

"The Kingdom of God Is Within You"

(The Passions and Purposes of the King - John 17:1-26) Part 1

To meaningfully, joyfully live as a kingdom person, the passions and purposes of the King must lead the way. There ought to be something about us as kingdom people (both individually and corporately) that cannot be explained any other way than by the compelling passions and purposes of Christ Himself. John 17 may be the clearest passage in the New Testament revealing His passions and purposes. You may find more than these, but these three are obvious:

- His passion for truth (for the purpose of liberty) - John 8:32
- His passion for oneness (for the purpose of fellowship) - I Jo 1:3
- His passion for self-expenditure (for the purpose of life for others) - I Jo 3:16

The King of Kings has an undeniable passion for truth. Jesus' definition of truth is simple and direct, "Father, Your word is truth!" (Jo 17:17) For kingdom citizens, the truth is what God says (Jo 17:7-8,14-17). A truth "not of this world" (Jo 17:14), it can only be received, never achieved ("by grace through faith"). We do not create or figure out the truth, the truth creates, figures us out! We master no truth, the truth masters us. To receive and believe the truth - what God says - is a conversion of trust. It is always personal - "I believe You!" All our thinking, interpreting, and choosing must be adjusted to the Truth Himself.

Our conversion of trust often starts with a "question" -a thought, a feeling, a tension, a need - which is meant by God to be an "agent" doing His bidding (II Cor 4:17-18). We present our "question" to the King with a non-selective readiness to hear and to obey Him (Ro 10:17). Using some of the indicators we talked about last month, we evaluate our "options" and make a choice of faith. Once made, God may then refine, confirm, or correct our choice until He brings us into the sense of His pleasure - a rest, a peace, a joyfulness, a blessed assurance.

A passion for truth builds in us as I Peter 2:6 becomes more and more our reality, "He who believes in Him shall not be disappointed." For at every point of trusting the truth - what God says - the Spirit of Truth in us does His work of liberating us from what is "not" God, so we may live and move and have our being in what "is" God. God's purpose for us is being fulfilled - that we be ever freer to live without hindrance according to the nature and character of our indwelling King. Once you and I learn by faith to be at home in Christ's passion for truth, we will never again be at home in living a lie!

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• **Tax-deductible contributions** -

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13820 NW 172nd Ave, Alachua, FL 32615

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Praise Reports & Prayer Requests



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Greetings

Many voices today within and without the church are decrying a "connection crisis" -the loss of meaningful, interpersonal relationships across the board. Friendships, neighborhoods, workplaces, even families and churches are experiencing a "dis-connect" - with all of its resultant expressions: rising emptiness, loneliness, and depression; increasing anger, demandness and conflict; the loss of respect, trust, and security; the decline of civility, courtesy, and community.

What's a Christian to do? To begin with, celebrate and live in your "never-ever-worry warranty" of connection with God. One so eternally meaningful and thoroughly interpersonal that "no created thing" can ever separate you from Him (Ro 8:35ff). Two, what you freely received, freely give away! God made room for you, now make room for others. Open your heart, your arms, your home, your church, your schedule to others who may not yet know the "connection" that overcomes all separation. Thirdly, don't forget that most who are experiencing this crisis of connection do not yet have eyes to see the Great Connector. But as His witnesses, they can see you and me. Speak to them. Make the first move to them. Seek to bless them. Invite them in. Show hospitality. And when they ask you why... tell them of the One Who did the same for you! (I Pet 3:15)

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

3,9,16,23,30 FBCA (live streamed)
11 Alachua Study
25 Ocala Study
*First Baptist Church Alachua - For live stream, go to fbcalachua.com, click on FBC on YouTube. Previously recorded options also available on their website.

Praise & Prayer

✋✋ The One Who sought "connection" with us!
✋✋ The Truth Who set us free
✝ The "disconnected" ones in our sphere of influence
✝ To be divested of all that is not Christ

2023 Florida Retreat

February 24-26, 2023 - Alachua, Florida

Same location and hotel accommodations as last year.
Costs and details to come in the next newsletter.
(352-672-1275 OR email OICnewsletter@gmail.com)