

Feast of Tabernacles—Day 5 Kingdom of God in the Gospels & Epistles

Fred R. Coulter—October 17, 2011

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to day five of the Feast of Tabernacles, 2011. Here we start on the second half of the Feast. Sometime back in channel surfing—and we don't have the 'religious' channel here in our area—but on Sunday there are some Sunday-preacher programs on there. Every once in a while I pick up on Charles Stanley. Charles Stanley is perhaps one of the best Protestant ministers that is out there. He does preach a good message concerning *personal* salvation.

However, in using the Bible he doesn't preach about baptism and he hopscoches right over the Sabbath and Holy Days. And you know the #1 missing thing in the whole Protestant message is the Kingdom of God. Everything that there is concerning the Gospel is centered around not just personal salvation—that's part of it—but it's also centered around the Kingdom of God and how to enter into it, as well as Christian growth. It's all centered around those things.

It's like anything else, if you have a perfect recipe for a perfect cake and you leave out one of the main ingredients, what happens? *It's no good!* It's not the real thing. What we find with even the best preachers in Protestantism—because Charles Stanley preaches going to heaven, not the Kingdom—they don't preach the Kingdom of God.

Let's pick up again concerning the Kingdom of God in the Gospels, then we will go into the Epistles and see that the whole message is about

- 1. the Kingdom of God**
 - 2. personal salvation**
- and how to enter into it
- 3. Christian growth**

Those are the three things. Christian growth is how to qualify for the Kingdom of God by the things that we do after God qualifies us first, so that we can have a relationship with Him.

Right in the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ, let's see what He did, Luke 4. Let's see about the personal salvation of the Kingdom of God. When He read out of the scroll of the book of Isaiah, He announced that He was the Messiah. He announced the *He* was the One Who had been anointed. In other words, He was announcing that He was the Messiah of Dan. 9, when you come to understand it.

Luke 4:18: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; for this reason, He has anointed Me to preach*

the Gospel to *the* poor... [What is the Gospel? *The Gospel of the Kingdom of God!* The subpart of that is *your personal salvation.*] ...He has sent Me to heal those who are brokenhearted... [That's part of salvation, part of being saved from Satan and the world.] ...to proclaim pardon to *the* captives... [Those who are captives of Satan the devil] ...and recovery of sight to *the* blind... [that's physically and spiritually. Remember, Jesus said, 'If the blind lead the blind, they're both going to fall into the ditch.'] ...to send forth in deliverance those who have been crushed, to proclaim *the* acceptable year of *the* Lord" (vs 18-19).

After He had done that, let's see what He preaches with the Sermon on the Mount, which is quite interesting indeed; yes, indeed!

Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent... [personal salvation] ...for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'" That is *He* was the Messenger of the Kingdom of God from God the Father to the world, and to preach the Gospel, how we can be saved from Satan the devil—the 'god of this world.' That's why He had to be tempted of Satan the devil (Matt. 4) and conquer him first before He began preaching the Gospel.

Let's see what happened when He was teaching His disciples, Matthew 5:1: "But seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain; and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth *and* taught them, saying, 'Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven'" (vs 1-3).

Everything that is taught here in Matt. 5, 6 and 7 has to do with what? *The Kingdom of Heaven and personal salvation!* Interesting—isn't it? But you can't have one without the other. You can't have personal salvation

- *without* the Kingdom of God
- *without* growing in grace and knowledge
- *without* overcoming

This is why you can say that the Gospel of Matthew is the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, because it speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the Kingdom of God coming from heaven more than anyone else. These are all from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The fatal flaw in any preaching is this—whether they're Protestants or Church of God, regardless of what it is—do they preach the *whole*

Gospel? Do they include the return of Jesus Christ in power and strength and authority, as we saw on the Day of Pentecost, combined with the Feast of Trumpets? That's going to be an awesome thing to take place, indeed!

Verse 10: "Blessed *are* those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness... [that is because you obey God] ...**for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.**" So, He says it twice there—right?

Verse 16—again, it's talking about the Kingdom and this time it identifies it as the Father's Kingdom: "In the same way also, you are to let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven." That's where it's going to come from.

Then, as we saw yesterday, v 48—here's how we are to become; here is part of Christian growth: "Therefore... [this is the goal of Christian growth]: ...you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

Let's understand something concerning the Kingdom of God and how we are to be focused on it *every single day*. Notice that it begins with the Father, and then the Kingdom, and then our personal requests, and then be rescued from Satan the devil. When we close the prayer it is, again, to focus on the Kingdom.

Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven...'"

I think this will answer the question: Why is it that those who preach in this world—the wise, the ones that are accepted by the world, the religious leaders, the politicians and so forth—don't understand? They have been blinded because they aren't willing to obey. But there's also another factor as to why we understand and they don't understand.

Matthew 11:25: "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes.'" Notice the fantastic miracle of true conversion and understanding the Gospel and understanding the plan of God. Brethren, this is a tremendous thing! Even the best in Protestantism do not understand.

Verse 26: "Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this.*"

- God delights in us!
- God loves us!
- God has given us knowledge!
- God has given us Truth!
- God has given us understanding!

It all comes from the Spirit of God! Comes from the Word of God! That's why the Feast of Tabernacles is so important, because it pictures the actual workings of the Kingdom of God on earth to save humanity—and *we have the signal part of it!*

As I've said many times, I'm going to repeat it again. Look at all the elite of the world, are they not the wise and the intelligent? But they don't know! Those are the *elite* of the world. Those who have the wealth and riches from worshipping and serving Satan the devil. But we're going to be the *elite, as kings and priests and teachers in the Kingdom of God!* We're going to replace them! They're going to get a demotion!

Verse 27: "All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son **personally chooses** to reveal *Him.*" Think of that! How do you know about the Father? The Truth about God the Father? The Truth about the Kingdom? The Truth about Jesus Christ? *It is revealed by Jesus Christ to us!* Then the Spirit of the Father draws us. We're led to repentance, which is the beginning of *personal salvation*. Then our whole goal, as we are going to see, is to seek the Kingdom of God.

Verse 28—here is the aspect of personal salvation: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest... [rest from sin; rest from blindness; rest from Satan the devil] ...Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light" (vs 28-30).

What is the *yoke* of Jesus Christ? *Practice the words of Christ!* In other words—as we have heard how many times—"the simplicity of Christ" defined in three words: **Obey My voice!** That carries from the Old Testament to the New Testament. "Why don't you do the things that I say," Jesus said.

Come back to Matthew 6:9: "...Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name... [Notice the first thing after having the Father revealed is this; and we are to pray this everyday; this is to be in the consciousness of our mind everyday.]: ...Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven" (vs 9-10).

Then we talk about our physical needs. God knows we have need of all these things—right? Doesn't God say that He will provide for us? Doesn't Jesus say, 'Don't be anxious about anything'? If God takes care of the things in the world—the birds, the beasts, the flowers and the grass of the field—with His Spirit in us and He loving us, does He not care more for us than that?

Will not God provide for us? Sometimes it may get a little thin. How thin can it get? Well, look what happened to Elijah, one of the greatest prophets of God. What did He do with Elijah for three and a half years? *He sent him out of the country and He sent him to a widow of the city of Sidon!* There they lived on the little amount of flour and oil that the woman had for three and a half years!

Just a little sidebar to that: Anyone who wants to say that they are Elijah the Prophet, why don't you start with that.

Verse 11: “Give us this day our daily bread... [God will provide. Sometimes it will be a little thin, but *God will provide.*] ...and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors” (vs 11-12). We need to forgive those who sin against us as God forgives us: key thing in growth; key thing in understanding the personality of God, the requirements of God. As I've said how many times: You can't hold in the corner of your mind hatred for someone and expect to enter into the Kingdom of God.

Verse 13: “And lead us not into temptation... [we don't want trials] ...but rescue us from the evil one.... [If a trial comes He will deliver us! I want you to pay special attention as to how this prayer ends. It ends the same way it began: ‘Your kingdom come.’] (How does He say at the end?): ...For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

There's about the Gospel. All the way through, every teaching, everything that Jesus taught is based upon those things:

- the Kingdom of God
- personal salvation
- growing and overcoming
- qualifying for the Kingdom of God

The focal point in our prayers is to be the Kingdom of God first, but notice what He says here in verse 33. So it's not *personal salvation* that is first, though it may begin with that, and then we understand what we are to do after that. It's the Kingdom of God that's important.

When I did the series on *The Kingdom of God* with Church at Home, you know how many half-hour segments that ended up being? *21!* Like one man said, ‘It's the Kingdom! *It's the Kingdom! It's the Kingdom!* That's why we keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Yes, we get together. Yes, we fellowship. Yes, we're able to have special things that we can do. However, those are all secondary to the Kingdom.

- The reason we are here is because this pictures the Kingdom.

- The reason we are here is to learn about the Kingdom.
- The reason we are here is to learn *how* we are going to help save the world in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 33: “But *as for* you, **seek first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...” He said up here Matt. 5:48: *be perfect as the Father*; and it is the Father's Kingdom and it is His righteousness. He gives that righteousness to us through the power of

- His Holy Spirit
 - His commandments
 - His laws, His love
 - His mercy
 - His grace
 - His faith
 - His goodness
- all combined together.

Men like to take certain things and dissect it out of the Bible, and that becomes *their* gospel—the Gospel of Grace. There is a Gospel of Grace; the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Yes, there is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. But it's the whole package together!

“...**seek first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.... [Then He gives a conclusion of chapter six concerning: Don't be striving for the physical things. No! What you do is you trust God every day in everything.] ...Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day*” (vs 33-34).

Acts 20, because we're going to go beyond the Gospels. Let's see what the Apostle Paul said concerning the Kingdom of God, so that we get everything in good perspective as to how we view the Kingdom of God and put that first, and prepare. Prepare to rule by developing character.

It is true that you can't rule unless you are ruled first. But even within the Church of God, that was distorted, because they made it that you had to be *ruled over by the ministry*; that's a lie! Christ has to rule in your heart.

Let me tell you something: If Christ rules in your heart, then you're qualifying to rule in the Kingdom of God—don't you think so? On the other hand, if Christ does not rule in your heart, and teaching you through the power of the Holy Spirit of God to govern yourself by your choices—which then come from the righteousness of God—then no amount of ministerial hierarchical authority is going to make you enter into the Kingdom of God. You see how the *slight of hand* comes? *Yes, indeed!*

Acts 20—here is part of a farewell address that Paul gave to the elders at Ephesus. I think if we remember what the message was to the Church at Ephesus in Rev. 2: they lost their first love. Oh, they had many good points about them, but they lost their first love. Brethren, the first love is loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being. We, living in the Laodicean age, better pay heed to that ourselves.

Notice what Paul said to them when they came down for this special meeting; Acts 20:18: “And when they had come to him, he said to them, ‘You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, and all the time I was with you... [he was there three years] ...I served the Lord with all humility and with many tears and temptations, which came upon me through the plots of the Jews’” (vs 18-19). Yes, there will be enemies; there will enemies without; there will be enemies within; but that’s why we are to:

- guard the Truth
- guard the doctrines
- stand for what is right

—at all times. But do so in:

- humility
- love
- understanding
- Truth

Verse 20: “*And* how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, *but* preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, **repentance toward God** and **faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**.... [personal salvation] ...And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I myself do not take any *of these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel of the Grace of God” (vs 20-24). So, the Gospel includes the *grace of God*. That’s personal salvation. And the Gospel of the Grace of God is the means

- to overcome sin!
- to escape temptations of Satan the devil

Verse 25: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more.” There we have it, the Gospel of Grace and the Kingdom of God go hand-in-hand.

Personal salvation and the Kingdom of God—God’s rule in your life directly through a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It is the goal for which we are aiming and

we’re to think about it every day, pray about it every day, so that we are able to know and understand, and keep our minds completely on the goal. That’s why we keep the Sabbath, and why we keep the Holy Days. Do you understand that?

- As we do it, we learn more every year.
- As we do that we’re preparing for the Kingdom of God.
- As we do that we’re growing and overcoming so that we will be prepared.

But we are also living in the grace of God, developing:

- the love of God
- the hope of God
- the faith of God
- the kindness of God
- the self-control of God

—which then gives us the *spiritual character* of God so that we—with the Spirit of God—are qualified to be rulers in the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ.

As it says in Dan. 7, concerning the Kingdom of God, that God is not going to leave it to other people. He’s going to give it to ‘the saints of the Most High.’ Brethren, *that’s us!* Who are the saints? *Saints means you are sanctified by the Holy Spirit!* That means that your relationship with God is Holy. That means that we are the Holy ones who are going to rule with Christ. He isn’t going to leave it to other people.

Hey! How about that? All the politicians of the world are going to be demoted in one day! No wonder one of the last things we say before we come down from the Sea of Glass to take over the world is ‘Hallelujah!’ Think on that! Think of the joy that that is going to be! I want you to really grasp that!

Let’s come to Colossians 1:9, and you will notice how all of this comes together in one whole package. We can’t be like Charles Stanley and have one aspect of it. Though he does very good in preaching. Though he’s very convincing in what he says. Though he’s very right in what he says in many aspects. *He’s not preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God!*

Colossians 1:9—Paul says after hearing of the conversion of the Colossians: “For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” God is not giving it to the wise of the world. They are the ones who became ‘fools’ because they rejected God. God is giving that wisdom and understanding to us, and that’s why we’re here at the Feast of Tabernacles, so we can learn and grow.

Verse 10: “That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God.”

- personal salvation
- Kingdom of God
- personal growth and overcoming
- qualifying to rule

—all of those together. We’ll see there’s another aspect of it here in just a minute, which comes back to the point of *personal salvation*.

Here’s the Christian growth, v 11: “Being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory...” Yielding to God!

- Asking for His Spirit!
- Asking for His help!
- Asking for His strength!

“...unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy... [regardless of what comes along, we are not going to let anything phase us, anything deter us, anything drive us away from God.] ...giving thanks to the Father...” (vs 11-12). Notice this, because we’ve heard it said in the past—preached from the pulpit—that *you* have to qualify for the Kingdom of God. Well, in a sense that is true; we have our works. But,

- Who gives us the Spirit?
- Who motivates us?
- Who gives us the understanding of the Word of God?
- *God the Father and Jesus Christ!*

It is the Father then Who qualifies us, v 12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”

We’re going to talk about that inheritance, because we’re inheriting the Kingdom of God. We’re inheriting eternal life. And we are going to be granted the greatest and best work that will ever be given to those who enter the Kingdom of God.

- We didn’t get here because of ourselves.
- We didn’t get here because we have a special bloodline.
- We didn’t get here because we live in Jerusalem.
- We didn’t get here because our father was a priest.
- We didn’t get here because we’re smart and intelligent and important.

We had to be *rescued* from Satan the devil! God is the One, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Who has done that. I want you to understand how much God is involved in our lives. Too many times God is kind of way off there someplace. Where is God? Have you ever felt that way? *Yes, there are times*

that we feel that way!

Even David did, as we went through some of the Psalms. He cried out and said, ‘Help! God, where are you?’ Yes, we all feel that way. That’s why we turn to God. God is interested in how we are going to react when the going gets tough. When everything is easy and everything is nice and everything is laid out for us, and we have no troubles and difficulties, we can be ‘very good Christians’—can’t we? But when the going gets tough, that’s the difficulty.

Notice how personal that this is; we have had to be rescued from the power of darkness, v 13: “Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness... [Who has personally done that? *The Father!*] ...and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love.” Here the Kingdom must be first and then personal salvation.

See how all of that is tied in together? How the whole New Testament is preaching and teaching the Kingdom of God? That’s why we go back to where we started, as Jesus said, ‘The Law and the Prophets were until John, since then the Kingdom of God is preached.’ That is containing all of those elements.

“...transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love... [because He’s the Head of the Church. This means that we are under the rulership of Jesus Christ in our lives, with His Spirit and it is): ...the Son of His love” (v 13). Remember:

- God loves you!
- God has called you!
- God has given you His Spirit!
- He has everything of the best to give us!

This is glorious, indeed, that we really understand this!

Then here is *personal salvation*, v 14: “In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins.”

Now let’s talk a little bit about the inheritance and what we’re going to do. He also shows here *Christ in us, the hope of glory.* Let’s come back to Romans, the eighth chapter, and let’s see that this calling and the Father personally dealing in our lives—personally giving us the power of His Holy Spirit, begetting us as His own sons and daughter—and brings us to the sonship of God.

That’s what it’s all about with the rule of God and *personal salvation*, and the Kingdom of God. It’s one whole package altogether. You can’t take part here and part there and say, ‘Oh, let’s do this; let’s do that; let’s do the other.’ It’s everything altogether.

Romans 8:14 shows that in the plan of God and the way the world is going—and it is going to get worse *and worse and worse*, you can count on that—*they are not going to solve the spiritual problems by political means*, nor by the ‘religious’ means of this world. There will come a unified ‘religion’ for the whole world. But here is God’s plan for us to rule, for us to receive eternal life, for us to *rescue* the world—and the world doesn’t even know it. The same thing is going to happen to us that happened to Jesus Christ. Jesus came, He preached the Gospel—right? *He wasn’t received! The people didn’t believe Him*—correct? So, what did they do? *They persecuted Him and killed Him!* Is that going to happen in the end-time to true Christians? *Yes!*

We’d better be strengthened with might in the inner man by the power of the Spirit of God so that we can endure the things that come. Remember, it says that the ‘one who endures to the end the same shall be saved.’ But that the ‘Gospel has got to be preached in all the world—the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—for a witness and then shall the end come.’

Let’s see beyond that time, Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God... [If you have the Spirit of God, you’re a son of God; you have the sonship.] ...Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [Paul calls it in 1-Cor. 2, ‘the spirit of the world.’] ...**but you have received the Spirit of sonship**, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vs 14-15).

Where did we start this sermon? *Our Father Who is in heaven!* Jesus personally revealed the Father to us. The Father has personally called us. The Father, through the Son, has led us to repentance, has given us His Spirit. This is what we’re talking about right here.

Verse 16: “The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now if *we are* children... [Don’t look around at the things that are here. ‘Lift up! Look up! Your salvation is near.’ Look in the Scriptures and see the things that are coming.] ...*we are* also heirs—**truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ**—...” (vs 16-17).

Come to Hebrews, the first chapter; let’s understand how important this is; let’s understand how God is involved in our lives and Christ is involved in our lives, and why we need to do the things that please Him. Why we need to look to the Father! Look to Christ! Look to the Word of God! Notice how important that this is; this is greater than anything that was ever done in the Old Testament:

Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the

fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days **by His Son...** [His own Son; His only begotten Son] ...Whom **He has appointed heir of all things...**” (vs 1-2). That means the universe! That’s why when we come to the Last Great Day, the great fulfillment of it is going to be eternal life and the rest of eternity with God the Father and Jesus Christ, and we are going to be sharing the universe under Christ. Think of those magnificent stars! Those magnificent galaxies, and how great that is! That’s all part of reflecting the glory of God!

“...by Whom also He made the [ages] worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (vs 2-3). Look at that! Our bodies are going to be transformed into the likeness of His glorious body. We need that to finish off what we’re going to read here:

Romans 8:17: “Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him.” There are going to be difficult times. That’s why you need to read the Gospels, study the Gospels, see what Jesus went through, see what He suffered and how He did it for His creation.

It wasn’t just a man who came and was perfect and can save mankind. It was GOD Who came in the flesh, tabernacled with us so that He, as our Creator, laid down His life so that He may take it back *to save* His creation and *to save* mankind. We brethren are going to be given a major role in that by ruling in the Kingdom of God. That’s what the whole Feast of Tabernacles is all about.

“...so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us” (vs 17-18). Never, never get down and discouraged and so low that you think God has gone off and deserted you. *No!* He has not gone off and deserted you.

- He is *with* you!
- He is *for* you!
- He is *in* you!

Whatever you are suffering He is suffering with you, and wants you to come to Him so that He can give you relief, so that He can raise you up!

Now then, with those experiences, and then after having entered into the Kingdom of God—through the resurrection—and coming back to the earth to rule, we can rule and help others.

Here is what the world is waiting for. They don't know what's going on. They don't know what the 'Beginning and the Ending' is. They don't have a clue. They're rejecting Jesus right and left, everywhere you go, and in the churches of this world. That's why we did the book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* You can have a great part in having brand new people.

Let me just say this: You can have as many of the books, *Lord, What Should I Do?*—and we put in there the CD, which has four of the Church at Home plus the hymn *The Almighty God*—and you can give those to brand new people. If you hear someone with a comment saying, I wonder what's happening in the world today and in the churches today? Say, 'I have a book that you might want to read.' Run home and get it and you give it to them. You can have a part in that.

Listen! God wants all of us to have a part in reaching out to new people. It'll vary in what we do, but we can all have a part. We'll supply you with those things. *Lord, What Should I Do?* We had 15,000 of them printed, so we're well stocked.

Verse 19: "For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God... [The world is waiting for God's solution and we are part of that solution!] ...because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, in order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now" (vs 19-22).

Yes! Look at the earthquakes, the tornadoes, the hurricanes, the droughts, the fires—all of the things combined together happening all at once (Deut. 28) which are the result of the curses of sin, and the result of Satan being the 'god of this world' and his demons under him.

Christ is coming and we are going to replace all of them. Satan is going to be bound and put into that abyss with all the demons with him. Then God is going to renew the world and we are going to go out and serve the world.

Verse 23: "And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies." Isn't that something? These are the things that we need to look to.

When we talk about 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, and Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever'—this is what that means.

(go to the next track)

Let's continue on and learn more about what the Kingdom of God is going to be like. After all, we find a lot of this right in the Gospels, because it is 'the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.'

Let's come to Luke 22 and the question always becomes: *Lord, what should I do?* Then you hear the other extreme of it: *Well, I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, so I'll just be a doorkeeper.* Well, let me tell you something, that's not right either. There aren't going to be a million doorkeepers in the Kingdom of Heaven. That's just an expression that it's better to be with God—regardless of the circumstances—than to be with the wicked with all that they have and the trouble that comes with them.

However, the disciples were wondering, because they had a pretty good understanding after hearing about the Gospel of the Kingdom of God with Jesus preaching, a pretty good understanding of it's going to be literal, it's going to be on the earth. This occurred right during the Passover, of all places. That last Passover was quite a Passover, indeed!

Luke 22:24: "And there was also an argument among them, *even* this: which of them should be considered *the* greatest.... [Everyone wants to be the greatest. Well, we'll see what Jesus says.] ...And He said to them, 'The kings of the nations lord over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors'" (vs 24-25). Oh yes, we do this for the greater good. Have you heard that? Oh yes, my, my, my!

Verse 26: "But *it shall* not be this way *among* you; rather, let the one who is greatest among you be as the younger, and the one who is leading as the one who is serving. For who *is* greater, the one who is sitting *at the table*, or the one who is serving? *Is* not the one who sits *at the table*? But I am among you as one who is serving." (vs 26-27).

Look at how Jesus looked at it. Look how He viewed it. That's the way we need to view it all. None of us are going to be anything great in this life. That's not the greatness that we need to seek. And we're not going to be arguing as to who is going to be the greatest in the Kingdom of God, because there's going to be God the Father, Jesus Christ and all the patriarchs and all of that. We're going to see that we're going to fit in, and we will see how that is explained.

Notice what He said after that, v 28: "Now you are the ones who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint to you, as My Father has

appointed to Me, a kingdom... [They're all going to have high positions—right? *Yes!*] ...so that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom... [that's going to be the whole world] ...and may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (vs 28-30). That should have been enough to satisfy them.

Let's come to Matthew 20:1; we're going to see how this will also apply to us: “The Kingdom of Heaven...” There it is again. Do a concordance study, or a computer search, in the book of Matthew and look up *Kingdom of Heaven, Kingdom of God*, and you will see that's the basic whole beginning and the outline on which all the book of Matthew hangs.

Here's another parable: “...shall be compared to a man, a master of a house, who went out early in *the* morning to hire workmen for his vineyard.... [Remember what we covered, the vineyard is the Church. The vineyard in the Old Testament was Israel. All they produced was wild grapes, worthless.] ...And after agreeing with the workmen on a silver coin *for the day's wage*, he sent them into his vineyard. And when he went out about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘Go also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you’” (vs 1-4). That sounds fair enough. They weren't working, so anything that they would get would be better than nothing—right?

Verse 5: “And they went. Again, after going out about *the* sixth hour and *the* ninth hour, he did likewise. And about the eleventh hour, he went out *and* found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all the day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘Go also into my vineyard, and whatever is right you shall receive.’” (vs 5-7). This sounded like a fair deal. This is a parable of eternal life given to all. Let's see what happened here:

Verse 8: “And when evening came, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the workmen and pay them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.’” Isn't that interesting? Let's look at the last ones who are saved that we know of in the book of Revelation. Who are they? *The 144,000 of the children of Israel and the great innumerable multitude!*

In the book of Revelation, they represent the ones who were hired—compared to the parable here—at the 11th hour. What are they going to receive? We're going to see something here that God is always fair, but what fairness looks to us in our eyes may not be the fairness that God sees.

Verse 9: “And when those who *were hired* about the eleventh hour came, they each received a

silver coin. But when the first ones came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a silver coin. And after receiving *it*, they complained against the master of the house, saying, ‘These *who came* last have worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have carried the burden and the heat of the day. But he answered *and* said to them, ‘Friend, I am not doing you wrong. Did you not agree with me on a silver coin *for the day?*’” (vs 9-13).

Didn't they? *Yes, indeed!* Didn't you say, ‘O Lord, please save me.’ When you're resurrected you're not going to stand there and watch as the rewards are handed out on the Sea of Glass and say, ‘Lord, I was at this longer than them.’ It's not going to work!

Listen! Understand this! Jesus said that ‘among men, John was the greatest prophet of all, and he did no miracle!’ What did He say about John? *The one who least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John!* We need to look at through the eyes of the Word of God, with the Spirit of God and not through our perception as to what is ‘fair.’ Especially living in this world, *fairness* and *anti-discrimination* have been all twisted out of proportion so that now they are passing laws allowing homosexuals to marry.

Let me tell you one thing about lawlessness—just a sidebar: Once sin is enacted into law, then lawlessness will multiply and reign! All of that was done under the guise of ‘fairness’ and non-discrimination—right? What is fair to God is always going to be fair, regardless of what some people may think.

Verse 14: “‘Take *what* is yours and go, for I also desire to give to the last *ones* exactly as I gave to you. And is it not lawful for me to do what I will with that which *is* my own? Is your eye evil because I am good?’ **So the last shall be first, and the first shall be last; for many are called, but few are chosen**” (vs 14-16). There you have it. *God is going to decide based upon our hearts*, and we will all be happy with God is going to give us.

Let's focus in on the part that we need to be doing. Right here in Matthew 25 there are three parables concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. We'll see how to apply those in our lives. Let's understand this: The Word of God is our guide. The Holy Spirit is to lead us. We need to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being. Don't you think because of that God is going to bless us and reward us according to the best that is for us? *Yes!*

Matthew 25:1—the parable of the ten virgins: “Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared *to* ten virgins, who took their lamps *and*

went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them” (vs 1-3). They did not have a supply of God’s Holy Spirit with them. The lamp is what is to shine to light the way.

The lamps that they had you could hold in your hand. They were like a large seashell with a little lip on the side, which they put a wick down into the oil that was in the shallow, little lamp and they lit the wick. The wick would draw the oil up to feed the flame so it would burn and give light. The Holy Spirit would not last long—just like the oil would not last long—in a person if they don’t exercise it and go to God in prayer and study and to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and to have that supplied every day.

Verse 4: “But the wise took oil in their vessels *along* with their lamps. Now when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept” (vs 4-5). That verse means that we all have our troubles and difficulties; we all have our ups and downs, but the questions are:

- How do we handle them?
- How far do we let things slide?
- How far to do we put things off?

I suppose you could say that someone—if the only thing they do is come to church on the Sabbath and the rest of the week they live more or less like the world—are they growing and overcoming? Are they using the Holy Spirit of God? *God has to determine that!* That’s not a judgment for us to make concerning other people. But that is a judgment we are to make concerning ourselves, because all of us want to be in the Kingdom of God—otherwise, we wouldn’t be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles—would we?

Verse 6: “But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry: ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.’” There are many other things you can add to it, which I can’t bring out at this time, but Christ and the events leading up to Christ’s coming are going to be suddenly on the scene.

When the beast is finally put in, is that when you’re going to wake up and get ready? *or* Should we not be ready before these end-time events come to fruition? So that when they do happen we’ll be ready!

Here’s what happened, v 8: “And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil...’” Here’s the truth:

- you cannot give someone of your Holy Spirit

- you cannot give someone of your understanding
- you cannot give someone what you have studied

That’s why there has to be study and prayer. How many times have we heard it during our life? Yet, how many times are these things put off and we don’t do them?

We don’t want this to happen to us—do we? Verse 9: “But the wise answered, saying, ‘*No*, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’” Here’s a last minute rush to do something! Oh boy! Oh boy! Jesus is coming!

Verse 10: “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut.” We need to take this to heart, too, so that we don’t become like the five foolish virgins. You can compare those to the Laodiceans who don’t repent.

Verse 11: “And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But He answered *and* said, ‘Truly I say to you, **I do not know you**’” (vs 11-12). We don’t want those words spoken to us—do we? What should we do? *All the things that we know we need to do, and what the Bible tells us to do:*

- grow in grace and knowledge
- grow in love and understanding
- grow in faith
- have that hope always before us
- be focused on the Kingdom of God

Every single day!

Verse 13: “Watch... [In this case, watch yourself, not world news. You have to watch world news and the events that are going on, but in this case it is *watch yourself; monitor yourself; discipline yourself!*] ...therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.”

The next parable we won’t go into, because we have other things we need to cover, but here’s the one of the talents—the five talents, the two talents, the one talent—the same thing. The five talents, he went out and worked, traded and increased and made ten. He was told ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You be over five cities.’

Likewise the one with two. He brought the two and said, ‘Look, Lord, it’s gained two besides what you gave me.’ He said, ‘Well done good and faithful servant.’

The truth is this: We all have to be stewards. Taking care of the Lord’s money was being a steward of the Lord’s money. We are stewards of the

Holy Spirit. We are stewards of the Word of God. A steward is one who takes care of someone else's property for the owner's benefit. They receive a wage for doing it. But notice the one who was afraid.

- Is God a God of love?
- Does Christ love us?
- Does God the Father love us?
- *Yes, indeed!*

But here's one that says, 'I know You are harsh, that You demand things to be given to You where You didn't sow. You want the harvest where You didn't scatter. So I did the best thing I could do, I went and hid it in the ground, wrapped it up in a napkin, put it under the earth and with Your coming, I dug it up and here it is, Lord.' What did Jesus say? *Why didn't you at least put it in the bank so I could have interest at My return*' and took the talent from him and gave it to the one who had ten.^[transcriber's correction] A warning we need to learn.

Verse 31: "Now when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon *the* throne of His glory; and He shall gather before Him all the nations... [This is down through the whole Millennium, but it applies to us now.] ...and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at *His* left. Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world'" (vs 31-34).

As we are going to see, the fourth part of everything is not only *personal salvation, the Kingdom of God, growing in grace and knowledge*, but it is

4. The knowledge of the plan of God that He has revealed to us.

We saw that yesterday in Matt. 13. Then you know what it was. This is showing a lack of brotherly love, and a lack of love of neighbor. What did Jesus say concerning how people were going to identify us as those who belong to Him? *That we have love for one another!* That's what we need to do.

Yes, people are going to have their faults. People are going to have their difficulties. You are going to see them. What are you going to do? Judge them *or* pray for them? Condemn them *or* help them? What is it? That's all a part of the difference between the sheep and the goats.

Let's come to Ephesians, the first chapter, and let's see what Paul has given to us concerning the plan of God and that final prayer of Paul. This is one of the greatest and most important chapters in all

the Bible.

- This tells us how God deals with us.
- This tells us how God has revealed His plan to us.
- This tells us how we're to have our minds open to understand the Truth, love and knowledge of God.

This is all important with our focus on the Kingdom of God, our focus on ruling with Christ, our focus on being chosen by God to receive the inheritance from Christ and the whole world is waiting for us to rescue it through Jesus Christ.

We're going to let Eph. 1 wrap it all up concerning the Kingdom of God. There are many, many more Scriptures throughout the entirety of the New Testament concerning the Kingdom of God. I'll leave that up to you for personal study during the year after the Feast of Tabernacles is over. But, brethren, keep our mind focused on that!

Ephesians 1:1—so that we understand that the Apostle Paul was instrumental in showing the greatness of the Kingdom of God and what God is doing with us. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus... [that's why it's here; not only to those in Ephesus, but to all the churches through all time] ...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-2).

That's what it needs to be with us. We are standing in the grace, we receive the grace of God, and the Gospel is also called 'the Gospel of Grace' because we have this close, intimate relationship with God—with the Spirit of God, through prayer and study—that has not been available to people in any manner as it is right now this day.

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ." Look at all the spiritual blessings that God has given us. Fantastic, isn't it, brethren? *Yes!* And we need to multiply those. We need to increase those. That's the whole purpose of our lives and where we're going.

Verse 4: "**According as He has personally chosen us for Himself...**" God the Father has personally involved in your life. Jesus Christ is personally involved in your life. It's both of Them here—right? *Yes!* And *we've been chosen by God the Father personally for Himself!*

"...before *the* foundation of *the* world..." (v 4). He destined that there would be those He would choose, which those of us who have the Holy Spirit today, we are the ones, and likewise down through history: "...before *the* foundation of *the* world..."

- Christ was slain from the foundation of the world
- God had His plan from the foundation of the world

Here is the goal that God has. Are we willingly yielding to God so that God's goal can be worked out in our lives? So that we can rule and reign with Christ? So that we can be with God the Father and Jesus Christ in New Jerusalem?

"...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love" (v 4). That's quite a thing—isn't it? Though it comes by grace, though it comes by God's Spirit, He has made us and created us to receive His Holy Spirit, and has given it to us so that we can yield to Him, so that we have our part in fulfilling this.

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, **according to the good pleasure of His own will.**" Notice, read those words! God has *personally* done it, that we be Holy and blameless, predestined us for sonship "...according to the good pleasure of His own will." ***That's God's will for us!***

Verse 6: "To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son.*" Isn't that something? The angels are going to praise Him for what He's doing. The 24 elders are going to praise Him for what He is doing? The people who come into the Kingdom of God, during the Millennium, are going to praise us for what God is doing. Think of that! Think of the exalted position that God has put us in, which is really very humbling, indeed—isn't it? *Yes!*

Verse 7: "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.... [Like we stand under an umbrella from which we receive the love of God, the power of God, the forgiveness, the mercy, the hope, the faith] ...which He has made to abound toward us... [not just a little sprinkling of dust upon us, but]: ...to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; having made known to us the mystery of His own will..." (vs 7-9). The world doesn't understand that secret—the secret of God! Through His Word and His Spirit He is sharing that with you. He says, 'I want you to be a part of this.

- Will love Me and be faithful?
- Will you serve Me and do what is right?
- Will you believe Me and trust in My hope?
- Will you love me with all your heart, mind, soul and being?

"...the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself; that in *the divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He

might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; . yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will" (vs 9-11). Isn't that a fantastic thing, brethren, that we are part of what God is doing? He has

- personally selected us
- personally called us
- personally granted us repentance
- personally given us of His Holy Spirit
- personally has opened our mind and given us this knowledge

Isn't that something? Verse 12: "That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ." Then Paul talks about the Holy Spirit which we receive after we believe and are baptized.

Verse 14: "Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory." And we can trust in this. We're a whole lot closer to the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God than when we first believed—don't you think? *Yes!* It hasn't worked out the way that a lot of people have thought, but it's going to work out the way that God intends.

Verse 15: "For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (vs 15-16).

Brethren, I know you pray for me every day. I appreciate that! Know that I can't do what I do unless you're praying for me. Likewise, I pray for you, as do all the other brethren, as do all the other elders. We pray for you daily!

- That God will help you!
- That God will heal you!
- That God will be with you!
- That you will be faithful!
- That you will love one another!
- That you will love God!

Especially while we have time, while it is called 'Today.'

Notice, here's Paul's prayer; this is fantastic, v 17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened... [understand and see with such vivid perception with your mind and the Word of God] ...in order that you may comprehend what is the **hope of His calling**, and **what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance**

in the saints... [He wants you to know!] ...and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power” (vs 17-19).

Isn't that something? That's the whole purpose of your calling and the Feast of Tabernacles. Remember this: It is the Kingdom! *The Kingdom! The Kingdom!* To get there you need

- personal salvation
- rescuing from Satan the devil
- growing in grace and knowledge and overcoming
- loving God with zeal and earnestness

and you have a guarantee that you will be in the Kingdom of God and rule with Jesus Christ and the saints!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 4:18-19
- 2) Matthew 4:17
- 3) Matthew 5:1-3, 10, 16, 48
- 4) Matthew 6:9
- 5) Matthew 11:25-30
- 6) Matthew 6:9-13, 33-34
- 7) Acts 20:18-25
- 8) Colossians 1:9-13
- 9) Romans 8:14-17
- 10) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 11) Romans 8:17-23
- 12) Luke 22:24-30
- 13) Matthew 20:1-16
- 14) Matthew 25:1-6, 8-13, 25-34
- 15) Ephesians 1:1-12, 14-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted

- Daniel 9
- Revelation 2
- Daniel 7
- 1 Corinthians 2
- Deuteronomy 28
- Matthew 13

Also referenced:

- ChurchatHome.com: *Kingdom of God* (series)
- Book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

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