

KINGDOM LIVING – Part Three

1) The importance of continually living with eternity in mind

➤ When we live with eternity in mind it influences:

- The way that we live our life (We desire to live our life to glorify God – Matthew 5:16)
- The choices that we make in life (We seek God's will and guidance for our life)
- How we use our time (Ephesians 5:15-17)
- How we use our gifts and talents, and
- How we use our finances

➤ **Jesus Himself said**, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21) “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matthew 6:24)

➤ **As Christians we are pilgrims here on earth. Our true home is in heaven. We are in the world but not of the world. As believers we have a different spirit to those in the world. As believers we are to be the salt and light of the world. To help bring the goodness and love of God into our world around us.**

- **As Christians we are the hands and feet of Jesus as we love and share the hope that we have in Christ with others**
- **We were all made to walk in relationship with God.**
- **As believers we can only ever be truly satisfied from above.**
- **The Psalmist wrote, “Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising you. Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.” (Psalm 84:4-5)**
- **As Christians our citizenship is in heaven and we can enjoy all of the spiritual blessings that are ours as believers**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” **(Philippians 3:20)**

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” **(Ephesians 1:3)**

➤ **As Christians:**

- **We can enjoy all of the divine privileges and resources that are available to us NOW as believers**
- **That we have been CHOSEN, (Ephesians 1:4)**
- **That we have been accepted by God, (Ephesians 1:6)**
- **That we have been ADOPTED INTO GOD’S FAMILY (Ephesians 1:5)**

- That we have been forgiven, (*Ephesians 1:7*)
 - That we have the Holy Spirit (the Comforter) to help us and to guide and empower us. (John 14:16) (John 14:26) (John 16:13) (Ephesians 3:20) The gifts of the Holy Spirit are among the spiritual blessings that we can receive as Spirit filled believers (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)
 - That we can continually enjoy fullness of joy and peace in our hearts because of our relationship with Jesus Christ no matter what trials we may be going through in life, (*Psalms 16:11*) (*Isaiah 26:3-4*) and
 - That God will meet our every need in life (*Philippians 4:19*)
- As Christians we are Christ's ambassadors here on earth and we have been given the commission to help reconcile people to God. When we live with eternity in mind we look for opportunities to help lead others to Christ as we realise the importance of all people being given the opportunity of hearing the gospel message.
- In the book of Proverbs we read, “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.” (Proverbs 11:30)
- “Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, “Surely we did not know this,” does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?” (Proverbs 24:11-12)
- Jesus Himself made it clear that there is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain.

- **When our focus is on things above we realise the importance of helping others to come to Christ**
- **The Apostle Paul wrote**, “Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)
- **We were made to worship God. God inhabits the praises of His people. When we worship the Lord we invite God’s presence into our lives and circumstances**
GOD INHABITS THE PRAISES OF HIS PEOPLE
King David wrote,
 “But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.” (Psalm 22:3)
- **The closer we are in our walk with the Lord the more we realise that the things of this world can never really satisfy us. In His presence is fullness of joy**
- **However whilst we are in this world the enemy will continually try and distract us and draw our focus away from the things of God onto other things**
- **THINGS THAT ARE NOT NECESSARILY EVIL BUT OF THEMSELVES WILL NEVER FULLY SATISFY US and that will pull us away from God’s best plan for our life**

➤ **Jesus Himself said in His explanation of the Parable of the Sower**, “Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.” (Mark 4:18-20)

➤ **If we do not purposely choose each day to live for the Kingdom cause it is so easy for the influences in this world to draw us away from God's plan and purpose for our life. Things such as:**

- **Peer Group Pressure**
- **Discouragement**
- **Materialism**
- **Our fears, and**
- **The TV and games technology and entertainment that is now available**

Can all be used by the enemy to steal our affections for the Lord and to draw us away from God’s plan for our life

The Apostle Paul wrote, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

- **WE MUST SIMPLY CHOOSE EACH DAY TO LIVE WITH ETERNITY IN MIND AND TO LIVE FOR THE KINGDOM CAUSE (That each day we simply commit our plans to the Lord)**

Jesus Himself said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.” **(Luke 9:23-24)**

- **It is only when Jesus is our first love and as we flow in the plan and purpose of God for our life that we *experience the ABUNDANT life that Jesus spoke of* AND that we experience purpose and meaning in even the everyday things of life. Jesus Himself said, “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” **(John 10:10)****

- **WHEN WE LEARN TO LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY FOR THE KINGDOM CAUSE WE:**

- Experience greater joy and purpose in life
- We store up eternal treasures in heaven
- We help to populate heaven
- Life becomes easier to live as we learn to rest in the Lord (His yoke is easy and His burden is light, and
- We continually shine brightly in this world

- **JESUS ALSO ASSURED US THAT IF WE CONTINUALLY PUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD FIRST IN OUR LIFE ALL OF THE OTHER THINGS THAT WE HAVE NEED OF IN LIFE WILL BE ADDED TO US**

- **God knows every need that we have in life**
- **Jesus Himself said,** “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (**Matthew 6:31-33**)
- **We must simply refuse to allow the things of this world or the cares and concerns of this life to steal our affections for the Lord so that we no longer make a difference in this world for eternity**
- **Jesus Himself said,** “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” (**Matthew 5:13**)
- **So as believers it is so important that we always live our life with eternity in mind as we help others to come to Christ through our life and witness**
- **More than ever before we need to be watching for the return of the Lord and be ready for the rapture of believers (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)**
- **Jesus Himself said,**
“Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.” (**Matthew 24:42**)

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (**Matthew 24:44**)

2) The importance of building our lives on the Word of God.

(Continually meditating on the Word of God is a great key to being blessed and prosperous in life and to having good success)

The Lord said to Joshua just before he was about to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” **(Joshua 1:8)**

There are many benefits that come from meditating on the Word of God and from applying the wisdom in God's Word to our own life

Just briefly some of these benefits include:

- i. That we develop a strong faith as we build our lives on God's promises that are contained in His Word**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”
(Romans 10:17)

- ii. That we remain strong during the trials of life as we continually build our lives on the truth and wisdom contained in God's Word. Jesus said,**

“Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the **rock**; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. **(Matthew 7:24-25)**

- iii. **It helps us to fulfil our God given potential in life. Meditating on the Word of God helps to transform our lives**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” **(Romans 12:2)**

Meditating on the Word of God helps us to develop Kingdom mindsets in life such as, “that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us” This gives us the confidence to step out to do all that God calls us to do in life

- iv. **We receive wisdom and guidance to make right choices in life that are in line with God's will for our life**

The Psalmist wrote,

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
(Psalm 119:105)

“Your testimonies are wonderful; Therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.” **(Psalm 119:129-130)**

“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.” **(Psalm 119:133)**

The Word of God helps to give us guidance and direction to make right choices in life, a great key to helping us to not stumble and fall in our walk with the Lord

3) The importance of continually trusting the Lord and taking STEPS OF FAITH

- **God has so much in store for each of our lives**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,”
(Ephesians 3:20)

- **To experience the fullness of what God has planned for our lives will always involve taking steps of faith**
- **In the book of Hebrews we see the importance of having faith in God**

The writer of Hebrews wrote,

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)

- **We have one life to experience the fullness of what God has planned for our lives**

- **We must refuse to allow our fears to stop us from moving out into all that God has planned for our life. We must simply learn to just do what God tells us to do in life. We can depend on God's faithfulness**

- **When we realize our full potential in life it glorifies God**

- **We can be assured that if we continually step out by faith to do what God calls us to do in our life we will succeed in all that He calls us to do**

- **King David wrote,**
“Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. **Delight yourself also in the Lord**, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.” **(Psalm 37:3-5)**

4) Living for others

➤ **The Apostle Paul wrote,**

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.”
(Philippians 2:3)

➤ **We must choose to lay down our lives for others on a daily basis**

➤ **True greatness always comes from serving and living for others.**

➤ **As we help others to fulfil God’s plan for their life we too will see God’s destiny and plan for our own life unfolding**

➤ **Mother Therese made a great impact in this world for eternity as she laid down her life to serve the poor in Calcutta in India – As she did this the world became aware of her sacrificial service to others and God blessed her ministry in an incredible way**

➤ **The enemy will always try to get us focusing on ourselves and to get us thinking about what we don’t have in life and to get us continually thinking about our own problems. If he can achieve this we will become oblivious to the needs of others in the world**

- **All who have made a great impact in this world have had a dream to help others**

- **It is in dying to self that our lives begin to bear much fruit**

- **I will finish with the words of Jesus Christ and then with an example of a man who truly gave His life to serve God and others. Jesus said,**
“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour.” **(John 12:24-26)**

❖ I will now conclude by briefly sharing about the life of a man called John Harper

- ❖ John Harper was born to a pair of solid Christian parents on May the 29th, 1872
- ❖ On the last Sunday of March 1886, when 13 years old, John Harper received Jesus as the Lord of his life
- ❖ Four years later at the age of 17, John Harper began preaching in the streets of his village pouring out his soul to see lost people come to Christ
- ❖ As John Harper’s life unfolded he was consumed by a passion to read and to preach the Word of God
- ❖ After five or six years of toiling on street corners preaching the gospel and working in a mill during the day, John Harper started his own church in September of 1896.
- ❖ This church started with just 25 members and over the next 13 years grew to 500 members

- ❖ During this time John Harper got married but shortly after was widowed. However during this brief marriage God blessed him with a beautiful little girl named Nana.
- ❖ Ironically, John Harper almost drowned on three occasions
- ❖ When two and a half years of age, he almost drowned when he fell into a well but his mother resuscitated him
- ❖ At the age of 26 he was swept out to sea by a reverse current and barely survived
- ❖ And if this was not enough, at the age of 32 he faced death on a leaking ship in the Mediterranean.
- ❖ It was like God was preparing him for what would come next
- ❖ On the 14th of April 1912 the RMS Titanic was sailing swiftly on the bitterly cold ocean waters
- ❖ On board this ship were many rich people
- ❖ At 11.40 pm on that fateful night, an iceberg scraped the ships starboard side and ripping open six watertight air compartments
- ❖ The sea poured in
- ❖ On board the ship that night was John Harper and his much beloved six year old daughter Nana
- ❖ According to documented reports as soon as it became apparent the boat was about to sink, he immediately took his daughter to a lifeboat
- ❖ It is reasonable to assume that this widowed preacher could also have easily got on board this lifeboat and been saved
- ❖ However this thought never crossed John Harper's mind
- ❖ He bent down and kissed his precious little girl; looking into her eyes he told her that she would see him again someday.
- ❖ The flares going off in the dark sky reflected the tears on his face as he turned and headed towards the crowd of desperate humanity on the sinking ocean liner
- ❖ As the rear of the huge ship began to lurch upwards, John Harper made his way up the deck yelling, "Women, children and unsaved into the life boats."
- ❖ As the ship began to break in half many people dived into the icy waters. 1528 people went into the frigid waters.

- ❖ John Harper was seen swimming frantically to people in the water leading them to Christ before hypothermia became fatal
- ❖ John Harper swam up to one young man who had climbed up on a piece of debris
- ❖ John Harper between breaths said “Are you saved?” This young man replied no.
- ❖ Harper then tried to lead him to Christ only to have the young man who was in shock, reply no
- ❖ John Harper then took off his own life jacket and threw it to the young man
- ❖ A few minutes later John Harper swam back to this young man and led him to Christ
- ❖ Of the 1528 people who went into the icy waters that night only six survived. One of them was this young man
- ❖ Four years later, at a survivors meeting, this young man stood up in tears and recounted how John Harper had led him to Christ
- ❖ Mr Harper had tried to swim back to help others, yet because of the cold had become too weak to swim.
- ❖ HIS LAST WORDS BEFORE GOING UNDER IN THE FRIGID WATERS WERE, “**Believe on the Name of the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.**”