

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God  
IN CHRIST JESUS.**  
(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)*

#04-1034

## ***The Good Seed of the Kingdom***

March 27, 2010

**And having been asked by the Pharisees when God's kingdom was coming, he answered them, and said, "The kingdom of God comes not with outward show; nor shall they say, 'Behold here! or there!' for behold, God's Royal Majesty is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 BWD)**

In the last issue (#04-1033), the point was made that the Pharisees were looking for a political kingdom to be manifested in an outward and visible way in their day. Essentially, they wanted to be released from the yoke of Rome and have their own nation with a king (Messiah) sitting on a literal throne. But Jesus told them that they had it all wrong, for He, as God's King, was in their presence; that is, He was among them and walking in their midst. The kingdom was not residing inside of them individually, as if in some mystical, spiritual, power-driven way, but was among them collectively in the Person of Jesus, God's Royal Majesty.

In the above verse, the word *among* comes from the Greek word *en*, which can be translated a number of ways including *in*, *within*, and *among*. Obviously, the meaning can be skewed in one direction or another, depending on which word the translators use. The words *in* and *within* conjure up the image of an object residing within another object. The word *among* conjures up the image of an object residing alongside or in the midst of a number of other objects.

Another example is discovered through Paul as he wrote of the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

**(19) Because the knowledge of God is apparent among them; for God disclosed it to them; (20) for his invisible things ... are clearly seen ... so that they are inexcusable.** (Romans 1:19, 20 BWD [*among* appears in ALT, CV, DNT, REB, YLT])

Many translations use the words *in* or *within*, which implies that the knowledge resides in them. I must admit that, at first, I thought this verse could be used to prove that the kingdom resides in everyone, the righteous and unrighteous alike. But then I realized that the knowledge is not some inherent knowledge that resides in man, as if God simply places it in man; rather, it is based on what man sees in creation in which he resides or is among.

Perhaps I tend to split hairs a bit too much, but I believe we should base our beliefs on scripture that clearly supports those beliefs; otherwise, we might find ourselves holding to the tradition of men and not the truth of the word of God. So, this leaves us with a question: Leaving aside Luke 17:21, is there scripture that can be used to answer the question of whether the kingdom resides in believers today?

As we continue, let us be reminded of the meaning of the Greek word *basileia*, which is most often translated as *kingdom* and less often as *reign*. *Basileia* means kingly power, authority, royal dignity, majesty, as well as kingdom (as of people), realm, territory, and reign. As we have seen, it can also refer to the person upon whom the title and honor of king rests.

I believe the answer to our question is best answered by the truth given to us through John. Seeing and entering the kingdom comes by being begotten of God, that is, by God planting His spiritual seed within believers.

**Jesus answered and said to him: "Indeed I assure thee, if any one be not born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of the God." (John 3:3 BWD)**

**No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 3:9 NASB)**

One must be born from above, that is, begotten of God, in order to see the kingdom of God, let alone to enter into it. Most translations use the phrase *born again*, but the proper rendering from the Greek is *born from above*. I explain this in detail in my book *Born From Above*, November 2008. However, a word of caution: In the book, I emphasize the present spiritual aspect of the kingdom of God. In making my point, I incorrectly used Luke 17:21 as a companion verse to John 3:3-5 (page 13). I plan to correct this, but until then, if you read it, please make the mental correction.

Obviously, the Pharisees were not born from above when Jesus answered their question about the kingdom, a concept that was foreign to them, just as it was foreign to Nicodemus. If they could not see or enter the kingdom without being born from above, being born of water and of spirit, then neither could the kingdom have been residing within them at that point.

Now, the key to understanding whether the kingdom resides within a believer lies in the truth that **His** (God's) **seed resides in him**. I call it **the good seed of the Kingdom**.

In the natural world, the male seed impregnates the female egg (i.e., begets), and the female causes the embryo to form and grow until she gives birth to a child (i.e., parturition). This is a type of how the spirit life is formed and birthed in us.

When we first believed, by the grace of God through the faith of the Son of God, the Father impregnated us with His spiritual seed, His spirit, for God is spirit, which is also the very life of His Son, Christ in you. God is the Father of this seed, and we became the mother of the seed, which is to grow and form Christ in us (Galatians 4:19) until one day, in the resurrection and transfiguration, it becomes our dwelling from heaven, our glorified body in the image of God's Son. In other words, we have been begotten by God, and, through our life in Christ, a new life will be birthed, the life of a son of God, a son of the kingdom and of glory, a life that will reign with Christ in the oncoming eons.

God's seed is a celestial seed planted within our inner man (Ephesians 3:16), and we are to nurture it by feeding upon the word of God under the leading of the spirit of God so that it grows through our life experiences, maturing to a complete man in Christ. Sin may continue to operate in some measure in our bodies of death, for sin reigns in death. However, our lives are to grow in such a fashion that the new man (a son) within us continually matures into the likeness of Christ so that sin no longer has sway in our lives. As Paul wrote, **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me** (Galatians 2:20), **for your life is now hidden with Christ in God; Christ, who is our life** (Colossians 3:3, 4).

All born of God are born from above; they have received a new life that has its source in heaven or, as I like to state, among the celestials. We could say that a piece of heaven or that which is of the spirit realm has been planted within all who believe. Please do not take this thought to support the notion that believers die and go to heaven. This is not what I mean. Quite the contrary; I believe that God's purpose and plan of the eons is to bring heaven, which is best called the spirit realm, to earth. Through God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, *the reign [basileia] of the heavens* will be brought to earth, and the ones who conquered or overcame through the life of Christ shall be reigning on the earth (Revelation 5:10).

The reign is yet to come upon the kingdoms of this world; but it has come in growing measure upon the ecclesia, the body of Christ, the dwelling of God that is being built *in spirit* (Ephesians 2:19-22). All who believe are new creations *in Christ* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15), having received an earnest of the spirit of God (2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14), and each has received a foretaste of living *in spirit*, for God has seated us together *among the celestials, in Christ Jesus* (Ephesians 2:6 CV).

Simple logic should tell us that, based on these truths and the definition of the word *basileia*, in some measure, the kingdom of God must reside in spirit within us believers as we, along with the rest of the world and creation, wait for the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ to be outwardly manifested among the nations in the oncoming eon [age], which is also called the Lord's Day.

Today, we taste the kingdom of God, just as we taste the Lord and see that He is good. In the day to come, we will be the kingdom of God on earth and among the celestials as we reign with Christ. No longer will we simply taste the Lord; we will be like Him, for we will see Him just as He is (1 John 3:2). He is the King, and His body of conquerors will be His Kingdom, **for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom** (Matthew 13:38), **made to be a kingdom to our God** (Revelation 5:10).