

THE SECRET OF HIS PURPOSE THE PLAN FOR THE FULLNESS OF THE TIMES
TO HEAD UP ALL THINGS IN THE KING,
EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND ON THE EARTH,
IN JESUS....

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#1

King Jesus—Our Life

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So, if you were raised to life with the king, search for the things that are above, where the king is seated at God's right hand! Think about the things that are above, not the things that belong on the earth. Don't you see: you died, and ***your life is hidden with the king***, in God! When the king is revealed (and ***he is your life***, remember), then you too will be revealed with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4 Kingdom NT)

In this new humanity there is no question of "Greek and Jew," or circumcised and uncircumcised," of "barbarian, Scythian," or "slave or free." ***The king is everything and in everything!*** (Colossians 3:11 Kingdom NT)

There is no greater subject in scripture than Jesus the king, who is our life. He is the very foundation and heart of the Christian life. As Paul wrote: *Nobody can lay any foundation, you see, except the one which is laid, which is Jesus the Messiah!* (1 Corinthians 3:11).

It is essential that we are in union with our solid foundation. This foundation is Jesus who is our life. We must grasp the significance of Christ. In fact, there is only one object central and supreme in all of scripture—the person of our Lord Jesus. Our *vision* must be *of* Him, our *work* must be *through* Him, and our *relationship* must *in* Him, in union or oneness with Him. We are nothing apart from Him, and we can do nothing of value for God without Him.

Christ a Title—Messiah, Anointed One, King

Before proceeding, the word *Christ* is a title, not Jesus' last name, as some believe. Over the years, I have read so many commentaries that refer to Him over and over again as Jesus Christ that after a while I start wondering if the writers think Christ is His last name. Christ is just as easily translated *Messiah*, *Anointed One*, or, based on one translation, *King*. I like the sound of *King Jesus!* Normally, I would stick with Christ in my writings, but lately I prefer to change it up a bit, as these other words add a greater dimension to our Lord Jesus. I also think it is good to inject many of the who's and what's of Jesus, and to actually refer to Him by His name *Jesus* or the Hebrew *Yeshua*. Frankly, I find the word *Christ* very impersonal, and especially religious. After all, if we don't know what it means, or we don't normally think its meaning when we see it, then of what value is it in our studies and, especially, our walk with the Lord. So, expect to see a variety of descriptors used throughout this writing and in all the future ones as I focus on our beloved, who is the love of our life (my favorite description), and our union with Him.

There are three points to bring to light. First, Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship—it is a living union with the king! Second, this relationship is with the Son of God who is preeminent and supreme. Third, all that we do as we wait for our Lord to come from heaven must come forth through this relationship. These points sum up this matter of King Jesus, who is our life.

The World Names

To begin, let us start with Paul and the *Way*. Prior to his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus when he met his Lord (Acts 9:3-20), Saul, as a zealous Pharisee, sought to persecute the sect that he called *the Way* (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22). He believed it was a false sect that had to be destroyed. Those who believed on Jesus and followed Him as His disciples were a threat to Judaism. Their way was the opposite of the Jewish religious system, and it threatened all for which Judaism stood. In large measure, the Jews rejected the offer of the kingdom of the heavens coming to earth and demanded that Israel's Messiah and King be crucified, but the Way was seeking for the kingdom and embraced the resurrected Messiah and King. The Way literally followed a way that was unlike any religion of the world. Praise God; instead of destroying the Way, Paul became one of its most fervent disciples.

However, the people of the Way also were called *Christians*. It was not a name that they took on themselves (at least at first), but which was given to the early disciples of Christ by the world. When Paul was brought to Antioch, it is recorded: *And it came about that for an entire year they met with the church, and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch* (Acts 11:26). In other words, the world (Antioch) looked at the disciples of Christ and their behavior (their way) and decided that they were followers of the Anointed One, the Christ. In short, they were different not only from Judaism but from the world. They were Christ-followers or, a new term I have adopted, *Christ-abiders* (based on John 15).

This is as it should be. The Lord's people do not have to take on names or titles or anything that draws attention to themselves according to the standards of the world. The world system in which we live must put labels on people, organizations, institutions, or anything that operates in the system of the world. Names and titles divide the world into various factions and camps. Of late, the social justice crowd have added a whole slew of new names ending in *phobic*. Today, this has gotten so bad that divisions have been radicalized and weaponized against groups that don't conform to the new amoral norms that are anti anything of the cultural norms that built the western world, including, and especially, built on Christian moral values.

I suppose we could say that, in some measure, division began nearly 5,000 years ago when man (collective man) decided to build for himself a city and a tower whose top would reach into the heavens (Genesis 11:4). Man wanted a name for himself. It was not good enough to be known simply as man. He wanted to be exalted even to the heavens. In that day, God came down and destroyed man's work, confused his language (Genesis 11:6-9), and scattered him across the earth. Therefore, the name of the city was called *Babel*, which means confusion. Since that day, confusion is the best way to describe the plight of man, which has led him to label everything with a name. Within fallen man, who is in confusion, there is this need to describe what he sees and put a name on it, but again, in our day it has grown into a grossly diabolical extreme.

In some respects, are we Christians much different? Today, according to the view of the world, even the religious world, Christianity is viewed merely as another religion or institution with a name attached to it. Why? Could it be that we are not the salt of the earth and the light of the world anymore? Are we united as one? There are so many names of Christian "churches," assemblies, groups and ministries, and so many titles given to those who are associated with

them, that Christians appear as confused and as divided as the world. It is no wonder that the testimony of what is called the *church* (I call it the *visible* or *public* church) today is no different than that of the world or of religions of the world. Instead of following a different way, the church today has embraced the many ways of the world. In fact, much of the church that we see in the world today has adopted the ways of the world that is passing away (1 John 2:17). The Lord's people, instead of being in the world but not of it, are *in it* and *of it*. The world's ways are the church's ways. Are we wed to the world or to Jesus, the love of our life?

However, this was not the case in the early *ecclesia*, which is the *body of Christ*, when the world had not infiltrated into their ways. They were different, and the world as well as the religious of the world knew it. They looked at the early disciples and labeled them the Way and Christians. Back then, something made them look different; they were not a religion or an institution or an organization. The person (not just a theory or an impersonal, unknown god) of the Lord Jesus made them different. They lived as ones who were raised up with the new creation Man. They were seeking the things above, where the king is, seated at the right hand of God. Their minds were set on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. This world system was not His realm, and the early church lived in His realm.

The good news is that, although outwardly, things might look like they are in disarray, Jesus is still building His *ecclesia*, and He cannot and will not fail to finish God's building project!

Christianity—Religion or Relationship?

Now, were the early Christians part of a new religion? Did Christ die to start a religion? Today, there are many religions in the world and many religious people. The world even calls Christianity a religion and those who follow the Lord religious people. Even Christians call themselves religious people who belong to the Christian religion. But is this correct? Is Christianity truly a religion? Are we who have been bought with the precious blood to be known as a religious people, as the world would define religious? Did God send His Son to die for sinners so that a new religion would be born? Is God looking for a religious people to come into the kingdom of God? Is this what it is all about?

To answer these questions, we must ask: What is religion? Surprisingly, the Bible does not contain many references to this word. As found in scripture, *religion* means "ceremonial observance." It implies external things such as ceremonies, rituals, traditions, creeds, and outward forms of piety. In other words, religion is an outward expression. It is something that must be done repeatedly, often, but not always, leaving little room for the heart of the person. An example is Judaism with all its outward form of ceremony and tradition (Acts 26:5). Some people even take on extreme outward measures involving the body to deal with fleshly indulgences. In this way, they try to attain to an outward form of piety; that is, they try to be religious. Paul referred to this type of religion as self-made and of no value.

These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, {but are} of no value against fleshly indulgence. (Colossians 2:23 NASB)

Only in the book of James do we find a reference to a pure religion in the sight of God.

This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of {our} God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, {and} to keep oneself unstained by the world. (James 1:27 NASB)

What is the heart of visiting orphans and widows? Love! Love comes from a pure devotion to God and His Son. If we have life in God's age (eonian life), then the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:5). It is out of this heart of love that we do what the Lord is doing, just as Jesus did with His Father as He walked on this earth in His inaugural appearing. Also, notice that James includes keeping oneself unstained by the world. Oh, how much stain has come into the Christian life of today? Jesus was unstained!

But this leads back to the question: Is Christianity a religion or a relationship? It should be unnecessary to ask such a question because it should be apparent to every begotten child of God. Unfortunately, leaven and the confusion have done a good job of corrupting the mind of many believers; therefore, it is needful to address the question.

At the very heart of Christianity is a man in glory! Christianity is a relationship with the Son of the living God. It is *not* a religion. It is a life to be lived—His life. This is why the teaching of Paul emphasizes repeatedly our relationship to Jesus, the Christ, the King, the Anointed One, the Messiah (take your pick).

Now you folks are (continuously exist being) forth from out of the midst of Him – ***within and in union with Christ Jesus***, Who came to be (is birthed) wisdom in us (to us; for us) from God; likewise, both fairness and equity (right relationship in the Way pointed out; rightwisdom and justice) and the essence of being set-apart (holiness) – even release by payment of a ransom (redemption) – (1 Corinthians 1:30 JM-NT)

He has blessed us in the king with every spirit-inspired blessing in the heavenly realm. (Ephesians 1:3 Kingdom NT)

I am, however, alive—but it isn't me any longer; it's the Messiah who lives in me. (Galatians 2:20 Kingdom NT)

And this is the key: the king, living within you as the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27 Kingdom NT)

What is the value of His life being in us if we are not intimately related to Him? The answer to this question sets Christianity apart from religion. There is no religion, past or present, that has ever had a God and a Savior who died for them, was raised from the dead, who is seated upon a throne in heaven, and who dwells in His people, and they in Him—hidden with the king in God. What king ever desired to be in this type of oneness with his subjects? Who ever heard of such a thing? A king is in you, and you are in a king. Wow!

If when we first believe on Yeshua, we believe we join a new religion, then our Christian faith will be religious. We will live our Christian life as an outward expression of ceremonies, rituals, and

traditions that we believe we must perform to please God. These become traditions of men, often leading to idols in the heart. It will be an outward expression, not the inward reality of the life that dwells in us. The result is that we will not know that there is a new life dwelling in us and, by this life, we are to live. This life alone pleases God. Further, through religion, we will not come into the place of abiding or remaining in this life (read 1 John).

Is it possible that we can say the name of *Jesus*, pray in the name of *Jesus*, sing about the name of *Jesus*, dance to the name of *Jesus*, attend some form of worship every Sunday in the name *Jesus*, plan some strategy in the name of *Jesus*, start some new movement in the name of *Jesus*, raise a lot of money in the name of *Jesus*, start a new church in the name of *Jesus*, show all sorts of excitement over the name of *Jesus*, and do many things in the name of *Jesus*, and yet not truly know the One who is *Jesus*? Yes! It can be mostly outward show, a religion with very little inward reality of *Jesus* in our lives. It can become a performance that we must continually strive to maintain. This is religion, not relationship.

The one vital need today for the Lord's people is to come into a personal, love relationship with the Anointed One who dwells in them, and they dwell in Him. The very heart of being Christian rests upon this one issue—*relationship*. We must be in relationship with our beloved Lord. After all, isn't this what love is all about? If we are not in relationship with Him, under the leadership of the spirit of God, then the things we do will be mere religion, even if they all are done in the name of *Jesus*. If we have this relationship, then what is expressed outwardly in our lives will be an expression of His life that is being formed in us. The life of Christ will be expressed in a natural, outward way, and we will continually have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord. The life is in the Son! This is a call to be like Him on earth as He is in heaven.

What does *relationship* mean? Some stress that it is about intimacy with the Lord. I once used the word *intimacy* but have since dropped it from my writings and conversations. There is nothing wrong with the word. For me, however, apart from being too romantic for my temperament, it speaks of two not one. *Union* is a much better word to describe this relationship, for union speaks of *oneness*. Paul often stresses this point—one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father (Ephesians 4:2-4). *Jesus* said: *I and the Father are one* (John 10:30). *Jesus* told His disciples: *Remain (abide) in Me. I also am in you. You can do nothing apart from Me* (John 15:4-5). Abiding is union. Paul wrote of being grafted into the rich root of the olive tree (Romans 11:17). When a branch is grafted into a plant, the branch becomes one with the plant. The rich sap of the tree feeds the branch as it takes on the life of the tree itself. This is a metaphorical picture of those who are in *Jesus* the king. Carrying this to another level, the tree with its grafted branches speaks not only of the king's life nourishing the branches but of the very kingdom itself. It is a picture of the king and His kingdom of love.

John, the apostle of love, wrote: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men* (John 1:1-4). In Him was life. In 1 John 1:1-2, we are told that He is the word of life and this life was manifested. What does this mean? It means that the very essence of life is the very person of the Son of God. This life did not just appear nearly 2,000 years ago when the Son came to this earth. This life was with God in the beginning. It is the uncreated life of God.

God created our life; but the life of the Son is the very life of God. It is a totally different life from ours, and it is given to us only in the Son.

When we believe on Jesus, we receive a new creation life. Christ becomes our new life, *for you died and your life has been hidden with the king, in God* (Colossians 3:3). Have these words penetrated into your heart? You have died. When did you die? You died on the cross with Christ. *Our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin* (Romans 6:6). Our old life that we inherited from Adam had to go to the cross; it has no value to God, and it cannot enter into the kingdom of God. If we do not have the Son in us, then we do not have life indeed. Why? Because the Messiah is the life! Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth and the life*. However, He is not only the life, but He is *life*. The life of the Son was breathed into creation. He is the Son of God and the Son of Man (John 1:1-3; 5:18; 8:12; 20:28-29; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Philippians 2:5-7; Titus 1:2-4; 2:13-14; 3:4-5; Hebrews 3:3-4; 2 Peter 1:1-2). Do not be deceived by those who teach that Christ was a created being who somehow attained to Deity. He is the Son of God! He is the Word who was with God in the beginning and the Word was God (John 1:1). He is the one who declared: *Let there be light*, and light went forth. He is the light of the world and the light of life (John 8:12). Remove His life from creation and the creation will cease. Oh hallelujah; the gift of God is Jesus Himself. Thank God; when we believe, this life is placed in us, for we receive the seed of God (1 John 3:9). Our entire Christian faith depends on this one fact: *the king in you and you in the king!*

In Son

It is vital that we not lose sight of the one in whom we have this relationship. Our relationship is with God *in Son*. I realize that to some reading this, God *in Son* might be a rather strange statement. However, this is what we are told in the book of Hebrews.

God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in [*his is not in the Greek*] Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:1-4 ASV [added])

The subject of Hebrews is the world or the age to come (Hebrews 2:5), which speaks of the kingdom of the heavens openly and gloriously manifesting on earth in the next age. However, the writer of this letter made it abundantly clear right from the start that the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, is the center of this age to come. In fact, without the king there is no future kingdom on earth or in heaven to discuss or to understand. Apart from the king we have no future, no hope. Thank God; our God has spoken, and He has spoken of one thing, *His Son*.

Throughout the era of the old covenant, God spoke through the prophets in many portions and in many ways. They spoke of what was to come; but no one person saw the complete picture, no one man touched upon all that was on God's heart. The spirit of God only revealed bits and pieces of what was to come. In many respects, much of it was in mystery (secret). The prophets spoke

of Israel's Messiah, the king to come, but it was still an incomplete understanding of what was God's full purpose and plan. It took the Son Himself to humble Himself and take on the form of man for God to reveal all that was hidden in His heart. God spoke all that was in His heart, and He spoke it in His Son.

As already pointed out, the original Greek text does not have the word *His*; it is simply stated that God spoke *in* Son or *as* Son. In other words, God has spoken *as the person of Son*. What does this mean? As I see it, God can and does express Himself in any manner He so desires. In this case it is Son.

Recently, I was directed by the Lord's spirit to consider the expression *I AM*, based on John 8:58: *Jesus said unto them—Verily, verily, I say unto you: Before, Abraham, came into existence, I, am* (Rotherham). This in turn led me to another verse that I had never read as translated by Rotherham.

And God said unto Moses, *I Will Become whatsoever I please*, and he said—Thus, shalt thou say to the sons of Israel, *I Will Become* hath sent me unto you. (Exodus 3:14 Rotherham [italic added])

Notice that instead of simply quoting God as the *I AM*, Rotherham reads: *I Will Become whatsoever I please*. This is rather intriguing as it ties in quite well with God expressing Himself as Son. If we accept that Rotherham just might be accurately expressing God's heart, then can we not assume that God can and does express Himself in whatever way He so chooses? Of course, we only know Him as Father, Son, and Spirit, but this does not restrict the infinite Creator of all to these. There are infinite ways in which He could and does express Himself. It makes me wonder how else He will express Himself beyond the ages to come? Food for thought!

Now, back to the point. In times past, the prophets were the mouth of God, and He spoke through them; although they were vessels of many weaknesses. But in these last days, God manifested Himself on earth in the person of Son, and He spoke. Every word that proceeds from the mouth of Jesus is of God, for He is the exact representation of God, for all the fullness of Deity dwells in Him in bodily form (Colossians 1:19; 2:9). If we see the Son, we see God the Father and His glory. The Son was (is) all God and all man, and unlike the prophets of old, no weakness was (is) found in Him (Hebrews 4:15). If we hear the Son, we hear God. He upholds all things [or holds all things together (Colossians 1:17)] by the word of His power. His word is God's word, and it cannot be broken. When He speaks, it is *the* truth. His word stands and by it all things hold together.

God's voice boomed throughout creation when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and when He was transfigured on the holy mountain; and it will boom once again in the glorious age to come.

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matthew 3:17 NASB)

"Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee" And again, "I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me" (Hebrews 1:5 NASB)

"This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" (Matthew 17:5 NASB)

Yet to the Son: "Thy throne, O God, is for the eon of the eon, And a scepter of rectitude is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest injustice; Therefore Thou art anointed by God, Thy God, with the oil of exultation beyond Thy partners." (Hebrews 1:8-9 CLV)

God the Father has declared the summation of His purpose and plan—*My Son*. His Son is the Son of God, and He has received a kingdom and His throne will last for the eons (ages). He has inherited the nations and taken full possession of the whole earth. There shall be no end to the increase of His government (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Supreme and Preeminent

Oh, we need to see that God *in* Son is central in God's purpose and plan. He will head up all things in heaven and on earth (Ephesians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28). He is to have first place in all things. He is to have the supremacy in all things. He is to be preeminent in all things. Consider the way three translations of the Bible proclaim Him in the same verse.

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have *first place in everything*. (Colossians 1:18 NASB [italic added])

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have *the supremacy*. (Colossians 1:18 NIV [italic added])

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have *the preeminence*. (Colossians 1:18 NKJ [italic added])

This is God's heart. His Son is to have first place in everything. He is the first man to overcome death and be resurrected from among the dead with an indestructible, immortal life. This places Him at the head of a new race of people, the one new man in Christ, the body of Christ, which is the ecclesia (church, assembly). As first in all things, He is supreme and He is preeminent. Our Lord Jesus is not to be merely dominant in heaven and on earth; He is to be preeminent. *Dominant* means that He is numbered along with many other things that have importance, but *preeminent* means that there is no one else in view but Him. Nothing compares with Him; nothing can compete with Him; nothing can shine brighter than Him; nothing has greater importance than Him; nothing is higher than Him; nothing is more supreme than Him. *He is all*, and *He is in all*. This is the meaning of preeminent. Not only is He preeminent, but He is central. Everything centers upon the one who created all things and who holds all things together. He upholds all things by the word of His power. Remove the Son from this universe and all creation will cease to exist. Our very existence is *in* Him. He is *the life*! There is no life beyond Him. The good news is that this is the life in all who have been given the faith of the Son to believe on Him!

When He speaks, the Father speaks of the centrality and preeminence of His beloved Son: *Listen to Him! What does the Son say? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds* (Matthew 16:27). Let us listen to *the* beloved Son while it is still *today!* *For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His faithfulness* (Psalm 96:13).

Dear brethren, we need the eyes of our heart to be enlightened to see the fullness of the Anointed One. We have made Him too small in our thinking. Far too many Christians see Yeshua as Savior who died for their sins and never see beyond this point. He has become a means to an end, not the all of everything. We need to see all of Him. We need to rise above the smallness of this earth to the heavenlies to see the greatness of our king. Of course, this is a spiritual seeing until He comes and we behold Him with our glorified eyes. However, until that day, we see Him as revealed in the word of God through His spirit, and as He is manifested in and through our earthly lives.

Oh, but the good news is this: We are called into union with the Son of God who is beyond all comparison. We are called into relationship with the king who is far above all. We are called into union with the supreme and preeminent firstborn of all creation and the firstborn from the dead. This is far more than being saved from our sins. King Jesus, the ruler of the kings of the earth, is our life—life as God intends it to be and will ultimately be at the consummation of the ages. The good news is that this life is ours now! Has this fact registered in your heart and changed you?