

"The Kingdom of God Is Within You"
(The Passions and Purposes of the King - John 17:1-26) Part 2

We noted last month that to live meaningfully, joyfully as a kingdom person is to live with the passions and purposes of the King leading the way. In John 17, we identified at least 3 of these: His passion for truth for the purpose of liberty; His passion for oneness for the purpose of fellowship; and, His passion for self-expenditure for the purpose of giving life to others. We spoke of His undeniable passion for what God says (Jo 17:17) and how His word(s) sets us free from what is "not" God. This month, we'll look into His passion for oneness.

God is really into oneness! He simply cannot abide separation. Trinitarian oneness, incarnational oneness, Christian oneness - all speak of His Holy Passion for Oneness (aka, "love"!). Jesus was clearly passionate about oneness with His Father - "My Father and I are one" (Jo 10:30). He was not sinless because He tried hard to keep the law. He lived a sinless life because He never operated out of anything but a relational oneness with His Father. In John 17, His passion for oneness with us is clearly evident, "That they may be one even as We are... even as You are in Me and I in You... perfected in oneness... with Me where I am..." (Jo 17:11,21,24).

To be "in Christ" is to be brought into God's ultimate intention - into a forever oneness with Himself. (It is a "relational" oneness, not an "essential" oneness - the creature never becomes or is even absorbed into the Uncreated!) His prayer for at-one-ment is quite evident in John 17:24 - "that they may be with Me where I am" - to the cross for forgiveness, on the cross for death to sin and separation, in the grave for putting off and leaving behind the "old", out of the grave in our newly created, eternal oneness. We are forever alive to God in His gospel of fellowship... no gaps, no distance, no space, no "thing" able to separate us from Him and His love. (Ro 8:35ff)

In this celebration of oneness Jesus Christ becomes our relationship to all things. Our daily "battle cry" is "Not I, but Christ!" Our questions change from "How can I...?" to "Who can...?" Our solutions change from trying harder, from self-improvement, from sin management to trusting Christ, to new creation life in Christ, to the righteousness of Christ in me. I am me... He is He... but now we are two operating by grace through faith as one... moving together as He in me, as He through me! (Acts 17:28; Jo 17:23)

The purpose for all this oneness? Revealing His character in order to glorify the King of the Kingdom (Jo 17:1,4, 25-26). The purpose of all this oneness is not to make my life on earth successful or easier. It is not even to improve "my" character. The purpose of this oneness is the release, the escape of His nature (Jo 7:38). For only the King can live worthy of the Kingdom!

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Greetings

Does the news of the day leave you anxious? angry? fearful? Certainly our feelings may "swing" in those directions, but what about you - the real you? What difference does it make that we are personally and eternally connected to the Lord of all things?

What if this is our Father's world? And that we are joined to its Creator while we temporarily dwell upon it? What if most of our angst is not because of a messy planet, but due to inadequate, incomplete, or erroneous objects of faith? What if the point of life now is not a better life, health and wealth, or even cultural transformation? What if the point is about a connection - personally and eternally - to the Lord of this world and the one to come? What if He, through His Saving Life, has brought us into a new creation existence where the world, the flesh, or the devil - not even death - has the final word? Now and forever more?

So where are those who are "steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord?" Who know that life, even below, is not "vanity of vanities" but rather that our "toil is not in vain in the Lord"? (I Cor 15:58) Who have believed and come to know we have "received a kingdom which cannot be shaken"? (Heb 12:27-28)

Where are those, when all hell breaks loose, who "straighten up and lift up their heads, because their redemption is drawing near?" (Lk 21:28) Do you think it may be time we start making use of the keys of the kingdom to unlock the doors of fear that have encased too many of our hearts? If fear is the "lock", then only the perfect love of God can be the "Key" (I Jo 4:18). Why not employ that "key" to cast out the fears that shape and condition too much of our life?



CALENDAR



**** (Steve is on a travel "sabbatical" until 2023) ****

NOVEMBER

6,13,20,27
8

FBCA (live streamed - fbcalachua.com)
Alachua Study

DECEMBER

6

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February 24, 25, 26, 2023

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