

Kingdom of God Absorption

Now, each one of us needs to take some time to explore our own need. To begin the process, take a moment to absorb the following Scripture.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

(Revelation 3:14-21)

In light of that Scripture, let us consider only our position in the LORD. Let us be selfish, for a moment.

Ooh; somebody is feeling hyper-religious, aren't they?

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What is this stuff about being selfish," they ask. "Of course that can't be right. Everyone knows that we should be ready to perform our service to God in the same fashion as was done by the prophets and apostles of olden times. For instance, we need to perform as recorded in this Scripture; don't we," they ask, with a look and a tone that bespeaks assurance that they are speaking absolute truth. They speak as one who is sure that the entire world will say, yes, to what they have just pronounced.

To add to the inevitability of receiving the, as they think, only possible response, yes; they resort to authority. Wherefore they continue, by saying, "Please pay attention to these words: *seeketh not her own.*" Then they try to bring the full weight of their authority to bear, as they quote Scripture.

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Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

(1 Corinthians 13:1-7)

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Well, yes we do need to behave in that fashion--after we have made it through the preliminaries of getting to that point. The apostle Paul indicated that there was a time during which we were not fully capable of bearing the weight of a public ministry. This prior point is the time in which we have to drink the milk of the word, and of the Spirit of God. These folks are an example of that time.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

(1 Corinthians 3:1-7)

Remember that the Kingdom of God is a place of birth and development. There is only one soul that has been presented to us as being fully grown. However, even in the case of this soul, there was a prior period of training. The prior period of training reached its climax at the time when the following Scripture could be applied to that soul.

*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying,
I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and*

unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

(Revelation 1:10-16)

Prior to that time, even this most austere soul had to submit to the process of growth. In the case of the most austere soul of the Son of God, who appeared to us *like unto the Son of man*, as Jesus Christ; the training period moved to its completion, in the Father, in Heaven. Along the way, at a certain time, Jesus did the following . . .

After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

(John 5:1-9)

Performing such an act, by which a *man was made whole* by an act of the will, would seem to be the work of a personal pioneer in medicine. However, Jesus stated that this was a learned action, and not a matter of his personal independent discovery and development. In a response to his critics, Jesus said that this is the truth of the matter . . .

The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me,

Take up thy bed, and walk.

Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

(John 5:10-18)

In that case, one man, though he was physically ill, was open to absorption of the grace of the LORD; wherefore he received healing. There was, situated in the same place as this man, a whole host of others who coated themselves in carnality, such that they were not able to absorb even the joy that comes when we see God's grace, in action. Indeed, instead of absorbing grace, this group allowed the venom of their arrogance to ooze out. It seems that they thought that the oozing arrogance would overwhelm the elegance of truth and healing. Let me explain, briefly.

Consider the oozing arrogance of one who attempts to find fault, as they developed this thought: *said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.* In the simplest of rebuttals, the following Scripture tells us what we, too, can do to begin our stride toward an equivalence--of a fractional measure--with God.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

(John 4:21-24)

When we add our absorption of the nature of true worship, and we internalize it as a part of our nature, then the LORD God will deliver us to a place that is closer to being equal with Him.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

(1 John 3:1-3)

In all of Jesus' teaching, the LORD God, the Father, is the One THAT must be our focal point of praise. This is true even when we are in the position at which Jesus is, for us, the instrument of the Father's goodness, and the face of the power of God. In such circumstances, we need only to hear again these words of Jesus.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

(John 5:19-21)

Even though Jesus had performed a personal healing, still he deflected credit for the miracle from a human-based power source, himself, to it being an extended act of the Father.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done

good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

(John 5:22-30)

This is further reinforcement for the certification of the Lord Jesus Christ's span of presence between the earth and Heaven. We need for that span to be real, for in that span is our only hope of absorbing the things of the Kingdom of Heaven, as we abide in the kingdom of man, which sits in its place in the Kingdom of God. Jesus tells us what the span of Christ provides.

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

(John 6:61-65)

In a most interesting statement to his disciples, Jesus revealed the actuality of his span, as being the final fulfillment of a host of prophecies. In the following statement, please note that the person speaking is a, then, resident of earth. However, in an almost side comment, the Son of man speaks of the span that allows him to still be in Heaven, even while he is also on the earth.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

(John 3:10-13)

This sort of thing should not be surprising to us. In the book of Genesis, there is an even More Austere hint at the spanning of the two realities. The hint is embedded in the text of a portion of Scripture that describes the prelude to a discussion. It tells us that the

Spirit of God was in a spanning type relationship with the kingdom of man, and, thereby, with the man, Adam.

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

(Genesis 3:8-9)

In the matter of God's walk in the Garden, and how we might explain the, simultaneous duality of far-spaced residence, there was no further need for refinement as a result of His presence on the earth. In the case of Jesus, though, there is a need for further refinement. The presence of Jesus on the earth was a means of perfecting him for the eternal mission that is the substance of his self and of his Spirit. Yes, it is appropriate to refer to the capital "S" Spirit of Jesus, since Jesus is originally a soul that resided, and was prepared for service, in Heaven. The truth of that pre-earth residence is expressed in the words of Jesus Christ.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

(John 17:20-24)

The subject of a revelation that came to the apostle Paul is this: that Jesus was brought to perfection as a result of his presence here and as a result of his absorption of the nuances of his mission. Fortunately for us, the LORD directed the apostle Paul to share this revelation. It is a revelation that tells of the reason that a soul's presence in the Kingdom of God is a personal relationship. No, not everyone will have to go through this rigorous preparation, in order to be allowed to flow in the kingdom of man as they strive to accommodate the things of the Kingdom of God that are activated in their life. The particular weight that we see here is a pioneering requirement that was placed only on the soul of Jesus Christ, for our sake.

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of

Melchisedec.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

(Hebrews 5:5-10)

The requirement that was personally placed on Jesus is one that we should all be thankful for. The prophet Isaiah told us about the burden that Jesus bore, for our sake.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

(Isaiah 53:1-5)

If not for the personal preparation of Jesus for the mission of God, then we would have to directly absorb the burden of negotiating with the LORD God for peaceful abiding in His Kingdom.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

(Isaiah 53:6-9)

Please note that when one absorbs the weight of responsibility that the LORD places on them, God is very gracious with His blessings. By the blessing of God, as a result of

the His generosity, any anguish of absorption will be overlaid and taken away by the healing power of His grace.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

(Isaiah 53:10-12)

Yes, Jesus did move to a time of personal completion in the Kingdom of God, as he finished his assignment on the earth. This is his statement about that completed work. This, too, is the truth that we must absorb, as we move to the personal completion of our first stage of readiness for service in the Kingdom of God.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of

them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

(John 17:1-13)

However, do not be in a hurry. The lesson of the disciples' progressive absorption of their specific, individual assignments (their cross) is a necessary part of our training. For, even though they walked in the body with Christ; still, the disciples of Jesus had not reached the point of personal completion during the time of Jesus' perfection as a result of his mission on earth. In the time of Jesus' personal ministry, there was still some further refinement that was needed in their lives. There were more portions of truth that they needed to absorb.

The commitment to ongoing absorption of the things of the Kingdom of God, such as we see in the disciple of Christ, is the same type of refinement through which we must pass in our movement toward the personal side of our relationship with the Kingdom of God. In the twelve disciples of Christ, in those times in which the disciples were of the mind that they had arrived, Jesus specifically told them that they had not arrived; that their absorption was not complete. This is, too, our reminder of the continual need for ever greater absorption of the way of the LORD, and of our need to do so in patience and with perseverance.

But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Of sin, because they believe not on me;

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

(John 16:5-15)

In a more direct and specific encounter with the need to have a heart that is open and

ready to absorb the things of the Kingdom of God, the disciple Peter serves as an example of the phasing of our personal relationship with God. The lesson of Peter consists of two parts: recognition and intervention. The place of recognition is where we will end this particular portion of our study of the Kingdom of God. Peter had to recognize that he was not yet complete in his personal relationship to the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Peter also had to submit himself to the necessary intervention that would push him further along the righteous road of service.

*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:
and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*
(Luke 22:31-32)

That Peter needed intervention was not unknown to his soul. This is the event that highlighted the need.

*And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.
And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*
(Luke 22:33-34)

In a conversation with Jesus, Peter stated that he needed further intervention. Also, in that same conversation, Peter taught us what we need to do to personalize that intervention. To do this, we must go beyond absorption of the message of the Gospel. To fully take our place in the Kingdom of God, we must move away from cookie-cutter worship. To fully take our place in the Kingdom of God, we must personalize our service to the LORD. Peter gives us an example of this; which, when we return, we will explore further. The second part of Peter's phasing for service, intervention, is not just a matter of interrupting someone's life. Intervention must be a personal part of our being, as we are powered by the Spirit. It is personal commitment that we will explore next. We must be willing to say, for our self, what Peter said for the group: *And we believe and are sure.*

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

*Then Simon Peter answered him,
Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*

(John 6:66-69)

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