

LEARNING TO LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

BY Sue Whisenhunt

There are many benefits of living in His Kingdom. This scripture is primary and very significant for walking and living in all the benefits of the kingdom of God. Its Mathew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." We need to be seeking Him and His Kingdom with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. Both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, we are instructed to seek Him with our whole heart and soul. Deuteronomy 4:29 (NKJV) says...you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. In Mathew 22:37 Jesus tells us, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." It is the first and great commandment.

We know what it's like to live under a system of bondage and then be set free, because that's what happened to us when we were born again. We were delivered out from under the oppressive regime of the devil and translated into the freedom of the Kingdom of God. We must know we have been purchased out of the Kingdom of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of Light (Colossians 1:3 NKJ). So by Jesus' blood, you and I were transferred into a new Kingdom, the Kingdom of the Son of His Love.

When that transfer first happened, we initially had no idea how to function in our new spiritual environment. The operating system of God's Kingdom was a mystery to us. That new Kingdom has specific protocols and ways, principles and laws regarding how to walk and live in that Kingdom.

Many Christians get the idea it's supposed to remain a mystery. They hear someone say that God's ways are past finding out, so they go to church and read their Bible without expecting to learn anything. "Well, you just never know what God's going to do." They say. "He works in mysterious ways."

As spiritual as such statements might sound, they're totally unscriptural. Jesus never said God's ways are supposed to be a mystery to us. He said just the opposite. He said, "Unto you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:10).

Do you realize what that means? It means that, as born-again citizens of heaven, we have access to inside information. We can understand God's methods of operation; His laws and principles. We can study His WORD and gain insight and learn the process by which He operates. Oh, the benefits of living in New Testament times. We have a new recreated spirit on the inside of us; plus when we ask Holy Spirit to come live in us, we have part of the Trinity living inside us (Luke 11:13).

LESSONS FROM THE MASTER

This kind of information will change your life and it is His will for you to have possession of it. In I Corinthians 2:9-10 AMP, the Bible states, "...as the Scripture says, What eye has not seen and ear has not heard and has not entered into the heart of man, [all that] God has prepared (made and keeps ready) for those who love Him [who hold Him in affectionate reverence, promptly obeying Him and gratefully recognizing the benefits He has bestowed]. **Yet to us God has unveiled and revealed them by and through His Spirit,...**" This is God's plan for His servants. He desires you to know all that He has prepared for you and His ways of getting it to you!

After all, He has not hidden His kingdom ways from us, but for us! Proverbs 25:2 states "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter (a thing), But the glory of kings is to search out a matter (a thing)." We have been made kings and priests under Jesus, our Lord and master. It is in our seeking Him with our whole heart that these things, His ways and methods of operation, are revealed to us.

If you want to see how, just look at what happened to Peter in the New Testament. The first time Jesus gave him a command, he knew nothing about Kingdom operations. He had no idea how to co-operate with these principles. So he missed a major opportunity.

You may remember the story. Jesus had borrowed Peter's fishing boat and preached from it to the multitudes on the Galilean shore. After finishing His message, He turned to Peter and said, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch."

"Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing: Peter answered, nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:4-5).

Notice Jesus said "nets" (plural) and Peter said "net" (singular). Why did Peter alter Jesus' instructions? Because he was exhausted from the night's work. He's already washed all his nets. He did not want to throw them back into the sea and get them dirty again just because this preacher—who obviously knew nothing about fishing—thought it would be a good idea. So he chose to use just one old, rotten net so it wouldn't matter if he didn't have the energy to wash it again later.

Of course, Peter soon regretted his choice because when he threw the net into the water, so many fish jumped into it that it broke. He had to call his fishing partners to come help him. While they hauled in the catch of a lifetime, Peter fell down at Jesus' knees right there in the boat. With fish tails slapping him in the face, he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of the fishes which they had taken" (verses 8-9).

Just think what that must have been for Peter! Even though the fishing trip was a success for his partners, for him personally it was a colossal failure. Why? Because he did not yet have insight into the mysteries of God's Kingdom.

Sometime later, however, it was a different story. When the Temple tax collectors came around demanding money, Peter didn't even flinch when Jesus told him once again, to go fishing. "Go thou to the sea and cast in a hook. Take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find there a shekel. Take it and give it to them for Me and for yourself" (Mathew 17:27).

Talk about a strange set of instructions! Jesus didn't even tell Peter to use any bait. He said, "Just throw in the hook and a money-carrying fish will get on it." If Jesus had said something like that to Peter the first day they met, he probably would have said, "Mister, what have you been drinking?" But this time he'd been walking with Jesus, his Master, for a while and listening to Him teach. He'd heard Jesus say things like, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner" (John 14:10, 5:19)

By watching what happened when Jesus heard and obeyed the WORD of the Father, Peter gained some insight into the mysteries of the Kingdom. He'd learned that when you say and do whatever Jesus tells you to say and do, God's power goes to work and you come out way ahead!

TRAVELING LIGHT

Peter wasn't the only one who learned some lessons either. Jesus taught all of the disciples. One way He did it was by sending them out to preach and teach all over the country equipped with nothing but the clothes on their backs. "Travel light!" He said, "Leave everything behind. Don't even pack a spare shirt" (See Mathew 10:5-10). Some people think Jesus said that because He wanted them all to be poor. But nothing could be further than

the Truth! He wasn't telling them to be poor. He was offering them the opportunity to shake off the shackles of the world's ungodly economic system and experience the thrill of having their needs supplied by the Kingdom of God.

He was saying, "Come to work for Me, boys. Do what I tell you to do and the Father will see to it you're well provided for." They obeyed Him and it turned out just like He promised. At the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out without purse, and script, and shoes, lacked you anything? And they said, Nothing" (Luke 22:35). They had learned to live free.

Read what the bible says about the rich young ruler and you'll see he could have gotten in on the same deal. Jesus offered it to him the day he came asking about how to receive eternal life. At the end of their conversation, Jesus said to him something similar to what he told the disciples. "Sell all that you have, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me" (Luke 18:22). Instead of jumping at the opportunity, however, the rich young ruler went away grieved because he knew nothing about the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. He didn't understand that if he'd done what Jesus said to do, he not only would have been a part of His ministry, he would have ended up richer than he ever dreamed. Like the other disciples, he too could have learned to live free.

ASK GOD TO TRAIN YOU

This is the process by which God's entire Kingdom operates! This is the way to get out of debt. It's the way to get healed. It's the way to make the devil flee from you. This is the way you have "days of heaven upon the earth" (Deuteronomy 11:21). All you have to do is listen to Jesus, Holy Spirit and your Father God. Say and do what They tell you to say and do,

and you can have the same success He had when He walked on this earth, in any area of life.

“Well Sister Sue, I’m not sure I can do that! Most of the time I don’t feel like I can even hear God’s voice.” Then forget about your feelings. Focus instead upon Scriptures like John 10:4-5 where Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice and a stranger’s voice they will not follow.” Believe that and say it. Tell the Lord, “I have ears to hear You and I know you’re speaking. So incline my ears to your sayings. Lord Jesus, I’m yours to command.”

Then do your part to familiarize yourself to God’s voice by putting the written Word first place in your life. Spend time reading and studying the Bible. Pray each day and practice listening to Holy Spirit’s voice in your spirit. Ask God to train you. Then trust Him to protect you by alerting you if you misunderstand something He said. I guarantee, He will do it!

He’s done it for me countless times. One incident in particular in the days of my ministry stands out in my mind. I was in a church building and the LORD spoke up on the inside of me and gave me a direct assignment. I knew it was him. But then a few minutes later, I heard something else in my spirit that didn’t seem right. My spirit inside me was not at peace. It was as though there was a caution light on in my spirit. I didn’t think it lined up with the written WORD—at least, with what I knew of it back then. So I stopped right there in that building. I repeated to The LORD what I’d heard and said, “I am willing and ready to obey You, but the last part seemed off to me. So with Your permission, I’m going to wait to act on it until I can see it in the written Word.”

In response, I heard The LORD say very plainly within me, “You are to be commended for that and I’ll show you what you need to know.” A short while later, He revealed to me what had happened. He showed me that right after He had spoken to me, Satan had come along behind and tried to

impersonate His voice. Then He directed me to the Bible, showed me exactly what scriptures the devil's instructions had violated and said, "You will not follow that voice ever again." Sure enough I haven't. When the devil has tried to play the impersonator with me, I've recognized it and said, "No, devil, you're not conning me with that. I know the difference between your voice and my Father's, and I'm not following you!"

You can do the same thing. So go after it. He desires to talk to you and is talking to you more than you could ever imagine. Practice listening. Take time to hear from Holy Spirit who lives inside you. Keep attending to The WORD; keep giving it first place in your life. Keep walking with Jesus, and keep your ear turned toward Him. Keep saying and doing whatever He tells you to say and do, knowing you will come out ahead every time.

Leave the bondage of Satan's system behind; keep pressing into the mysteries of the Kingdom, and every day you'll learn more about how to live free. As believers, we have all been delivered out from under the oppressive regime of the devil and translated into the kingdom of God. But to fully enjoy our new found freedom we must discover the process by which His Kingdom operates. We must learn how to live free.

Here are a few points to help you.

1] Every time you read the Bible, read it with the full intent of doing it; and expect to learn more about God's methods of operation.

James 1:22 – "Be you a doer of the Word, and not a hearer only, deceiving yourself," & Luke 8:10 – "unto you it has been given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God..."

2] Familiarize yourself with God's voice by putting His written WORD first place in your life. Hebrews 4:12 – "For the Word of God is quick, and

powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." John 15:26 AMP – "But when the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengtheners, Standby) comes, Whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth (Holy Spirit), Who comes (proceeds) from the Father, He [Himself] will testify of Me."

3] Pray daily with your understanding and pray with the spirit. Prayer makes you more sensitive to hear your Lord's voice.

I Corinthians 14:15 – "What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding."

4] Practice listening to the Holy Spirit's voice in your new recreated spirit inside you. John 14:17 – "He is the Holy Spirit, who leads you into all Truth. The world cannot receive Him and doesn't recognize Him. But you know Him, because He lives with you now and later will be in you." Jesus said this to his disciples, "...later will be in you" because He had to be glorified (suffer death, resurrect and return to Heaven, His home;) before Holy Spirit could come (John 7:39 NKJ).

5] Trust God to protect you by alerting you if you misunderstand something he said. John 10:5 – "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." See also John 15:26 AMP).

6] If you are not sure you've heard the Spirit correctly, ask God to confirm it with His written WORD. I John 5:7 – "For there are three that bear witness/record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one."