

## *Jesus' Invitation For All To Be Great In His Kingdom*

### I. GOD INVITES EVERYONE TO BE GREAT IN HIS KINGDOM

*<sup>19</sup> Whoever breaks (consistently) one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches (encourages) them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:19)*

- A. God invites “whosoever” or literally everyone to be great in His Kingdom. This is a primary teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (constitution of the Kingdom; Mt. 5-7).
- B. We cannot repent of the desire for greatness because God designed our spirit with this longing. We must repent for seeking greatness in a wrong way. We must also repent for neglecting to seek greatness (simply because Jesus designed and called us to be great in His sight).
- C. Without the paradigm of being on a journey to greatness, the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle is much more difficult to sustain. It is the “north star” to keep us focused on our journey.  
*<sup>6</sup> For he who comes to God must believe that...He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6)*
- D. Jesus revealed a new paradigm for greatness. We are to focus on being great in His sight rather than in the sight of men. We understand that this greatness will be fully manifest in the age-to-come not in this age. Our greatness will be based on our heart responses in love and meekness not on our gifting, resources, accomplishments or the size of our ministry and its impact.
- E. The opportunity for promotion and greatness in God’s sight is available to all. We must pursue it in the right way through obedience to God and meekness (servanthood).  
*<sup>26</sup> Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. <sup>27</sup> Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave. (Mt. 20:26-27)*  
*<sup>11</sup> But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. <sup>12</sup> And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Mt. 23:11-12)*
- F. Jesus taught that there would be a range of degrees of glory and greatness in God’s Kingdom including those who are called the least and the greatest. Our rewards in eternity greatly differ from one another. (The largest star known is the Pistol Star, which has a mass about 100-150 times that of the Sun, and is about 10 million times brighter).  
*<sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)*

- G. Jesus taught on God's invitation for our greatness more than any other man in Scripture. He spoke on this directly and indirectly as He called people to become great (Mt. 5:19; 18:4; 20:25-26; 23:11; Mk. 10:42-43; Lk. 6:23, 35; 9:48; 22:26); to receive riches with God in heaven (Lk. 12:21; 16:11; Rev. 2:9; 3:18); to be ruler over many things (Mt. 25:21; 23); to have authority over cities (Lk. 19:17, 19); to have power over nations (Rev. 2:26-27); to sit on Jesus' Throne (Rev. 3:21); to inherit authority over part of the earth (Mt. 5:5); to be first in authority and honor (Mt. 19:30; 20:16, 27); to gain treasure in heaven (Mt. 6:20; 19:21; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 12:33; 18:22); to receive rewards (Mt. 5:12; 6:4, 6, 18; 10:41-42; 16:27; Mk. 9:41; Lk. 6:23, 35; Rev. 22:12); to be exalted (Mt. 23:12; Lk. 14:11; 18:14); to receive honor from the Father (Jn. 12:26); to be one of the few who are chosen for honor (Mt. 20:16; 22:14); to gain crowns (Rev. 2:10; 3:11); to gain heavenly garments (Rev. 3:4-5, 18; 16:15; 19:7-8).
- H. Living in light of receiving reward in heaven and being great in God's sight is a major theme in the Sermon on the Mount that is emphasized in Mt. 5:5, 12, 19, 46; 6:1, 4, 6, 18, 20; 7:2).
- I. Our reward is partially given in this life and mostly in the age-to-come. However, when God does release tokens of our reward in this life, it is mostly by a release of His Spirit in our inner man and secondarily it is increased blessing in our circumstances (more honor, money, comfort). It is important to understand how God gives us rewards so that we do not become offended at God because we do not receive rewards in our circumstances in the way that we expected. Many either put too much emphasize on receiving God's rewards in their circumstances in this age or they totally ignore the subject of rewards. Both extreme positions are contrary to Scripture.

## II. CENTERPIECE OF GOD'S PURPOSE: BRING HEAVEN AND EARTH TOGETHER

<sup>9</sup> *Having made known to us the mystery (hidden plan) of His will... which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the... fullness of the times He might gather together in one ALL things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. (Eph. 1:9-10)*

- A. The centerpiece of God's eternal purpose is for Jesus to come back to fully establish His Kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together. **Heaven** speaks of the supernatural spirit realm where God's power and presence are manifest. It is the place believers go (for the last 2,000 year as a "temporary holding pattern" for disembodied spirits). **Earth** speaks of the physical realm where human process, emotions and physical sensation reach their fullest expression. The earth **requires a resurrected body** to relate to it.
- B. As Gentile believers, we most naturally think of worshipping Jesus as God in the supernatural conditions of heaven. We emphasize Jesus' deity as the Son of God. Whereas, the Jewish paradigm, thinks of reigning with the Messianic King as a man in the natural conditions of the earth. They emphasize the Messiah's humanity as the Son of David.
- C. Jesus will rule the earth with the **natural human processes not suspended, yet significantly enhanced by the supernatural dimension of the Spirit**. We see aspects of this when Jesus appeared with His resurrected body (Jn. 20-21; Acts 1).

### III. THE NECESSITY OF UNDERSTANDING JESUS' EARTHLY REIGN OVER ALL NATIONS

- A. The Millennium speaks of a literal 1000-year period in which Jesus rules all the nations on earth (including every sphere of life: political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, etc.) At this time, all the kings of the earth will be born again and will worship Jesus (Ps. 72:11; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Isa. 60:10-11, 62:2; Rev. 12:5; 15:4; 21:24).
- <sup>4</sup> *I saw thrones, and they (saints of Rev. 19:14) sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus...they lived and reigned with Christ for 1,000 years. 5...This is the first resurrection. 6 ...They shall be priests of God... and of Christ, and shall reign with Him 1,000 years. (Rev. 20:4-6)*
- B. This period of global blessing will be initiated by Jesus' coming to establish a 1000-year period of righteousness, prosperity (Rev. 20:1-6; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 51:1-8; 60-62; 65:17-25; Ps. 2:6-12; 110:1-7; Mt. 5:5; 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; Acts 1:6; 3:21). The Millennium speaks of a literal 1000-year period (*millennium* is from the Latin “*mille*” or ‘a thousand’ and “*annus*” ‘a year’).
- C. Scripture emphasizes that the saints (with resurrected bodies who are counted worthy or considered faithful during their life on earth) will be given leadership roles so as to reign with Jesus on earth in the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6; 22:5; Mt. 19:28; 20:21-23; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rom 8:17).
- <sup>21</sup> *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My Throne... (Rev. 3:21)*
- <sup>27</sup> *The kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints... (Dan. 7:27)*
- D. Jesus promised the saints at Thyatira that if they kept His Word until the end of their life that in the resurrection they would rule the nations (in the Millennial Kingdom), when it would still be necessary to confront sin and resistance to God's will with the severity of a rod iron.
- <sup>26</sup> *And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations-- 27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron... (Rev. 2:26-27)*
- E. Jesus will be the King of all kings, in other words, the King over other kings in the Millennium (Rev. 19:16). He will govern a worldwide Kingdom from Jerusalem in partnership with two sets of kings: the *Millennial kings* (with non-resurrected bodies), and the *resurrected kings* (saints).
- <sup>5</sup> *Jesus...the ruler over the kings of the earth (Millennial kings). To Him who loved us...6 and has made us (resurrected saints) kings and priests to His God and Father. (Rev. 1:5-6)*
- F. The three types of people are on earth when Jesus appears in the sky include the *redeemed* will be raptured during Jesus' worldwide procession across the sky. The *reprobate* who took the mark of the Beast will be judged and then killed (some executed). The *resistors* are the unsaved survivors (Jews and Gentiles) of the Great Tribulation who refused to worship the Antichrist. The Scripture refers to them as “those who are left” or “who remain.” These will have an opportunity to be converted after Jesus returns and then populate the Millennial earth (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19; Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 20:38-42; 36:36; Dan. 12:1; Amos 9:9-10; Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:14; 13:8; 14:16).

- G. The two functions most emphasized for the saints are: priests and kings (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).  
<sup>5</sup> *To Him who loved us...6 and made us kings and priests to His God and Father. (Rev. 1:5-6)*  
<sup>10</sup> *Have made us kings and priests to our God...we shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10)*
- H. As priests, the saints will worship, intercede and communicate the knowledge of God to others i.e., non-resurrected people on the Millennial earth and saints and angels in the New Jerusalem.
- I. As kings, the saints will reign (rule) with judicial responsibility and authority. This role involves authority to evaluate the past (judging) and to determine action plans for the future for the people and areas that they are over. The ruling saints will appoint people into positions in the infrastructure that are within their sphere of Kingdom responsibility. This will include training and managing the people who are appointed. The saints will judge angels (1 Cor. 6:2).  
<sup>2</sup> *Do you not know the saints will judge the world?...the world will be judged by you...3 Do you not know that we shall judge (evaluate) angels? (1 Cor. 6:2-3)*  
<sup>28</sup> *Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration (re-birth of the earth beginning in Millennium), when the Son of Man sits on the Throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. " (Mt. 19:28)*  
<sup>29</sup> *I bestow upon you a kingdom...30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Lk. 22:29-30)*

#### IV. LIVING IN THE NEW JERUSALEM WHILE REIGNING ON EARTH

- A. The saints' will live in the New Jerusalem, yet rule with governmental responsibilities on earth.  
<sup>20</sup> *For our citizenship is in heaven (New Jerusalem)... (Phil 3:20-21)*
- B. What kind of body will the saints have? A solid material body with supernatural abilities (Lk. 24:15, 30-31; Jn. 20:14-15, 26; 21:4-5). Resurrected saints will relate to but not fully co-mingle with those in natural bodies. Inhabitants on the Millennial earth (with non-resurrected bodies) will work closely with saints with resurrected bodies. Marriage will continue among those in non-resurrected bodies. Those with resurrected bodies will not be given to marriage. Jesus spoke with His disciples for forty days in His resurrected body (Acts 1:3). Sometimes spirit beings (demons and angels) appear in the natural realm to interact with people in natural bodies.

#### V. HAVING A RIGHT VIEW OF AUTHORITY IN THE MILLENNIAL GOVERNMENT

- A. Some see authority as a way to establish their own honor before people. This is a secular view of authority that is based on the "pride of being over people." A godly person obviously would not see any value in seeking this type of authority and rewards in heaven.
- B. In the Millennial Kingdom, the Father entrusts to Jesus the mandate to bring all nations under God's authority and to fill them with His goodness and glory (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

- C. This mandate is very precious to the Father and the Son. Therefore, Jesus' view of authority (ruling) is related to walking out this intimate partnership with His Father and His people as He establishes on the earth that which is so dear to His heart. Think of one you love and admire; you would want to work closely with that person to glorify God and enrich people's lives.
- D. The Bridal paradigm of authority and reward is to be with Him where He is and doing what He is doing. It is being involved in what He calls precious. We will enjoy each step of the process of working closely with Jesus to bring the earth under the Father's authority. Jesus has great joy in working closely with His people. The saints will have the authority in the infrastructure to make important life enhancing decisions that determine the quality of life for many. We will have joy in possessing the ability and authority to impart the Father's values to those He loves.

*<sup>21</sup> Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy (enjoyment) of your Lord. (Mt. 25:21)*

## VI. WAYS IN WHICH THE SAINTS WILL BE REWARDED IN THE AGE-TO-COME

- A. There will be a vast range of degrees of glory, reward and greatness in God's Kingdom.  
*<sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)*
- B. The measure of God's glory will be manifest in our resurrected body (1 Cor. 15:41-42; Mt. 13:41-43, Dan. 12:2-3).
- C. Our work assignment and authority (over nations, tribes and cities, etc.) will bring us in close proximity to Jesus (Mt. 19:28, 30; 20:16, 27; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; Dan. 7:22, 25-27). This will influence the measure of impartation of power and wisdom that we operate in. Some will be exalted with authority and honor (Mt. 5:19; 18:4; 20:25-26; 23:11-12; Mk. 10:42-43; Lk. 6:23, 35; 9:48; Lk. 14:11; 18:14; 22:26).
- D. We will receive varying praise from God (Jn. 12:26; 1 Pet. 1:7; Mt. 25:21, 1 Cor. 4:5).
- E. We will receive crowns (1 Cor. 9:25, Rev. 2:10; 3:11; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Tim. 4:8).
- F. Our communion with Jesus will vary according to the degree that we have the spiritual capacity to receive from Him as the Morningstar (Rev. 2:28; 22:16; Gen. 15:1).
- G. Our garments have varying dimensions of God's glory (Rev. 3:4-5, 18; 16:15; 19:7-8).
- H. We will receive riches, treasures and rewards in heaven (Mt. 5:12; 6:4, 6, 18, 20; 10:41-42; 16:27; 19:21; Mk. 9:41; 10:21; Lk. 6:23, 35; 12:21, 33; 16:11; 18:22; Rev. 2:9; 3:18; 22:12). This will include the location and design of our heavenly dwelling place.
- I. Our history with people will be cherished in eternity (1 Thes. 2:19; Phil. 2:16; Lk. 16:9).

## VII. THIS LIFE IS AN INTERNSHIP THAT GIVES US OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE MEEKNESS

- A. Life in this age can be likened to a 70 year internship (Ps. 90:10) which prepares us for our life on earth in the age to come. Our next stage of life in the Millennium is when our primary ministry calling begins. This primary ministry assignment will last for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-6).
- B. In our 70 year internship, we have two issues that we are to determine in the grace of God. First, to decide if we want to ***be in God's family*** as voluntarily lovers. Second, to decide if we want to ***function in Jesus' government*** (initially for 1,000 years in the Millennium, then for all eternity). The measure that we develop in love, meekness, and revelation (of His Word) determines our place, function and glory in His eternal government

## VIII. THE CALL TO GREATNESS BY OBEYING GOD IN THE LEAST AREAS

*<sup>17</sup> Do not think that I came to destroy (nullify or minimize) the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (bring their full intentions to full expression). <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away (renovated by fire at the end of the Millennium), one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law (Word) till all is fulfilled (embraced and expressed in God's people). <sup>19</sup> Whoever breaks (consistently) one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches (encourages) them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:17-19)*

- A. Jesus came so that the fullness of what God originally intended in each of His commandments would be fully expressed in the lives of His people. God always wanted His commands to be obeyed in the inner life of His people. Israel reduced them to refer only to externals issues.
- <sup>29</sup> Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! (Deut. 5:29)*
- B. The least of God's commandments are in contrast to those perceived as His great ones. In other words, some commandments are seen as great or significant by men because they ***overtly impact other people*** (for example, laws that have social consequences i.e., do not murder, steal or commit adultery). The great commands in the eyes of people are the ones that have the ***greatest consequence in society***. These commands receive the greatest emphasis among God's people.
- C. The least commandments emphasize the areas of our life that are "esteemed as least" in importance to men. God intended that they dynamically impact even the "least" (private) areas of our life. The ***least commandments*** speaks of those that are "least honored" (least emphasized or obeyed) by God's people because they focus on the hidden and private issues of our heart. Jesus gives insight into the "least areas" in the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount. These include the least or private issues of our heart (Mt. 5:21-48) and our devotional activities (Mt. 6:1-21).
- D. One important aspect of ministry is to help people be great in God by teaching them to diligently and consistently obey what seems like the least of God's commands.