

MESSAGE 4 . . . Present truth (or kingdom truth)?

Down through the ages, God has chosen to speak to man. He was not obligated to do so, nor was He coerced to do so. He did not do so out of pity. God chose to speak to man by His own free will. Everything God has ever done, and will ever do, is by His own free will. He answers to no one. God has also chosen to reveal Himself to mankind through His Word, and HE has also chosen only what He will have us to know of Him. It behooves anyone who claims to be a child of God to study, meditate, and pray regularly upon God's Word knowing that in it is the only place eternal life can be found. In it is the only place God reveals the secret things of Himself. In the physical world, He reveals Himself to all mankind. How can anyone watch a baby being born, and think that there is no God, is beyond comprehension. How anyone can watch a sunrise, or sunset, or a mound of ants marching to and fro, or a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, and I could go on and on. The Scriptures clearly tell us in Romans 1 that man has no excuse for not believing in God. However in His Word, He reveals a different side to Himself, one that is not revealed to everyone, but only to those whom He chooses to reveal Himself. In the Scriptures is the only truth that we will ever know in this present evil world.

In the Scriptures, God could have revealed all that we will ever know about Him at one time. He could have revealed everything to Moses, and nothing thereafter, and you would think if God had done so, that we wouldn't have all the bad teaching and various denominations that we do today. But I rather think that we would. I think that man will and would always try to make God's Word fit into their personal belief system. The homosexual will state that God loves everyone, and the liberal churchgoer will say that "God hates the sin, but loves the sinner".

Regardless there would still be confusion, but remember that God is not the Author of confusion, therefore who do you think it is that is reeking all this havoc in the churches today? That is fracturing denominations left and right and causing a different denominational church to pop up on every street corner? The god of this present evil world, of course, and that is Satan. Satan loves confusion, he loves nothing more than to hear Scripture misquoted, to have men reading something other than God's Word, and yet calling it the Bible. These are tools of the deceitful one, the one whose presence fills this earth, and the one who was defeated upon Calvary with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God.

This day and age is no different. Go into any city no matter the size, and you will probably find one church that practices water baptism and the Lord's Supper, another that practices confession of sins, another that practices speaking in tongues and healing, another that teaches good works saves a soul, and yet another that believes God and His Son are not One in the same. Yet all of these get their beliefs from the Bible. And it is because they are not performing the chief duty of man which is to discover, through revelation by the Holy Spirit, that which pertains to them.

In every age, as far back as Abraham, there has been truth generated by God that was peculiar, and particular to the age in which they lived. Abraham was not bound by the ten commandments because they had not been revealed to him, they were not even in existence. While this sounds like something simple to grasp, it is just as true that God revealed different truths to different people at different times. It is important to know what was written to you for your obedience to the Word.

If you dare say that some of the Bible is TO you, and some of it is FOR you, you will be branded a hyper-dispensationalist, and then accused of telling people that they should rip out most of the pages of their Bible, which is a plain thoughtless comment. A dear friend of mine once wrote, "By so doing they acknowledge what God has spoken directly to them. God deals on the principle of faith. That is to say, God speaks, and man's responsibility in any age has been that of believing that which comes from God. To believe the report that comes from God is faith. Romans 10:17 says., "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing (cometh) by the Word of God," i.e. faith cometh by what we hear through the Word of God. Faith believes all that comes from God. But the FAITHFUL distinguish that which relates directly to them and are obedient. In all the ages the requirement was for each saint to believe the report that came from God."

Many people fail to believe or fail to distinguish the latest truth from God, because it is not common teaching, but this idea of present truth is not something new. Peter admonished his readers, “*Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance*” (2 Peter 1:12,13). I believe that it is our duty to put one another in remembrance of what is present truth. Not to alienate someone, or not to anger someone, or not to try to persuade someone, but just simply reminding one another of what is present truth.

Our present truth is different from that of Peter’s, which was different from that of Isaiah’s, which was different from that of Moses, which was different from that of Abraham, and so let us take a moment and do as the Scriptures tell us to, and that is, to “be established in present truth.” But if you don’t know present truth, you cannot believe present truth. Present truth will never be popular. When Moses brought present truth down from the mountain the people became stiff necked and hard hearted. In Jeremiah 36:23, when Jehudi read present truth into the ear of the king, he took out a penknife, cut out the leaves and threw it in a fire. When the Lord Jesus Christ came preaching the gospel of the kingdom that was to soon come, He was not received with open arms. Today, the so called gospel of prosperity and mans free will is very popular, therefore, that is enough right there to eternally convince me that they are not preaching present truth.

Most people today believe that God would have them DO SOMETHING, when that is not the case, nor has that ever been the case, so allow me to state right off – God does not ask us to DO SOMETHING, He asks us to BELIEVE SOMETHING. And in believing, you will perform that which He asks because that is a part of believing. Suppose I were standing on top of a three story building and someone told me that if I jumped off I would die. If they were to say, “Listen to me, do not jump off that building, otherwise you will plummet to the ground, and plummet to your death.” Now if I believed them, I would do as they said, would I not? They are asking me not to jump, but it is not their request I am adhering to as much as it is that I believe what they say, and based upon believing them, I will do as they say.

If we go all the way back to the garden of Eden, and see what God told Adam, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). That was present truth. God spoke to Adam, and faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. God told Adam something, and that was present truth at that time. We don’t discount or ignore this because it is not present truth for today, but we can learn from it, and we can learn much. Look at what Eve told the serpent, “And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die” (Genesis 3:2,3).

That is not what God had said, this is what Eve wanted God to have said. She wrested His words, changed them to fit her good. The serpent took advantage of this by telling her that her eyes would be opened if she ate of the tree and thusly Eve connected seeing with believing. We see some 6000 years later, the world is full of men wresting God’s Words away from Him, changing His Words for their good, and only believing what they can see.

When God spoke to Cain and Abel was present truth concerning an offering. We know that God spoke to them because faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. When God told them to offer a sacrifice, in essence garden truth had been set aside. This was no longer garden truth, but offering truth. Cain brought what he imagined God to want, Abel did exactly as God said. It was here learned that it was blood that God wanted, not the sacrifice itself. It is said that Cain brought turnips, and Abel brought an animal sacrifice, and so the term was coined “you can’t get blood from a turnip”.

In the days of Noah, the offering truth was set aside and Noah was commanded to build an ark. That was present truth at that time. We do not build an ark today because we have no Scriptural grounds to do so. I cannot be sure, but I think that others at that time might have begun building an ark as well, but left off building it after a time, for we know that only Noah went on to complete what God had said. And so it continues until today, present truth was never popular, it was not always readily believed or received.

With that said, we now have a completed Bible, the completed Word of God in our hands. We have all that He intends to say at this present time. Beginning with Abraham, the nation of Israel was called out, and they are the main focus of nearly the entire remainder of the Scriptures. When you read the OT, it tells of a kingdom on earth that was promised to the nation of Israel, the descendants of Abraham. God promises them that a King would come to set them free from their bondage and that He would rule in this kingdom. That King, of course, was the Lord Jesus Christ. When we use the words “the kingdom” or “kingdom truth,” it simply refers to this coming kingdom here on earth that God promised to Israel.

During this kingdom time, the Holy Spirit would manifest Himself outwardly just as He did in the Acts period. This would include things such as healings, tongues, and miracles. Water baptism and the Lord’s supper were to be followed as well during this kingdom time. If someone were to ask you today why you didn’t have your children baptized, what would you tell them? If someone asked you why you don’t partake of the Lord’s supper what would you tell them? If someone were to ask you why you don’t believe in, or practice the speaking in tongues, what would you say? If someone asked you if you believe Oral Roberts has the gift of healing, what would you say? If someone ask you if you believe in physical death because of your sins, what would you say? You can’t remain neutral on these matters, nor is it enough to simply state that you just don’t believe in it, because I can show you were in the Bible these things were practiced and I can show you were they were taught and practiced by the Lord, by Peter, by James, by John, and yes, even by Paul.

I can show you in the four gospels were Jesus Christ commanded men to be baptized. I can show you where James states that if I prayed the prayer of faith, and anointed the sick with oil they would be healed, AND there sins would be forgiven them. How about that one? We just finished dealing with that verse in our Panama City bible studies. Lets read that, “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:14,15).

I can show you where Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 promoted the speaking in tongues. I can show you in Romans where Paul preached the eating laws. I can show you in 1 John where there is a sin that you can commit and it is a sin unto death. “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it” (1 John 5:16). Consider this also, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Are we just suppose to spiritualize that away?

So again I ask you what do you do with these passages? Do we just spiritualize them all away, or what? I will tell you the simple answer to every one of these questions. None of them apply to us today because they all have to deal with the coming kingdom of God. They are all FOR us, but are not TO us. Water baptism in the four gospels is a truth for the kingdom not for the body of Christ. The Lords supper is a truth for the kingdom NOT for the body of Christ. The laying on of hands in James is for the kingdom, NOT the body of Christ. The speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians is truth for the kingdom NOT the body of Christ. Sinning unto death and the wages of sin is death is truth for the kingdom NOT truth for the body of Christ.

There have been questions galore regarding whether Charles Spurgeon is a part of the body of Christ, or part of the kingdom. There are questions about whether or not A.W. Pink was, whether the Puritans of old, and the list goes on and on, but to make this really easy let me state that when the kingdom was suspended at the end of the book of Acts, and the body of Christ began, the kingdom was suspended. Charles Spurgeon cannot be a part of the kingdom, it was suspended at the end of Acts. Pink, Newton, Huntington and all of them cannot be a part of something that was no longer in existence. They are either in the body of Christ or they are not saved (in my opinion). In the Body of Christ, there is no Lord’s Supper, there is no water baptism, there is no healing, no anointing, no sin unto death, no speaking in tongues, none of it. The Body of Christ exists solely upon salvation through faith by grace.

There is a different between kingdom truth and body truth, and in order to know the difference, you must know when the kingdom truth ended and when body truth began, for then and only then can you begin to properly rightly divide. Kingdom truth is not body truth, body truth is not kingdom truth. Kingdom

promises are not Body promises, and Body promises are not kingdom promises. Kingdom inheritance is not Body inheritance, and Body inheritance is not kingdom inheritance. We are not a part of the kingdom, we are a part of the Body of Christ, members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. We do not live in an age of judgment, we live in an age of grace. You must be careful not to take a promise, or a truth, or an inheritance to the kingdom, and try to apply it to the Body or vice versa, because if you do confusion will reign.

For proof of this look at any denomination today. Why is it that there are so many of them? Why are there Methodists that believe they are right, Catholics that believe they are right, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutherans, and JW's, and they all believe that they are right. How can this be? How can one group practice confession and mass, another practice healing and tongues, and yet another practice baptism and the Lord's supper? And yet they all feel that they are right? How can that be? The answer is simple: that is what happens when you mix body truth with kingdom truth – the truth becomes very convoluted.

The kingdom, the promises, the inheritance, the relationship, the blessings almost all relate to the nation of Israel and the kingdom of God. Until we get into the book of Acts, the kingdom was promised only for Israel, only to Jews or for those that would convert to Judaism. But towards the middle of Acts, we find that God calls out a Gentile, Cornelius, which had never been done before, and so there we see that it was God's plan to include Gentiles as a part of this kingdom, but remember that – even though God called out a Gentile it was still to be part of the kingdom. The Body of Christ was nowhere in existence as of yet. Shortly thereafter God calls out Saul of Tarsus to be the one to preach kingdom truth to these Gentiles. Note that Paul was called out to preach KINGDOM truth, not Body truth to the Gentiles.

If the Gentiles wanted to be a part of the kingdom, which is what the olive tree in Romans 11 represents, then they had to be what is referred to as “grafted in.” And as being grafted in they had to obey, not the entire law as did the Jews, but only four laws, and this greatly aggravated the Jews. The four laws can be found in the letter that James gave to Paul in Acts 15:28-29. So for the remainder of the book of Acts, kingdom truth was proclaimed to the Gentiles by Paul, and to the Jews by John, James, and Peter. The books written during this time are as follows: 1, 2 Peter, James, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude, Revelation, Galatians, 1,2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Corinthians, Romans, and Hebrews.

But remember – Paul was called out to preach kingdom truth to the Gentiles. He was called out to preach the OT Scriptures to them, to tell them that they too were now being included in God's future plans for Israel. Now that is so important, I feel the need to state it again – when Paul was called out on the road to Damascus, he was called out to preach the kingdom of God to the Gentiles, to tell them that God was including them in the upcoming kingdom of God that was seemingly beginning to unfold right before their eyes. Paul was to preach kingdom truth to the Gentiles, and kingdom truth is NOT present truth. Kingdom truth is not present truth, and this I know because as we saw earlier, a later message has come from God which sets aside the kingdom truth, no longer making it present truth, and we will discuss that in a moment.

Kingdom truth encompasses most of the entire Scriptures, and either the prophets were prophesying about it, or the disciples were looking for it. Our Lord gave the parable, “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear” (Mark 4:26-28). So the kingdom of God first has the blade, which began upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, then the ear, which was the book of Acts, and the full corn in the ear has yet to come.

We know that faith pleases God, faith in what He has said, and we know that by believing and living present truth, we are pleasing God, and few today know anything of present truth. The reason why is because they are mixing present truth with kingdom truth, plus a little bit of Mosaic truth, and a touch of Davidic truth, plus a smidgen of even garden truth with some present Body truth. This is all done with an attempt to “cover all their bases,” and to please God. I believe many men in the pulpit do not know that they are convoluting present truth, but they still are nonetheless. This does not mean that you cannot find truth in past dispensations, the entire Bible is for our learning, and I truly believe what Paul told Timothy, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Any time that you get in your mind that only present truth matters, and nothing else, recall those words of Paul. I can look to garden truth and take away from it, but I must, I must be very very very careful that I do not misinterpret that which God has said. I cannot take someone else word for it for they could be wrong. Faith only comes through the hearing of God’s word, thusly garden truth is of great benefit to me spiritually. Likewise, I can build upon this the truth given to Cain and Abel that a sacrifice must be offered to God in order to please Him, and it must be a blood sacrifice. Upon this truth I can add that only in the ark will I find refuge and salvation and safety, and Christ is my Ark. I could go on and on, but suffice it to say that all of these things are building blocks for what I believe today to be present truth.

So what is present truth? What happened that did away with kingdom truth for the present time? Present truth began at the end of the book of Acts, and what happened at the end of Acts is the Israel lost its prominence. In other words all nations had now become equal in the sight of God. This was a truth that I really saw about 6 years ago. I was actually listening to this lady named Gloria Copeland on TV. Tanya will tell you that I listen to them to get material to teach because they are so wrong on their views. She was quoting, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16), but she left off the part about “to the Jew first.” It was then that I began to realize that I had no idea what that meant.

Now six years later, I see that during the Acts period, during the time that the kingdom was being proclaimed, the message was to go to Israel first, for they were the prominent nation in the sight of God, and the Gentiles were secondary. At the end of Acts that all changed, and now all nations are equal, the Jews have lost their standing with God. Some people might be asking, “What does that really matter? What does that matter to me?” Well it should, because when that changed, so did a lot of other things.

Please bear with me for a moment when I read something that Paul wrote just after the Acts period ended, and take careful note of the words he uses. “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, **If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward:** (this was a brand new dispensation called the grace of God) How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) **Which in other ages was not made known** (very, very important that you see this, it is brand new) unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; **That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:** (and there you have it – Gentiles are fellowheirs with Christ and of His body, this was NEW). Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; **And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery,** (the fellowship that we now share with Christ, the union, the unity, the oneness that those in the kingdom never had or will have), which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:1-11).

The new era that had now begun was called the dispensation of the grace of God, found only in the letters of Paul written after the kingdom era had ended, or in other words, after the book of Acts had closed. During the kingdom period, the inheritance of those Jews and Gentiles was to be an earthly inheritance, “blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth,” said our Lord in the four gospels. But NOW we have a heavenly inheritance that is with Christ in heavenly places.

Our marching orders are simple, and many of them are found in Ephesians 4. But brethren here is the real blessed truth that is being overlooked by so many today – that we live in an age of grace, God does not, move apart from grace in this present age. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead in the book of Acts remember that? Why were they struck dead? For lying to the Holy Spirit. That was what John called the sin unto death. God struck them dead on the spot. Herod was smote dead in Acts 12. The kingdom period was

a period of judgment. One day the kingdom will begin again, but not until the Lord's appearing for us, the present day church which is His Body.

Until that time God deals solely in grace. I don't think that many of us understand or appreciate that as we ought. We are not given a list of rules to abide by per se. We are not given a list of rituals or traditions to uphold. We know that as being a part of this present age of grace that water baptism plays no part in it. The Lord's supper is not practiced because that was a part of the kingdom. We know that God will not openly manifest Himself through the gifts of tongues or of healings. We know that the tithing is a part of the kingdom, and we know that confession of sin is as well. We are free. We are at liberty to worship Him as we see fit in accordance with the post Acts letters, and yet men today will still place themselves under rules and dictates in an attempt to please God, when nothing apart from faith will please Him.

It was Paul's heartfelt desire to make all men see what is the fellowship of this mystery, the fellowship that the believer now shares with Jesus Christ. But you cannot enjoy fellowship with Christ in His Body if you do not know what the differences are between the kingdom body, and the church which is His Body. One of the first differences is that the church of the mystery was a secret as we saw in the passage we read in Ephesians. Nowhere is it referred to, or even hinted at in the OT Scriptures, the four gospels, or the inner Acts letters. It was a mystery, a secret with God held until the Acts period had ended. It was, as Paul said, "hid in God" (Ephesians 3:9).

The mystery of the church which is His Body was planned by God BEFORE the foundation of the world. We are the only believers in all of history that are said to have its origin before the world began. That means that although Israel was God's chosen, and that Israel had the prominence throughout the entire OT, and most of the NT, the church which is His body existed before the nation of Israel ever did. The church which is His body began in Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4), whereas Israel began with the calling out of Abraham, literally several thousand of years later!! Therefore Israel and the kingdom had to be put aside, it had to, because the church which is His Body was already in existence in the mind of God.

Yet perhaps one of the most amazing things regarding the church which is His Body is that is not related to any covenant or promises whatsoever. What that means is that God promised the new covenant to the house of Judah and to the house of Israel, and that is basically the New Testament. Therefore the truth applying to us today cannot be found within the confines of the New Testament. We must go outside the New Testament which means that we must not hear the words "New Testament," and automatically assume it means Matthew-Revelation for that would be a mistake. Our promises were made before the covenant was ever made with Abraham and we are not a part of any such thing.

Finally, and there is so much more, but for the purposes of this study I will finish with the fact that we, as members of the church which is His Body have a unique sphere of blessing. No other group, no other company, no other dispensation, no other age, no other of God's redeemed enjoy this high place of blessing which we enjoy today as members of the church which is His body.