

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

by Jackson Morro

© 2008 by Christ's Chapel
Fall River, Massachusetts

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Version of the Bible.

Printed in the United States of America
All rights reserved

Christ's Chapel
PO Box 3182
Fall River, MA 02722

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. SOWING AND REAPING**
- 2. WHAT YOU SAY**
- 3. THE HEART IN COVENANT**
- 4. "IT IS WELL..."**
- 5. FINAL OUTCOME PEOPLE**
- 6. KINGDOM OF GOD FACT SHEET**

KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

CHAPTER ONE SOWING AND REAPING

In Matthew 16:19, Jesus said to the Apostle Peter, “I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.” Jesus was telling us two things. First, He has a special kingdom that we can live in and operate in. Second, success in His Kingdom comes about by using certain keys. I think of a time in my own life when I worked as a security guard at a good-sized institution. The first night at work, I was given a key ring with dozens of master keys on it. I literally had the keys of the kingdom. But those keys were of no use to me unless 1) I knew how to use those keys, and 2) I did actually use them. I want to start off our discussion of the keys of Jesus’ Kingdom with the law of sowing and reaping.

The Lord Jesus told us that he had a kingdom we could live and operate in. He told us that His Kingdom was independent from this world system and did not depend on the prosperity or well-being of the world system. He stated that success in His Kingdom would come about by using certain spiritual keys or laws. Just as God has put certain physical laws into motion in the physical universe, He has also spiritual laws that are just as reliable. For example, in the physical realm we have the law of gravity. If I hold a pen over the side of a table and let it go, no one would be surprised that the pen would fall. Well, there are spiritual laws with the same reliability. One of those laws is the law of sowing and reaping.

7Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

8For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

9Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary

(Galatians 6:7-9)

Every act we do in life is a seed which brings a harvest or a result that is greater than the act itself. We are farmers who plant seeds in the field of our life and we harvest a crop from those seeds.

I'm sure you've heard the phrase "You reap what you sow." Well, that's absolutely true. It's a spiritual law that God has established. We've probably most often heard that phrase in respect to bad things—someone goes through the bad consequences of their unwise actions and we say, "They reaped what they sowed." Always remember, the whole truth is that sowing and reaping also works for good actions. Sow good and you'll reap good; sow bad seed and you'll reap bad. *You're the farmer!*

God established the law of sowing and reaping right at the beginning of creation when He established the law that "LIKE PRODUCES LIKE." When God created the plants, the fish, and the animals, He established the law that each thing would bring forth after its own kind.

24Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.

25God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

(Genesis 1:24-25)

So, God has placed an established spiritual law in this universe, the law of sowing and reaping, the law that like produces like, the law that states, "Keep doing what you're doing and you'll keep getting what you're getting."

We also see that when God created man, He created man in His (God's) own image and likeness.

26Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and

over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

(Genesis 1:26-28)

In other words, God had created man to be like Himself, a ruler and a creator. God created humans as His masterpiece. He wanted people to be creators with a small “c” just as He is the Creator with a capital “C.” He created man to rule and create within the earth He had created for him. There was one limitation: Only God was to decide what was morally right and wrong. Everything else belonged to man. Of course, we know that Adam and Eve sinned and decided for themselves what was right and wrong, and so the world fell under the dominion of the evil, rebellious angel who had tempted Adam and Eve. But Jesus Christ came and bought redemption for anyone who would believe in Him. He bought that redemption by His sacrifice on the cross which paid the penalty and demands of justice for our sins. When we are redeemed, we are also restored to God’s original purpose for us as rulers and creators.

Through Jesus and His Kingdom, we are restored in our power to operate this law of sowing and reaping in a creative way. We can *create* and *generate* according to the actions we sow in life. We’ll reap a like harvest. Jesus has given you the ability to create the life you want by the type of spiritual seed you sow.

Look at your life. If you’re satisfied, keep doing what you’re doing. If not, start sowing different seed. Search the Bible to find the good seed you can sow to change things. Use Jesus’ principle of sowing and reaping. 1) You have to sow first, be an *initiator*. 2) You have to sow in faith and trust, and sow cheerfully.

Jesus’ law of sowing and reaping will work in any area of life:

SPIRITUALLY—If you want to be a strong man or woman of faith, you *start* praying, you *start* reading the Bible, you *start* singing praises to God. You’ll find yourself reaping the harvest of getting spiritually.

EMOTIONALLY—You forgive others first, you initiate peacemaking first, you reach out to lonely people first, you give love first.

PHYSICALLY—If you need healing, you start praying for others to be healed and you reach out to those who need healing.

MATERIALLY—Give away the very thing you need to someone who has a similar need and you’ll see what you gave away com back to you multiplied. (Read Ecclesiastes 11:1.)

WHAT IS IT YOU NEED IN YOUR LIFE? Start sowing what you need. Jesus’ law of sowing and reaping has the ability to solve all the needs in

your life. In fact, the law of sowing and reaping can solve all the problems in this world. If, as a world, we'd operate the law of sowing and reaping, all the problems of this world would disappear, one by one.

CHAPTER TWO WHAT YOU SAY

The Lord Jesus Christ tells us there is a Kingdom that He rules and which we can live and operate in. We can have our needs met through this Kingdom and we can be a blessing to others. Jesus states that success in His Kingdom does not depend on circumstances in the world system. Jesus' Kingdom is separate from and over and above the world situation. Jesus also states that success in His Kingdom depends upon applying certain spiritual laws or principles, certain spiritual "keys" which would open the doors of heaven. In the last chapter, we saw the first key, or really, the first Law of the Kingdom of God. *The Law of Sowing and Reaping*. Whatever we do in life will produce a harvest after its own kind, whether good or bad. Now we will examine the second law of the Kingdom of God: *We create or destroy by what we say*: the creative (or destructive) power of our words.

Some years back, there was a popular saying, "What you see is what you get." In the Kingdom of God, however, the accurate saying is "What you SAY is what you get." Just as the law of sowing and reaping is a key to operating in God's Kingdom, so the law of speaking faith-filled words will produce and create. Consider Proverbs 18:20-21:

20 With the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach will be satisfied; He will be satisfied with the product of his lips.

21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, those who love it will eat its fruit.

In this scripture, we see the tremendous power to create or destroy by what we say with our mouth. We saw already in Genesis 1 that God created us in His own image and likeness. He created us to be rulers over the earth. We were to be little creators with a small "c" - He was THE CREATOR with a capital "C." He created all things out of nothing by speaking them into existence. God placed one limitation on humans—they must not decide for themselves what was morally right or wrong—only God would do that. Everything else belonged to man.

God had created all things by speaking them into existence. God said, “Let there be light”— and there was light. One of the blessings and means of authority God has given to us is the creative power of speech. We are unique—no other created being can use rational, creative speech. Animals cannot speak and create by their speech. Humans, however, can create or destroy through speech; we can bless or curse, lie or tell the truth, speak filth and degradation or speak purity and edification. In the legal world, words can be considered legally binding as a contract. In the old days, children would get their mouths washed out with soap for saying something wrong. All this attests to the importance and power of words to create or destroy.

The Lord Jesus gave us two important examples of the creative power of faith-filled words.

1) MATTHEW 17:20—Jesus said if we had faith even as a tiny mustard seed, we could speak to a mountain and it would move and nothing would be impossible to us.

2) MARK 11:22-24—Jesus said we are to have faith in God and actually have God’s kind of faith when He spoke the universe into existence. If we speak to any kind of mountain, tell it to move, and do not doubt in our heart, whatever we say will come to pass.

Jesus was saying we have to do two things. First, we have to speak forth a desired result. Second, the words we speak have to be faith-filled words. We have to believe in our heart that what we speak will come to pass. Jesus said, if we speak something and believe it in our heart, it will come to pass.

Our world is filled with negative speech and we see those negative words bringing negative circumstances to pass all the time. (In fact, you the reader may be aware of negative things you have said and how your negative words framed and created negative happenings in your life.)

Jesus tells us that in His Kingdom, He has reestablished us in the power to speak faith-filled words. He has given us the power to overcome and solve the problems and battles we face in life by speaking faith-filled words. The faith-filled words will release God’s creative power to meet needs, solve problems, and bring victory in life’s battles.

God has established the promises of the Bible, the Word of God, as His faith-filled words. (Write for our free booklet, *The Promises of God—Building Blocks of God’s Kingdom* available free from this ministry.) God tells us time and time again that His words in the Bible, the Word of God, are power packed and are backed up by the power of the Holy Spirit and by God Himself. As we speak forth God’s Word with faith in our heart that

those words are truth, we release God's power into any situation. We have to get our heart into agreement with what God's Word says about any situation in life, and as we do, we'll see God's power released to change that situation.

You and I have an important responsibility to use our power of speech in the way that God intended. We have to speak FAITH rather than FEAR, LOVE rather than HATE, TRUTH rather than FALSEHOOD and SLANDER. We have to speak DIGNITY and PURITY rather than PREJUDICE, FILTH and DEGRADATION. It means we don't COMPLAIN or MURMUR against God in tough times, but we speak FAITH and TRUST in Him. It means we don't belittle others, especially children. (I cringe when people call children ugly or stupid. Correct your children with proper words and discipline, but never destroy them by what you say. Jesus never would have shamed anyone or destroyed anyone with His speech. He always wanted to bring salvation and healing.)

Remember, God created this whole universe by speaking faith-filled words. God gave you the power of speech and your speech is going to create or destroy. The second law of Jesus' Kingdom is to believe in your heart and speak forth a desired result and you will see it come to pass.

The most important word of faith we can speak is listed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 10:9-10:

9That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;

10for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

CHAPTER THREE THE HEART IN COVENANT

We now come to the third key of Jesus' Kingdom: the heart that is in covenant with God. We've already seen how God has given us the power to sow a seed and produce a like harvest. We've seen also how we create by the words we speak. We have the power to allow (loose) or disallow (bind) anything that God allows or disallows in His word and the authority of heaven will back us up if we are lined up with God's word and God's will. We can take *authority* over any work of the devil (1 John 3:8).

We've seen, of course, that we can't just speak those words unless we

also *believe in our heart* that the words we say will come to pass (Mark 11:23-24). The power of our faith starts in our heart. In using the keys of the Kingdom, the condition of our heart (our inner-spirit man) is of ultimate importance. We have to have an inner man that is not bound up by unbelief or doubt. We have to have an inner man that desires to walk in holiness and the ways that please God. And, we must have an inner man that walks in forgiveness of others, regardless of who is right or wrong (Mark 11:25-26). This is the heart that seeks after God to please God. The Word of God tells us: “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)

Whenever Jesus’ disciples came and asked Him to increase their faith, He always responded by telling them to use the faith they already had (Matthew 17:20; Luke 17:5-6). As a born again child of God, with the resurrected Christ living within you (1 John 4:4), you already have within you all the faith resources you’ll ever need to accomplish God’s will for your life. The real issue is having a heart (or inner-spirit man) that is free and open to the ways of God so that faith can flow from it into the seed-sowing and word-creating productivity that God makes available to us.

The keystone or foundation stone of our walk in the Kingdom of God rests in our inner man—in the condition of our heart toward God. The key (the grandmaster key, so to speak) is the *heart that is in covenant or holy contract with God*. In the Old Testament we see that God had entered into a covenant or a contract with His people. The contract was: God would be their God; He would be their sponsor. He had a plan for them and if they obeyed Him, He would guarantee the success of His will for their lives. The Israelites, on the other hand, would be a faithful people to their God. They would obey Him. They would follow His plan for them. They would seek to do the things that were pleasing to Him. And *above all*, they would be “sold out” to Him in their inner heart. There was to be no possibility of any other person or thing taking that special place of honor, loyalty, and faith in that special place of their inner man. They were *sold out to God* in their loyalty to Him *no matter what!*

God was always ready and willing and able to back up His part of the covenant. In Deuteronomy 1:8 we see that God told the people to go take the land that He had promised to them. He guaranteed their success. So the Israelites sent out twelve spies to get the layout of the land. Ten of the spies came back complaining about the size of the people in the land, that the occupants were like giants and they themselves were like grasshoppers. Two spies, Joshua and Caleb, came back with a good report and some samples of large, juicy grapes. Ten people looked at the giants, two looked at the

grapes. Ten suffered from a grasshopper complex. Ten had a heart that wasn't really in covenant with God. Ten failed to realize that giants are never a problem to God; giants are only a problem in the mind of someone whose heart is not sold out in covenant with God. Two, Joshua and Caleb, took God at His promise.

We see a similar situation many years later in 1 Samuel 17. The nation of Israel was at war with the Philistine nation. The two nations had reached what we would call today "a Mexican stand-off." Both sides were armed and looking at each other across a ravine, but no one was fighting yet. Every day, a Philistine giant named Goliath would come out and mock God and taunt the people of Israel. The Jewish king Saul and his soldiers were afraid to challenge Goliath. Saul, who had been an anointed king, had gotten into disobedience to God and his heart was no longer in covenant with God or sold out to God. As a result, he no longer had the inner faith to act on God's promises. His poor leadership and fear had filtered down to his soldiers. When a leader is afraid and not in covenant with God, his men will also be afraid

There was, however, a young teenage boy named David, a shepherd of his father's sheep, who visited the camp of Israel to bring some food to his brothers who were soldiers. David was a teenager with an obedient heart, with a heart that was in covenant with God. David was shocked by the stand-off he saw: "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" (1 Samuel 17:26) David knew one simple fact—he had a covenant with God and Goliath didn't have a covenant with God. That made all the difference.

David knew that God had promised: "If you obey My will, I'll guarantee your victory. If you're in covenant with Me, all that you have is at My disposal, but also all that I have is at your disposal! If you go to war for Me, the battle is not yours, but the battle is Mine!" (1 Samuel 17:47)

David's heart was sold out to God in holy covenant. David believed that one man who believes + God = the majority. David had experienced God's protection while he was taking care of his father's sheep. At times the lion and the bear tried to attack the sheep but the Spirit of God came upon David enabling him to rip up the lion and the bear into pieces. God would do the same to the giant. In the Bible, the lion is a symbol of the devil, the bear a symbol of the world system, and the giant is a symbol of our personal problems. The heart in covenant with God knows that a covenant-keeping God will give victory over all three!

We all know the outcome. David slew Goliath and the Philistines ran and were defeated. David knew that a dead giant face-down in the mud is not the

problem. David knew that the shadow of a dog never bit anyone and the shadow of death never killed anyone. David knew that giants were never a problem except in the mind of a person whose heart was not in covenant with God.

It makes all the difference in the world when you can come to a place where you know two things: 1) You really mean business with God, and 2) God really means business with you. When you know that God has made a covenant with you through His holy word and that He's not going to change the rules in the middle of the game and when you know that He has promised to guarantee your success if you seek to do His will for your life, it makes all the difference.

Another man whose heart was in covenant with God was Job. At the height of his battles he stated, "Though He [God] slay me, yet I will trust in Him." (Job 13:15) Of course, it wasn't God trying to kill Job, it was satan (John 10:10). But Job had a heart that would never, never leave God. So often, we focus on the battles Job faced, but in the New Testament, James tells us to consider the *outcome* of Job (James 5:11). In Job 42, we see that Job, in the end, received back double everything satan tried to rob from him. The third key of Jesus' Kingdom is the heart that is in covenant with God, the heart that will never turn away from God, and the heart that knows, that even against all odds, Almighty God and His goodness, will always have the last word.

CHAPTER FOUR

"IT IS WELL..."

[Read 2 Kings, Chapter 4, verses 8 to 37 before reading this chapter.]

In Matthew 16, Jesus asked His disciples who men said He was and then who *they* said He was. Peter answered that Jesus was the Christ, Son of the Living God. Jesus then proclaimed that Peter's confession would be the rock upon which Jesus would build His church and the gates of hell could not withstand the power of the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord over a situation. The gates of hell could be torn open by Jesus' believing church and captives would be set free especially by the power of binding and loosing. The Kingdom of God could tear down the gates of hell and either bind (or not allow) bad results or loose (or allow or cause to come to pass) good results. Binding and loosing would be operated through a *revelation knowledge* and verbal confession that Jesus is Lord over the situation to be

bound or loosed.

In 2 Kings we see the prophet Elisha who had succeeded Elijah. Elisha had pestered Elijah for a double portion of Elijah's anointing. Elisha proved he was willing to do what was necessary to get the double portion (2 Kings 2). Elisha had hungered and thirsted after righteousness and proved you can attain a position with God if you really want it. As Elijah went up to heaven, his mantle fell on Elisha and we see that while Elijah had performed 8 miracles, Elisha performed 16 in his ministry.

In 2 Kings 4:8 we are introduced to the Shunamite woman. She and her husband were people of substance and also of hospitality. The woman was a godly woman. They often invited Elisha to eat at their home and even built a little room for him so he could stop and rest on his many journeys. Elisha wanted to bless her for being so kind. He asked if there were anything she wanted him to pray for. She replied that she was blessed enough and was satisfied as she was. Later, Elisha's servant Gehazi, told Elisha she had no son and her husband was old. Elisha called her back and told her that within a year she would have a son. Elisha operated the principle of binding and (in this case) loosing. The Shunamite responded, "Don't lie to me." In other words, don't play with my feelings or tease me. Obviously, it had been a secret desire of her heart.

Of course, a year later she gave birth to a son. One day, after the son had grown, he was out in the field with his father and he developed a severe headache. Then the boy died—and suddenly there was a major obstacle to the fulfillment of the prophet's word and the woman's desire of her heart. The Shunamite was at a crossroads and had to decide—which is bigger? God or the obstacle? The CHOICE was up to HER!

Today, we have the right under the New Covenant to lay hands on the sick before the illness results in death. She had not that option and hence, she was facing a seemingly impossible situation. The Shunamite, however, reacted with the attitude that *God is always bigger* than any obstacle we may face. This put her in a position to exercise the same kind of power of binding and loosing that we in the Kingdom of God have today.

Consequently, we see her act in the following way:

- With our mouth, we bind the wrong results and loose the right results.
- Call the things that are not as though they are when we are on the firm foundation of a promise from God.
- We speak the final outcome we want to see and we believe it in our heart that it will come to pass.
- She fully believed that God doesn't give and then take away. She

believed God gives and when a battle arises, you look to God to bring victory against the enemy (sickness, death, poverty, etc.).

The Shunamite decided to go on a journey to Elisha who had originally spoken the promise into coming to pass. She would not be satisfied until she had victory. In going to Elisha she was really going to God, whom Elisha sent and represented.

First, the woman would not confess a negative result NO MATTER WHAT THE PRESENT MOMENT LOOKED LIKE. She placed her dead son's body on Elisha's bed. She was bringing the son to God. As she left, her husband wondered why she was going to seek out the prophet. All she stated was, "It will be well." (2 Kings 4:23) Then she told her servant who was driving the donkey cart to go forward and not slow down until she said so. Her quest for Elisha (and God) took priority over everything.

As Elisha saw her approaching, he sent his servant Gehazi to greet her, but all the Shunamite said to Gehazi was, "It is well." The woman was not lying or deceiving people. It's not lying when we draw upon the resources of the Kingdom of God through a faith-filled confession that will not be deterred. We are speaking the END RESULT of what God has promised. As such, even the death of a child is not bigger than God's power.

She bypassed Gehazi and went right to Elisha and fell and caught hold of his feet and would not leave until the prophet agreed to go to her house and raise her son from the dead. She told Elisha, in effect, she had not asked for the son, but now that she had him, she would not settle for anything less than God's best—her son coming back to life. And if she had to hold on to Elisha's ankles for the rest of her life, she would do so.

The Kingdom of God principle of binding and loosing must be *real* to us. We cannot just go through the motions and expect results. In the process of binding and loosing, we must move in a *revelation* that binding and loosing is true. There is a real LAYING HOLD OF GOD in any exercise of true faith. We see that Elisha (and God) did just as she wished—Elisha went to her home, raised her son, and gave the son back to her.

In using the key of binding and loosing in the Kingdom of God, we must consider:

- How big is God in our eyes? Do we really see Him as bigger than any situation we might face?
- Can we say "It is well" when it doesn't look well?
- Do we see that in any battle, God is our answer, not our enemy?
- Will we lay hold of God the way she laid hold of Elisha's ankles?

If we do, it will be well!

CHAPTER FIVE

FINAL OUTCOME PEOPLE

[Read John's Gospel, Chapter 11, verse 1 to verse 46 before reading this chapter.]

Just about every miracle the Lord Jesus performed demanded a response of faith from the one needing the miracle. The person needing the miracle had to believe two things: 1) that Jesus *could* do the miracle they needed and 2) not only could He, but also that Jesus *would* do the very thing they needed to save them from death or destruction. Faith demanded that they see the miracle in their spirit even when they couldn't see it with their natural eyes. And usually, there was always one critical moment in each of these journeys of faith where things looked very grim, even sometimes hopeless. At that critical moment, the believer had to take a courageous, supernatural, strong stand of faith, even in the face of the impossible—and have faith in the final outcome. One important key of the Kingdom of God is that in the midst of the battle **WE ALWAYS KEEP OUR FAITH FIXED ON THE FINAL OUTCOME—THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE OF GOD.**

Early in Jesus' ministry, in Mark 2, we see Jesus in ministry at Capernaum where at this time, He owned His own little house. Four men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus hoping that Jesus would heal him. But there was such a great crowd gathered to hear Jesus' teachings they couldn't get near the door, never mind in the house. This was a critical point—they could have said, "Oh well, we can't get in today. Let's go home and try tomorrow." But tomorrow often becomes next week, then next week becomes next month and they may never have come back, or, if they did, Jesus might have moved on to another town. But these men kept their eyes on the final outcome they desired. They got a clever idea. They climbed on Jesus' roof, tore part of the roof off, and lowered their friend on his pallet through the roof by a rope. When Jesus saw the man coming down through the roof, He was so impressed by their faith, He healed the paralyzed man completely.

There was also the time when a very important man named Jairus came to Jesus and asked Him to come heal his twelve year-old daughter who was

near death. On the way to Jairus' house, they were interrupted by a woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years and Jesus healed her. Then messengers came to Jairus telling him not to bother Jesus anymore because his daughter had died. But Jesus told Jairus, "Fear not; only believe." At this critical point, Jairus could have believed the messengers and sent Jesus away. Instead, he focused on the final outcome he desired, believed Jesus' words and they continued on to Jairus' house. And Jesus raised the little girl from the dead.

Finally, we see an incident from late in Jesus' earthly ministry. In fact, it was one of the last miracles He performed before His crucifixion. In John 11 we see how the sisters of a man named Lazarus sent word to Jesus that their brother was very sick. Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, were very good friends of Jesus. Jesus and His apostles had dined at Lazarus' house and received hospitality, perhaps often. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, loved to hear Jesus teach the Word of God. Jesus Himself loved Lazarus, Martha and Mary with the highest kind of *agape* love.

When Jesus got word of Lazarus' illness, He did what we all should do—He put His faith into action by the spoken word. In John 11:4, Jesus took the positive promises of the Word of God: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it." By His spoken word, He guaranteed the victorious outcome—and He never changed His positive confession of faith throughout the whole event, regardless of what outward circumstances looked like at any given moment. Instead of going to Lazarus' town of Bethany right away, Jesus stayed where He was two more days. Then He started out for Bethany. True faith is never hurried; true faith is never anxious or worried. True faith *knows* the victory is *guaranteed*. True faith always focuses on the FINAL OUTCOME.

While on the way to Bethany, Jesus told His disciples that Lazarus had fallen asleep. When they thought that meant he was taking a nap, Jesus explained to them that Lazarus had died.

When Jesus and His disciples arrived at Bethany, they found Lazarus had been dead and buried in the tomb for four days. The mourners were there. Everybody had given up. Even Martha and Mary, who believed Jesus was the Son of God, thought this one was a little too difficult for Jesus. Both said, "Jesus, if only you had gotten here a little earlier, you could have healed Lazarus, but now he's dead." In effect, everybody had given up. Everybody, that is, except one person: Jesus Himself. Jesus was showing that He is greater than ALL HUMAN THINKING (Ephesians 3:20). Jesus spoke and said, "I am the resurrection and the life..." (John 11:25) Then He asked where Lazarus was and they led Jesus to the tomb. Jesus told the

people to roll away the stone. They protested, saying Lazarus stunk by now, what was the use? But Jesus insisted. They had to show *some* kind of faith. They couldn't raise Lazarus; only Jesus could do that. But they could cooperate and sow a seed of faith by rolling away the stone, just as Jesus had told them.

As they rolled away the stone, Jesus reconfirmed His faith by thanking God the Father ahead of time for what was about to happen (John 11:41-42). Then in a loud voice, Jesus commanded, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came forth (John 11:44).

Death was conquered because one person of faith, Jesus, kept His eyes on the FINAL OUTCOME—THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE OF GOD.

In Romans 12:3 we read that God deals to every man the measure of faith. That means, that at the moment of salvation, when a person accepts Christ into their heart as Lord, they receive, *at that very moment*, all the faith necessary to live out God's plan for their life. Not only that, I also believe their measure of faith is such that it would enable them to live in the same way Jesus would if He were living their life! When we are born again and baptized with the Holy Spirit, we have received all the faith we need. After that, it's really up to us. The final outcome is up to us as we have moved in what our Lord Jesus provided for us.

CHAPTER SIX

KINGDOM OF GOD FACT SHEET

The Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples that He had a Kingdom. In this Kingdom, He was King, Lord and Ruler. Those who believe in Him can live in this Kingdom which does not depend on what happens in the affairs of the everyday world as we know it. In Jesus' Kingdom, all things are possible through faith. Jesus also tells us there are certain laws, principles, or "keys" He has given us to operate successfully in this Kingdom. We've already studied the two basic laws of the Kingdom: 1) *The Law of Sowing and Reaping*, that everything produces after its own kind. Sow good seed, and you'll get a good harvest. Sow bad seed, and you'll get a bad harvest. 2) *The power of speaking faith-filled words*. Jesus said that if we spoke something with our mouth and believed it in our heart, we'd see that thing come to pass.

1) JESUS TOLD US HOW WE ENTER HIS KINGDOM. We enter His Kingdom through the spiritual new birth, what Jesus called being “born again” (John 3:3 and John 3:5). Jesus told us that we were all born physically at one time, but we all need a second birth. We need a spiritual birth where our dead inner man is made alive when the risen Christ comes and brings His eternal life into our spirit. We literally become a new creation, a person who didn’t exist before. To have the Kingdom of God, we must have the King living inside of us. That’s how we enter His Kingdom.

2) JESUS SAID THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN US (LUKE 17:21). Now this makes sense. If Jesus brings the Kingdom and we enter the Kingdom by having Jesus within us, then all the power and authority of the Kingdom of God abides in our heart, in our inner person. True happiness, peace and victory over our problems never come from outside circumstances. True peace, joy and victory always begin as an “inside job” that comes from the presence of the Risen Christ within us. The power of the Kingdom of God is always released from the inside out, never from the outside in. In this way, we are in the image and likeness of God Himself Who created all things by speaking forth the creative word from His heart.

3) JESUS TOLD US WHAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AND WHAT IT ISN’T (ROMANS 14:17). The Kingdom of God is not “things.” Success in the Kingdom of God doesn’t start by seeking “things.” Things, first of all, will never bring happiness. The Kingdom of God is righteousness (a right standing with God), peace (a calmness and knowing that all is well), and the joy of the Holy Spirit (an inner thrill or an inner delight that comes from fellowship or union with God). In Matthew 6:33 Jesus told us that our priority in life should be to seek these spiritual gifts first and not make things our priority. But then, God has promised if we make His Kingdom and our life of the spirit with Him our priority, He’ll make sure all “things” we need fall into place and we will have everything we need with *no lack* and *no fear* that we’ll lack provision! Modern everyday life is often called a “rat race.” Although we have technological advances and a veneer of material prosperity, there are more miserable people than ever in this world because we’ve come to make “things” our priority. When we do that, we start to make “things” our God and “things” will never meet our deepest need.

4) JESUS TOLD US WE HAD TO BE LIKE CHILDREN TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. I once heard a preacher explain this by saying when he was a child and went on vacation with his

parents, he'd just get into the car. He wouldn't worry about how to get "there," or where the money was coming for the trip, or who would put gas in the car, or where they would eat. He just TRUSTED all these things would be there. Parents know that their children trust them to provide. Jesus said we have to have this childlike trust. God feeds the birds of the air, He takes care of the lilies of the field; He knows the number of hairs on our head. He keeps all the galaxies of this universe in proper order. We have to trust God with our lives. IF WE TRUST GOD, HE WILL NOT BETRAY THAT TRUST.

5) LASTLY, GOD WANTS HIS KINGDOM ESTABLISHED ON EARTH AND HE WANTS YOU IN IT. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus prayed "Our Father...Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth..." (Matthew 6:9, 10) In Luke 22:29, Jesus stated, "And just as My Father has granted Me a Kingdom, I grant you." And in Luke 12:32, Jesus said, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the Kingdom." One thing is absolutely certain—God wants YOU in His Kingdom. (It's like the old Army recruiting posters with Uncle Sam pointing and saying, "I Want You.") And He wants His Kingdom established on earth—that's the whole purpose of the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth after the Great Tribulation. (See Revelation, Chapter 20.)

Jesus said the Kingdom of God was like a pearl of great price (Matthew 13:45-46), worth selling all we have to purchase it. He also said that where our treasure is, that's where our heart will be (Matthew 6:21).

As we close this book, we must ask ourselves, "Where does God and His Kingdom fit in our lives?" and we must remember—life is too important to get it wrong! (Matthew 6:33)

PRAYER REQUESTS

We invite you to send any prayer requests you might have for prayer at our chapel prayer meetings. Send to:

Christ's Chapel
PO Box 3182
Fall River, MA 02722

If you enjoyed this book, we invite you to write for other free books through this ministry.