



JOYCE MEYER  
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# THE UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM THAT IS RIGHT SIDE UP

Teaching Notes by Joyce Meyer

Joyce Meyer Ministries

Nanakramguda

Hyderabad - 500 008

Andhra Pradesh

INDIA

91-40-2300 6777

[www.jmmindia.org](http://www.jmmindia.org)

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*Joyce Meyer Ministries*  
P.O. Box 655 • Fenton, MO 63026  
636-349-0303 • 1-800-727-WORD (9673)  
[www.joycemeyer.org](http://www.joycemeyer.org)

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# THE UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM THAT IS RIGHT SIDE UP

## The Secret Kingdom

### I. The Kingdom Of Heaven Is At Hand.

- A. **Matthew 4:17** – The first utterance of Jesus’ public ministry was: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- B. **Matthew 10:7** – Jesus sent His disciples out to preach: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand!”
  - 1. It is a literal, actual kingdom that is among us. It is invisible; but to those who see it, it is more real than the visible world.
  - 2. **II Corinthians 4:16-18** – Paul said they maintained their joy even in severe tribulation because they looked to the invisible instead of the visible things.
  - 3. We often refer to the invisible kingdom as the **spiritual realm**.
- C. Jesus spent all of His earthly ministry telling people the kingdom had come and explaining how it worked.
  - 1. **I Samuel 10:17-25** – Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom. In other words, he told them how it would operate and how they were to operate in it.
- D. **John 3:3** – Unless a man is **BORN AGAIN**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

1. When my brother came home before he was born again, he made this statement: **“You are all apparently seeing something that I don’t see, but I want to see what you see.”**
2. My brother also said: **“You all have your own little kingdom, don’t you? You have your own language, your own rules, you do different things with your money, and you live in your own little world.”**

E. John 3:5 – . . . *unless a man is born of water and [even] the Spirit, he cannot [ever] enter the kingdom of God.*

1. When we are baptized, we bury the old man and are resurrected to a new life. Unless the decision is made to bury the old and live in the new, one can never ENTER the kingdom or “kingdom living.”
2. Many “born again” people never walk in real victory. I was one of them for years. I was saved, but still carnal and worldly. I had not yet really entered into kingdom living.
3. I lived in a world of facts, impossibilities, and the past. In the kingdom we learn that **truth supersedes facts, all things are possible to him who believes, and we can let go of what lies behind and press on to the good things that are ahead.**

F. We enter the kingdom of God through its principles – we learn them and begin to adopt them as our new “laws.”

1. Jesus said over and over, “If you want this, then do this.”
2. Examples:
  - a. **Matthew 7:12** – *So then, whatever you desire that others would do to and for you, even so do also to and for them, for this is (sums up) the Law and the Prophets.*

- b. **Romans 12:21** – *Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good.*
- c. **Luke 6:28** – *Invoke blessings upon and pray for the happiness of those who curse you, implore God’s blessing (favor) upon those who abuse you [who revile, reproach, disparage, and high-handedly misuse you].*

## II. Deception

A. Deception/deceit (defined/Vine’s/Greek) – To cheat, that which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement, or influence. It is said of riches (**Matthew 13:22** and **Mark 4:19**) and of sin (**Hebrews 3:13**).

1. **Romans 6:17-22** – Your present reward for a righteous life is holiness, and its end is eternal life.

Many would not think that to be a reward at all; but if they have ever even tasted “the kingdom,” they know that holiness is a wonderful reward. It is better than anything that riches, sin, or the world could ever give.

B. The deception of the world

1. **I John 2:16-17** – The world passes away and disappears, and with it the cravings and lusts.
2. **Matthew 13:22** and **Mark 4:19** – Money and worldliness
3. Millions and millions of people today are deceived by commerce – commercialism and the abundance of things, things, and more things.
4. Deception comes cloaked in success, fame, fortune, and sometimes even under the guise of education. Education and knowledge are wonderful, but our trust must be in God and His kingdom. Highly educated people frequently have trouble with “simple faith.”

JM NOTE: (Show a wrapped package.)

We cannot tell what is inside unless we unwrap it.

5. People should examine more closely the things they get involved in. They should **look for what is beyond the way it “looks or feels.”**

C. Deception is everywhere!!

1. Deception comes cloaked in insincere people who say they are your friends; but in the end, they use you, abuse you, and reject you. Discernment should be used when choosing friends and companions.

**Discernment operates in the spiritual realm.**

2. You can now borrow on next week’s paycheck; and of course, the lender “only wants to help you.”
3. You can buy something in the fall and not have to start making payments until next spring.

**You are spending tomorrow’s prosperity today – and when tomorrow comes, you will be poor.**

4. You can get very clean and decent family movies on HBO during the day; but in order to have them, you must also have the XXX-rated movies that are on at night.

D. **Proverbs 27:6** – . . . *the kisses of an enemy are lavish and deceitful.*

1. Satan deceives and then eventually leaves the deceived one empty, burned out, and lost. Deceived people are like “a bombed-out shell of what was once a house.”

E. **II Corinthians 4:4** – Satan is the god of this world and its systems (principles).

1. **I Corinthians 1:18-25** – The world cannot receive the simple truth of the Gospel and the message of the Cross.

## **I WOULD RATHER BE A FOOL FOR CHRIST THAN A GENIUS FOR THE DEVIL.**

### **III. This World Is Not Our Home.**

- A. **I Peter 2:11-12** – As aliens and strangers, abstain from sensual urges that are worldly temptations.
  - 1. This is not our home; we are merely passing through.
- B. When we visited Europe, it was strange. We could not talk their language; they had different customs; the shops closed for three hours in the middle of the day, and restaurants did not open for dinner until 7 p.m. **We enjoyed it, but it was evident that it was not our home.**
- C. **John 17:15-16** – Jesus prayed: *I do not ask that You will take them out of the world, but that You will keep and protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world (worldly, belonging to the world), [just] as I am not of the world.*
  - 1. Protection from the evil one must also include protection from his principles. I am not avoiding Satan if I am not avoiding being offended, jealous, greedy, unforgiving, etc.
  - 2. We are to live here and to be a witness for God – **A LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE**. We must guard against becoming worldly.

### **IV. The World In Contrast To The Kingdom Of God**

- A. The **kingdom of God** is a secret kingdom that one can live in, right in the midst of the world, and thereby be protected from the world.
- B. **Matthew 13:33** – The kingdom of heaven is like leaven placed in dough. The leaven is very small, but it affects the entire lump of dough.
  - 1. The kingdom of heaven may seem like a small, invisible thing – something insignificant because it cannot be readily seen – but in due time, it will affect the entire world.

2. The kingdom of heaven is planted in a person's heart when they accept Jesus by faith. That kingdom is intended to eventually affect their entire life – their thoughts, conversation, and every decision they make.
  
- C. **Matthew 13:44** – The kingdom of heaven is like a secret hidden in a field (the world). Once someone finds it, they keep it hidden in their hearts; and they give up all else in order to have it.
  
- D. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (His way of doing things), and all these other things will be added unto you.





# The Key That Unlocks The Door

## I. Faith Is The Key To The Invisible Kingdom.

- A. **Hebrews 11:1** – Faith is the title deed to the things we do not see, and it is the conviction of their reality.
  - 1. Faith is the key that unlocks the door to God’s secret kingdom.
- B. The **kingdom** of God is a **spiritual kingdom**. Faith is a **spiritual force** that operates in the **spiritual realm**.
- C. **I John 5:4** – . . . *this is the victory that conquers the world, even our faith*.
  - 1. **Faith** – believing that the spiritual realm is more powerful than the realm we see – is what gives us the victory.
  - 2. We see the world with all its problems – but we **BELIEVE** we can reach into the realm of the spirit with our faith and pull out answers to the problems we see.
- D. **I Peter 1:3-9** – By faith we guard our inheritance.
  - 1. We believe we will have all that God has promised us, and our faith is guarding it until we actually see it.
  - 2. We have not seen Him, but we love Him. We believe in Him, and it brings us inexpressible joy.
- E. Faith keeps me in the spiritual realm where I find peace and joy.
  - 1. **Romans 15:13** – Joy and peace are found in believing.
- F. **Romans 14:17** (KJV) – *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but RIGHTEOUSNESS, and PEACE, and **JOY** in the HOLY GHOST.*

1. I am righteous (right with God) by faith in Jesus and what He did for me. I experience peace and joy by faith – believing that He saved me and is keeping me, He loves me and has a good plan for my life, and that all things work out for good to those who love Him.
2. **The kingdom of God is RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE, and JOY; and we enter it by FAITH.**

## II. It Does Not Cost Us Anything To Believe.

- A. Why not believe – you don't have anything better to do!
- B. **Luke 18:7-8** – Jesus wants to find **persistent faith** when He returns.
- C. Do not get caught up in other things that don't produce the fruit of righteousness, peace, and joy – **REMAIN IN SIMPLE FAITH.**
  1. **I Timothy 6:4-6** – Stay away from useless debate.  
  
**REMAIN IN SIMPLE FAITH and WALK IN LOVE.**
  2. **Galatians 5:6** – People were arguing about circumcision, and Paul reminded them that **simple faith** and **walking in love** were the really important things.

## III. Welcome The Kingdom Like A Child.

- A. **Luke 18:17** – We must come as a little child, or we cannot enter into the kingdom.
- B. **Matthew 18:1-4** – Those who are childlike are the greatest in the kingdom (spiritual realm).
  1. Among other qualities, children are **trusting**.
- C. Children are simple.

1. **II Corinthians 11:3** (KJV) – *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the **SIMPLICITY** that is in Christ.*
2. New believers have **fresh faith**, and they readily believe until the **spirit of doubt** and **unbelief** launch a campaign against them.
3. Children simply believe what you tell them – when an adult is like that, they are referred to as gullible or naïve.

Naïve (defined) – Lacking sophistication and worldliness, simple and credulous (tending to believe too readily): ingenuous, lacking analytical insight, not previously subjected to experiment.

- D. The world is filled with doubt, suspicion, and a “prove-it-to-me-first attitude.” The world wants us to analyze, philosophize, and experiment with everything.
1. The education process, if carried too far, can steal the simple faith a person once had. If we fill our heads with too much, suddenly nothing makes any sense. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!**
- E. People, who think they are worldly, educated, sophisticated, and certainly not naïve or childlike, are the ones who are lacking peace and joy. They usually spend their lives trying to buy what was there for them all the time in the **KINGDOM OF GOD.**

#### **IV. Children Know How To Receive And Enjoy.**

- A. **Hebrews 12:27-28** – Let us receive a kingdom that is firm and stable.
1. The kingdom of God must be **received** by faith.
- B. Children receive well. If you tell a child they can have something, they **SIMPLY** take it and begin to enjoy it.

- C. For example: Bring several small children on the platform and give them money. Watch how excited they get – they don't question, they are not suspicious, and they don't want to go "earn" it first.

### **THEY RECEIVE AND ENJOY.**

- D. Kingdom benefits that must be received by faith

1. **Acts 26:18 – Forgiveness of sins**

How can I prove that I am forgiven? By the world's standards, I can't; but **I simply know!**

2. **Hebrews 4:15-16 – Mercy**

We can receive mercy for our failures.

3. **Ephesians 1:3-7 – The love and goodness of God**

a. We are blessed with every blessing available in the spiritual realm.

b. **BELIEVE and RECEIVE!**

This is the **LAW** of the kingdom.

4. **Ephesians 2:7-10 – New life**

a. We enter the new life in the kingdom by faith, and so we must walk.

b. **We don't begin one way and then continue and end another way. We begin by faith, and so shall we finish.**

- E. Strive to keep a simple childlike faith. It is the key that opens all the doors in the kingdom of heaven.

1. **Matthew 16:13-19 – Peter is given the keys of the kingdom.**

2. His faith is the key.

## V. Turn Your Faith Loose!

- A. **James 5:15-16** – The prayer of faith makes tremendous power available.

1. Release your faith when you pray.

**Faith is a spiritual force that reaches into the spiritual realm and gets the job done.**

- B. **Romans 4:16-18** – Hope, being positive, and calling those things that be not as though they are

- C. Do not doubt!

**DON'T TURN YOUR FAITH OFF IN YOUR MIND!**

1. **James 1:6** – Ask in faith and do not doubt.
2. **Mark 11:22-24** – Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe and do not doubt.

- D. **Remember that the greatest hindrance to faith is unforgiveness!**

1. For more in-depth teaching on this subject, study JM's teaching series entitled *Bitterness, Resentment, And Unforgiveness* (A83).

- E. Faith is the leaning of the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness.

**KEEP TRUSTING, AND YOU WILL KEEP OPENING DOORS IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

**FAITH IS THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM!**







# The Upside Down Kingdom

## I. Upside Down

- A. The constitution of the **kingdom of God** reverses normal worldly thinking.
  - 1. Don't expect to understand the spiritual laws that govern the kingdom of God with your natural mind. **They can only be understood with the heart.**
- B. People not living in the kingdom of God don't understand those who do.
  - 1. **I Corinthians 2:14-15** – The natural man does not understand the spiritual man.
  - 2. The spiritual man tends to do things **upside down** from the way others do them.
- C. The kingdom-of-God principles are filled with paradoxes.
  - 1. Paradox (defined) – A seemingly contradicting statement that may nonetheless be true; a statement contrary to popular opinion.
- D. Paradoxes found in the Bible:
  - 1. **Luke 6:28-30, 35** and **Matthew 5:43-45** – The world says: hate your enemies – the **kingdom** says to love them.
  - 2. **Matthew 5:38-41** – The world says: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; in other words, do to others what they do to you. The **kingdom** says: do not resist the evil man who strikes you, but turn the other cheek. If someone wants to sue you and take your undershirt, give him your coat also. If anyone wants you to go one mile, go two.

3. **I Peter 3:3-4** – The world says: the way we look (our appearance) is a key issue. Looking young and good is essential. The **kingdom** principle says: it is not hair, jewelry, or clothes that matter – but the hidden man of the heart.
  
4. **I Peter 5:6; Matthew 20:20-27** and **Psalm 75:6-7** – The world says: push and shove your way to the top and promote yourself at any cost. The **kingdom** principle says that true promotion only comes from God. He exalts those who have humbled themselves and waited on Him. The **kingdom** says to serve if you want to lead.
  
5. **Luke 6:38** – The world says: be greedy and store up everything you can get your hands on. The **kingdom** says: give and it shall be given unto you. The world says: save money in order to be rich – the **kingdom** says: store up treasure in heaven if you desire to be truly rich.

**Luke 12:31-34** – **Seek the kingdom**, don't be seized with fear – it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you possess and give donations to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.

6. **Matthew 20:16** – The first shall be last and the last first.
  
7. **Matthew 5:27-28** – The world says: adultery is wrong (at least it once did). The **kingdom** says that if you even so much as look at a woman or man with evil desire, you have already committed adultery in your heart.
  
8. The world says: tell people what you expect; and if they don't give it to you, reject them from your life. The **kingdom** principle says to sow mercy, and you will reap mercy.

**Matthew 5:7** (KJV) – *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

## II. The Sermon On The Mount Is Filled With Upside-Down Principles.

A. **Matthew 5:1-12** – The Sermon on the Mount tells us that we are blessed when we do what no natural worldly person would do in the situations mentioned.

1. **Blessed** (Amplified) – Happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous – **with life-joy** and satisfaction in God’s favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions.

B. **Blessed are the poor in spirit** (the humble, who rate themselves insignificant) – for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1. Our significance is found “in Christ,” not in ourselves.

2. Humility is the cardinal virtue one must have to function properly in the kingdom of God.

a. God not only does NOT help those who are proud, but He actively resists them.

b. **I Peter 5:5** – He opposes, frustrates, and defeats the proud.

3. A humble man is quick to obey God, is careful about how he treats other people, and does not push himself forward but waits to be invited. He is a broken man, and he displays the Fruit of the Spirit. A humble man is patient because he is well acquainted with his own frailties.

4. A humble man is a happy man because he is not fighting people and things. He believes God is in control of his life, and he accepts with joy whatever God has for him on any given day.

C. **Blessed are those who mourn** – for they shall be comforted!

1. The world would not agree that mourning is a blessing. They are not mourning over their sin or the sad conditions of other people.

Those in the kingdom are happy because they are “quick to repent,” and they have compassion on others who are hurting.

D. **Blessed are the meek** (the mild, the patient, the long-suffering) – for they shall inherit the earth!

1. The world thinks meekness is weakness, but it is actually **STRENGTH UNDER CONTROL**.
2. The world thinks meek people are walked all over by others and taken advantage of – but “kingdom dwellers” know that their King is their Vindicator and has promised to exalt them.

**Psalm 37** tells us not to worry about evildoers – for in the end they will be cut off – but the meek shall inherit the earth.

E. **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness** – for they shall be completely satisfied.

1. The world is seeking **EVERYTHING** but righteousness, and they are **ANYTHING** but satisfied.

F. **Blessed are the merciful** – for they shall obtain mercy.

1. The world is anything other than merciful. They give people what they deserve, not mercy.

G. **Blessed are the pure in heart** – for they shall see God.

1. The world is wicked – not pure in heart. Their thoughts are selfish, self-centered, greedy, and mostly evil. Out of their hearts come murders, strife, jealousy, bitterness, etc.
2. These kinds of thoughts are not “kingdom thoughts.”

- H. **Blessed are the makers and maintainers of peace** – for they shall be called the sons of God.
1. The world is in strife (bickering, arguing, and anger) –  
**The world definitely does not minister peace.**
  2. Peace is on the top of the list of fruits to be developed in order to enjoy kingdom living.
- I. **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake** – for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
1. Try to tell someone in the world they are blessed if they do the right thing and get persecuted for it.
- J. **Blessed are you when people persecute you and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely on Jesus' account** – be glad and supremely joyful, for your reward in heaven is great (strong and intense).
- K. We must remember that “they have eyes to see, but they see not; and ears to hear, but they hear not.” We seem “kooky” to them, but they do not see what we see. They live in the seen realm – we live in the unseen. They live in the natural – we live in the spiritual. They operate in the carnal (fleshly realm) – we operate in the spirit.

### III. Lights In A Dark Place

- A. **Matthew 5:14-16** – Let your light shine. It may be the only light they will ever have in their darkness.
- B. **Acts 26:13-18** – God showed Paul a light from heaven, and then called him to those in darkness so that they might turn to the light.
- C. **Ephesians 5:8-11** – Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of Light and bear fruit that the Light produces.
1. The light is seen by those in the darkness manifested as every form of kindness and goodness.

- D. **Philippians 2:14-15** – Do all things without grumbling so that you may be seen as bright lights shining out in a dark world.
  
- E. Talking **KINGDOM LANGUAGE** is vital to being a light in a dark world.





# The Pearl Of Great Price

## I. Put First Things First.

- A. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek **FIRST** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.
1. Seeking His righteousness means seeking His way of doing things.
  2. **Exodus 33:13** – Moses prayed, “God, show me Your way.”
  3. **Psalms 25:4** – David prayed, “God, show me Your ways.”
  4. **Matthew 22:1-5** – The kingdom of heaven is like a king who gave a banquet for his son, and those he invited would not come. He summoned them, but they made light of the invitation and went their own way.
  5. **Hosea 14:9** – *Who is wise, that he may understand these things? Prudent, that he may know them? For the ways of the Lord are right and the [uncompromisingly] just shall walk in them . . .*
  6. **Haggai 1:5-7** – Consider your ways and what has come to you and how you have fared.
- B. **Matthew 13:45-46** – The pearl of great price
1. When the man found the pearl, he sold all he had and bought it.
- C. **Philippians 3:7-8** – Paul said: “For His sake I have lost everything and consider it all to be mere rubbish, in order that I may win (gain) Christ, the Anointed One.”
1. **Gain through loss is a kingdom principle.**

- a. **John 12:24** – Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
  - b. **I Kings 17:9-15** – Elijah told the widow to give up (lose) what she had in order to gain provision.
  - c. **Mark 8:35** – A spiritual paradox: Whoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, shall find it.
  - d. **Mark 9:35** – Humility leads to exaltation. And He sat down and called the Twelve and said unto them, “If any man desires to be first, the same shall be last of all and servant of all.”
- D. **Colossians 1:18** – Jesus must have the first (chief) place and stand preeminent.

## II. The Result Of Wrong Pursuits

- A. **Matthew 13:44-46** – The kingdom of heaven is like something precious hidden in a field (the world), which a man found and hid again (in his heart); and he goes and sells all he has and buys that field.
  - 1. **We need more people today who are willing to do that!**
- B. Consecrate your life – make a deeper commitment!
- C. **Luke 5:1-11** – Leave the shallows and head for the deep.
- D. Don't seek things – seek the kingdom!
  - 1. **Romans 14:17** – The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
  - 2. **Psalms 37:4** – *Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He will give you the desires and secret petitions of your heart.*

### III. Wholehearted Devotion

- A. **James 1:8** and **4:8** – Beware of a divided heart.
1. Divided (defined) – Two spirited; vacillating in opinion or **PURPOSE**.
- B. God is a God of purpose, and we must be people who know our purpose and pursue it with a “**WHOLE HEART.**”
- C. **Acts 11:23** – When Barnabus arrived and saw what grace (favor) was bestowed upon them, he was full of joy; and he continuously exhorted (warned, urged, and encouraged) them all to cleave unto and remain faithful to and **DEVOTED** to the Lord with resolute and steady purpose of heart.
- D. A perfect heart is a whole heart. The heart is not perfect before God unless it is whole or undivided.
1. **Matthew 22:36-40** – The first and most important commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind.
  2. **Deuteronomy 6:5-9** – Love the Lord with all your heart and mind, and with your soul and entire being. Then teach your children to do the same thing.
  3. **Deuteronomy 10:12-13** – The Lord requires that we fear Him and walk in His ways, we serve Him with our entire being, and we keep His commands for our good.
- E. We tend to **COMPARTMENTALIZE** everything. We have a compartment for this and one for that. But God will not be kept in a compartment of our lives. He is not just for one hour on Sunday mornings and severe emergencies. HE WANTS the RUN of the **ENTIRE** HOUSE. Everything you are and ever hope to be must be laid before Him.

1. God is not satisfied in the **spiritual compartment** of our lives. He wants to be in the work compartment, entertainment compartment, life-goals compartment, financial compartment, choice-of-friends compartment, appetite compartment, how-I-spend-my-time compartment, etc.
- F. The power of a perfect heart
1. **II Kings 20:2-6** – Hezekiah’s bold prayer
    - a. I have walked before You with a perfect heart.
    - b. God heard and answered his prayer.
    - c. A perfect heart does not equal a perfect performance.
  2. **II Kings 18:3-6** – Hezekiah did right in the sight of the Lord. This does not mean he did every single thing right – he trusted God and ceased not to follow Him.

#### IV. The Priority Of What We Pursue

- A. **Pursue** – To crave, go after with all your strength, to sacrifice other things for, and require as a vital necessity in life; TO SEEK!
- B. We are never instructed to PURSUE things, promotion, riches, or anything the world has to offer.
  1. **We are free to enjoy them, but not to pursue them.**

**Ecclesiastes 5:18-19** – Enjoy what God gives you; it is His gift to you.
- C. What are we instructed to **PURSUE** biblically?
  1. God, peace, holiness, righteousness, love, and the kingdom
    - a. **Psalm 34:14**

- b. **Romans 14:19**
- c. **I Corinthians 14:1**
- d. **I Timothy 6:11**
- e. **Hebrews 12:14**
- f. **Psalm 27:4**

D. We need to examine our priorities and ask ourselves what we are pursuing? What are we spending our time and energy on?

- 1. We may desire things in a balanced way, but not **LUST** after them.
  - a. We are lusting after a thing when we absolutely cannot be satisfied or content without it.
  - b. One can lust after a ministry or ministry position. A person could lust after being in the choir, singing specials in church services, recording his own music tape, being married, having children, etc.

## V. The Result Of Wrong Pursuits

- A. **James 4:1** – Strife
- B. **Jeremiah 2:13** – Failure and dryness
- C. **Jeremiah 17:5-9** – Pursuing people instead of God first brings extreme dryness and lack of joy.
- D. **I Peter 5:5** – The wrong pursuit of seeking in one’s own strength brings frustration and failure.

**SUMMARY: EMPTINESS, DISSATISFACTION, DRYNESS, FAILURE, TROUBLE, STRIFE, and NO JOY**

- E. **Psalm 106:13-15** – They got their way, but with it came much leanness of their soul.

## VI. Seek First The Kingdom – NOT Kingdom Benefits!

- A. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

- B. **Romans 14:17** – The kingdom of God is not meat and drink (things); but it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1. Seek the kingdom – not kingdom benefits!
2. My buttons are not my jacket – they are part of it, they come with it, but they are not **IT**.

We are always seeking **IT** – the one thing we think will make us eternally satisfied and content.

- C. **Psalm 27:4** – One thing have I desired, and that will I **SEEK** after: that I may dwell in Your presence and behold Your beauty all the days of my life.

1. **Hebrews 11:6** – He is the **REWARDER** of those who **DILIGENTLY** (wholeheartedly) **SEEK** Him.
2. Seeking Him includes seeking His will, His ways, and His presence.
3. Anyone we consider to be a great Bible hero was a person who sought Him wholeheartedly and sought His will and His ways.

- D. Sell all and purchase **THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE**.





# Kingdom Laws

## I. Every Kingdom Has Laws And A King.

- A. Each kingdom's laws are a little different, but they are necessary to keep everyone in the kingdom going in the same direction as the king.
- B. Our King is Jesus.
  - 1. He is the King of kings.
- C. We must discover what the King wants and do it if we are to dwell peacefully in His kingdom – **we must follow kingdom laws.**
  - 1. We cannot dwell in any kingdom peacefully without following the kingdom's laws. When I was in Europe, I had to follow each country's laws; and they were all a little different.
    - a. Speed limits were different; taxes and fees were different (in one town in Bavaria, we had to pay \$3.00 per person just to stay overnight in their town).
    - b. If we would have refused to follow their laws, we would not have been able to stay in the town.
- D. Laws are made, and law officers are established to **KEEP THE PEACE.**

## II. Righteousness, Peace, And Joy

- A. Peace, harmony, and unity are laws of the kingdom of God.
  - 1. The kingdom of God is filled with power – power that is available to its residents. But **WHERE THERE IS NO PEACE, THERE IS NO POWER!**

2. God told Dave and me to “**keep the strife out**” of our lives and ministry in order to be blessed.
3. Scriptures to keep strife out:

**John 14:27; Romans 12:16, 18; II Timothy 2:23-24; James 3:17-18 and I Peter 3:10-11**

B. The **kingdom dwellers** of the early church knew the importance of peace. They frequently greeted one another by saying, “Grace and peace be unto you,” or “Grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

1. **Philippians 1:2; I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:3; II Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Colossians 1:2, etc.**

C. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS **RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE,** and **JOY** IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

D. Righteousness – Only those **RIGHT** with God can live in His secret kingdom.

1. **II Corinthians 5:21** – He Who knew no sin became sin so that we might be made the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of God in Jesus Christ.
2. Righteousness is first a state we are put into by virtue of a relationship with Jesus, and then it is “worked out” in our lives and seen through righteous behavior.

Actually, we progressively behave like the King.

3. We must know how to repent when we fall into sin and how to resist condemnation.

Satan is the “Accuser of the Brethren.” He relentlessly accuses the believer.

4. **Romans 8:1, 34** – There is therefore **NOW** no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. Jesus is praying for us – He is not condemning us.

5. **Psalm 85:10** – . . . *righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*
6. **Isaiah 32:17** – The effect of righteousness shall be peace.

E. Kingdom dress code

1. The kingdom even has a “dress code” – it includes a breastplate of righteousness and shoes of peace, among other things.
2. I hope you look good in white because that seems to be the color of the clothes there.

**Revelation 3:18** says to clothe yourself in white clothes. White represents purity and holiness (or righteousness).

F. Joy is the atmosphere of the kingdom.

1. **John 15:11; 16:24** and **17:13**
2. God laughs, and He wants us to laugh!

Walking in faith (the key to the door of the kingdom) brings you into rest, and rest releases joy.

3. God laughs at the wicked and their calamity because He has read the end of The Book. He instructs us to do the same thing.

**Psalm 2:4** and **Job 5:19-22**

4. Other powerful Scriptures that instruct us to rejoice and laugh are: **Philippians 4:4** and **Psalm 85:6; 126:2; 30:5.**
5. **Genesis 17:15-19** – Abraham laughed the laugh of faith. When our hearts are filled with faith and God shows us things to come, we laugh in the spirit with joy the world would not understand.

6. **John 16:33** – CHEER UP! is a kingdom instruction, and it is Jesus' answer to tribulation.

### III. The Law Of Sowing And Reaping

- A. Laws work every time. Like the law of gravity always works, what goes up MUST come down, so the law of sowing and reaping also works. We can only reap according to what we sow. This law is so powerful that it is in the natural as well as in the spiritual.
- B. **Galatians 6:7** – Be not deceived; whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.
- C. **Luke 6:38** (KJV) – *Give, and it shall be given unto you . . .*
  1. These are emphatic statements that relay facts. They are not suggestions of things that might happen if we try them.
- D. **Matthew 7:12** – *So then, whatever you desire that others would **do to** and **for** you, even so do also to and for them, for this is (sums up) the Law and the Prophets.*
  1. Although He is not calling it by name, He is speaking about the law of love.
  2. **John 13:34-35** – Jesus' command to walk in love
- E. **Matthew 7:13-14** – *Enter through the narrow gate . . .*
- F. **Matthew 7:1-2** – Do not critically judge others because just as you judge them, you will also be judged.
- G. In the kingdom of God, we must be good to people – all the Fruit of the Spirit must be abundant to dwell in the kingdom: love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, humility (meekness, gentleness), faithfulness, and self-control.

SPECIAL NOTE: One can be a legal citizen of a country and yet not be allowed to live there if they refuse to follow the laws of that country. They will usually end up in prison somewhere for rebellion.

The kingdom of God is no different. One may be a legal citizen due to the new birth (we cannot see the kingdom without it), but many never really dwell in it because they seek wrong things. They seek kingdom benefits and fail to seek the kingdom for itself. They want to rewrite all the laws to suit themselves, but the King of this kingdom is very strict about things being done according to His Father's heart. The kingdom of God has come, and it is the spiritual counterpart to the Garden of Eden. God had original plans for the Garden; and even though Adam and Eve failed to fulfill them, He has held them over for this time and made them available to WHOSOEVER WILL.

#### IV. The Law Of Use

- A. **Matthew 25:13-30** – Three servants received talents and two used theirs, but one did not. He buried his in fear. He was severely reprimanded, and what he had was taken away and given to the servant who did the most with what he had.
  
- B. God is not into waste. He does not give us portions of Himself so we can waste what He gives us.
  - 1. Spiritual gifts are portions of God's nature and ability distributed to us by the Holy Spirit.
  
- C. Anytime you take what you have and put it to work, you will get more of it.
  - 1. I had a little flabby muscle in the front of my legs. I was having sciatic nerve problems, which sent pain down the back of my leg. My doctor told me I had to do these exercises for the front of my leg; and when that muscle got stronger, the back of my leg would stop hurting. The healthy muscle in the front of my leg would keep the pressure off the sciatic nerve.  
  
**I have used that muscle almost every day now for six months, and I have a lot more muscle than when I started using it.** This principle verifies the "law of use."
  
  - 2. I always say, **"USE IT OR LOSE IT."**

D. Pastors, who have gifted and talented people sitting in their congregations, will ultimately lose them if they don't use them.

1. People get frustrated when they have abilities and no release for them. I have had pastors get a little whiney because someone from their church has come to work for me. They applied at my office (I didn't go seeking them); but still the pastor has said on a couple of occasions, "I was thinking about using that person."

**The question is: how long have you been thinking while they have been shriveling up on the vine? Did you ever share your plans with the person to at least give them hope?**

People will not be satisfied for a long time by simply going to the service and going home week after week. The law of use requires involvement. Sometimes people are not given an opportunity, and sometimes they don't take the opportunity that is given – but either way, eventually, it will cause the people to feel they have to move on.

2. We endeavor at JMM to pull the best out of people and get them into the spot where they will be happy and the most fruitful.
3. We often have people apply who want to work for us, but their skills are greater than our need in an area. We encourage them to go somewhere that will need their skills and keep them challenged.
4. Warning: Young people or new converts, be patient. You may hear this and think someone should be using you. The Bible teaches us to let people **be tested** and **tried** and **then promote** them.

## V. The Law Of Work And Effort

- A. We never come to a new level without making a greater effort and taking a greater responsibility.

1. **New level – new devil!**
- B. The eaglet, when in the shell, pecks away at the shell with a small tooth on the end of his beak. He pecks and pecks. It is a lot of work, and great effort is required to finally break through. However, his effort has brought him into a new realm of freedom. The same thing happens when it is time to learn to fly. The baby eaglet has been safe and cozy in the nest for quite a while, but it is time to fly. He often has to make quite an effort to learn this new freedom, but he eventually gets it.
1. Children go through the same thing learning how to walk. Many *boo-boos* will appear on the baby's legs and arms until he or she learns how to walk. But if he or she is persistent, refuses to give up, and continues to make an effort, the baby will eventually come into a new level of freedom.
- C. **II Peter 1:3-8** – Take the promises that have been freely provided and employ every **EFFORT** in exercising your faith to develop virtue.
- D. **Matthew 7:7-11** – Ask and keep on asking, and it will be given unto you. Seek and keep on seeking, and you will find. Knock and keep on knocking, and it will be opened unto you.
1. These Scriptures show the exact kingdom law we are discussing.
  2. **If you refuse to give up, the kingdom law says that you must make progress.**
  3. I had a dream and vision from God about a large ministry – I spent sixteen years refusing to quit and doing little things faithfully.
  4. The foundation-laying years are not always exciting. Nobody gets real excited about the basement of your new home. But without a strong foundation, we lack stability.
- E. If one crop fails, plant another crop!

1. If one person disappoints you, don't distrust everybody.
2. If at first you don't succeed, try and try again.
3. If at first you don't succeed, **YOU ARE NORMAL!**
4. If God is finished with what you have been doing, press on to the next thing. Don't mourn over the past. The law of progress is "keep moving."

- F. **WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS** means: we have already made our minds up that whatever gets in our way will ultimately give way to us. We will persevere until we see the desired result!
- G. All societies say we must work if we wish to have anything. The kingdom of God is no different. Do not be afraid of hard work.

**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,  
and all of these things will be added unto you.**



