

DEREK PRINCE MINISTRIES

TEACHING LETTER

Preparing to Reign with Christ

Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? (1 Cor. 6:2)

God has a double purpose in redeeming us. On the negative side, it is to save us from hell--for which we should be eternally grateful. On the positive side, it is to prepare a people for Himself, who will share the throne with Christ.

Before you read any further, pause for a moment and consider what it means to you personally, as a Christian, that you should be preparing yourself to reign eternally with Christ. For our part, Ruth and I have found that the Holy Spirit is laying an ever-increasing emphasis on preparing for our destiny in eternity.

Promises to Reign

"Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, 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." (Matt. 19:28)

"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations--

*'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
As the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces.'"*
(Rev. 2:26-27)

Preparing to Reign

For this awesome responsibility of reigning with Christ we are required to make diligent preparation. It is not enough merely to claim to be "born again." The following are some main requirements.

1. ENDURANCE

"But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:28-30)

Many people started out as disciples of Jesus, but only twelve continued steadfastly with Him to the end, and they alone were counted worthy to reign with Him over Israel.

"For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2:11-12a)

If we are to share Christ's exaltation, we must first share His death and then continue steadfast to the end through many trials.

2. MEEKNESS, POVERTY OF SPIRIT

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3)

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5)

God does not offer His kingdom to those who are arrogant or self-assertive, but only to those who recognize that in themselves they are totally unworthy of such honor. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, declared in her song of triumph:

*"He [God] raises the poor from the dust and lifts the beggar from the ash heap,
To set them among princes and make them inherit the throne of glory."* (1 Sam. 2:8)

A thousand years later, the Virgin Mary--in an even greater song of triumph--proclaimed the same truth:

*"He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
And exalted the lowly."* (Luke 1:52)

3. PURITY

"Christ . . . gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works." (Titus 2:14)

The people whom Christ acknowledged as His own are those whom He has redeemed from every lawless deed and purified for Himself.

But there are two sides to this process of purification: one divine, the other human. In 1 John 3:3 the apostle speaks of our hope of being transformed into Christ's likeness at His return, but then he adds: "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." Christ will only purify those who respond by purifying themselves. Furthermore, God has only one standard of purity: "just as He [Jesus] is pure."

First Peter 1:22 tells us how we may purify our souls: by "*obeying the truth through the Spirit*", resulting "*in sincere love of the brethren*". The purified soul is a soul filled with love.

4. LOVE OF THE TRUTH

It was by deception that Satan enticed Adam and Even into rebellion against God, and this has been his main weapon against humanity ever since. In Revelation 12:9 he is called "*that serpent of old . . . who deceives the whole world.*"

The 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 Paul warns that this satanic tactic will find its ultimate expression in the antichrist, who will deceive with lying signs and wonders all those who *"did not receive the love of the truth"*.

Here, then, is our only protection: to receive the love of the truth. All who refuse this will not merely be deceived by Satan. God Himself will send them strong delusion.

Love of the truth is not mere conformity to a religious code, however "orthodox" it may be. Nor is it even reading your Bible and having "a quiet time" every day. It demands a total, unreserved commitment to believe and obey God's Word--one that rules out all forms of compromise.

In the time of Jesus, many Jews recognized that Jesus was the Messiah, but for fear of the religious authorities they did not acknowledge Him, *"for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God"* (John 12:43). That is the essence of compromise. We each need to ask ourselves: Which means more to me -- God's approval . . . or man's?

In Proverbs 23:23 Solomon counsels, *"Buy the truth, and do not sell it. . . ."* Truth is not cheaply obtained. It demands much time given to prayer and study of the Scriptures, followed by practical application in our daily lives. It must take priority over the many forms of cheap entertainment offered by our secular culture. It is a lifetime commitment.

We are also warned not to sell the truth. We can be tempted to purchase popularity at the price of truth by leaving out the "hard sayings" of Jesus and presenting a gospel that demands no sacrifice, but promises an easy way through life. Yet this belies the warning of Jesus: *"Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it"* (Matt. 7:14).

If you are serious in your desire to share Christ's kingdom with Him, let me suggest that you read carefully several times the Scriptures I have quoted above, and consider how each one applies to your own life. If the Holy Spirit shows you areas in which you fall short, ask His help to make the changes that are needed. In this way you can make the year ahead a year of growth and fulfillment.

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