



THE RELATIONAL DISCIPLE

WATCHFULNESS

Watchfulness.

Discipleship groups purpose: Each member being transformed into the image of the Son.

Key Truth: Being watchful.

Read: Being watchful means to be spiritually awake, being fully aware of the spiritual realm called the kingdom of God. The reason Jesus sent His Spirit into our spirit was so we could be born again and enter into His kingdom, where we start living from this realm and not the kingdom of the world, in which we were born. The kingdom of God is a completely different kingdom from the kingdom of the world and we need spiritual ears and eyes to be able to hear, see, enter and live in it.

This is exactly the conversation Jesus was having with Nicodemus the ruler of the Jews who was their teacher.

John 3:1-3 *Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Jesus says we must be born again if we want to see the kingdom of God. We must be reborn of the spirit now to be watchful. If we can not see the kingdom we may not in fact be born again. We may just be covered by God's grace, but not born again in our inner most being, through the power of His Spirit. This starts the process of sight to see Him and His kingdom. We have started to become watchful. It is fully possible to grow up in what we would all call a Christian family and not be born again.

Jesus goes on and says if you want to enter the kingdom of God, you must be born of water and Spirit.

John 3:4-5 *Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*

There is a repentance of one's iniquity and sin, which was the message John the Baptist preached, being baptised in water for the cleansing of this iniquity and sin. This was preparation for the message of the kingdom of God which Jesus Himself preached. Jesus would be the one who baptises in the Holy Spirit and fire, and this baptism would open up this whole kingdom realm for us to hear, see and enter into it, having our existence and our life source found and formed from this new kingdom, while on earth.

The kingdom of God will also be a literal kingdom on the earth when Jesus returns for the 1000 year reign but for now it is to be established and formed within our hearts and minds. It is a spiritual domain. We are to see it built within us and we are to live our lives from this new dimension of His kingdom culture operating in us and being demonstrated through us. This watchfulness effects every aspect of our lives. It determines who we love and how we live. This watchfulness determines what we have and what we prioritise in our lives. It determines literally everything about our lives and what and who we live for.

The next part of this passage is very defining and speaks to whether we are still a people of the flesh or a people of the spirit. We are born of the flesh and our lives will be dictated to us by the flesh, unless we are born of the spirit.

John 3:6-8 ⁶ *Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.* ⁷ *You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'* ⁸ *The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or*

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where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

Ask your self how much of your life has really changed from when you made a decision to follow Christ until now. Are you able to give countless examples of Jesus changing your life and bringing you into this kingdom of God, where you are going from strength to strength on the inside. Do you still recognise the old you or have you forgotten the old, because of the overwhelming new creation life you are now in, because you have entered the kingdom of God.

What do you hear and what are you seeing and understanding about this new kingdom you have been born into? How has this new theocratic rulership influenced and changed the way you are living. Jesus is Lord of His kingdom and if we are in Him and obeying His instructions through the love He has deposited in our lives, motivated by faith, outworking through the power of His Word, then we will be experiencing this new life.

To not be watchful and to not to be entering into this kingdom life would be nothing short of devastating, as it is this life that Jesus' death and resurrection was for.

Questions:

1. Why is being born again of the spirit so critical to being watchful?
2. Being watchful means to be able to hear and see God's spiritual kingdom and enter into it. Give testimony to what you are hearing, seeing and living from.
3. Describe the difference between being covered by God's grace and having God's grace operating in you?
4. What conclusions about your own relationship with Christ are you coming to after hearing about being watchful?

Pray and encourage one another to press in to all God has for us.