

**AUGUST 25, 2021**  
**Renewing Your Life in Christ**

David Renwick  
National presbyterian Church, Washington, DC 20016

- August 11 How Can I Find God?
- August 18 How Can I be Sure that I am Loved and Forgiven?
- August 25 How Can I Grow as a Christian?
- September 1 **How Can I Serve God Faithfully?**

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REVIEW . . (see [www.nationalpres.org](http://www.nationalpres.org) for detailed notes)

**Class #1.**  
**VARIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD**

- Is There A God At All?
- What Is God Like?
- How Can I Find God?

*God's Passion is To Be Close (not just "out there")*

**Class # 2**  
**HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT I AM LOVED AND FORGIVEN?**

- Multiple verses about God's passion to connect and be close.

IN THE END . . .this is God's passion . . .

- **Revelation 21:3, 22**  
<sup>3</sup>and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, *the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them.*  
<sup>22</sup>But I saw no temple in the city, because *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*

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SO GOD WANTS US  
TO HAVE CONFIDENCE  
In His LOVE and CLOSENESS  
But We're Not in Heaven Yet!!  
**STRUGGLE IS A PART OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**  
We need to be prepared, not surprised

**If Jesus struggled** . . in the desert, at Gethsemane, on the cross  
**So will we**

. . . so we will need to . . work to "remember"

**Remember**

1. stories of sinners (like us) in scripture
2. to focus on God, NOT on our feelings
3. to ask for God *to work in our conscience and heart* by the Holy Spirit

**NOTE: THAT SAME HOLY SPIRIT . .**  
**Wants to Empower Us**  
**in our Faith & Relationships**  
• **Not Just to be Confident**  
**BUT**

- **TO GROW & BE EFFECTIVE for Christ**

**Class # 3**

**GOD'S PASSION & EXPECTATION FOR GROWTH**

**1. JESUS GREW . . .**

**Luke 2:52**

*in wisdom and years (stature) and in favor (relationship) with God and people*

**2. THE HUMAN ANALOGY OF GROWTH**

**1 Peter 2:2**

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may *grow up into salvation*—

**3. Repeated Imagery of CREATION**

**– GROWTH IN PLANTS & FRUIT**

**Psalm 92:12-14 (growth as the promise of God)**

<sup>12</sup>The righteous ("rightly-related")

will **flourish** like a palm tree,  
they will **grow** like a cedar of Lebanon;

**John 15.8** (*bear fruit: because it brings glory – joy and honor – to God and is evidence of discipleship*)

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much **fruit** and so become my disciples.

### Galatians 5 (fruit – produced by God’s Presence)

<sup>22</sup>**The fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

## 4. SPECIFIC AREAS OF GROWTH

i. **Personal Growth** – in Character

ii. **Relational Growth** – Vertical & Horizontal  
(God & People)

iii. **Communal Growth** -- The Growth of the Christian Community (As a Plant, Building, Body, Child)

## 5. SPECIFIC MEANS & AREAS OF GROWTH = HOW TO GROW

### 1. Empowered by God’s Spirit → (Jesus IN US NOW)

#### John 15:5:

I am the vine, you are the branches.  
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much **fruit**, because *apart from me you can do nothing*.

### 2. By Prayer → (not just praying for physical health)

#### Colossians 1:9-10

Since the day we heard about you, ***we have not stopped praying for you*** we continually ***ask God***

- To fill you with **THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL**
- through all the **WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING** that the Spirit gives,

<sup>10</sup>so that you may

- live a **LIFE WORTHY OF THE LORD** and **PLEASE HIM IN EVERY WAY: bearing fruit** in every **GOOD WORK, growing** in the **KNOWLEDGE OF GOD**

### 3. By Reading/ Listening/ Seeking

#### Proverbs 1:1-5 (Read the Book!)

The Proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

- <sup>2</sup>for gaining **WISDOM** and *instruction*;
- **For UNDERSTANDING WORDS OF INSIGHT**
- <sup>3</sup>for receiving instruction in **PRUDENT BEHAVIOR, DOING WHAT IS RIGHT AND JUST AND FAIR;**
- <sup>4</sup>**FOR GIVING PRUDENCE** to those who are simple,
- **KNOWLEDGE AND DISCRETION** to the young—  
<sup>5</sup>let the wise **listen** and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—

### 4. By Experience/Suffering/Hard Knocks

#### Romans 5:3-5

**suffering produces** endurance,  
4 and **ENDURANCE** produces character,  
and **CHARACTER** produces hope,  
5 and **HOPE** does not put us to shame,  
because **GOD’S LOVE** has been poured into our hearts  
*through the Holy Spirit* who has been given to us.

### 5. By Remembering

*What God Wants, Commands, and Prioritizes*

#### 2 Peter 3:18 (a command)

**GROW** in the **GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

#### Ephesians 4:15

<sup>15</sup>we are to **grow up in every way** into him who is the head, into Christ

#### Matthew 6:33

- **SEEK FIRST** the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
- and all these things will be added to you.

#### 2 Peter 1:5-8

<sup>5</sup>**You must make every effort to**

- support your **FAITH** with **GOODNESS**,
- and goodness with **KNOWLEDGE**,
- <sup>6</sup>and knowledge with **SELF-CONTROL**,

- and self-control with ENDURANCE,
- and endurance with GODLINESS,
- <sup>7</sup>and godliness with MUTUAL AFFECTION,
- and mutual affection with LOVE. . . .

<sup>8</sup>For if these things are yours  
and are increasing among you,  
they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful  
in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**NOTE:**            **FOR GROWTH = A FRUITFUL LIFE**  
                                 **YOU MUST STICK WITH IT!!**

**Galatians 6:9**

And let us NOT GROW WEARY of doing good,  
for in due season WE WILL REAP, if we do not give up.

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**THE SUMMARY**

**LET ME COUNT THE WAYS TO GROW ..**

1. In Favor With The Lord
  - a. *True Holiness (set apart for God)*
  - b. *Life Worthy of The Lord*
  - c. *Pleasing God in Every Way:*
2. In Favor with People.
  - a. *True righteousness (right-relatedness)*
  - b. *To build up the Body Of Christ*
  - c. *To play our part in the Body.*
  - d. *Unity In the Faith*
3. Our Attitude Of Mind
4. Love xx -- Mutual Affection
5. Joy
6. Peace
7. Patience
8. Kindness
9. Generosity
10. Faith, Faithfulness
11. Gentleness
12. Self-Control.
13. Endurance, steadfastness

14. Character
15. Hope
16. Assurance of God's Love
17. Goodness
18. Self-Control
19. Godliness
20. Grace
21. Abounding In Thanksgiving.

**22. Wisdom & Instruction & understanding**

**a. Knowledge of God**

**b. Knowledge of God's Will**

- i. *Distinguish Good From Evil.*
- ii. *Knowledge And All Discernment*
- iii. *Knowledge And Discretion*
- iv. *Understanding Words of Insight*
- v. *Pursuing Good Work*
- vi. *Prudent Behavior*
- vii. *Doing What Is Right and Just And Fair*

**c. Knowledge of The Son of God**

- i. Knowledge of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ.
- ii. Whole Measure of The Fullness of Christ.
- iii. Mature

**23. No Longer Infants**

- a. *Not Tossed Back and Forth by The Waves,*
- b. *Not Blown Here And There by Every Wind of Teaching*
- c. *& By The Cunning And Craftiness of People In Their Deceitful Scheming.*
- d. *Not Ineffective and Unfruitful*

## Class # 4

### SO – God wants us to Grow

- **Personally** (*character*)
- **Relationally** (*with God & people; one on one AND together*)
- **Communally** (*like a team*)

#### **BUT . .**

Not just so we can be good people . . .

#### **RATHER . .**

so we can become

#### **EFFECTIVE SERVANTS of God in the world**

Bearing witness to God  
Accomplishing God's Purposes (social impact)  
In Christian & Secular Environments  
By action

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## GROWING IN “FRUITFUL” SERVICE

### 1. A Short Word Study: “SERVE/SERVANT”

#### >150x in NT

Matthew 23 (Central to Jesus' teaching)

<sup>11</sup>The greatest among you will be your servant.

<sup>12</sup>All who exalt themselves will be humbled,  
and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

#### 35x in OT Isaiah (*that Jesus knew well*)

##### Isaiah 37.35:

my servant David.

##### Isaiah 41.8:

Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of  
Abraham, my friend;

##### Isaiah 42.1 (*of the Messiah; Matthew 12:15-21*)

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul  
delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to  
the ethnic peoples (nations).

### 2. THE BIBLICAL EXPECTATION --

#### **For GROWTH IN SERVICE.**

## John the Baptist( in Luke 3)

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You  
brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

<sup>8</sup> **Bear fruits worthy of repentance.** Do not begin to say to  
yourselves,

‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from  
these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is  
lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear  
**good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.**”

(*BUT what kind of fruit?*)

1. <sup>10</sup> And **the crowds** asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In  
reply he said to them, [*start!*]
  - i. “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who  
has none;
  - ii. and whoever has food must do likewise.”
2. <sup>12</sup> Even **tax collectors** came to be baptized, and they asked him,  
“Teacher, what should we do?”  
<sup>13</sup> He said to them, [*stop!*]
  - i. “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”
3. <sup>14</sup> **Soldiers** also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He  
said to them, [*stop!*]
  - i. “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false  
accusation,
  - ii. and be satisfied with your wages.”

## Paul (in Ephesians 2:8-10)

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith,  
and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God

<sup>9</sup> **not the result of works,** so that no one may boast.

<sup>10</sup> For we are what he has made us,

**created in Christ Jesus for good works,**  
**which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.**

## James – Jesus’ brother (James 2:14-26)

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters,  
if you say you have faith but do not have works?

Can faith save you?

(*what kind of works?*)

<sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one  
of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,”  
and yet you do not supply their bodily needs,

what is the good of that?

<sup>17</sup> ***So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.***

<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.”

Show me your faith apart from your works,  
and I by my works will show you my faith.

- <sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one; you do well.  
-- Even the demons believe—and shudder.
- <sup>20</sup> Do you want to be shown, you senseless person,  
that ***faith apart from works is barren?***
- <sup>26</sup> For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so  
***faith without works is also dead.***

## **JESUS – within the church community (relational)**

### **John 13:14-16; 34-35**

<sup>14</sup> **So if I**, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,  
**you also ought to wash one another’s feet.**

<sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done  
to you.

<sup>16</sup> Very truly, I tell you,

- *servants* are not greater than their master,
- nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.

<sup>34</sup> I give you (“*you*” plural = *the fledgling church*)  
a new commandment: that you love one another.

Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

(*Jesus’ interest in effectiveness*)

<sup>35</sup> **By this everyone will know that you (all) are my disciples:**  
if you (as a community) have love for one another.”

## **JESUS – beyond the church**

### **Matthew 5:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt **of the earth**;

but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?

It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled  
under foot.

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light **of the world**.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> No one after lighting a lamp  
puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand,

and it gives light to all in the house.

<sup>16</sup> In the same way, **let your light shine before others,**

so that they may see your good works  
and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup> **“Do not think that I have come to abolish *the law or the prophets*;** I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

### **Luke 4:16-20**

<sup>16</sup> When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up,  
he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, **as was his custom.**  
He stood up to read,

<sup>17</sup> and **the scroll of the prophet Isaiah (61:1-2)** was given to him.  
He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,*

*<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down.  
The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

<sup>21</sup> Then he began to say to them,

**“Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”**

Jesus – summons our behavior to change

Both within the church

And beyond the church

Jesus – points us to the Old testament “Law & Prophets”

### **Matthew 5**

<sup>17</sup> **“Do not think that I have come to abolish *the law or the prophets*;** I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

## **SO WHAT DO *THE LAW & PROPHETS* SAY?**

### **A. THE LAW**

#### **Deuteronomy 16:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> You (plural = as a community) shall appoint judges and officials  
throughout your tribes, in all your towns that the Lord your God is giving  
you, and they shall render just decisions for the people.

<sup>19</sup>**You must not distort justice;**

you must not show partiality;  
and you must not accept bribes,  
for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise  
and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

<sup>20</sup>**Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue,**  
so that you may live and occupy the land  
that the Lord your God is giving you.

## **B. THE PROPHETS**

In OT Prophets → Major social issues are . . .  
(all stemming from Ten Commandments)

1. Greed
2. Truth
3. Abuse of Power

e.g.,

- **2 Samuel 12** – The Prophet Nathan Confronts King David (*after committed adultery with Bathsheba and having her husband, Uriah, murdered*)
- **1 Kings 21** -- King Ahab & Queen Jezebel (*unjustly taking Naboth's Vineyard and killing him*)
- **Micah 6** . . . *greed, violence, dishonesty, lies*  
The LORD has told you what is good.  
This is what the LORD requires from you:
  - to do what is right,
  - to love mercy (kindness),
  - and to live humbly with your God.<sup>9</sup>The voice of the LORD calls out to the city.  
(The fear of your name is wisdom.)  
“Listen, you tribe assembled in the city.  
<sup>10</sup>I have cursed all the wicked people  
who use their money for evil  
and use inaccurate weights and measures.  
<sup>11</sup>I cannot tolerate dishonest scales  
and bags filled with inaccurate weights.  
<sup>12</sup>The rich people in the city are violent.  
Those who live in the city speak lies,  
and their tongues speak deceitfully.

We sometimes forget that . . .

## **THE LAW & THE PROPHETS** **INCLUDE STORIES**

Some stories speak of

- The Positive Use of Professional Skills  
(*sometimes in the service of godless governments!*)  
Enabling God's servants to become
  - the Salt of the Earth and
  - the Light of the World
- Bearing Witness to the presence of God

## **A STORY FROM “THE LAW”** **Genesis 41 – JOSEPH**

<sup>38</sup>So Pharaoh asked his servants, “Can we find anyone like Joseph—a man who has God's Spirit in him?”

<sup>39</sup>Then Pharaoh said to Joseph,

“*Because God has let you know all this, there is no one as wise and intelligent as you.* <sup>40</sup>*You will be in charge of my palace, and all my people will do what you say. I will be more important than you, only because I'm Pharaoh.*”

<sup>41</sup>Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I now put you in charge of Egypt.”

- <sup>42</sup>Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph's finger.
- He had Joseph dressed in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.
- <sup>43</sup>He had him ride in the chariot of the second-in-command. Men ran ahead of him and shouted, “Make way!”
- **Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of Egypt.**
- <sup>44</sup>He also said to Joseph, “Even though I am Pharaoh, no one anywhere in Egypt will do anything without your permission.” . . .
- <sup>46</sup>Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh (the king of Egypt).
  - He left Pharaoh and traveled all around Egypt. <sup>47</sup>During the seven good years the land produced large harvests.
  - <sup>48</sup>Joseph collected all the food grown in Egypt during those seven years and put this food in the cities. In each city he put the food from the fields around it.

- <sup>49</sup> Joseph stored up grain in huge quantities like the sand on the seashore. He had so much that he finally gave up keeping any records because he couldn't measure it all.

<sup>53</sup> The seven years when there was plenty of food in Egypt came to an end. <sup>54</sup> Then the seven years of famine began as Joseph had said they would.

*All the other countries were experiencing famine.*

*Yet, there was food in Egypt.*

<sup>55</sup> When everyone in Egypt began to feel the effects of the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. But Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, **"Go to Joseph! Do what he tells you!"**

<sup>56</sup> When the famine had spread all over the country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians. He did this because the famine was severe in Egypt.

<sup>57</sup> **The whole world came to Joseph in Egypt** to buy grain, since the famine was so severe all over the world.

## **Genesis 50**

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."

<sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them,

*"Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?" <sup>20</sup> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good,*

*to bring it about that many people should be kept alive,*

*as they are today. <sup>21</sup> So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones."*

Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

## **A STORY FROM "THE PROPHETS"**

### **Daniel 1-2 – DANIEL**

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, **King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.**

<sup>2</sup> The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods.

<sup>3</sup> **Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring**

- some of the Israelites
- of the royal family and of the nobility,

- <sup>4</sup> young men without physical defect and handsome,
  - versed in every branch of wisdom,
  - endowed with knowledge and insight,
  - and competent to serve in the king's palace;

they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

<sup>5</sup> The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine.

They were to be educated for three years, so that **at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court.**

<sup>6</sup> Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah.

<sup>7</sup> The palace master gave them other names:

- Daniel he called Belteshazzar,
- Hananiah he called Shadrach,
- Mishael he called Meshach,
- and Azariah he called Abednego.

## **THE FOOD TEST**

<sup>8</sup> **But Daniel resolved that**

**he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself.**

<sup>9</sup> Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master.

<sup>10</sup> The palace master said to Daniel,

*"I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king."*

<sup>11</sup> Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

<sup>12</sup> *"Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. <sup>13</sup> You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe."*

<sup>14</sup> So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days.

<sup>15</sup> **At the end of ten days** it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations.

<sup>16</sup> So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

<sup>17</sup> **To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom;**

*Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.*

<sup>18</sup> At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, <sup>19</sup> and the king spoke with them. *And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah;* therefore they were stationed in the king's court.

<sup>20</sup> **In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.**

<sup>21</sup> **And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.**

### THE DREAM TEST

Daniel 2

In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, *Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams* that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. .

..  
(*and no one could interpret*) <sup>12</sup> Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. <sup>13</sup> The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them.

<sup>14</sup> Then *Daniel responded with prudence and discretion* to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon; <sup>15</sup> he asked Arioch, the royal official, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?"

Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel.

<sup>16</sup> So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation. . . (*which he did*)

<sup>46</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him.

<sup>47</sup> The king said to Daniel,

*"Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!"*

<sup>48</sup> **Then the king**

- **promoted Daniel,**
- **gave him many great gifts,**
- **and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon**
- **and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.**

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**How do we pull this together?**

GROWTH . . .

IN CHARACTER,  
IN RELATIONSHIP with God & People  
IN COMMUNITY?

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## **THE UNIFYING THEME OF "THE KINGDOM OF GOD"**

### Matthew 4

<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for *the kingdom of heaven has come near.*"

### Matthew 6:10

*Thy kingdom* come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

### Matthew 16:15-17

<sup>15</sup> Jesus said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are *the Messiah, the Son of the living God.*" <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.

### WORD NOTE:

Messiah (Hebrew) = Christ (Greek) = King . .

- Every time you read *Christ* Jesus, or *Jesus Christ*
  - change the word to "King": "King Jesus" or "Jesus the King"
- When you do this, you see how prominent this theme is in the NT

### PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM

Jesus wants us to live life

As if we were living

Not just in human nations (and kingdoms)

But already living

In the Kingdom (*community*) ruled by God the King

### A. TO ENTER THE KINGDOM

Requires repentance ("*evangelism*")

-- the acknowledgment that there is a King

-- that this king is my king

-- the decision to embrace the king's priorities

. . . (John 3:3,5 -- Jesus said to Nicodemus:

Unless you are born *again/from above/of water/of the Spirit* you cannot see or enter ***the kingdom of God.***

#### “Born Again”

Not necessarily a new experience . . . But

- a new *parent and family*
- & a new *path of growth*

#### B. TO LIVE AS A CITIZEN OF THE KINGDOM

##### **Requires repentance**

*(a commitment to live life in order to build/manifest God’s kingdom on earth NOW)*

Not just on a specific piece of land

But in a “realm” – a community comprising

- Individual People of character
- A Community that is just and fair
- and fruitful!
- a foretaste of heaven on earth

#### **Revelation 21 – HEAVEN . .**

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the *holy city, the new Jerusalem,* coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

<sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them;

<sup>4</sup> *he will wipe every tear from their eyes.*

*Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”*

#### **Revelation 22**

<sup>1</sup>Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city.

On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for *the healing of the ethnics (peoples, nations).*

#### **COMMUNITY (Kingdom) GROWTH:**

- **WE EACH HAVE A PART TO PLAY**
- Gifted for Service . . . to play our part . . .

#### **1 Corinthians 12**

<sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;

<sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord (*king*);

<sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

<sup>7</sup> ***To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.***

#### **Ephesians 4**

<sup>14</sup> We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming.

<sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love,

***we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*** <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, ***as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.***

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#### **How Can I**

- **Find God?**
- **Be Sure that I am  
Loved and Forgiven?**
- **Grow as a Christian?  
& as a Church?**
- **Serve God Faithfully?  
In the church? In the world?**