

"The Kingdom Is Within You"

(Our Response to His Coming - Luke 17:20-21; Mark 1:14-18)

We are neither passive nor active participants in God's kingdom - we are responsive participants. The King's intervention (which doesn't need our permission or approval!) calls for a response from us. One of the privileges of our Kingdom citizenship is a free "Yes" and a free "No". We exercise that freedom with our "Yes" or "No" to His invitation... and trust Him with the consequences. (See Ga 6:7-8)

In Mark 1:14-18, Jesus "came" - He wasn't invited (He doesn't need to be if He is the King!). He comes revealing and proclaiming the "gospel of God" that requires a decision, a response. Every proclamation of His comes with a command invitation to enter into the revolution of His rule. And there is really only one reason His uninvited interruption would not be considered a "gospel" (good news)... WE WANT TO BE THE KING (think Herod!). The question is simple - who will we crown "King" of the moment? Who will we authorize to be the Way-maker, the Truth-teller, the Life-giver? (Jo 14:6) Every "interruption" below is the upward call of Christ above into His way, His truth, His Life.

Our response often takes the form of repenting and/or consenting - wherein we "un-crown" what is not of the King and "crown" Him to be Lord of the moment. You have heard that "repentance" is a change of direction. That is not wrong, but I think it is more accurate to say it is a CHANGE OF DIRECTORS (Ro 6:16). Turning from one authority - the prince of this world - to another Authority - the King of all Kings! We exchange a "self-dom" for His "kingdom"! We "un-lord" every voice but His.

We also consent to the Truth-teller. We join our chooser to His choice(s) as we say, "I believe, I trust, I obey You!" We experience a conversion - a conversion of trust. The King of the Kingdom becomes the sole object of my faith, the sole referent for my choice(s), the sole standard of all valuation, the sole supply for Kingdom living... MY "SOLE MATE!" We consent to the liberating reality of being under the authority of the King of God's forever Kingdom, trusting ever more that His ways, His truth, His Life are always accurate indicators of reality.

Both repenting and consenting are necessary to experience the reality of Kingdom living. Repenting without consenting often leads to regret, shame, helplessness...even despair. Consenting without repenting can lead to mysticism, gnosticism, and arrogance. Saying "no" to self sufficiency without a "yes" to God's sufficiency can lead to resignation and helplessness. Saying "yes" to God's sufficiency without a "no" to our self sufficiency keeps us trapped in prisons of pride and self effort. When our power has been brought to its end by weakness, "the time is fulfilled" to repent of our own self-generated power. And when His power has been graciously revealed to us, "the time is fulfilled" to consent to His power at work in us. And we can step into the truth that it is no longer I - the subject - who lives, but it is Christ - the King - Who lives in me!

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Greetings

From time to time a favorite verse of mine concerning "grace" is brought again to My attention, "What do you have that you did not receive?" (I Cor 4:7) I was filling out an annual financial report to the U. S. government that is required for all non-profit corporations in order to demonstrate and retain their eligibility for their status and the "right" to send out donation receipts for tax purposes (you can imagine how much fun that is!). I don't resent that process - I'm thankful for it - but it is tedious and time consuming.

About the time I was finishing up the forms, this verse came to my mind! And, once again, I was humbled, stunned, grateful, and encouraged. Humbled - because we have neither "earned" nor "merited" such support. Stunned - because this had been occurring for over 30 years. Grateful - for the generosity of God's people. Encouraged - to continue the journey of expanding the awareness of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" and trusting God to be our Source.

All that to say this, "Thank you!" Thank you for sharing the journey with us through your open homes and open hearts. Your open fellowship and open friendship. Your open counsel and your open contributions. Without your kind and faithful "openness" to us and this ministry, we would have "closed" a long time ago.



CALENDAR



JUNE

5,12,19,26

FBCA*

14

Alachua Study

28

Ocala Study

JULY

8-10

Rockville, MD (240-477-9678)

15-17

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Praise & Prayer



Christ the King's loving "intrusion" in the "all things" of life



Grace upon grace sufficient for our every need



Sensitivity to Christ's "coming" in the "all things" of life



The humility to step into "not I, but Christ"