

CONCLUSION

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Psalms 34:8-10 KJV

I Conclude That - -

It is true, that Life in the Kingdom of God is like the treasure hidden in the field, and the fine pearls of great value of [Mt. 13:44-46](#). However, we are only likely to find them if we are seeking them, and the cost is great.

I have found faith in Christ and life in His Kingdom to be practical and fulfilling as I served him as a husband and dad, a commercial pilot, an entrepreneur, a ministry founder, a pastor, missionary - and friend to many hurting people.

Elaine's and my faith has sustained us through several major valleys including a fire that consumed the business I had started with and for our sons, the loss of two adult sons, and then my twin.

Add to that the several potentially devastating betrayals as I served those who said they were ready to take up their cross to follow Jesus but then found it too costly.

Elaine and I have known the freedom and joy of a modest lifestyle where "investments" in things eternal, versus those of the world, offers security that no amount of earthly wealth can match.

And where Spirit-to-spirit intimacy with Jesus, and finding our identity and personal validation in Him, is more satisfying than winning the approval of the crowds.

And where partnering with God in making the Gospel known to others, gives unmatched purpose and fulfillment in life.

And where the "realities" of life here must succumb to the REALITY of Life in His Kingdom because He is the greatest god and the only God!

I think I have ended up with a fairly realistic sense of both the light and dark sides of being a Christian in His service, in

life and in relationship with others in the Body of Christ, and I wouldn't want to do life any other way!

The Dark Side

We Christians do many things that compromise our faith and distract us from single-mindedly loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

We quickly forget that the only truly fulfilling way to live is to invite God's rule over us - reconnecting us to the Life that He always intended for us.

Our experiences with money, food, sex and power are key areas. They are wonderfully fulfilling and rewarding when experienced in harmony with God's plan, but equally destructive under Satan's rule.

In addition to tarnishing our intimacy with Christ and robbing us of its joy, our sinful affections degrade us as humans and hurt others in the process.

They naturally become masters who express Satan's rule over us, but we can choose to make them servants under God's rule. They can then draw us toward His Life rather than away from Him, and bless us instead of cursing us.

Kingdom Life includes the ecstasy of the "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" of [Romans 14:17](#), and the [John 7:37-39](#) outflow of rivers of Living Water that draw other to Jesus. Obeying Him is a prerequisite to experiencing the life of His Kingdom, but we must choose.

Satan is a thief. As Jesus said in [John 10:10](#), "The thief comes only to steal, and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (nasb) Sin, and even compromise, rob us of the richness that God has for us through Jesus.

The [Luke 9:23-26](#) cross will cost us everything in life but will give us even more. It's part of "the mystery of God."

Eyes to See

Life is more spiritual than natural, and the spirit world rules over the natural world.

Our problem is that we often react/respond according to the natural because we are earthly minded. That's why the reality of the Kingdom of God escapes us. It is a spiritual reality in a physical world and is only seen with spiritual eyes and hearts. Consider [I Cor. 1:17-25](#) and [2:6-16](#).

According to [II Corinthians 3:12-18](#), we are not able to see how wonderful Jesus really is because of our sinful humanity, but when we open our hearts to Him, His Holy Spirit opens our spiritual eyes and lets us see Him.

A Work in Progress

Jesus said that we must be "born again." ([John 3:5-7](#)) When we are born again, we are born a second time but this is a spiritual birth instead of a physical birth.

We begin an exciting and rewarding spiritual journey of entering more deeply into intimacy with Him, and thus the Life of His Kingdom!

It is tragic, that such an approach to faith is rarely taught in today's church where our enthusiasm for the life of the institution often smothers our pursuit of the surpassing beauty of the Kingdom of God.

Summing Up

The whole "Christian" thing then, is about Jesus coming to earth to die on the cross to bear the penalty for our sins, and then being raised from the dead on the third day by the power of God to break Satan's power of spiritual death over us.

All who would subsequently learn of that Good News, and choose to accept God's rescue plan, would be "saved." Their spirit is made alive, and they are now able to see things as they are and to live in relationship with God as He always wanted.

The assumption then, is that one's outward life, which had previously shown that they were under Satan's control, will now show that they are serving God. What happened on the inside will be confirmed by what others see on the outside.

That choice totally impacts our years on earth and determines our eternal destiny. Learning to apply it in everyday life, in a Christian culture that has not done well at defining what it means, is a challenge.

Authentic faith requires our focus on the Life of God's kingdom in a way that separates us from what the world calls "The good life," and I commend that world view to you.

When All is Said and Done

God had a wonderful plan for man as the crowning part of His glorious creation.

It changed drastically when Adam and Eve chose to sin against Him, but praise God, everything that was impacted by "the fall" is also affected by our redemption! It is there for the taking - or better said, for the choosing! That glorifies God and He heaps His pleasure upon us.

Hindrances

One hindrance is our belief that the institutional church of our day is what Jesus had in mind for His [Mt. 16:18](#) Church. We are satisfied with things as they are, as anyone who "rocks the boat" will soon learn.

And there is *ignorance* about the richness of Life in God's Kingdom; *unbelief*, which won't allow us to believe it could be that good; and *pride* that tells us we're doing okay without getting serious about it.

"It is time for judgment to begin with God's household - -?" I Peter 4:17a niv

Conclusion: FOR HIS GLORY, 9/12/22
Ken Stoltzfus, P.O. Box 228, Kidron, Ohio 44636
www.10minas.net/for-his-glory/ www.john2031.com