
Three Essentials

Sonny Pyles

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Forward

The following pages contain a sermon preached by Elder Sonny Pyles titled, “Three Essential Facts.” Elder Pyles discusses three principles that have been essential in helping unlock the Bible for many believers. These essentials include a discussion on the word salvation, the law of cause and effect, and the phrase kingdom of God. These three principles can be considered keys that help Bible readers come to a more full knowledge of the truth. Making these kinds of proper divisions is commanded by God.

Paul told his son in the ministry Timothy to, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). Rightly dividing, or correctly handling the word of God is a duty of every Bible student. Rightly dividing involves considering the context, the grammar, as well as systematically interpreting scripture with scripture. Without such division the true understanding of the text is lost and personal interpretations reign. Just as a person must understand the holiness of God and depravity of man to fully embrace the doctrine of sovereign grace, the principles presented by Elder Pyles

likewise are pertinent to rightly dividing the word of truth.

Brother Sonny has a special gift that both educates and entertains. During my late teens and early twenties I was blessed to enjoy an annual week long preaching trip that Elder Pyles made to Central Alabama. His yearly visit was always a blessing. The Spirit filled meetings were always looked for with anticipation. Yet the greatest gift that Elder Pyles gave to us was that he always challenged our mind.

May this small volume equally challenge you to a deeper study of the scriptures.

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THREE ESSENTIALS

Introduction

If it's the Lord's will, I want to set before you three essential facts or three essential principles in the scriptures that God's people need to know in order to understand the doctrine of salvation and to understand what the Lord has done for you. There are two of these subjects or two of these essential facts that I've spoke about a number of times over the years. There's a third one that I've not said all that much about, I've mentioned a few times, but I found that it's also very essential that God's people have a clear understanding of it.

First Essential

Types of Salvation

I've known a number of people in my life that have told me that the first door that ever opened, the first light that ever came on, seemingly the first hook that ever went into them to attract them to what the Primitive Baptists teach and to help them to understand it, was when they reached that point that they could understand that there's more than one type of salvation taught in the Bible. I've met a number of people in my life that have told me that, I've heard Primitive Baptists preach, I've heard you preach, I've heard a lot of men preach, but after I was able to understand that there's more than one type of salvation in the Bible, they would tell me that a number of other things began to fall in place.

So that first essential that I set before you that you need to understand if you're going to understand the truth about what the Bible teaches is to be able to understand that there is more than one type of salvation taught in the Bible. That word "salvation" in the Bible usually means deliverance. I find in the Exodus 14:29-30, there came a time that the Lord delivered his people across the Red Sea. After they had been delivered across the Red Sea

and the Egyptian army pursued them, those same waters through which they had been delivered, those same waters collapsed and fell on the Egyptians and Pharaoh, so that his horsemen and his army was drowned in the sea. On the other side of the Red Sea in Exodus 14:29-30, the Bible says, "And thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore."

I've had a few people tell me over the years, people critical of what some Primitive Baptists teach, they say, "You know, That term 'time salvation' is not in the Bible." They are exactly right. I've had other people say, "That term 'conditional time salvation' is not in the Bible." Well, they are right about that. But I have found in the Bible where it says that day salvation, "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Exodus 14:30). I also find in I Peter 3:20-21, where Peter says, "when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." So I find in the Bible the term "now salvation." and the term "that day salvation."

Now, the terms "now salvation" and "that day salvation" are close enough to time salvation or salvation here in time, that's close enough for

government work. At least that's close enough for me. So while my critics may be right that that term "time salvation" is not in the Bible, "that day salvation" is in there and "now salvation" is in there. Exodus 14:30 tells us, "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore." These people were not saved from hell. They were saved from drowning. They were saved from the swords and spears of the Egyptian Army. The salvation that's here is a temporal deliverance from a temporal danger.

We come to the 8th chapter of Matthew, verse 25, when the Lord and his disciples are on a ship. The Lord is down in that ship asleep, and a storm begins to toss that ship, those disciples cry out and they say, "Lord, save us: we perish." When they say, "Lord, save us: we perish," it is not hell they have in mind. It's drowning. And when they ask the Lord to save them, they're not expecting that he will carry them home to heaven and give them harps of gold. They are expecting that he will indeed deliver them from this storm and from this shipwreck (Matthew 8:25). I find time and time again in the Bible where there is a salvation spoken of, and it is a temporal deliverance. In I Timothy chapter 2, I read of a woman being saved in childbearing (2 Timothy 2:15). That's a temporal deliverance.

On the other hand, there is an eternal salvation that's taught in the Bible. God's people should be brought to the point that as they go through the Bible they can see that there is more than one type of salvation being taught. There is an eternal salvation, which is entirely by the grace of God, which Jesus told the rich young ruler was impossible with man (Matthew 19:26). That rich young ruler came to Jesus and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" He did not say, "What good thing must I do that I may join the church?" He did not say, "What good thing must I do that I might obey the gospel?" He asked, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?." It is eternal life he's talking about.

When that rich young ruler goes away, it says that those disciples that had overheard the conversation asked about Christ's answer. Matthew 19:25 says, "When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?" Jesus replies with five simple words, and I've said hundreds of times to God's people that these five words that came from the holy lips of Jesus Christ are enough to obliterate and demolish every soul-saving sermon that has ever been preached from the foundation of the world. Every sermon that has ever been preached teaching salvation by the works of man, every book that's

ever been written, Jesus demolished it with five words. The question is, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus says, "With men this is impossible" (Matthew 19:26). There is a salvation that with man is impossible.

Now, obeying the gospel is not impossible with you. It is not impossible for you to be baptized. It is not impossible for you to join the church. In fact, God's people ought to do those things, but that salvation that is impossible with man is eternal salvation. He says, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." The Apostle Peter, who overheard that conversation between Christ and the rich young ruler, the Apostle Peter who heard Jesus Christ tell those disciples pertaining to the rich young ruler that salvation with men is impossible, the Apostle Peter just a short time later on the day of Pentecost preached to some people, and in Acts 2:40 it says, "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

Someone might say, "Well, now, Brother Peter, didn't you hear the Lord just a short while back tell us that salvation with men is impossible, now you're telling some people to save themselves?" Yet notice, the Apostle Peter is not telling these people to save themselves from hell, irretrievable woe and misery. He is telling them to save themselves from this "untoward generation." God's people can save

themselves from this untoward generation. I can save myself from being a liar by telling the truth. I can save myself from being a thief by not stealing. I can save myself from being a drunkard by not drinking. We can save ourselves from this untoward generation, but eternal salvation with man is impossible.

Any individual that tries to take the salvation that Jesus says is impossible with man and make it the same salvation that Peter is exhorting them to find is going to wind up endlessly confused. I don't intend to say anymore about the different types of salvation in the Bible, but I've known many, many people that have told me that when they could see that essential fact, that there is more than one type of salvation taught in the Bible, they were a long way down the road to understanding the truth.

Second Essential

Cause and Effect

Now to the second essential fact that I have known a number of people in my experience that have told me “when I came to understand this, there was many, many things opened up to me.” That second essential fact is to be able to read the Bible and understand the difference between causes and effects. Now, the law of cause and effect is a law that's used in just about every branch of science, every field of human labor. It is a well-established law. No sensible person can deny it. The law of cause and effect just simply tells us that in the world in which we live there are causes and then there are effects, symptoms or results, that are produced by that cause.

For instance, if you were to go to your doctor tomorrow and tell the doctor, “I have high fever, I've got some aching muscles, my face is flushed” The doctor is not all that impressed with that. The doctor recognizes that those things are symptoms, or effects, and that somewhere there probably is a virus, bacteria, or toxic condition working in your body that's causing all those things. That doctor is

not so impressed with those effects as he is the cause that they point him back to.

Someone might say, "I have a pain here in the breastbone." That is not always a sign of a heart attack. It could be caused by anxiety, high intercostal nerves coming around the rib cage. It could be caused by several things. Maybe, you tell your friend, "I've got a pain right here" They may think you are dying of a heart attack, but it could be several other things. The doctor is going to check you for some other symptoms before he arrives at the cause.

A person that does not use the law of cause and effect cannot be a doctor. You cannot be an electrician. This light up here, say, will not burn. Why is it that it won't burn? The light is burned out, something is wrong in the wiring. There is some tracing out you have got to do. A mechanic in any field has got to understand cause and effect. That mechanic begins to search for the effects, and he goes back here to the thing that's causing it. All intelligent people have to have some understanding that there's a difference in effects, or symptoms, and that which has caused it.

I recall a number of years ago I was on a talk show on a 50,000 watt station. After I'd been on there about two hours, the host of the show told me, he said, "We have about 30 seconds left." He said,

“In 30 seconds or less I want you to tell us what's the major difference between the Primitive Baptists you represent and other groups of people.” I answered, “The major difference is, the things that most people teach are the causes of spiritual life, we believe that these things are the effects or evidences of spiritual life.” That took considerably less than 30 seconds. If I were on a talk show again and asked that very question, I'd answer it the same way, because that is the major difference between Primitive Baptists and many other groups of people. The things that other people teach are the causes of spiritual life, we teach that these things are the effects, the symptoms or the evidences, of spiritual life.

Many folks have said that once they understood something about cause and effect, then a lot of other things fell into place. What do I mean by cause and effect? As we go through the scriptures, I want to take up very quickly some subjects like faith, repentance, baptism, believing on Christ, good works, and godly living. Let's see if these things are the causes of spiritual life, or if they are the effects of spiritual life.

1 John 5:1 reads, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ". That is an effect, that person is producing an evidence or a symptom. The symptom is that this person believes that Jesus is the Christ. But notice what he says. "Whosoever believeth that

Jesus is the Christ is born of God." He's already born of God.

In John 10:26 the Lord told some wicked Jews, "But ye believe not." That is your effect, there is the evidence, there is the symptom they produced. He continues, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Did the Lord say, "You are not a sheep because you will not believe?" He did not say that. He said the exact opposite. He said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." He said that the reason you do not believe is because you are not a sheep to start with. He didn't say you are not a sheep because you will not believe. He said, "But ye believe not," the effect, "because ye are not of my sheep", the cause. In John 8:47, Jesus says, "He that is of God heareth God's words". That is an effect. Look at the cause of it. "He that is of God heareth God's words. Ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God." Are you not of God because you do not hear? No, the Lord said the exact opposite. He said, you do not hear because you are not of God.

We also find in the scriptures that believing on Jesus Christ is presented in the Bible as an evidence that a person is born again. Now, your believing on Christ is nowhere in the Bible presented as a cause of eternal life. It's presented as an evidence. I find in where John says "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God,

even to them that believe on his name: Which were born" (John 1:11-13). Did you notice that "were born" is in an earlier tense than believe? It's that way in English. It's that way in Greek. It's that way in Eskimo. It says, "even to them that believe on his name: Which were born" (John 1:12-13). But how were they born? "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). These people were born of God before they believed.

I find in the Bible that good works is presented as an effect or evidence of spiritual life. We look at Ephesians 2:10, and the Apostle Paul says here, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." It is not that we did the good works to be the cause of the creation, but we were "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Most all Bible readers have read Philippians 2:12, which says, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Now look at the cause, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). I find place after place in the Bible where faith, repentance, good works and

godly living are always presented as the effects of spiritual life, never the cause.

When I think about the subject of faith, I find in Galatians 5:22, the text says the fruit of the Spirit are these. He compares the spirit of God to a tree that bears nine manner of fruit. He says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is" (Galatians 5:22). The Spirit is the tree, I want to say, the Spirit is the tree that bears nine manner of fruit. He says that the fruit of the spirit are these, they are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. Faith is one of these nine fruit that the Spirit produces. It is only an individual that has been born of the Spirit that can produce faith because all people by nature do not have faith.

You say, "Well, don't you think everybody's got a little?" No, because in 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2, the Apostle Paul says, "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." That verse plainly says that all men do not have faith. You say, "Well, since all men by nature don't have faith, then how is it that anybody has faith?" Well, turn to Romans 12:3. The Apostle Paul says, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to

think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." If you have faith it's because God gave it to you. You don't have it by nature. Faith is one of those fruit of the Spirit.

We could go on and take up the rest of the time illustrating the importance of the law of cause and effect. I can think of a brother today, a dear friend of mine, very able Primitive Baptist preacher, very good pastor, good Bible teacher, but there was a time a number of years ago when him and his wife were both teaching, well they were teaching Sunday school in a church of another order. That man I'm talking about also worked at a steel mill with another Primitive Baptist.

He and this Primitive Baptist brother were discussing various things pertaining to the Bible, and he told him, "I have a preacher friend in Texas that preached on that, and I'll make you a copy of the tape." They listened to that copy, that tape on cause and effect time and time again. Finally his wife said to him one night, "The reason we are confused is because we are trying to make the effects of salvation the causes and that is where we are mixed up." I wish a lot of God's people could see that.

I'm going to move off of cause and effect by saying that the Bible clearly teaches that faith,

repentance, good works, godly living, baptism, repentance, these things are the effects of spiritual life rather than the causes. I urge you tonight if you have never done this before, go through the Bible, and when it starts talking about your salvation, look for the cause that the Bible is talking about, then look for the effect. If people can understand the law of cause and effect, they are a long way down the road. These first two topics I've said a good deal about over the years.

Third Essential

The Kingdom

Now I want to talk to you about a third essential principle that God's people need to understand if they're going to understand what the Bible teaches. When you understand any one of these three things, as I say, you're a long way down the road. If God has blessed you to understand two of them, you're on shouting ground already. But I come to that third principle. That third principle is to have some understanding of what the Bible says about the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of his dear Son.

I have friends among the Primitive Baptists that at one time were as confused as a termite in a yo-yo when it came to what the Bible was teaching. They were out here in the world of darkness, and the thing that turned on the first light for them was when they came to some understanding what the Bible teaches about the subject of the kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven, and kingdom of his dear Son (as it is sometimes referred to).

Many of our good friends out in the denominational world as they go through the

scriptures, they will try to take the terms "kingdom of God", "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of his dear Son" and in every place apply them to the eternal heaven. That produces endless confusion.

But may I say to you that some of my brethren, some of my dear friends have seen the error, that everywhere you read the term "kingdom of heaven" or "kingdom of God" to apply it to the eternal heaven, they can see that's wrong, and some of them go to the other extreme. They head for the other ditch that, and say that these terms used in the Bible always apply to the Old Baptist church. They have gone off in another ditch with that one.

Those terms, "kingdom of heaven," "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of his dear Son," are used used in five different senses in the Bible. I'm going to spare you a little bit. I've taken up a little bit of time with more than one type of salvation, a little bit of time with cause and effect. I'm going to spare you a bit. I want to deal with only three of them.

First of all, if I read the Bible from the standpoint that there is only one aspect of the kingdom taught in the Bible, that wherever that term appears it's always talking about the same thing, I would be headed for endless confusion in no time. In the 17th chapter of Luke, verse 20, the Pharisees inquired of Jesus Christ when the kingdom of God should appear. He told them, "The

kingdom cometh not with observation." The center column reads, "Cometh not with outward show." It "cometh not with observation." You know, I find in John 3:3 where the Lord told Nicodemus that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." A kingdom that you've got to be born again to see is not the same one that comes without observation. Something that comes without observation is not the same as something that you've got to be born again to see.

Now, watch this, in Colossians 1:12-13 the Apostle Paul says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness," – that's Satan's power – "and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son". Here's a kingdom you are translated into. If you want a definition of that word "translation" go to Hebrews 11:5. Hebrews 11:5 says, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

That word "translated" as it appears in the Bible is like we use it today. Every day on this earth men are translating from English into Spanish, from Spanish into German, from English into Russian, Russian back into English. Any sensible person can see that when language is translated, that language

is passive. The language has nothing to do with it. The translator is active. When I read over here, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him", that simply means that Enoch was picked up taken right into heaven (Genesis 5:24). This kingdom that you're translated into is something that you had nothing to do with. You were passive in it, and the Lord was active.

On the other hand, I find in Luke 16:16 where the Lord says, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." A kingdom that you have got to press into actively, by pressing against the world, the flesh and the devil, is not the same kingdom that you are translated into passively. Here is a kingdom that you are translated into passively (Colossians 1:13). Here is a kingdom over here that he says, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Luke 16:16).

I find where the Lord Jesus Christ said in Matthew 11:12, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Here is a kingdom that suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. That is, the world is able to abuse it. The world is able to persecute it, put John the

Baptist in jail, and have some of the apostles beheaded. On the other hand, in the 18th chapter of John's gospel Jesus says, "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). This kingdom that is not of this world is not the same one that of the world suffers violence, abuse, persecution, and torments. To very simply illustrate what

I'm trying to set before you tonight, and use just a very simple illustration. Suppose I'm walking down the streets of Paris, France. There's a man from South America approaching. He looks me over as I approach him. He says, "Where are you from? Aren't you from North America?" I say, "Yes, I'm from North America." I walk on a bit more. There's a man from Canada starts approaching me. He says, "Where are you from? Aren't you from the United States?" I say, "Yes, I'm from the United States." I walk on a little more. Somebody from California or Michigan, someplace like that, begins to approach me. They look me over. They say, "Where are you from? Aren't you from Texas?" I say, "Yes, I'm from Texas."

I gave three different answers to the question "where are you from?" I did not lie on any point. I told the truth on all three points. I told one person

that I was from North America. I told another person that I was from the United States. I told another one that I was from Texas. Now, Texas is not the United States. Some people think it is, but Texas is not the United States, and the United States is not the same as North America. Yet, one is contained in the other. Now watch this. I'm from Texas, that's true. Texas is contained in the United States. It's true that I'm from the United States. The United States is contained in North America.

I have heard men get up and try to preach on the phases of the kingdom. They try to lay them out side by side, and they wind up endlessly confused and confusing the audience. These kingdoms cannot be laid out side by side like I lay out hymn books. That would confuse anybody. I'm talking to you about something here that this is contained in something which is larger; that is contained in something even larger. Texas is contained in the United States, which is larger than Texas. The United States is contained in America, which is larger than the United States.

Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). This kingdom you have got to be born into. All right, watch this, there came a time when you were born into that kingdom. When the Lord is talking about being born into that kingdom, He is not talking to you about something that you must do. He is talking

to you about something that is done to you. If you will tell me what you did to be born into the family of your parents, I'll tell you what I did to be born into the family of God. The answer in both cases is nothing.

There was a time when you were born of the Spirit. There was a time when you were translated and delivered from the power of darkness. You were translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Here is a situation that is in your heart. This first aspect of the kingdom of God, or kingdom of heaven, I'm talking about is a situation in the hearts of born again individuals. Make sure to remember that the terms kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven means wherever heaven rules. Now then, there came a time in your experience after you were born again where you met other born again individuals. These born again individuals had been established in the truth, and now we're going to move to a larger aspect of the kingdom. I told you a while ago I'm from Texas, but Texas is contained in something larger. I'm also from the United States.

We now come to the visible aspect of the Lord's kingdom. There is an aspect of that kingdom that's in the hearts of God's people, in the hearts of born again people. Now we come to the visible aspect of it. There was a time about 2000 years ago that the Lord established another aspect of that kingdom. We find this prophesied in the Old Testament in II

Samuel 7:12. Around a thousand years before Christ was born at Bethlehem, in II Samuel 7:12 God gave a prophecy to King David, and listen to it carefully. God tells David, "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers". That is, when you are dead and buried. He continues, "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever."

When you first read that, you say, "Well, that's got to be talking about Solomon." You better hold the phone. Let us come to Acts 2:29 and see how Peter interprets that. On the day of Pentecost the Apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, begins to preach to these people and he says, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." You might say, What a strange way to start a sermon, for a preacher to get up on the day of Pentecost and say, Men and brethren, there is a man that is dead and we know where he is buried. No, the Apostle Peter starts his sermon that way because Peter is about to show that the prophecy has been fulfilled that could only be fulfilled after David is dead and buried. He said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and

buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Now continue reading, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:30). Did he say bring back Christ to sit on his throne? He didn't say that. He said raise up.

I don't say this to be ugly or sarcastic, that there are many people in this world who teach that Jesus Christ came to this earth about 2000 years ago trying to set up a kingdom, that Israel rejected His kingdom, Israel wouldn't have it, and because they wouldn't have it Jesus put the church here as a substitute, a spare tire. This is known in theology school as the post-atonement theory, and that Christ, they say, is coming back to an earthly Jerusalem some day to try it all over again, to set up His kingdom. Well, people that believe that believe that God is going to bring back Christ to sit on his throne. Listen to what the Bible says. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:29-30).

He didn't say he'd bring him back to sit on his throne. He said raise him up. I'm going to prove to

you by the Bible that Christ arose from the dead and sat down on throne of his kingdom. He says, "Of the fruit of his loins he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne". Does he say, "He, seeing this before, spake concerning the second coming of Christ?" No, sir, he says, "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ". There is an aspect of Christ's kingdom that Christ established while he was here on this earth.

Now we come to the 16th chapter of Matthew, and Jesus tells the Apostle Peter, he says, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). In that one verse of scripture the Lord Jesus Christ uses the term "church" and the term "kingdom of heaven" with reference to one and the same thing.

My friends, another aspect of the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God is the church that Jesus built about 2000 years ago. The Lord's church, the visible church as we refer to it, the people with whom you worship tonight, is another aspect of the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. After all, what is the church made up of? The church is made up of regenerate, that means born again, body of people. Now, people that are properly fit for church membership are people that have already experienced the first phase or aspect of the kingdom, that is, they have been born into the

kingdom. They have been born of God, they have been translated into that kingdom. The Lord dwells in their hearts. The kingdom is within them. Now when the born again unite with the Lord's church they are in the second aspect of that kingdom, which I'm going to refer to as the visible aspect.

This visible aspect does suffer violence. The church that Jesus put here 2000 years ago has suffered violence. It has been hated by the world. In times past our people have been persecuted. Even here in the United States of America in the early days there was religious persecution in this nation. A lot of folks are not aware of that. You can study it very carefully. Study what went on in Culpepper County, Virginia, where Baptist preachers were taken out of the pulpit at gunpoint, put out here in stocks, put in jail, and everything else. I'm not talking about Soviet Russia or red China. I'm talking about right here in the United States. This aspect of the kingdom does suffer violence, and the world hates it.

We come now to a third aspect. You remember that I said I'm from Texas. That's true, but Texas is contained in something bigger than the United States. I'm also from the United States. The United States is contained in something larger still, which is North America. I come to I Corinthians 15:23-24, where the Apostle Paul says, "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that

are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." Here is the kingdom that Christ is going to deliver up to the Father. You know what this kingdom is made up of? This kingdom is made up of all of his people out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.

This is that kingdom that the Lord spoke about in Matthew 25:34 when the Bible tells us there will come that time that Jesus will come in the glory of His Father with all of his holy angels with him, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats, and listen to what he says to the sheep on his right hand in Matthew 25:34. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". There is a "ye" in that sentence and a "you." The "ye" that are told to come and enter it is the same identical "you" that it was prepared for before the foundation of the world. It's not a matter that it was prepared for one people and given to somebody else.

He says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". This is the Lord's triumphant kingdom, the Lord's triumphant kingdom that

involves all the elect family of God. Now, watch this. What is my definition of the kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven? No, it is not talking about territory. That word "kingdom" can refer to the royal authority or power of the king. That term "dominion" can mean the dominion of Hitler, the dominion of Caesar, the dominion of anybody. It can mean that besides meaning a territory.

We come to the 7th chapter of Daniel and verse 13. The Prophet Daniel says, "Daniel 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." Here you have Jesus Christ, the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven to God the Father, the Ancient of days. And he says, "there was given him dominion"(Daniel 7:14). It says "there was given him," watch this, it says that the Son of man came near before him and "there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Here is the eternal triumphant phase of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ involving all the elect. It will never pass away.

Remember this, that term "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven" means wherever heaven rules.

faceSome day the laws of heaven, some day heaven will rule over all the elect family of God because Satan will be destroyed, and all wickedness banished from the universe. Heaven rules over all the elect family of God. Now then, listen to this, I'll be as kind about this as I possibly can. Whenever heaven is ruling in your heart you'll enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God, if you are out somewhere by yourself, if there's two of you, or three of you sitting around discussing the scriptures.

Some of the richest experiences I have ever had in my life have been out all by myself meditating on the things of God, the cares of this life banished and heaven ruling in my heart. At that particular time you are eating and drinking, you are enjoying the blessings of the kingdom of God. It is whenever heaven rules. It is not when the racetrack is ruling your mind. It is not when the "hellivision," the helligarbage, and CB-sewer, AB-sewer and NB-sewer is ruling your mind. It is not when those things are ruling your mind. It is when heaven is ruling in your mind.

You say, "Well, I suppose if we'll gather here automatically at 10:30 on meeting day and come inside, we are going to experience the kingdom of God." Not on your life. The only way you are going to really experience the kingdom of God when you meet here next meeting day or whenever we meet tomorrow night, wherever I am supposed to speak,

the only way we are going to experience the kingdom of God down there tomorrow night is this, or the only way you're going to experience it here next meeting day, is for me to walk in that door saying heaven is going to rule in my heart tonight. Not my flesh. Heaven is going to rule.

Whatever the Lord has told me to do, whatever attitude the Lord has told me to have, that is what I am going to have. When you get a bunch of folks together and heaven rules in the song service, when you get a bunch of folks together and they are more concerned about singing praises than they are singing for praises, heaven rules. I have seen both kinds. I have been around folks who it was obvious they were singing for praises. I've been around other folks that were singing praises. You say heaven is going to rule in the song service.

You sit out there and listen to the man of God, and you say, "I'm praying that the Lord will bless me and the Lord will bless him and I'm shutting the world out and heaven is going to rule in my heart while I listen." This man that gets up in the pulpit, instead of thinking about some axe he wants to grind, instead of having his mind on some cause he wants to promote, if that man will humbly yield himself that whatever the Lord puts on his heart, that is what he is going to preach, if heaven is ruling in the heart of the man in the pulpit and it's ruling in your heart, it's ruling in this building, then we are

going to have a meeting like maybe we have not been in in a long time.

The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven is wherever heaven rules. Jesus says in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." I told you I'd just deal with three aspects, and I'm now in the fourth one, but I think you'll allow me this, won't you? Two of you brethren or two of you sisters get together and heaven rules your thoughts, heaven rules your conversation. Instead of talking about the neighbors, instead of talking about your aches and pains, instead of talking about the wickedness, the evil of this world, instead of talking about those things, start talking about what God has done for you and how the Lord is blessing you. Next thing we know, heaven is ruling my conversation and it is ruling your conversation. We begin to experience and feel something a lot of folks never feel. You know what we are experiencing? We are experiencing the kingdom of God.

There can be two or three of you get off over here somewhere. Maybe you are in the corner of a cafe. Maybe you are over here on a porch. Instead of talking about the Dallas Cowboys and the Carolina Panthers, the World Series, you know, all those types of things, the stock market and what the crops are and all that type of thing, start talking

about the goodness of God. The next thing you know heaven is ruling your conversation and it is ruling mine. We are feasting on something you do not find very often in this world.

Now, then I hear the bleating of the lambs over this country. I have had people tell me, they say, "Brother Pyles, you have heard about the blind leading the blind?" they say, "In my country it is the bland leading the bland." You have bland preachers. You know what it is to live on a bland diet? I never have. I have been around people who were put on the bland diet. They say, "We have bland preachers getting up preaching bland sermons to a bland people." You want to change that situation? Want to change it? Then may heaven rule in your hearts when you come in that door. May heaven rule in the heart of this man standing up here. Because otherwise you are just going through the mechanics, through the pretense.

Some folk call it playing church. That's right. You are going through the mechanics, you will go through the pretense, and you will be like the Lord said to a man one time, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Matthew 12:34). I have seen where God's people met together at the right time, they got up and mechanically sang the songs, and the man gets up and mechanically reels out what he has got to say, and they mechanically shake hands, and they mechanically go out the door. Yet nobody

there has experienced the joy of the kingdom of heaven. You know why? Because heaven did not rule.

That kingdom of heaven, kingdom of God in all five aspects that you find in the Bible, it means wherever heaven rules. It is my ambition, my desire that it rule in my heart. It is my ambition when I get together with you that it rule in our midst, and some day it is going to rule over all of us in glory, world without end.