



THE KINGDOM IS WITHIN US

KINDOM PRINCIPLE STUDY KP6

READ THIS FIRST

This study is a practical application of many of the principles learned in previous studies. In particular the principle of praise is emphasised. Take this principle to heart as you read the study, fill your mind with the importance of it and above all PRAISE! It is the key to victorious living. Other aspects of the study will help you to understand some of the things going on inside of you. These things can be bewildering to the uninformed, but to the informed believer they are the encouragement that the Spirit within is really preparing us for a future in glory.

Key scriptures for this study are found in: (In this case, do not read the scriptures first because they need some explanation from the text. Go through the study notes looking up all of the texts as you go along).

Ephesians 5:18-33, 6:1-9

Exodus 23-33, 36-40

John 3:1-18

II Chronicles 20:1-30

I Samuel 24

Psalms 57

LEARN THESE SCRIPTURES BY HEART

‘The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen; no-one will say here it is, or there it is because the Kingdom of God is within you’ (*Luke 17:20-21*).

‘Let us not neglect the spiritual gift that is in us given to us when the prophets spoke and the elders laid hands on us’ (*1 Tim. 4:14*).

FAN UP THE FLAME

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul reminds his younger disciple ‘to keep alive the gift that God gave you when the elders laid hands on you. For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid, rather it fills us with power, love and self control.’

Whatever our need, the answer lies in God’s provision of His life within us. But, if we are to take advantage of what God has done, faith must operate. It is our responsibility to use what God has given us, not to go on living as if we have not received anything!

The word that Paul used which is translated for us ‘to keep alive’ or ‘to stir up’ is the Greek word

anazopurein. The ancient meaning of this word gives the picture of live coals or embers by which a fire can be kindled with the aid of bellows or a fan. From this picture we see that Paul understands that the gift of the Spirit lies within us like a brazier of live coals, waiting to be fanned into a living fire. As the fire is fanned up, so it fills every part of our being until we are literally filled with God’s Spirit.

Our calling is to be so filled, not once or twice, but continually go on being filled. If we do this, we meet life’s situations, not in our own natural strength, but in God’s power. This is the promise of the Father! (*Eph. 5:18, Acts 1:8*).

THE TABERNACLE: A SHADOW OF HEAVENLY THINGS

When the Lord God wanted to live amongst his people Israel he had them build a tabernacle. The pattern and details of this tabernacle are so important a revelation to us that the Holy Spirit allowed many of the details to be recorded twice. Study the descriptions relating to the tabernacle carefully; many statements in the New Testament cannot be understood unless we have this pattern in our understanding. Draw your own pictures of the tabernacle. (Books can also be helpful. Every detail of the tabernacle speaks to us principles that relate to what Jesus has done for us on the cross. (*Heb. 9:23, Ex. 23-33, Ex. 35-40, Heb. 8:2, Heb. 9:2-28, Heb. 10:1-39, John 3:5 etc*).

For this study, it is sufficient to grasp that there was:

A gate leading into an outer court, which contained a brass altar, a laver of water and a container of special anointing oil.

A tent (tabernacle) which was divided into:

A Holy Place containing a golden lampstand, a golden table and a golden altar of incense.

A Most Holy Place wherein was the golden Ark of the Covenant. The Ark contained a pot of manna, the tablets of the Law and Aaron’s rod. The Ark also provided a mercy seat from which God spoke. Overhead were golden Cherubim.

In the case of the later version (temple) that Solomon built scripture talks of people going up to the temple to worship. Because of this it is often thought that the tabernacle is a way by which we may approach God. In a sense this is true, but it is much better that we understand that the tabernacle is really *a provision that God has made for Himself so that He may come down and dwell amongst an unholy people*. The tabernacle court was approximately 46 metres long and 23 metres wide, hardly enough for nearly three million people to worship, or even for the tribe of Levi for that matter! No, when the tabernacle was finished (*Ex. 40:33-38*) it was not filled with worshippers, it

was filled with God's presence!!! Exactly the same thing happened when the temple was completed (*11 Chron. 5:11-14, 1 Kings 8:10-11*). And so it was at Pentecost!!! After Jesus had done away with earthly temples of stone, God did what He had always planned; He came down and began to fill those who believed on Jesus (*Acts 2:14-21*). This is why John the Baptist said '...the one who comes after me will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire' (*Matt. 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33*). This is also why Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said 'this is that spoken of by the Prophet Joel: In the last days... I will pour out my Spirit on everyone; your sons and daughters will prophecy; your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions; I will pour out my spirit even on your servants, both men and women!' (*Joel 2:28-29*).

By all of this, we understand that ***we are now the temple of the living God***. From Pentecost onwards, God no longer dwells in temples of stone or animal skins; He now dwells in us who are His sons! We do not go to the temple to worship; we are the temple. Wherever we are, God is; when we move, God moves. Where two or three are gathered, Jesus is there in the midst (*Matt. 18:19-20, 1 Cor. 3:16-17, 1 Cor. 6:19, II Cor. 6:16*).

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES

The revelation that we are now the temple of the living God helps us to understand a great deal about our inner experiences. The scripture tells us that the Triune (Elohim) God made us in His own image (likeness). Not only are we personal, rational and moral, as God is personal, rational and moral; we are also tri-partite: body (outer court), soul (holy place), and spirit (most holy place).

When the Spirit of God comes to dwell in us He enters by our spirit (most holy place). From there He seeks to fill our soul (holy place). And, we are told, He can also quicken our mortal body, although at this time He refrains from completely renewing our bodies, leaving this completing work to the end of His program.

NB God does not invade or fill our soul (Holy Place) without our permission. Rather, He knocks quietly, waiting for us to open the door so that He can come in and share with us His divine fellowship. This door, as we will see below, is the veil that separates soul and spirit. While we are dead in trespasses and sins our spirit area is closed off to us. When God comes in He quickens our spirit and seeks to live in union with our soul. NB: Only God's Spirit can enter our spirit; the devil or his minions can NEVER enter here. Demons may control our minds, our emotions, and even dwell in our bodies, but they have no way of penetrating the wall that protects our spirit only God alone can do this. It is a great protection that God has given us, like the angel that stood at the gate of Eden! Similarly, only God can penetrate the veil and when He comes into our soul life DEMONS FLEE! (*Gen. 1:26, 1 Thess.*

5:23, 1 Peter 1:13, 11 Cor. 5:1, 1 Cor. 6:17, II Cor. 5:2-5, I, Cor. 15:51-57, Rev. 3:20).

THE DYNAMIC INVASION

Many Christians are born again in their spirit but never manage to be filled with God's life. For this to happen, the veil (wall) of our temple must be 'rent asunder'. This was the significance of the event in Herod's temple immediately after Jesus gave up His spirit. It was a super-natural act, the veil was torn from top to bottom! So, it is with us. God does it! (*Matt. 27:51*).

The invasion of Jericho (*Josh. 2:6*) is another helpful description in the Old Testament scripture in relation to the invasion of a human's being by the Holy Spirit. God first sends out the spies to search out whether our heart will agree to this invasion or not! What He finds is the heart of a harlot who has served other Gods and lived in total disobedience to God's commands. But, hopefully, it is such a harlot as Rahab who, when faced with total destruction, sheltered the spies, having faith to change her mind (i.e. 'repent') to the saving of her household. The spies leave a crimson thread signifying to us the blood of Jesus. Praise God for the blood of Jesus. Only that can save us when the Holy Spirit comes in with power; '...for He is like strong soap, like a fire that refines metals' (*Ezek. 14:3-5, Ezek. 23, Malachi 3:2*).

If we are trusting in Jesus we need not fear this invasion, even though at times it will be traumatic for us. God's Spirit can break down the wall of separation, cleanse us, make our hearts new, renew our minds, heal our bodies, and flow out of us to others WITHOUT LEAVING A SCAR!

When that wall comes down we enter into a wonderful world of relationship with Jesus (the Spirit does not speak of Himself). We begin to 'take the Yoke of Jesus upon us and learn of Him'. We begin to enjoy His divine company. We find His yoke easy and His burden light. We begin to learn that we have within us the Spirit of power (by which can overcome fear, death, the world and the devil), love (by which we keep the commandments to love God, our neighbour, our brothers and our enemies), and self control (by which we overcome our flesh). We begin to move and live not in human power but in God's power. We now have the potential to walk as Jesus walked, for the same Spirit that filled and anointed Him now fills and anoints us. The things that He did, we begin to do by the power of His Spirit.

Are you a power filled Christian? If not, there is only one reason: you are not opening the door to Him who can fill you with His power! I am assuming here that you have the Spirit of Christ; if you do not you do not belong to Him) (*Heb. 4:12, Rom. 8:9-11, John 7:37-39, Ezek. 36:25-27, Rom. 12:1-2, Eph. 3:14-21, John 16:13, Matt. 11:28-30, Matt. 22:34-40, John 13:34-35, John 14:23-24, John 15:9-17, John 3:34, Is. 61:1-3, Luke 4:17-19, John 14:12, Mark 16:17-18*).

KEEPING THE DOOR OPEN

Once we have faith to allow the Spirit to enter into our soul life we begin to live in a 'new and living way' (*Heb. 10:20*). How excited we are the first time it happens; how full of faith and victory. We speak out by faith in new languages, we rejoice continually, we sing aloud the praises of Him who has released us, washed and renewed us. Perhaps some nagging problem in our bodies is touched by the over wash and is healed! BUT, unless we are careful, this joyous state soon slips away from us! The fire dies down, and we revert to what we were; belonging to Jesus but living in our own strength and not in God's strength. It is absolutely vital that we learn how to fan up the fire of the gift within us.

The Bible has another illustration which is helpful to us in considering this matter. It describes our experience of salvation as a well of water within us. 'Therefore, with joy shall you draw water out of the well of salvation. And in that day you shall say, 'Hallelujah!' Jesus spoke in these terms also. (*Is. 12:3-4, John 4:10-15, John 7:37-39*).

Now, we are to understand that this well can be blocked up by stones of the self-life falling into it and by the pressures of day to day living. The river of life within us can quite quickly be reduced to a mere trickle. How often people who leave the Sunday meeting in victory but by Wednesday are back to 'normal', needing another meeting to get back the 'victory'. This may be all right for the young in Christ but mature brethren know how to keep the river flowing all the time, meeting or no meeting! May we all go on to maturity!

The work of keeping the river flowing is bound up in the principle of praise. Praise is not an optional extra for the people of God. We are to 'enter in with praise and thanksgiving' at all times (*Ps. 100:4*). Praise is not necessary because God is on an ego trip; nor is it necessary to show God that we love Him; He already knows whether we love Him because He searches our hearts!! No! Praise is the means He has given us to keep the well open! Praise is the prerequisite to victory - no praise, no victory. There are many Old Testament examples; one of the best is the story of Judah under Jehoshaphat: 'when they began to sing....' (*II Chron. 20:1-30*). The most victorious people, the most helpful people to have around in the family of God are those who have a healthy praise life. The ones who need propping up the most are those who have a weak praise life. Where do you stand?

THE SECRET OF VICTORIOUS LIVING

King David is the great Bible example of a praising life. The secret of his victorious living is no better shown to us than in the story of the cave in the wilderness of Engedi. Saul, bent on destroying David, leaves his army of 3 000 warriors to relieve himself in the very cave that David and his men are hiding.

Urged on by his comrades to kill Saul while he has the chance David wisely 'tests' the situation and confirms what he feels in his spirit - he can on no account kill the Lord's anointed. What then is he to do? What did he do? For something surely happened to change him from one cringing in the cave for fear of Saul to the one (verse 8) who boldly exposes himself to his enemy! The answer to these questions is carefully preserved for us in Psalm 57, the song of David in the cave! In verse 7 and following verses it is simply, I *will* praise thee, I *will* sing!!! There is no suggestion at all that David felt like praising, just the opposite. But he set his will to it just the same.

When we are caught in a time of trouble it is fairly certain that we too will not feel like praising but we must learn as David did that feelings have nothing to do with praise. If, in our time of trouble, we want to wallow in helplessness, then we shall surely do so. If, on the other hand, we learn how to 'fan up the fire', we shall conquer sin within, conquer fear and conquer the enemy. We shall become part of God's liberated, conquering army. We shall be equipped, not only to deal with our own inner need, but also to penetrate the darkest comer of the devil's kingdom in order to rescue others who are called to be the brethren of Jesus. To battle!!! (*I Samuel 24*).

Paul agrees with David! 'Go on being filled with the Spirit' he says. 'Speak to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; sing hymns and psalms to the Lord, with praise in your hearts; in the name of the Lord, always giving thanks for everything to God the Father!' Then (he goes on to say) you will be able to do the things which please God but are not always easy to do: 'submit yourselves to one another... wives submit to husbands, husbands love your wives, children obey your parents... parents, do not provoke your children... slaves obey your masters, masters care for your slaves! Paul's point is this: if you are not free within and filled with God's life you cannot do these other things. A Spirit-filled wife has no problem being submissive to her husband; and a Spirit-filled husband has no problem loving his wife even as Christ loves the Church! We have within us the power potential for these things (the coals); it is our responsibility to fan up the fire and live in that power. (*Eph. 5:18-20, Eph. 5:21-33, Eph. 6:1-9*).

A REMINDER OF SOME THINGS THAT THE SPIRIT DOES FOR US

The Spirit within:

Makes intercession for us when we do not know how to pray...

Brings us into all truth and understanding...

Brings us into Liberty and changes us from glory into more glory...

Produces fruit in us...

Strengthens us...

Sanctifies us...

Makes us alive...

(John 14:25, John 16:13-15, I Cor. 2:10-15, II Cor. 3:17, John 15:1-6, Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 3:16, II Thess. 2:13, I Peter 1:2, I Peter 3:18).

Therefore: Do not grieve the Spirit. Do not quench the Spirit. (Eph. 4:30, I Thess. 5:19) for:

You are the chosen race, priests of the King, a holy nation, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God who called you out of darkness into His own marvelous light! (I Peter 2:9).

Let us, therefore, always give praise to God as our sacrifice through Jesus, which is the offering presented by lips that confess Him as Lord! (Heb. 13:15).

Always be filled with God's joy ('rejoice' means 'brighten your self up', i.e. fan up the fire!) Show a gentle attitude towards everyone; the Lord is coming soon to judge us; don't worry about anything but in your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking Him with a thankful heart. And God's peace keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Jesus our Liberator. Finally, brothers, fill your minds with those things which are good and deserve praise; things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honourable! Put into practice what you have learned from me! (Phil. 4:4-8).

And put into practice what you have learned in this study, brothers, PRAISE! For, our God inhabits the praises of His people!!!! (Psalm 22:3).

QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand to be the gift of God?
 2. Describe in your own words what it means to be filled with the Spirit.
 3. What do you think Jesus meant when he said to Nicodemus (John 3:10) "You are a teacher in Israel and you don't know these things!?" (Read John 3:1-10).
 4. What are the signs of a Spirit-filled life?
 5. What is the purpose of praying in a prayer language (tongues)?
 6. List ways that you know of that are helpful in releasing God's life within us.
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Post your answers to:

**The Paraclete Institute Inc.
Kingdom Principles Course Coordinator
96 Barramundi Drive, Hallett Cove, South
Australia 5158**

Or scan and email them to:

paracamp@senet.com.au