

KINGDOM COMMUNITY: Don't Drift Apart

INDIVIDUALLY

In the Kingdom, everyone is responsible for their own walk with the Lord. In other words, we are each individually responsible for the following for ourselves:

1. Our salvation
2. Maintaining our salvation
3. Spirituality
4. Spiritual growth and development
5. Spiritual maturity
6. Righteousness
7. Sinfulness
8. Besetting sins
9. Resisting temptation
10. Intimacy with the Trinity members
11. Listening to the Spirit
12. Compliance with what the Spirit requests
13. Feeding on the rhema
14. Drinking the Living Water
15. Readying for the King's return
16. Fulfilling our role in the Kingdom army
17. Fulfilling our Kingdom responsibilities
18. Fulfilling our family responsibilities
19. Fulfilling our occupational responsibilities
20. Fulfilling our national responsibilities
21. Submitting to authority
22. Stewarding our resources
23. Entering our destiny
24. Receiving the Lord's counsel
25. Using our Kingdom authority
26. Resisting the enemy
27. Understanding spiritual authority case-by-case
28. Discernment
29. Implementing prophecy
30. Continued filling with the Spirit
31. Choosing designated Kingdom marriage partners
32. Choosing designated Kingdom occupations
33. Living the Kingdom lifestyle
34. etc

No one can do all these for us. It's a huge set of responsibilities. Actually, we were required to evaluate this load before we came into the Kingdom.¹

A pastor, parent or mentor is not responsible for these in another believer. Why is this?

Firstly, spiritual authority dictates that every person has their own responsibilities and concomitant authority, and no one else can substitute for either of them.

Secondly, our Lord must become everything to us. He must become our Beloved **and** be the source that meets all our needs – emotional, mental, spiritual, physical & financial. Oneness demands this.

Unfortunately the lie of the enemy that we subscribed to in the institutional church system was that the

¹ – Luke 14:26-33

pastor/minister/apostle was responsible for each of us. This is a fallacy. Believing it made us lazy and we stagnated, becoming mere sponges of teaching and adherents to processes and ceremony.

Even in the family, spouses and children have abdicated their Kingdom responsibilities, either through rebellion or laziness. Parents are not responsible for any of their children's decisions once they reach the 'age of accountability' – approximately 7 years old, and definitely by 14 y.o.a.

Now that we are free in the Kingdom and live as the ekklesia in community, we must fully understand our responsibilities and be responsible for them.

Unfortunately our 'past life' in the system has taught us too many bad habits, like laziness and dereliction of Kingdom duty. We need to wake up and 'smell the roses' – as it were – and get serious about it.

Laziness prevents believers from maturing. Paul wrote: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”² Constant growing and maturing is essential to live the Kingdom life because Father wants to lead us into more responsibility for him so that greater works can flow from us.

One childish activity of believers is riding the 'coat tails' of others' spiritual experiences. This is immature and must cease. It may make a person feel good as they listen, watch and read about others' exploits, but it won't be the *rhema* food to feed them. We need *rhema* bread³ to feed our spirit so that it strengthens and we grow from its nourishment.

Remember this?

EVERYTHING MUST CHANGE

COLLECTIVELY

Although we are responsible for ourselves, we're not in isolation. We're part of a Body, an organism that can't function without all its parts.

However, one of the factors that will come into play when we take up full responsibility of our spiritual lives is that we will observe the great disparity in where each of us are in our spiritual maturity. This comes about because of:

- the length of time we have been believers,
- how long we've had the revelation of the Kingdom,
- whether we are baptised in the Holy Spirit,
- our determination to grow,
- our submission to the King's correction, moulding and shaping,
- our commitment to the King's will,
- our commitment to being about Father's business,
- etc.

Within a Kingdom Community there will always be a range of maturity and commitment.

Our individual job in community is to encourage others to progress. The teacher's job is to provide *rhema* feeding to promote growth. However, we each, individually, must respond to these inputs and determine to grow up.

What will happen in this process of communal growth is that the fast 'growers' will out-grow the slower 'growers'. Although this is undesirable, it's a fact of human existence and we must deal with it rightly within community.

2 – 1 Corinthians 13:11

3 – Matthew 4:4

Those who are more 'advanced' will want to talk about 'advanced' matters with others who are of the same standing. Those who are less 'advanced' will find such discussions irrelevant or over-the-top, so they will gravitate to other like-minded members.

As a result of this tension the community will tend to polarize members into approximately 3 groups:

1. The mature,
2. The immature, &
3. The carnal.

This will fracture the community and cause members to leave to find other like-minded believers. This is what church-hoppers do – at least one reason for it, anyway. But, **a Community shouldn't fracture, it should grow ever more tightly knit together.**

THE EXCEPTION

The exception to sticking together is what we've done. We've been called out of the institutional church system to start a new page in the history of believers, prior to the return of the King. This worldwide movement is as essential for the ekklesia as the Reformation was in splitting off from the Romish organisation.

While we are a separate grouping to the denomination components, there is a need for us to be with like-minded believers. T.D. Jakes puts it like this:

“The challenge is to bring people with you...The challenge as a great leader, as we are exposed to more, we've got to bring you with us. Because if we don't grow together, we'll grow apart. The day I'm interested in something you're not at all interested in, we going to have trouble...In order to be connected with someone, we need to be going in the same direction. And if we don't grow together, we grow apart, and all of a sudden, you're not happy to communicate with them because they don't understand what you're doing...You can't walk with somebody who doesn't see what you see. You need to be surrounded with other visionaries who are fired up and excited about what's about to happen in your life. For this next stage, you can't carry everybody. Everybody who started with you is not going to be able to go to this next dimension. They don't have the mentality. They don't have the passion. They don't have the drive. They don't have the tenacity. They don't have the foresight. They don't have the goal. And so, in order for you to go to the next level, you've got to do like Abraham did, and say to the servants, “Stay here with the asses, we're going yonder to worship”...You can't take everybody with you. Everybody can't go to the next level. You've got to be prepared to leave some folks on the level they're on, because when you try to bring them with you they're not going to do nothing but be a hater anyway. Because people who don't transitionalise, hate you for going to the next dimension. That's why the bible says, be not to be unequally yoked, believers with unbelievers. You've got to be yoked up with somebody who believes what you believe, sees what you see, and knows what you know.”⁴

We need to 'hang out' with Kingdom-minded believers so that we cross-pollenate and encourage each other. Unfortunately, it's the experience of some of us that being with anti-Kingdom people brings a 'swipe' from the critical spirit and the religious spirit which are at enmity with the current move of God. The Lord spoke to members of our Community about this some time ago because it was important for us to stay on-track.

However, we must be careful not to go too far with this as not everyone thinks the same or believes identical concepts. Every person differs slightly and we must accommodate that. I suggest that within a Kingdom Community like-minded members should be spending time together to build each other up. The others should not be ignored or rejected, and we should come together for corporate things on a regular basis – as we do each Sunday morning.

4 – SUMMARY, not an exact transcript: “Bishop TD Jakes at New Birth Shifting Seasons” video [40:50-43:20] (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nMWhvblyXk&feature=youtu.be)

For us, not everyone is a forerunner for the Kingdom. Not everyone is apostolic. Not everyone is prophetic. Not everyone needs to be mentored. Not everyone has the feminine connection needed to meet with women. BUT...we are all Kingdom citizens who need each other – we're all part of a mini Body and everyone is essential.

FAMILY

The secret to preventing the splits/schisms that have occurred in the institutional church system is to operate within Community as a **FAMILY**, being of one heart and one mind.

In a natural family, there are individuals at many levels of maturity and age. Those who are not the same state of development as the parents (or grandparents) are not kicked out because they don't measure up. Instead, the older members maintain the unity of family by keeping everyone together and commit themselves to overseeing the growth of the younger. They do this by focussing on the family, not the differences. “We are family”, is their catch-cry they use and this motivates everyone to stick together even though they may be a motley crew.

In community we must see ourselves, first and foremost, as Kingdom FAMILY. The initial church did this as you can see early in the book of Acts⁵.

The disappointment of the early church is that they stopped being of one heart and one mind. This breakdown can be seen in the epistles to the churches. They had splits and factions (called 'heresies' in the Greek) which ruined everything. It wasn't false teaching that was the problem, the cause was the exaggeration of differences that caused believers to operate in the flesh so that they divided along certain lines.

The first church forgot to be Father's family. They allowed squabbles and petty differences to divide them so that the impact of the ekklesia was greatly reduced.

The process of the multiplication of the 'family of God' in each new city and town as the message of the Kingdom spread through the known world kept the momentum of Kingdom expansion going. However, in the established churches, the rot began to set in. I'm not talking about the efforts of those to force believers to go back to Judaism or the push to introduce pagan religion, it was a decay of the 'family' or community attitude of its members.

We must resist the soulish tendency to drift apart because we are at different levels of maturity. We must stick together as family as we are expected to do as Kingdom citizens and Father's sons. This will require effort and determination, but it can succeed.

Stick together. Gather together. Meet with one another during the week. See each other as brothers and sisters: not because the Bible says we are, but because we are Father's family, genuine family, who we want to be with.

We don't need the Spirit to tell us how to choose what's righteous and to reject what's unrighteous. This should naturally flow out of us. In the same way we don't need the Spirit to tell us to be in community, to come together. It should be normal and natural – part of being a Kingdom citizen.

5 – Acts 3:42-47; 4:32-35

FINALLY

In the days ahead, with the pressure that will be on us, this family relationship will be part of our survival – by being together as community. Don't neglect meeting together⁶: one-on-one; small groups; larger groups. We need each other, to encourage each other and strengthen each other.

We are a prototype of what the Lord wants to use in our nation, so we can't delay what he's doing by drifting apart because we don't fit in. This is soulish and not the fruit of following the Spirit.

Don't drift apart. Don't give up.

Laurence

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