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## **THINKING OF KINGDOM PRINCIPLES IN THE NEW YEAR.**

A New Year seems to generate thoughts of focusing on the course of our life – a timely milestone spaced between what was and what is yet to be. It is a divine interlude for remembering our accomplishments and considering our purpose in God ... a time for reflecting on our ministry goals ... and a contemplative rest for valiant generational sons who are *pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*. This is a special juncture in time meant for evaluating a successful passage – and for us, its not only into another year but into the Seventh Day of God!

Examining our progress is crucial if we are to remain on a course that reaches our destiny. One of our major concerns should be in hearing what the Spirit of God is speaking to His Church so we fully understand the Kingdom message. With this as our heart's cry, we continually gird up all of our spiritual senses to run after God – eagerly racing to reach our full potential in Christ.

Awareness of the necessity to understand the spiritual language of the Kingdom has also directed us towards searching out its Principles. In our comprehension of the 'ways of the Kingdom' is the added benefit of also learning its government and culture. Our endeavor this year is to wholly understand Kingdom Principles. These Principles will not only transform the way we live but also empower our ministry in the Kingdom ... it did for the prophet Daniel!

Daniel was a young man when Jerusalem was besieged and taken into Babylonian captivity, but in just three years he rose to a chief position in the kingdom because he 'qualified' himself in all that he did – doing his very best in every situation shaped his destiny. Learning the language, culture and government of the Chaldeans made Daniel successful in a foreign kingdom ... yet it is his discipline

or application of divine Principles that established his place in God's Kingdom. Daniel rose above the situation ... entering a dimension of incredible possibility!

Daniel walked in his destiny because he honored the Spiritual Laws and Principles of the Kingdom of God and applied them in his everyday life! He was not waiting for 'someday when I'm back in Jerusalem' or 'when things get better' or 'my situation improves' but practiced Kingdom Principles everyday ... regardless of where he was or how he felt. He may have been a prisoner in a foreign land but that did not bind him spiritually – he fearlessly walked in God's Kingdom with unequalled wisdom and revelation! God wants us to rule and reign with Him in His Kingdom. We desperately need to learn Kingdom Principles. It will change our lives forever.

Daniel discovered some Kingdom Principles and became very successful in a foreign land. He knew the scriptures – that God had given mankind dominion over the earth as part of their job description in the Book of Genesis ... but how will man rule the earth unless he first learns to rule over his own person? God empowered man with the ability to rule over his body, mind and spirit. This became a Principle Daniel practiced – he planned to behave righteously. We likewise have the same ability entrusted to us. We choose life or death everyday. No one makes us do anything. It is all a matter of choices that we make with the options available. We choose how we behave and not only have the ability, but the responsibility to bring ourselves into order.

We live in such a fast paced society that righteousness is challenged every moment. There is way too much that stimulates our senses and influences our decisions. But if we have difficulty living righteously or according to Kingdom Principles, then we make adjustments in our lifestyle. We rise above the chaos by removing options until we maintain righteousness. Daniel was a prisoner – he didn't have many options available to him, yet he always made right choices. We bring our thoughts into captivity by limiting our options. When there is too much stimuli for the flesh, too much activity going on – the flesh is very much awake but the spirit man is in a stupor. If we become so hyped up, so caught up in the moment that we lose our sense of responsibility, we usually behave poorly. If our spirit man is sleeping how will we ever be able to make right choices for ourselves? We all need to use our 'time out' feature to refocus on what is right, honorable and necessary to do. In other words, we eliminate options and activities until we can remember what we should do ... and once renewed and grounded in Kingdom Principles, we are able to successfully tackle any opposition.

A friend once confided that he could be very responsible unless he had alcohol – then he just didn't care. That's why he knew he had a problem because he could not be responsible to do the right thing. He removed alcohol as an option and took rule over his life. He bound his weakness so he could be set free to be compassionate and responsible. We likewise may have some difficult obstacles to overcome but that does not mean spiritually we remain bound. Our struggles in life may be the consequence of not knowing Kingdom Principles, but our success is always directly affected by reshaping our experiences according to our knowledge of these Principles.

Most of us make complicated choices every day ... courageously deciding issues that involve the well being of our families as we fearlessly pursue godly lifestyles. We expand our authority and understanding of God's Kingdom by establishing His order in our lives. Wisdom, integrity, intelligence and compassion are not virtues of youth – they are qualities earned through years of challenging choices and courageous living. When these qualities are present in a man, we see a life well lived.

Daniel was determined not to defile himself even if he was in prison. He therefore made a plan to eat only vegetables. He asked the steward if he could test his plan. This was his diet – not just a ten-day fast but rather a lifetime commitment! The whole purpose for implementing a fast is to change the way we live. Diet means 'manner of life' and it should be the way we live for the rest of our life. If we learn some Principles for living in the Kingdom, then it becomes our custom and everyday lifestyle.

Customs are our protocol – a set of rules or a code for our behavior. Governments are established with a code of diplomatic or military protocol. Solomon remembered the tragedy that happened when his father first attempted to bring the Ark of God back to Jerusalem. David confesses it was his ignorance of proper order – not knowing the protocol or customs of God. Solomon admits his own lack of understanding kingdom customs – not knowing *how to go out and come in before the Lord*. His prayer reflects a desire for wisdom to function in his ministry as king of Israel. Solomon wants to know the 'ways' of the Kingdom ... the right way of doing things – Kingdom Principles. Later he will write what he has learned in the Book of Proverbs ... a treasury of Kingdom Principles to live by.

We are in a tremendous search to understand the most effective ways for the Body of Christ to walk in the Kingdom of God. We want to be empowered, but what are the secrets to being successful in the Kingdom? If we ever uncovered some Kingdom Principles that held the possibility of enabling us to reach our full potential and purpose in God

... would we be willing to incorporate these into our lifestyle as Daniel did? Daniel discovered some Kingdom Principles that changed his life. He learned that if he behaved responsibly, he could rule in the kingdom. He discovered the Principle of always doing his very best – that having your whole heart in everything that you do is an excellent spirit and highly valued in the Kingdom.

Another life changing Kingdom Principle is to ‘say what we mean and mean what we say,’ a man of our word. If God says anything, it always happens! Our word is synonymous with who we are – a creative force producing power, whether for good or evil. If we choose life, then we personally endeavor to ‘walk the talk’ ... not only as forgiven in Christ but also blameless in the Kingdom of God.

We are here for a reason. We have a divine purpose and therefore need a course of action and the determination to fulfill it. We daily discipline ourselves to do the right *thing* ... at the right *time* ... in the right *way* ... in the right *spirit* ... and for the right *reason*. Disciplined people behave responsibly at any given moment because they live Kingdom Principles everyday of their lives and purposely rise to reach their full potential in Christ. We often run ourselves ragged trying to be someone we are not but if we use the Kingdom Principles as a key to a successful life in Christ, we will find peace and harmony ... the easy life.

As you pause in this time of new beginnings, may you find encouragement to change the way you think ... determination to be more effective and loving ... and appreciation for your life in Christ. This is a mere moment in time, yet it holds the possibility of forever changing the course of your life ... if you put your whole heart into it!

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