

“Life Under God”

January 1. “The Heart of the Problem”

John 17:3

The heart of our problem in our nation, in our lives, families, churches, and communities—can be captured and summarized in these verse found in 2 Chronicles 15:1-6

The first things missing was “the true God”

The Israelites had **not** become atheists. Nor was their attendance at the temple down.

The sacrificial fires continued to burn. Yet despite all of their religious activity, Israel had lost a correct view of the true God.

They wanted a convenient God, one they could control. They wanted a kingdom without a King.

They wanted a figurehead, a puppet with the trapping of kingship only.

Yet any God or king you can boss around isn't the TRUE God, or the TRUE king.

TRUE GOD DOES NOT ADJUST TO YOU. YOU ADJUST TO HIM.

Our culture doesn't want the true God either.

Our culture wants to pay homage (honour) only—to offer a nice little prayer before public meetings.

Yet any time we simply pay homage without aligning our thoughts and actions under God, we are reinforcing our culture's false view of God as a harmless deity. We seek to leave God the title King in name only, but give His power and authority to others or even ourselves.

Reflection:

What is the difference between paying homage and true worship?

In what area of your life do you treat God as a figurehead king and not your TRUE LORD?

How can we align our thoughts and actions under God?

Prayer:

Grant me the Wisdom and ability to Seek You in everything that I do and to live a life reflective of your kingdom agenda.

January 2. "The standard of Truth"

John 1:1

We often complain about what unbelievers do. In 2 Chronicles 15 we see that the Israelites did not seek the true God. That was their first problem, and it is our problem in our nation as well.

The second problem Israel faced, which led to their decay, was a lack of teaching priests. The text doesn't say there were no priests at all. But the priests had stopped teaching the truth. They had traded enlightenment for entertainment. Worship had degenerated into a social club. The church was no longer the epicentre of all life and conscience of the culture, calling people to take God seriously.

Israel was suffering from an absence of spiritual leaders who took seriously the authority of scripture and tell the truth. So Spiritual leaders should tell the truth.

The issue of truth is all-important. The lack of truth leads to a "society without a conscience". People become hardened in their conscience, losing their sense of right and wrong. In such society every person becomes a law unto himself or herself, so chaos rules.

When a society loses truth, it loses meaning, because people are never really sure about anything. There's only one standard of truth: the changeless WORD of the one, true God.

Reflection:

Why is God's Word important to the Christian life?

How can we keep our hearts focused on the truth of God's word?

Prayer;

I praise you and thank you for your word and for the ability you have given each of us to know you and to understand your teaching.

January 3. "Bad information"

Rom 12:12

When you look at the news from your community or your nation, would you describe it as chaotic or peaceful?

The third missing ingredient in Israel was God's law. When a culture has a false view of God built on bad information, God begins to remove the restraint of His law, and evil grows unbridled. What you and I are witnessing today in the rapid worsening of our culture is the reality that God is removing more and more of his restraint.

Even sinners who respect God won't do certain things. But once God is removed from or marginalized in a culture, then the standard for a society is gone and God becomes one's worst enemy and worst nightmare.

That's what had happened in Israel.....When the rule of God's law is missing, chaos replaces community. You cannot have order and structure in society without God. Men become enslaved by the very freedom they seek.

We have ungodly people in our culture who don't want any divine standard to which they must be held accountable. But when God leaves a society, hope goes with him.

As long as you have God, you have hope. He's the one thing you can count on. If God is still in the picture, and as long as His agenda is still on the table, it's not over until it's over.

Even if everything collapses, God will keep you. As long as God is in the front and centre in a culture, life, family or church, there's hope. But when he is removed, God goes to the spiritual suburbs, and the inner city's cultures crumble.

Reflection:

How does a false view of God harm an individual?

How does it harm a community or a culture?

In what area has our own culture gone astray from God's word?

How has my family followed culture instead of God's way—and how can we correct that?

Prayer:

Father , help me to always keep you front and centre of my life. And I also pray that you will help the believers in this nation to do the same as well. Remind us of your pre-eminence over all.

January 4. "God's Agenda"

Mark 4:30-32

When you look around you, it seem like everyone has an agenda. People have plans, programs, things they want to accomplish, and specific ways they want to accomplish them. They make list, set goals, and try to reach them. May be you've got your own agenda as well.

God's is no stranger to agendas. In fact, he has an agenda too; something He wants to accomplish in His way. Scripture calls this agenda God's kingdom. The kingdom of God is the alternative to the kingdom of this world. An "alternative" simply means that it is another way, there is another idea on the table. As God's people, we are not limited by the choices this world offers us. God has an alternative plan for us—called His kingdom agenda.

In the same way that our culture and our country want us to be regularly reminded about our citizenship in the kingdom called India, there is another kingdom—a greater and more perfect kingdom—of which we are a part. It is kingdom of God.

Reflection:

What are the three most important items on your life agenda?

What do these agenda items say about your life priorities?

What place do kingdom values have in your priorities?

Prayer:

Father, reveal to me the majesty and magnitude of your kingdom., of which i am a part. Cause me to know both my place and position, and use me within if for the good of others and your glory.

January 5. "Your Birthplace"

Luke 8:10

If you are an Indian, you are most likely an Indian because you were born here. Likewise, if you are a part of the kingdom of God, it is because you have been born again into his kingdom. This foundational truth not only affects you greatly, but it is also the key to grasping the truth of the Bible.

Then unifying central theme throughout the bible is the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom. From Genesis to Revelation—from beginning to end—is focused on one thing: God's glory through advancing God's kingdom.

When you do not focus on that theme, the Bible presents itself as disconnected stories that may be great for inspiration but seem to be unrelated in purpose and direction. The Bible exists to share God's movement in history toward the establishment and expansion of his kingdom.

It highlights the connectivity throughout, which is the kingdom.

Understanding this principle increases the relevance of this several-thousand-year-old manuscript to your everyday life, because the kingdom is not only then, it is now.

Reflection:

How does understanding the Bible's theme help us read it?

If you were to summarise the bible's theme briefly, how would you describe it?

How is it comforting to know the bible isn't really about us but about God?

Prayer:

Father, open my eyes to see your world in light of the purpose and stories of Your kingdom. Show me the connections throughout scripture and reveal to me the unifying heartbeat of your own heartbeat, which is your kingdom...

January 6: “God’s All-inclusive Kingdom”

Col 1:13-14

The kingdom of God is His rule His plan, His program. It is all-embracing, covering everything in the universe. We can define the kingdom as God’s comprehensive rule over all creation.

If God’s kingdom is comprehensive, so is His kingdom agenda. The kingdom may be defined as the visible demonstration of the comprehensive rule of God over every area of life.

Kingdom means a “rule” or “authority”. It includes the concept of power. So when we talk about a kingdom, we’re talking first about a king or a ruler.

Now if there is ruler, there also have to be “rulees”, or kingdom subjects COL 1:13; in addition, a kingdom includes a realm—that is, a domain over which the king rules. Finally, if you’re going to have ruler, rulees and a realm, you also need kingdom regulations; guidelines that govern the relationship between the ruler and the subjects. These are necessary so that the rulees will know whether they are doing what the ruler wants done.

God’s Kingdom includes all of these elements. He is the absolute RULER of His domain, which encompasses all of creation. Likewise, His authority is total. Everything God rules, He runs.

Reflection:

How do you react to the statement that God’s rule is comprehensive...over every area of life?

What areas are hard for you to submit to God’s authority?

How does your submission to God’s authority allow you to function as you were created to function?

Prayer:

Father, I recognise and honour you as king and ruler. Not only over all your creation, but over me. I exalt your name as the one true king—knowing you are ultimately in charge of all things. Help me to walk according to your rules and regulations because these will guard my life.

January 7th: "HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE?"

2 Corinthians 10:12

WHAT DO YOU SET YOUR CLOCK BY?

There is story about a watchmaker who lived at the turn of the 1900's that set up his shop in a small village. This small village was unique in the fact that eighty percent of the men were employed at the local mill. After the watchmaker had opened up his little shop, he noticed that every single day since the opening, a gentleman would come by and pause for a moment, take out his pocket watch, adjust it very carefully by the clock in the window, put it back in his pocket, and then go on his way.

This went on for a period of weeks. Finally, out of curiosity, the watchmaker stopped him one morning and said to him, "I've noticed for the last of number of weeks now, you've come by, adjusted your watch, and gone on your way." He continued, "Just out of curiosity, I was just wondering what exactly you do for a living that you pass by my little shop every morning and set your watch to start your day?"

The gentleman explained that he was the foreman down at the mill, and it was his responsibility to blow the whistle at lunch time. He went on to explain why it was so important that he have the correct time each day because not only does the whistle signify that it is time for the men to knock off from work for an hour, but that it was amazing how many people rely on this whistle to set their clocks by.

The watchmaker sort of smiled and chuckled to himself and said, "That's interesting, ever since I've been in this village, I've been setting my clock according to your whistle."

I think people tend to do this spiritually also. We look at others and compare ourselves. We adjust our way of thinking by their way of doing things, and the Bible says that if we do this, we are not wise, "... they that commend themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

Always be mindful that others may be setting their clocks by what they see in you life. God made you a unique individual. Always remember that He views you from Eternal perspective and has a unique plan for your life. Do not be conformed to ways of this world that is passing away. Always make good use of your time and to be mindful of it for you do not know how much time you have. Psalm 90:12 says, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

This world is racing towards destruction. Do not be conformed to it. Set your clock to a higher calling in Jesus, The author and finisher of your faith.

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise, Let them flow in ceaseless praise."

May every fleeting moment of your life bring glory and honour to your Heavenly Father for today and all the days of your life!

Reflection: WHAT DO YOU SET YOUR CLOCK BY?

Set my mind on Jesus....

Prayer: Lord let me fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.

January 8th “The King’s Servants”

John 18:36

TOO many are trying to find fulfillment and significance through human means. They are trying to discover their destinies through man’s methods. However, man’s methods have never accomplished God’s goals. Jesus revealed that fully when He answered Pilate straightforwardly. Jesus said **“My kingdom is not of this World. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm” John 18:36.**

In essence, He said, **“My method reflects My source”**. As believers, we are called to be in the world, but not of the world. Similar, a boat is made to be in the water but not of the water. If the boat begins to be of the water and starts taking on water inside of it, it will soon go down.

To be in the world and yet not of the world means that worldliness does not define your decisions.....The king and His kingdom controls your methodology. You seek Him first...

Reflection:

How important is it that a Christian be in the world?

How can one be in the world but not of the world?

Where is your own experience on “in, but not of” out of balance?

Prayer:

Father, help me to let go of my own agenda and my own methods. Enable me to trust You in how things happen, and to trust that You have a way to accomplish Your will in my life. I give You thanks in advance for all you are doing in and through me...

January 9: “Keeping Sight of What Matters Most”

Mat 6:33

God’s kingdom is lived from the perspective of heaven and earth. That’s why Jesus said **“Seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” Mat 6:33;**

What too many Christians do is, mix a little of God with a lot of the world.

Q. Is this something that you have done?

Q. Have you wound up experiencing less of God because His kingdom is not of this world?

When you bring the World into the Word, you are asking the King to bless something that His Kingdom is not a part of, and He won’t do it.

If you lose sight of the kingdom, God’s perspective gets lost and you start focusing on the tangible and temporal things in life. When that happens, your judgment begins to be skewed and your decisions become shortsighted. Rather than living your destiny and purpose, you may end up with wasted time, effort, energy, and emotions.

Yet when God’s kingdom is prioritized, you get to see heaven both rule and overrule in your life. You will witness God trump circumstances and people that you thought had the last word. **Only God has the last word.** You get to experience Him at a whole other level when you experience Him as king.

Reflection

How can a Christian prioritize God’s Word and his Kingdom?

How can we experience earth from a heavenly perspective?
Where are earthly circumstance over whelming your own Vision and blocking your view of God?
How can you change this?

Prayer:

Father, I want to experience You as king in my life. Reveal to me where I am looking to the world's way rather than your way in my thoughts, decisions and actions. Help me to align all of these underneath Your word so that I can benefit from the covering of your covenant and kingdom.

January 10: "Gods Recipe"

Romans 8:28; "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who LOVE God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

Sometimes I walk into the kitchen to see what my wife is cooking. She may be putting together a meal that does not look to me like it's going anywhere. It's a little of this and a little of that and a little of others. "I'll say, "What are you making?" She will answer, "wait and see." If I have the patience to wait while she puts her special touch to the meal, when it comes to the table all I can say is, 'Delicious.'

That's how God works. It Takes a little love of this and a little of that and a little of the other that might not look too tasty on its own. Yet in His Sovereignty, He can mix it, stir in a little Omnipresence, add some Omnipotence, a dash of Grace, throw a little goodness, mix in a little mercy, and a combine it altogether. Then, when it comes out of the kitchen all you say is, "Excellent".

The only ones who can say excellent are those who love God and are committed to His purpose. You've got to be on His agenda not on your own. You've got to be following His path, not you own. It's not, "Lord, this is what I want." But Rather it's "Lord, what do You want?" This is the question that defines a life lived in abundance of king and His kingdom.

Reflection:

Where have you seen, in your own life, God work bad circumstances for your good?
What examples do you have in Scriptures of such instance?
Why do we find it hard to trust God in hard or uncertain times?
Why should we trust him anyway?.

Pray: "Father, grant me the patience to wait with a trusting spirit has you arrange the situation and experiences in my life for your good and glory. I know that you will accomplish good in and through me if I will commit my heart to love you and seek Your will. Thank you for what you are doing—even that which I cannot Yet see.

January 11th "Everything for HIS Glory"

Roman 11:

All things operate for the purpose of Gods glory. **Romans 11:36; says "for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the Glory forever.Amen."**

As you may already know, Amen, means "so be it." God's glory is the bottom line in His kingdom....It is His goal.

Paul said that everything is from God. He is the first cause the source. Then Paul said that through Him everything is. God is also the effective cause of everything in creation. And finally, Paul said that everything is to Him. He is the final cause. It all returns to him to bring Him glory forever.

It is crucial that you understand that God created the universe for His pleasure and His glory, (**Revelations 4:11**), including the creation of you (**Isaiah 43:7**). God did not make the world first and

foremost for you but for Himself. Everything is created to bring him glory and that means you too. This is your chief aim—your highest purpose.

You are to reflect Him and His way through your thoughts, choices, and actions in such a way that people look at you and can't help but give Glory to God.

Reflection:

How can the creation of mankind bring glory to God?

How can you bring glory to God?

How can you and your family honour and glorify God this week?

Pray.

Lord I want to know the sweetness that comes from living a life that glorifies you. Make me an instrument of your praise and let the words that comes from my mouth show off the wondrous work of your Your hands in my heart and life.

January 12th “Satan’s temporary kingdom.”

“how you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! you have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! Isaiah 14:12.

At the beginning of known time, a rebellion took place in heaven. The ‘Star of the morning’ {Isaiah 14:12, the beautiful and powerful angel once known as Lucifer, raised his head and his hand in an attempt to take God’s Throne for Him {13-14}.

God had no trouble defending His throne, and Lucifer was the defeated and kicked out of the heaven’s kingdom. Now is the Satan, **“the Prince of the power of the air” {Ephesians 2:2}, No doubt** disgruntled, vengeful, and on a mission of reclaim the power and prestige he once had.

For a short time, God has permitted Satan to act as a ruler of a rival kingdom, the world of unsaved humanity and the Demons of hell. At this time, Satan has his own kingdom, and we can see and feel its effect everywhere. Whenever you witness rebellions rise up against legitimate authorities, you are seeing Satan at work. The thing that characterise him and his kingdom is rebellious against divine authority.

While Satan’s work might be obvious in the world around you, he will often try to subtly sway you into a spirit of rebellion against God as well. Be on the alert for his schemes which aims to remove God from his rightful place as ruler over your life.

Reflection:

What does Satan wish to gain from getting humans to side against God?

What can human gain in such temptation?

How is Satan defeated in your own life, and that of your fellow Christians?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, I want to be on the alert for Satan’s scheme in my life. Grant me inside and awareness to detect these schemes. Grant me also the strength and wisdom that will take me down a path to avoid falling for his tricks to mislead me. You are my rightful king. May I seek to honour you in that position with my thoughts, words, and action each day

January 13: “Gods Glory is HIS Alone””

Proverb 6:16-17;

Satan's original name, Lucifer, means "shining one star." Lucifer was God's chief angel in charge. But one day he looked into the mirror and became all too smitten with himself. He answered his own riddle, Mirror, mirror on the wall, I'm the fairest of them all. "Satan got what he would call a "God complex," making him quickly dissatisfied with this position.

Eyeing God's throne, he wondered, *"maybe there's room for two."*

Ezekiel 28:16; explains God's response, "by the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned therefore I have cast you as a profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

We get a glimpse into Satan's haughtiness and boasting, which led to God's response, when we read of his five "I will" statements found in the book of Isaiah. These statements clearly outline Satan's root sin, which is PRIDE.

Scripture tells us clearly that pride is first on God's hate list {PR 6:16-17}. One reason God hates pride is that it is the fundamental attitude of kingdom that rivals His own. The next time you feel tempted to take glory for that which should belong to God, remember what happened to Satan.

Reflection

What was God's response to Satan's attempt to climb up higher than a mere creature {Isaiah 40:12-17}?

Why does God hate pride?

Where is pride lurking in your own life?

What will your response be?

Prayer.

Lord, pride is a sin that seeks to take glory away from You. It is the sin that You hate strongly. Sometime it is easier to look at more obvious sin as those that offend You while ignoring this one that often remains internal in the heart. Lord, help me not to feel superior to those who are caught in obvious sins and help me recognize the subtle sin of pride when it swells within me so that I can be convicted to humble myself before you.

January 14th "Our spiritual Foe"

1 Corinthians 1:10;

We don't have to be Christians for very long to discover that the Christian life is a battleground, not a playground. This is because we are waging war in a conflict with a spiritual foe.

One of Satan's strategies is to get us to forget that we are fighting a spiritual battle and to focus on physical, tangible challenges we face instead. Unfortunately, he will often use people to do just that.

Do you ever think, **"my life would be so wonderful if it weren't for people?"**

Most of the problems that we face, in one way or another, can be traced back to people. It could be your mate, your family, your work coworker, or even people with whom you simply do business.

If you look a bit closer, though, behind the scenes of these conflicts and challenges in your life, you will see someone else who is lurking there with a conniving scheme to disarm and defeat you. That someone is Satan, busy pulling the strings and pushing the buttons in this invisible war raging all around us.

One of Satan's primary strategies is to use people to engineer a spiritual downfall by driving wedges between us that shatter our unity and draws our focus away from God. God is the God of unity, and He hangs out where oneness abounds.

Reflection

Where has a wedge been driven in unity between you and fellow Christians?

Where have you erred in other direction, ignoring truth in order to "get along" with someone?

Is there anything in your life with whom you need to be reconciled, or to whom you need to confess that you have been living under a false peace of ignoring truth?

Prayer:

Dear God, it is easy to become distracted by what someone else is doing or saying and think that they are the real problems when, in fact, satan is simply using them to bring about disunity and harm. Give me a heart of kindness, compassion, understanding knowing that you love each of us and seek for us to live lives in unity under you.

January 15th 2019.

“People are not the Problem” (Mark 9:29)

One of the main truths you need to embrace with regard to Satan is understanding that people are not your problem. **“Satan is your problem.”** Satan is their a problem, too.

We Christians are all in the same war, and we all have the same enemy.

Angels and demons are spirit beings without a physical form. sometimes demons inhabit a form that they can use for their own ends. For examples, Satan slithered in the garden as a snake. Jesus send the legion of Demons to drown in the bodies of swine.

Your problem isn't the person you think it is. Your problem is that a Demon is influencing them towards disruption.

Until you realise that your struggle is not with people but with the **“Spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places”** you will never leave out the victory Christ Jesus has secured for you. The next time you face a challenge or enter into a conflict with someone, go to the Lord in prayer. On your knees, fight—and win—this battle, for the victory is the Lord's. Pray for peace, protection, and wisdom for all parties involved and then watch what the Lord will do.

Reflection.

In what relationship have you been tempted to think that the other person is your problem?

What would Satan want you to do in regard to this person/issues?

What does the Bible says about it?

How can you pray for this person.

Prayer.

Dear father, I ask you for peace, protection and wisdom in my own heart as well as in the hearts of those I am in conflict with right now, or may come into conflict with in the future. Grant us eyes to see what Satan is trying to do, and grant us the love that is necessary to treat each other with respect and honour as coheirs of the grace of God.

Shows us the right way to overcoming conflict and living victoriously under you.

January 16th 2019.

“Grace Freely supplied”

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.” (Ephesians 6:10)

Do you feel weak and helpless in the struggles of life?

The strength that you need to successfully do battle with the devil has already been supplied to you by God. You already have all that you need to win this war. Your strength is not accumulated nor it is earned.

It is supplied by grace of God, who equips you to live the life to which you have been called.

Paul said; **“be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.”**

Paul tells you to be **“strong in the Lord”**. In your humanity, you do not have the power to overcome angels—even fallen ones like the devil and his legions.

God himself is the only one capable of putting the devil in his place. He is the One who empowers you to achieve victory in your encounters with darkness, because your victory rest in Him.

Doing battle with Satan requires more than a dose of willpower. All warfare requires weaponry. Spiritual warfare requires spiritual weaponry. These weapons are given to you by God, and when you wear and apply them, you are assured the victory that God has in store for you. Your strength comes from Him. Wear it well and you will experience His victory in your life.

Reflection

Where do you need strength today?
What have you been relying on to supply your strength?
In what area do you need God's wisdom?

Pray for his strength and his wisdom, and wait on him.

Prayer

"God, my strength is in you. I do not have the ability to overcome Satan or his Demons or their schemes in my own strength. But you have more than enough power to do so if I will align myself Under you and tap into your strength. Give me a reminder somehow when I am starting to face my battles alone. Gently nudge me that I may remember to find my strength and victory in you and in your might.

January 17th 2019.

"Thinking Spiritually"

Ephesians 3:10;"so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly place."

If you don't know how to function in "heavenly places," you are going to face challenges in your earthly places. Many Christians are trying to "live heavenly" without living in the heavenly places.

In the heavenly places, God and Satan are at war to see who will establish the rule that govern earth. The nature of satan's Kingdom makes it imperative that you learn to think spiritually. Why? Because if you are not thinking spiritually, you won't be in tune with what is happening in the heavenly realms. You won't recognise Satan's agenda when you see it, so you won't be able to wage victorious spiritually warfare.

Living and battling in the heavenly places means identifying with the spiritual world-view and participating in a divine frame of reference. You need to learn to put the spiritual ahead of the physical, because your real battle is against a kingdom that seeks to influence and dominate you spiritually.

Satan knows that if he can get you hooked into his way of thinking spiritually, the physical will follow. He knows that if you can get to your mind, he can dictate the action that follow. To wage victorious warfare in the heavenly places, you must set your mind on Christ and His truth.

Reflection:

What occupies your thoughts?
Are your thoughts focused on temporary, earthly issues or on ones of eternal significance?
How can you do a "priority adjustment" towards a focus on internally significance?

Prayer.

Lord, I know that my victory lies in the heavenly places. That means I need to think spiritually from your perspective I'm not my own. Give me a spiritual eyes to see what you are doing and what your

strategy is for defeating the enemy's schemes in my life. Open my heart to know when Satan is seeking to defeat me, and grant me joy as I set my mind on Jesus Christ and the pureness of His love and power.

January 18th 2019.

“Ruling under God’s Authority” (Revelation 20:1-2)

When God created Adam and Eve, He said, “***Let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth***” (Genesis 1:26).

Then God told them to “subdue” the earth (v.28). This is known in theological terms as the Dominion covenant.

In other words, it was impossible that God would not have a kingdom that would rule over and defeat the kingdom of Satan.

When Jesus Christ sets up His millennial kingdom, it will be the final, triumphant declaration of God’s glory. Satan will then be chained up during the time of demonstrate his utter defeat and judgement (Revelation 20:1-3).

Yet, for now, God has created you and me to harness and rule a part of His creation. Every person was created with that divine intent.

Why is important for you to grasp the unfolding of God’s kingdom? because when God said “**let them rule**”, He made that statement for you. This is my commission from God. God stated that He would not rule independently of man—that mankind’s decisions would now carry weight regarding what He did or did not do.

He did this for one reason to demonstrate to the devil that he could do more through a lesser creature—through you—in manifesting His glory than through the once “shining star”. God has a plan for you that is bigger than you.

Reflection

Has Satan’s kingdom gained a foothold in your life or your thoughts.?

What has God done about satan’s kingdom? Read and meditate on revelations 20.

Prayer.

Lord, you desire to shine through me. I am humbled that you have chosen me to demonstrate to Satan and his Demons that you can accomplish great things through me when I commit my life to you.

Jesus, help me to rule wisely. Enable me to influence the realms in which you have Placed me well. Expand my influence that I may be used to demonstrate great things in your name and to bring you Glory

January 19th 2019.

“Aligning with God’s will”

Then God said, “let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds in the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on this earth” (Genesis 1:26).

A number of people think that there is a battle going on between God and devil...There is no battle going on between God and the Devil if there was, it wouldn’t last long.

That’s that’s like saying David Noronha and Mike Tyson are fighting. We might both climb into the ring together to fight it out, but I would be no match for Mike Tyson, even at his age now.

Satan, a created being, is no match for omnipotent creator. That's not even a fight. But what God did do was create an inferior creature—humanity—you, Who are not even competition with Satan or his demons on our own, to demonstrate that in the spiritual battle, even the inferior creature can win when he or she operates according to God's governance, authority, and kingdom agenda.

You and I were cast in a cosmic conflict to manifest God's rule in history for the advancement of his kingdom and reflection of His glory. And one way this is done is through the dominion covenant—your ability and commission to rule through decisions that are made in alignment with God's sovereign rule.

Reflection

what does it mean to be made in God's image?

Why does a Christian not need to fear Satan?

What authority do you have under the dominion covenant?

How is your authority limited?

Prayer

God, I am excited to see what you're going to do in and through me. you have created me to carry out your influence on earth. You have also embodied me with your holy spirit so that when Satan seeks to disrupt me somehow, you can defeat him. I look forward to all that you have planned as I learn to place myself under your comprehensive rule in my life.

January 20th 2019.

"The authority of God's word"

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'indeed, has God said, 'you shall not eat from any tree of the garden?' (Genesis 3:1;).

The first conversation between the devil and a human being is about God. Not only that, but it's about God's word. Satan asked Eve, "indeed, has God said...? Satan did this because he knew that in order to get rid of God's rule, he had to get rid of the authority of His word.

Very important part of Satan's strategy is that he did not seek to get rid of religion. the whole conversation is about God. In fact, he even goes so far as to tell Eve that she can be "like God" (Genesis 3:5).

Satan doesn't mind religion. you can go to church all day long if you want to. What he does mind is when you acknowledge God as rule over your life. This is evidenced through a very clever manoeuvre Satan did read linguistically with Eve.

Prior to the conversation between The women and the snake, God is referenced in scripture as "Lord God" which means "ruler, absolute authority."

Yet when Satan talked about Eve, he removed the word "Lord." He removed the fundamental principle of God as the rightful king over His kingdom. This issue in the garden was whose word would be fine. Will God be "Lord God"? Or will you just say that he is "God" while making your own decision?.

Reflection

Are you at times tempted to acknowledge God about avoid acknowledging His lordship over you?

What area of your life have been hands-off to God's lordship?

What will you do about this?

Prayer

Lord God—Jehovah Elohim, I look to you as both my creator and my Lord. You are holy, righteous, powerful, and pure. May I never separate religion from a relationship with you. Keep me from turning the divine truth of who you are into a mere duty. You are my Lord and you are also my God.

January 21st 2019

“God’s Glory and Human Purpose”

Satan said, *“for God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, Knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3.5)*

Whenever you allow the evil one to cause you to question the ultimate authority of God in your life, you jeopardise your influence in His kingdom. That is why so many Christians never fully live out their destiny. You were not designed to live a purposeless life. God has given you a responsible position to fill as manager in His kingdom.

In the garden, Satan challenged God’s authority as the Ruler of His kingdom. His strategy is revealed in Genesis 3.5, where the Serpent told Eve, “God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, Knowing good and evil.”

Satan tried to persuade Eve to think that God was being jealous of His deity. But Satan knew no one could be like God. How did he know? Because he had tried it already himself and got thrown out of heaven. Satan attempted to sell Eve the same exact lie he had once sold himself. God created you for His glory. So whenever you try to take glory for yourself and live independently of Him, you are living outside of your intended purpose.

Reflection

Take time to think through the good things God has placed in your life. Take time to think through the character qualities God has, and which He uses for His glory and your benefit. As you think through your who God is, thank Him for His attributes (character qualities).

Prayer

Father, the air I breathe comes from you. The lungs that take it in come from you. The sun that gives me warmth comes from you. The food I eat comes from you. Nothing that I have done or could ever do comes from me. You are the creator and sustainer of all things. I give you praise because I know that I am fully depended upon you.

January 22nd 2019

"The Church's Job"

1 Timothy 3:13-15

Biblical authority expands from the person and the family to the church. God's kingdom is expanded through the influence of the church. The job of the church, as God's the New Testament covenant people, is to model the principles of His kingdom in such a way that even the ungodly will say, "**that makes sense. That's the best way to live.**"

When the church is not the church, then society has nowhere to look for an answer since the churches uniquely preserve and depository of divine truth (1 Timothy 3:13-15).

Jesus said His people are to be "***the salt of the earth***" and "***the light of the world***" (***Matthew 5:13-15***). The job of the church is to illuminate the truth, not just to pontificate about the truth. As members of the church, we need to show the truth and not just talk about it. Our job is not just to point out what the world should do but to illustrate before the world what Christ can do through what we do.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; the Bible was given so that God's people would be a "***equipped for every good work.***"

If the Bible is not good enough for God's people to live by, how can it be good enough for the world? If the Bible can't straighten us out, how can you straighten out the MLA, MP, The President, The Prime Minister.....of this world? It's got to work in the family of God if it's going to work in society. You were not called to be the salt of the salt shaker, you were tasked with being the salt of the earth. All of us in the body of Christ share this same calling and we need to hold each other accountable to do it.

Reflection :

What does it mean for the church to be salt (light) to the world?

What are God's mean to equip God's people for every good work?

What are the good work God has placed in your own path to be done?

Who are the people who need God's love shown through you?

Prayer :

Lord, Sometime people cannot tell the difference between saved and the unsaved, forgive us father. Enable us to live a life worthy of advertising your kingdom to the lost and perishing.

January 23rd 2019

"Leaders on God's Behalf"

Proverbs 14:34; "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

Paul told us in ***1 Timothy 2:2***; to pray for our leaders and those in authority so that we might have a peaceful Society. We need to pray that leaders will become SENSITIVE to God's way of doing things, because the culture can be a reasonable place to live if it is informed by biblical principles.

The Bible says that God sets up and deposes Kings (Daniel 2:21).

David said, "I will also speak of your testimonies before Kings" (psalm 119:46).

David knew that society must run by God's rules.

In (Deuteronomy 17:19) that the king of Israel was required to read God's Word each and every day. A nation is going to stand or fall based on whether God's rules have permeated the culture.

Even though many don't know it, our governmental leaders are also religious leaders. The Greek word for minister is a religious term. It means "**one who acts on God's behalf.**" so although leaders serve in the civil realm, they are still God's ministers.

That is, our leader's jobs are to uphold and carry out God's standard in the civil arena. For instance, The Bible forbids murder. When murder is committed, a minister, in this case called a judge, must act and impose, appropriate punishment on the murderer.

Whether or not the judge acknowledges it, the rule being imposed—"you shall not murder"—is God's rule. The reason He gave it is that we are made in His image. So when a person commits murder, he or she has in reality attack God.

So when that happens, God has his representatives, His ministers, To act on His behalf in punishing the offender. Judges may not even realize they are acting as God's ministers when they impose such a sentence, but the Bible says that's what they are doing.

Reflection :

How is it reassuring to know that rulers act under the God—given authority?

What rulers act within your own community (your government leaders, school authorities, etc)?

Take time to pray that these people would have God's wisdom at day as they make decisions...And that you and your family would have the proper attitudes toward them as well.

Prayer :

Lord, You have created the rules by which we live, Lord. Your creation follows those rules without complaint or argument. Help us as your people to follow them as well and hold each other accountable to YOUR order.

January 24th 2019

"Drawing a straight line"

(Isaiah 33:22)"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; He will save us."

Why is it so imperative that you learnt to function by biblical authorities? A Simple exercise will demonstrate your need. Take a blank sheet of paper and try to draw a straight line down the middle. What will happen? It will be crooked. I don't care how steady your hand is, if you try to draw a straight line on your own there's going to be a curve in that line somewhere.

But now try a straight line with the ruler. Lay a ruler next to your line and draw another line with it. The difference will be obvious.

You get the idea. When you try to live life on your own, it's going to be crooked. I don't care how much you try or how straight you are, your life is going to have lumps and bends in it because the best of us can't live in a straight live on our own.

To many of us in God's kingdom are trying to live life on our own, and we keep messing up. But if you'll let the Word of God be your ruler and draw your life according to its standard, You'll take care of the bumps.

God Word is the only authority that will enable us to draw a straight line in our personal life, in our family life, in the church, and in society. There's only one King in this kingdom, and He has a ruler call to His Word. That's our standard.

Reflection :

Are you living life by your own standards or God's ?

How are you making sure that you hear, know, and understand God's Word?

How are you training your children (or young men/women within your circle of influence) in the Word of God?

Prayer :

Lord, your Word is the authority and the guideline I am to use to show me how to live my life for you.

You'll take care of me as I seek you, and for that—I am truly grateful.

January 25th 2019**"Our First Priority"**

Psalm 25:4; "make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths."

Much of your life whether it shows up on successes or failures Will be determined by your priorities. What you put first in your thoughts, desires, and choices will affect the fruit or consequences you then face.

Jesus spoke about our priorities in the longest sermon He ever preached while on earth, is called the sermon on the Mount. Now, people in my congregation may think I preach a long time, but Jesus someone takes up three full chapter (Matthew 5 to 7) in the Bible. That's a long sermon.

His messages addressed to believers originally to His disciples. And it is primarily a sermon about the Kingdom whose centerpiece revolves around one verse:

In fact, this one verse is the centerpiece of kingdom living altogether. "***Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you***" (Matthew 6:33).

The word that I want to focus on from this passage is the word **FIRST**, because it is the diminishing of the value of this word that has led to the diminishing of the experience of God in many of our lives.

To live life to its fullest and to accomplish and experience all that God has created you to do, and His kingdom must be first. God is not to be one among many—He is to be first.

The problem in most of our lives today is that God is merely in the vicinity; He is not first. I often hear people say i just don't have enough time for God, which means that they are really telling God is not first place in their lives. This is because a person will always make time for what is first, for what matters most.

Reflection :

What does it means for God to be the first in our lives?

What does it look like for God to be first?

Where does God come in second (or later) in your life...and How can you put Him back in FIRST place?

Prayer :

Lord, First. that's where You belong. That's where You deserve to be in my life, Lord. First. Forgive me for not always putting You first. But I will try to do so, starting now. Help me to make You first.

January 26th 2019

“Our First Love”

(Colossians 1:18) “He is also head of the body, the church, and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he Himself will come to have first place in everything.”

Frequently in Scriptures we read about God and the offering where He ask for the “**first fruits**” of all that He has given to us. As just one example of many, we read in **Proverbs3:9**; **“Honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your products”**

Jesus in Revelation 2:4; wasn't saying that they did not love Him at all. In fact, He applauded them for being upstanding people who have “perseverance and have endured My name's sake, and have not grown weary” (v3). But what he was saying is that they had left your “**first love**”. They no longer regarded Him as first in the hearts or in their lives.

When the God that you acknowledge as God is not treated as God, then His kingdom and its benefits are not experienced by you. The follow-up portion of the Verse we looked at in our yesterday's devotional (Matthew 6:33), states clearly that when you put God first, then “all these things” will be given to you. The corollary of that rings true as well—when you do not put God first, then you are missing out on all of the benefits and blessings of the king and His kingdom. That doesn't mean that you won't have problem or issues in life. What it does means is that you will be well equipped to overcome or get through those problems and issues.

Reflection :

Why is it so important that God be first in our lives?

Read **Colossians 1:12-20**. Ask God to help you keep Christ first in all that you do this week.

Prayer :

Lord, you aren't in add on, God. You aren't something or someone to get to when I have extra time. You deserve the first portion of my energy, thoughts and emotions. I want you to be in that place in my life. Help me to be always put You there.

January 27th 2019

“Talk to him first”

James 1:18; “in the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruit among His creatures.”

One of the major determining factors to know if you are putting God first in your life is to ask yourself where you turn when you have a decision to make.

When you have a problem to resolve, or you need guidance, do you turned to people first? Do you turn to your desires first? Or do you look to God, His Word, and His principle first?

Getting God's perspective on a matter and then applying it to the particular situation you are dealing with is one revealer of God's position in your life.

Perhaps you are wondering why are you not hearing from God or experiencing His presence and victory in your life. God's answer to your question is simply, “because you don't look to Me first. In fact, you go to the world—a system that leaves Me out—first. And then you only come to Me when none of that works out.”

The key to kingdom success is found in this word, First. It is the prioritization of rule of God over every area of life where the power of kingdom living is realized.

Reflection :

Where do you turn first when you face a crisis or an important decision?
What does your decision-making say about your priorities?
How can you put God in first place in today's issue and choices?

Prayer :

Lord, help me to priorities your kingdom-to priorities you-is the key to living a life filled with your Abundance. Lord, I see that-it's just that I sometimes get distracted, and I forget. Gently nudge me and remind me to put you first when I have forgotten to do so.

January 28th 2019**"The Antidote to Worry"****Matthew 6:25;**

God says that if you will seek His kingdom first and His righteous standards first, then He will willingly grant you all of the things that often makes themselves the focus of your worry.

You ought to put God's kingdom first if for no other reason than to reduce your personal anxiety and worry. Countless suffer from worry or anxiety. Worry is a common issue plaguing people today. Perhaps it is even plaguing you?
Whether it's worrying about jobs, Safety, Healthy, Relationship, Flying, income, terrorism, the future, or anything else—worry eats away at many people's ability to enjoy the gift of life that God has given them.

God tells us in this foundational principle for kingdom living—that of seeking Him and His kingdom first—that we actually don't have to worry at all. God Himself is the very antidote to worry. In this sermon by Jesus that we have been looking at Matthew 6, we also read:

V25; "for this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life".

V27; "And who of you by being worried...."

V28; "And why are you worried.."

V31; "do not worry then.."

V34; "So do not worry...."

That's enough reason right there to put God First

Reflection

What does worry accomplish in life?

What does God say about worry?

Read Matthew six, and choose one or more versus to Memorize.

Prayer :

Father, there are so many things that I worry about. Sometime I call these things concerns, but it's worry. I don't want to worry but I do. Help me to focus on You and live in the peace of Your sovereign control and perfect will.

January 29th 2019

“Worrying About Tomorrow”

Matthew 6:34; so do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself, each day has enough trouble of its own.

Most people are being crucified between two thieves: yesterday and tomorrow. They kill today because of what happened yesterday, and they are too scared today because of what may happen tomorrow. Do you know that today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday?

In other words, as long as you are on earth, you will never run out of tomorrows. There will always be a tomorrow. So until you learn to make today what today is supposed to be—to embrace today, size it—then you will perpetually live your life either being bound by yesterday or tomorrow, or even chained between both.

I would like to challenge you to change one thing and watch that one thing change everything else. When you put God first, all else will fall in place. Make Him First in your thoughts, hopes, and decisions. Put Him first in how you spend your time. Place Him first in how you view the world around you. Please Him first, honor Him first, give to Him first....And all else will get in line.

God doesn't say that to put him first is the a request. This is a demand from a deserving King. But when you choose to obey this principle in your life, you will reap the benefits of experiencing the abundance life Christ came that you may have.

God's got your BACK when you put Him first. He has you COVERED when you place His will and His kingdom as the first priority in all that you do, say, and think.

Reflection

How are yesterday and tomorrow thieves?

How does placing God first rob these thieves of their power?

Prayer

LORD, I can't change yesterday, nor can I control tomorrow. But I do have a say in what happens today—what I think, what I choose, what I do. Today, I put You first. Thank you for today!

January 30th 2019

“In Kingdom Living”

Psalms 25:5; “Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for You I wait all the day.”

Have you ever experienced what it's like for God to have your back? That is an awesome thing. But too many people never get to experience that because they refuse to put Him first. This is His kingdom and He is the rightful King—putting Him any place other than first is foolishness.

Keep in mind we are to seek His “kingdom” and “His righteousness.” Kingdom simply means His authoritative rule along with the visible demonstration of it comprehensively in every area of life. Righteousness is the standard God requires for people to be rightly related to Him. It includes abiding by the government guidelines He has set as the king, and humbly aligning yourself underneath the blood of Jesus Christ.

Righteousness, simply defined, is God's standard for living life. His kingdom and His righteousness are to be what each of us seeks first. Without them, we are wandering aimlessly around without the support and the backing of our king.

In Kingdom living, if you fail to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness first, all else is nothing simply because He has established His rightful place as first; without it, you are on your own.

Reflection

Why is it necessary to seek God's kingdom first?

What does it mean to seek His righteousness?

Ask God to help you keep Him first place in your life.

Prayer

God, I don't want to be on my own. I want You to have Your rightful place in my life. I want Your kingdom and Your righteousness to be my driving force and greatest passion.

January 31st 2019

"Your Kingdom Password"

1 Corinthians 6:20; "For you have been brought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

When you look around at the Christian community today, you frequently see chaos. Marriages are falling apart; singles are struggling to be content. Debt rules. Addiction runs crazy. And yet so many people are faithful in church, leaving many to conclude, "My Christianity is just not working." They are worn out, lonely, miserable, and frustrated, to say the least.

Many have come to conclude that either this thing called Christianity is not real, or is simply not real for them. However there is a reason why so many well-intentioned believers are falling short of God's best in their lives. This is because without the password called "priority" they cannot access all that God has in store for them. The way that you express priority is through surrender.

If you have a smartphone, it is likely that you have a password restriction on it so if you unintentionally left it somewhere, a stranger—or a friend—couldn't pick it up and take advantage of the personal information. Passwords are often critical to the whole process of access, and the password for victorious kingdom living is this word: first.

Will you place God first in your life, you will be granted the access to the rightful blessing, authority, and provision that He has in store for you. He will meet your needs and satisfy your desires. But His standard as king cannot be lowered. His position as first cannot be altered or else that would cheapen Him, and He is not cheap. Salvation may be free, but it cost Jesus Christ a dear price. It was not cheap.

Reflection

When you think of God's blessing, are you tempted to think in terms of wish fulfillment?

What blessing have all of us received in Christ?

What blessings have you personally received?

Thank God for two or three of these.

Prayer

Lord; Thank you, Jesus, for Your sacrifice. Thank you for the cost of YOUR life so that I could also know eternal life. Show me where I am not putting YOU first so that I can change these things to Honor You.

February 1st 2019

“True Worship”

Roman 12:1; “therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

The problem with many Christians is that, while they have made a decision to become a Christian by trusting in Jesus Christ for their salvation, they have not yet made a decision to become a disciple.

They have not surrender their lives in such a way so as to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ. The difference between a decision maker and a follower is simply surrender.

What Paul is telling us in Romans 12:1-2; is that God wants us to present us to Him. He wants you to put you on the altar. You are to present your life—that means all of you—to Him on His alter. Keep in mind, in the old Testament times when a sacrifice was placed on an alter, the priest did not just put the head, or the arm, or a portion of the lamp on the alter. He put the entirety of the being on the alter. What too many believers have done is put a portion of the time, talents, and treasures on God’s altar and assumed it is enough.

It is not. God wants all of you to be given Him.

In fact, throughout Scripture we read that anytime God wanted to do something big for His people, He always requires sacrifice first. There had to be something present that demonstrated sincerity and commitment. See, worship is not simply singing songs on a Sunday. True worship, as outlined in Romans 12, is giving yourself to God in your entirety.

True worship including surrender.

Reflection

Why did God require sacrifices (dead sacrifices) of old Testament believers?

What does it means for us to be living sacrifices?

Do you find yourself holding back parts of your life from God? Read Romans 12.

Prayer

Lord, You want all of me to be given to all of you. I want that, too. I want to honor You through my thoughts, action, words, and choices. Help me, Lord, to do that; thank you for helping me.

February 2nd 2019

“A living Sacrifice”

Deuteronomy 28:1; “Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do ALL His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of this earth”.

I like the story of the chicken and a pig. Both are walking down the streets one day when they come to a grocery store with a sign with the window which reads, "bacons and eggs desperately needed". The chicken looks at the pig and says, "I'll give them the eggs if you'll will give them the bacons."

The pig stares back of the chicken and replies, "No way."

The chicken ask, "Why not?"

To which pig states, "because for you it's a contribution, but for me it's my life." unfortunately today we have too many Christians who are only willing to give God an egg Here and there, and after they do so they think they've have given enough. They they wonder why God isn't showing up miraculously in their lives. The reason He is not is that God has asked us as Kingdom followers to climb up on the altar alter and give Him our all. Or Another thing that believers will do is climb up on the altar and then climb back off.

Our King has asked each of us to live our lives as a "living sacrifice". Quite literally, a sacrifice is a dead thing. So the truest interpretation of this term is that we to be a "living dead things." We are to be alive to God and HIS desires and will while simultaneously being dead to our sinful nature and our will.

We are to surrender to Him. the way that you surrender to an almighty God is by placing His priorities first in your life and making them your priorities as well.

Reflection

What does it means to be alive to God and dead to ourselves?

Why does God require this?

How can you live to God and die to yourself in your life this week?

Prayer

Lord, I surrender. I place your will, priorities, precepts, and principles above my own thoughts, reasoning, and choices. I want to obey you in all that I do. Thank you for giving me the desire to do that, and increase that desire.

February 3rd 2019

"Relationship with God"

John 15:4; "Abide me, I and in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the wine, so neither you can you unless you abide in me."

As you put God first in your life, make certain that what you do is rooted in relationship rather than its rulers. Too frequently people will confuse structure for surrender. They cross off a list and think that they have put God first. When in actually, if God is first, you don't need a list because you will naturally seek Him, His heart, and His way in your own personal surrender out of love. Whenever religious activity trumps relationship, the victory of Christ is no longer experienced in the fullness it ought to be in the believer's life.

One of the greatest dangers in our churches today is for religion to replace an intimate relationship with the same with the Saviour. By religion, I mean the external adherence to exercise codes, or practices in the name of God yet apart from God. For Example, if you go to church because it his religious, or Spiritual, thing to do rather than because you are motivated to spend time worshipping God, learning about Him, and experience Him, then that is religion. Religion is anything you do for God that does not stem out of a heart connected to God.

It's not that there aren't a lot of people doing a lot of excellent things. A lot of these same people attend church, help the hurting, or say all the correct spiritual platitudes. It's just that they've missed the priority of the Kingdom. They've missed the relational connection that comes through voluntary surrender. They have not made God first in their hearts. And then they wonder why they aren't experiencing any victories, power, hope, and authority in their lives.

External observation—the rules of religion—can actually get in the way of a relationship. When you are motivated by relationship, surrender comes naturally.

Reflection

How is the difference in motivation between religion and relationship important? What did Jesus warn religious leaders that they knew the law but their hearts were far from God (Matthew 15:1-8)? Have you found yourself drifting into a rule-based religion? Read Revelation 21:1-7.

Prayer

Lord, you are my joy. You are my delight. Knowing you is my passion. Thank you for reminding me to put my focus on You and not on rituals that reflect religion.