ.

The rule of heaven and the Church go together (Matthew 16). For believers, to live in the Kingdom of God simply means to abide under the rule of heaven through the Spirit of life in the Corporate Body of Jesus Christ on earth.

According to Colossians 1:13, there is an-

other kingdom. People are under the rule of the kingdom of darkness until they get saved. Oh, they are in a kingdom, but it is a satanic kingdom, a kingdom of darkness, and Satan is the ruler. A liar from the beginning, he institutes programs of counterfeits: false peace, false pleasure, false covering, and wrong thoughts. Those who live under his authority are deceived.

Many philosophies at work in the world today have a satanic origin. Instead of God's righteousness, there is human righteousness; instead of Christianity, there is religion; instead of the power of the Holy Spirit, there are works in the flesh. In the place of the perfect peace of God, there is a circumstantial peace produced by the natural effort in the flesh. All happiness in the satanic kingdom is dependent upon what happens next. It has nothing to do with spirituality.

Absent from the kingdom of darkness is the joy of the Holy Spirit which is derived from the ministry of God when He is on the throne of the heart. It is an unspeakable joy that I experience regardless of the circumstances. But instead of emotional soundness and mental security, Satan stimulates mental elevations of self and emotional spasms that mimic the reality of what the

Spirit does in the mind and emotions of a believer.

Satan has a counterfeit for everything that God does. For example, the Word of God says that, as a principle of identification with Jesus Christ, a person should be baptized *after* he is saved (Acts 2:38). But the devil comes along and promotes the false doctrine that someone must be baptized *in order* to be saved. Concerning liberty, God declares that there is complete liberty in the Holy Spirit, and it is a liberty to go all the way with Christ, according to His Word. Hell, in contrast, stirs up the idea that there is a liberty to do what we want to do in the flesh, to cast off all restraints and to let no one rule us.

That is how subtly the devil takes the truth of God and twists it.

Ye Must Be Born Again

“Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of 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.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:5-8).

People who are not born again cannot understand the kingdom of God. A dog cannot fly because it does not have the life of a bird. A bird cannot talk because it does not have the life of a man. And the reason that some people cannot enter into the reality of the Christian life is that they have never been born again.

Every Christian needs to be taught, counseled, exhorted, loved, bathed in and saturated with grace in order to live practically in the kingdom of God. If, however, a person is having difficulty understanding the kingdom of God for his life, perhaps he needs to be born again.

In the old days, buildings were made of stones, but a heap of stones is not a building. Today, many structures are made of bricks, but a pile of bricks cannot function as a building. Churches are made up of born-again believers, but a group of born-again believers do not make up a church, any more than a heap of bricks make a building. A group of Christians do not

necessarily form a habitation for God.

What does it mean to enter into the kingdom of God? The first thing it means is to be translated by the Holy Spirit out of the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:13). It means the Holy Spirit takes you from one kingdom with all of its counterfeits and places you in the kingdom of His dear Son, all because of His love and grace and all because of the rule of redemption in God's Kingdom.

Chapter Two

THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE GOVERNMENT OF HEAVEN

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

“And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

“He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:13-18).

What Jesus was really saying in that last verse is something such as this: “You are Peter, a small movable stone, and upon Myself—Christ, the immoveable stone, the rock of 1 Corinthians 10:4—I will build My Church. I will build upon the rock of your confession. You said I am the Christ, and Christ is the rock, the immovable stone. And upon that immovable stone, which is the chief corner stone (1 Peter 2:6), I will build.”

“Lord Jesus, what are You going to do?”

“I’m going to build.”

“What are You going to build?”

“My Church.”

Unless we understand that the Church is an assembly of men and women who are in the process of being built up in Christ, we won’t understand how Jesus is to reign in our lives.

We are members of His Church. Moreover, Jesus Christ wants us to understand most clearly that as His Church we must live under the authority of the King. Every kingdom must have a King. The King must have a throne. The throne must have an administrator. And the administrator must administrate the gifts of the governmental Body to produce the authority of the divine government of God’s Kingdom of heaven. Every born-again believer can enjoy a

life that is fitted into the Body, administrated by the Holy Spirit, and ruled by a King. That King is Jesus Christ.

When Jesus Christ enters into your life and my life, we must submit to God and to each other in the Lord (1 Peter 5:5). Thus, heaven becomes our government. King Jesus reigns on the throne of our hearts, and the Holy Spirit administers our personal spiritual gifts. Jesus as King continually builds up His Body as He ministers in absolute, supreme authority.

A Habitation of the Spirit

“Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

“In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).

It is Jesus who is building up His Church. We enter into the authority of the life of the King on the throne of our hearts, and heaven’s rule is

produced in the minds of men on the earth below.

We are Christians for one purpose, and that is to be fitly framed together with this whole Body, submitting to God's rule, and letting Jesus Christ be King, which ultimately glorifies God. We accept the government of the pastors and the teachers God has given to the church (Ephesians 4:11-12). We accept the administration of the Holy Spirit. We are fitted into the Body in a marvelous way, with new authority, because of God's life and the King reigning on the throne of our hearts.

Are you a built-up member of a local assembly that is being fitly framed together? Are you allowing yourself to be built together, never isolating yourself as only one among a heap of stones?

It is so great to allow Jesus Christ to reign so we can be built together to operate with the authority of the Church, the authority of souls being saved, and the authority of healing. We desire to receive all that goes with the release from bondage and servitude to the old nature, having been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

Chapter Three

BONE TO BONE, HEART TO HEART: GOD BUILDS HIS CHURCH

“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

“And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

“And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

“Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O you dry bones, hear the word of the LORD” (Ezekiel 37:1-4).

If a person is not built up by Jesus Christ, the gates of hell will prevail against him in his practical experience. We must be built together with

every other believer, fitly framed. We must be carefully enclosed by the grace and protection of God's presence. If we are not, we are simply men who have dry bones with no life.

A lot of people live in a valley of dry bones because they are detached from the life that is in the Body of Christ. Notice several things about the dry bones: They were scattered in the cemetery, not connected; they had no life; therefore, they had no authority.

Today, as Christians, we have been called to reach out to people who are tired of being dry bones, people that are not living in God's life, that are not built up together, that are not growing with the life and the authority of the King.

Why are there so many problems in America today? It is because the Church does not have the authority of the King. Why do you think that many people do not get saved? Of course there is the matter of free volition, but in many cases it is because the Church does not have the authority of the King, Jesus, and the valley is full of dry bones.

It is a matter of Christ's life being revealed.

Scattered Lives Knit Together

"Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones;

Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

“And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

“So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone” (Ezekiel 37:5-7).

The scattered bones represent many minds, and many bodies, and many divisions (1 Corinthians 11:18). But when Jesus Christ reigns in the assembly, the bones come together! When bones come together, that produces a body. And with the breath of the Holy Spirit, the Body of Christ begins to live in the one area that defeats the kingdom of darkness—that is, the authority and the life of God (1 John 3:8).

What does Colossians 2:2 teach us? It teaches that we are to be knit together in love. Jesus said, “I will cause these bones to be knit together, to be built together, to join each other, and then I will produce My life in them. But unless these bones come together, they will be dried up, withered up, arguing, tormented, defeated, frustrated, bored, selfish, temporally-minded bones

that amount to nothing.”

Dry bones live for temporal values instead of Christ. It is amazing that a person would come to a living Church of God and not get deeply excited about life. It is sad that anyone could even want to miss a church service for no reason. Christ is healing and saving day by day in the Church services, and yet many people stay home.

Dry bones are scattered. They are living in a gray world of dryness. Bored though they are, they will never reap satisfaction, because they are not knit together for God to inhabit.

“For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones” (Ephesians 5:30).

Christians would not have so many problems with their bones if they understood Christ’s authority to loose them and to set them free. If they would come under the submission of the heavenly rule, under the administration of the Holy Spirit in the government of God’s leadership, their troubles would go. If they would allow Him to reign in their hearts on the throne of their lives, they would no longer be as dry bones.

Breathed Upon by the Spirit of God

“And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

“Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army” (Ezekiel 37:8-11).

I am sure that Jesus looks upon church after church and sees a picture of Ezekiel 37:1-2 and Ezekiel 37:8: “There is no breath in them.” There is no song of praise to God and there is no life of the Holy Spirit revealed. Do you know why? It is because they are not being built together by Jesus Christ Himself, so they are not bone to bone, heart to heart, fitly framed in the temple of a corporate Body, experiencing the liberty and power and authority of heaven, which has been delegated unto them by Jesus Christ Himself (Matthew 16:18).

“He that is joined to the Lord is of one spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:17). When we realize this great principle of the corporate life of Christ, we won’t

expect anything of the Body of Christ. We won't debate with the Body. We won't try to reason or argue. Rather, we will complement each one. We will be building up and edifying continually because Jesus always builds. He doesn't destroy His Body. He builds, and edifies, and builds. He does not demand a thing.

Jesus Christ never demanded a thing from anybody. He gave His life. Many people are always looking for something instead of giving their lives. Let Jesus reign so that He might be our life, as we become "bone of His bone"—members of His very Body in our experience.

CONCLUSION

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

“From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

What happened to those bones in Ezekiel 37? They came together. Our Body will be as strong as the members who supply it with the life of Christ as we are building up one another. Our assemblies will be no stronger than the weakest member as each one is built up by the supply of the Word in the life of Christ.

Our Body will be regulated by each one of us—by our listening, our prayers, and our love, having constructive, creative life to build up one

another.

When the Body is functioning like this, it “maketh increase of the body.” Souls are saved and lives are transformed when each one of us is supplying each other. Joined together and fitly framed, the Body is regulated by the measure with which we contribute through the creative life of the King on the throne of our hearts, through the administration of the Holy Spirit, under the government of the pastors and teachers.

As we understand this, the Body is compacted together, bone is fused with bone, and the life of God comes in. We stand. We have life. We breathe with heavenly breath. We let Jesus reign! And then what happens? By the grace of God, the Body increases itself. It reproduces itself after its kind, souls are saved, and lives are changed forever.