



Still Standing
Week 2: The Nature of Standing

And having prepared everything...take your stand.
(Ephesians 6:13b)

Week 1: Standing Defined – Installing a parameter (Paul in Acts 19-20). LIVING FOR THE WILL OF GOD. Measuring its success by Results = Miracles, Attacks, Salvations, Baptisms, DISCIPLESHIP happening because we are standing not because we organized an event to create some hoopla.

A VERB (gerund(derived from a verb but behaves as a noun – ends with ing) or present participle)
An Action Word

Maintain an upright position supported by one’s feet.

Upright. Rise. Rise to one’s feet. Pick oneself up. Find one’s feet. Be upstanding. Get up. Get to one’s feet. Arise.

Put. Set. Set up. Upend. Place. Position. Locate. Situate. Prop. Lean. Plant. Stick. Install. Arrange. Deposit. Park.

Be situated. Be located. Be positioned. Be set. Be found. Be sited. Be established. Be perched. Sit. Perch. Nestle. Remain in force. Remain valid. Remain effective. Remain operative. Remain in operation. Hold. Obtain. Apply. Prevail. Exist. Be in use.

Be in a specified state or condition.

Withstand. Endure. Bear. Put up with. Take. Cope with. Handle. Sustain. Resist. Stand up to. Tolerate. Abide. Suffer. Support. Face. Stick. Stomach.

The Nature of Standing: WHO STANDS

As **God** Stands (who bequeathed it to Jesus)

The **Enemy’s** Stand (that is allowed because of our gift of free will)

Our Right to Stand (the gift from our Heavenly Father when we were conceived = Freewill)

Three areas to Define Standing:

(Shout out to the Women’s Study Bible for the inspirational chart!)

The Nature of Standing in: RULERSHIP (rights to)

The Nature of Standing in: CHARACTER

The Nature of Standing in: MANIFESTATIONS (behaviors, results, growth, signs of)



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The Nature of Standing in: RULERSHIP (authority? More on this coming next week? Following?)

The act or fact of ruling or the state of being ruled:

Generalship, leadership administration, care, charge, conduct control, direction governance, government, guidance, handling intendance, management, operation, oversight, presidency, regulation, running, stewardship, supervision, custodian, guardianship, keeping, protection, trust

RULERSHIP: As God Stands

a. Rule by God

2 Chronicles 20:6

⁶ and said, “O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you. **Psalm 95:3** For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Daniel 4:17

¹⁷ The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.’

Daniel 4:32 ³² and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.”

1 Timothy 1:17

¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Jeremiah 27:5

⁵ By My great strength and outstretched arm, I made the earth, and the people, and animals on the face of the earth. I give it to anyone I please.

John 18:36

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”

b. God’s rule through His Son

Psalm 110:1

The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”

Isaiah 9:6-7

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.



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Daniel 7:13-14

The Son of Man Is Given Dominion

¹³ *"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.*

¹⁴ *And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*

Matthew 28:18

¹⁸ *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

Luke 1:32-33

³² *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

Ephesians 1:20-22

²⁰ *that he worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.²² And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church,*

Hebrews 1:3-8

³ *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.*

⁵ *For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"?*

Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"?

⁶ *And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."*

⁷ *Of the angels he says,*

"He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire."

⁸ *But of the Son he says,*

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

Revelation 1:5

⁵ *and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood*

Revelation 19:13-16

¹³ *He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*



RULERSHIP: The Enemy's Stand

a. Rule by Satan, the god of this age

John 12:31

³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

John 14:30-31

³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, ³¹ but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

1 John 5:19

¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:1-2

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

b. Satan assisted by principalities, powers and rulers of this dark world

Ephesians 6:12

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Colossians 1:16¹⁶ *For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him.*

Colossians 2:15

¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him. [through the cross]

AMP

¹⁵ When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities [those supernatural forces of evil operating against us], He made a public example of them [exhibiting them as captives in His triumphal procession], having triumphed over them through the cross.

Cf. Daniel 10:13

¹³ The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia,



RULERSHIP: Our Right to Stand

Genesis 2:8-9

⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15-17

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Do Human Beings Truly Have a Free Will?

If “free will” means that God gives humans the opportunity to make choices that genuinely affect their destiny, then yes, human beings do have a free will. The world’s current sinful state is directly linked to choices made by Adam and Eve. God created mankind in His own image, and that included the ability to choose.

However, free will does not mean that mankind can do anything he pleases. Our choices are limited to what is in keeping with our nature. For example, a man may choose to walk across a bridge or not to walk across it; what he may *not* choose is to fly over the bridge—his nature prevents him from flying. In a similar way, a man cannot choose to make himself righteous—his (sin) nature prevents him from canceling his guilt (**Romans 3:23** *for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*). So, free will is limited by nature.

This limitation does not mitigate our accountability. The Bible is clear that we not only have the *ability* to choose, we also have the *responsibility* to choose wisely. In the Old Testament, God chose a nation (Israel), but individuals within that nation still bore an obligation to choose obedience to God. And individuals outside of Israel were able to choose to believe and follow God as well (e.g., Ruth and Rahab).

In the New Testament, sinners are commanded over and over to “repent” and “believe” (**Matthew 3:2; 4:17; Acts 3:19; 1 John 3:23**). Every call to repent is a call to choose. The command to believe assumes that the hearer can choose to obey the command.

Jesus identified the problem of some unbelievers when He told them, “*You refuse to come to me to have life*” (**John 5:40**). Clearly, they could have come if they wanted to; their problem was they chose not to. “*A man reaps what he sows*” (**Galatians 6:7**), and those who are outside of salvation are “*without excuse*” (**Romans 1:20–21**).

But how can man, limited by a sin nature, ever choose what is good? It is only through the grace and power of God that free will truly becomes “free” in the sense of being able to choose salvation (**John 15:16**). It is the Holy Spirit who works in and through a person’s will to regenerate that person (**John 1:12–13**) and give him/her a new nature “*created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness*” (**Ephesians 4:24**). Salvation is God’s work. At the same time, our motives, desires, and actions are voluntary, and we are rightly held responsible for them.¹

¹ Got Questions Ministries. (2002–2013). [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.



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- CHOICE
- Free Will
- To Chose
- Who to listen to
*Because who we listen to is who we trust
Who we trust is who we really love*

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” ESV

We are ETERNAL Spiritual Beings having this PRESENT physical experience

- Given control of our own kingdom
We get to choose who we listen to...

CHAPTER FOUR Divine Rebellions

I ended the previous chapter with the thought that free will in the hands of imperfect beings, whether divine or human, can have disastrous results. That’s an understatement. Some catastrophes in the early chapters of the Bible, all of them involving both humans and supernatural beings, illustrate the point.

Recall that God decided to share his authority with both divine beings in the supernatural realm and human beings on earth. That was the backdrop to God’s statement, “Let *us* make humankind in *our* image” (Gen. 1:26, emphasis added) and the fact that God then created humans in *his* image. Spiritual beings and humans are imagers of God. We share his authority and represent him as co-rulers.

On one hand, that was a wonderful decision. Free will is part of being like God. We couldn’t be like him if we didn’t have it. Without free will, concepts like love and self-sacrifice die. If you are merely programmed to “love,” there is no decision in it. It isn’t real. Scripted words and acts aren’t genuine. Thinking about this takes me back to the last of the original Star Wars movies, *The Return of the Jedi*. The spirit of Obiwan Kenobi tells Luke his father, Darth Vader, “is more machine now than man.” And yet, in the end, we find that isn’t true. Vader saves Luke from the emperor at the cost of his own life. He wasn’t just a programmed machine. His decision came from the heart, his humanity—his own free will.

But there’s a dark side to God’s decision. Granting intelligent beings freedom means they can and will make wrong choices or intentionally rebel. And that’s basically guaranteed to happen, since the only truly perfect being is God. He’s the only one he can really trust. This is why things could, and did, go wrong in Eden.²

² Heiser, M. S. (2015). *Supernatural: What the Bible Teaches about the Unseen World—And Why It Matters*. (D. Lambert, Ed.) (pp. 35–36). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



The Nature of Standing in: **CHARACTER**

CHARACTER: **As God Stands**

a. Righteousness, Peace, Joy in the Holy Spirit

Matthew 6:33

³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and his **righteousness**, and all these things will be added to you.*

Romans 14:17

¹⁷ *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of **righteousness and peace and joy** in the Holy Spirit.*

b. Divine Power

Luke 11:20-22

²⁰ *But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; ²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.*

1 Corinthians 2:4 ⁴ *and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,*

1 Corinthians 4:20

²⁰ *For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.*

1 Thessalonians 1:5b

⁵ *because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.*

c. Truth

John 8:31-32

³¹ *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

John 14:6

⁶ *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

John 14:16-17

¹⁶ *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

John 15:26

²⁶ *"But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*

John 16:13

¹³ *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

John 17:17

¹⁷ *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*



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d. Holiness

Ephesians 4:24

²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Hebrews 12:10

¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

e. Light

John 1:4-9 ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the Light, but came to bear witness about the Light.

⁹ The true Light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

John 3:19

¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

Acts 26:18 [Colossians 1:12-13]

¹⁸ to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

1 John 1:5-7

⁵ This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

CHARACTER: The Enemy’s Stand

a. Centered in the things of this world

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

1 John 5:19

¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Revelation 2:1-13

To the Church in Ephesus

² “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

² “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. ³ I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶ Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also



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hate.⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

To the Church in Smyrna

⁸ *"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.*

⁹ *"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'*

To the Church in Pergamum

¹² *"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.*

¹³ *"I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.*

b. Disease, sickness, slavery

Matthew 10:1 [Lk 9:1]

¹⁰ *And he called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.*

c. Deception

Genesis 3:4-5

⁴ *But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

Genesis 3:13

¹³ *Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

John 8:44

⁴⁴ *You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

Romans 1:25

²⁵ *because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ *In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

d. Sin and Evil

Romans 1:28-32

²⁸ *And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are*



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gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Ephesians 2:1-3

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

1 John 3:7-12

*⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever **practices** righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. ⁸ Whoever makes a **practice** of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's^[u] seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*

Love One Another

¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.

e. Darkness

Luke 22:53

⁵³ When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

Acts 26:18

¹⁸ to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

Colossians 1:13

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

1 John 1:6

⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:14

¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.



CHARACTER: **Our Right to Stand**

By Making Choices of Whom we listen to:

I. FIVE Sources of Influence

1.) God/Christ **Colossians 1:15-20**

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent.¹⁹ For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

2.) The Enemy

Revelation 12:7-9

⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Isaiah 14:12-15

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!

How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!

¹³ You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

¹⁵ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.

1 John 5: 19

We know that we are from God [children of God], and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

2 Corinthians 11: 14

“And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.”

John 12:31 (Jesus speaking with the Greeks)

“Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.”

2 Corinthians 4:4

“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

Genesis 3:1-13

The Fall 3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You^[a] shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,^[b] she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.



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⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool^[c] of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"^[c] ¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." ¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

3.) Evil People

Proverbs 21:10

The soul of the wicked desires evil; his neighbor finds no mercy in his eyes.

"The wicked man craves evil; his neighbor gets no mercy from him."

4.) Life

Matthew 5:45b

⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. *For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

5.) Own Choices

Joshua 24:15

¹⁵ *And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*"

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

How the Nature of Standing: **MANIFESTS**

As God MANIFESTS

a. God Manifests in: Salvation

Mark 1:15

¹⁵ *and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Acts 8:12

¹² *But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*

Matthew 3:2

² *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

b. God Manifests in: Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Matthew 3:11-12

¹¹ *"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*



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Acts 1:3-8

³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

The Ascension

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 2:4

⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 10:45-46

⁴⁵ And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared,

Acts 19:6

⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

c. God Manifests in: Miracles and Driving out Demons

Matthew 4:23-24

²³ And He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴ So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought Him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and He healed them. [Luke 11:20-22]

Matthew 12:28

²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Luke 9:1-2

⁹ And He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ² and He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

Luke 9:11 ¹¹ When the crowds learned it, they followed Him, and He welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.

Luke 13:11-16

¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. ¹² When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your disability.” ¹³ And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, “There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.” ¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?”



d. God Manifests in: The Presence of Jesus

Matthew 3:1-3

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.’”

Matthew 4:17

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1:14-15 Jesus Begins His Ministry

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

e. God Manifests in: The Gifts of the Spirit

Romans 12:6-8 Motivational (born inside of us)

⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:1-31 Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual Gifts

¹² Now concerning ^[a] spiritual gifts, ^[b] brothers, ^[c] I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

One Body with Many Members

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves ^[d] or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, ^[e] yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unrepresentable



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parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Ephesians 4:11-13 Vocational Gifts

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, **for building up the body of Christ,** ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

f. God Manifests in: The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-24

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

The Enemy's MANIFESTATIONS

a. The Enemy Manifests in: Destruction

John 10:10

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

b. The Enemy Manifests in: Being Filled with the spirit of this World

1 Corinthians 2:12

¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

James 4:4

⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

c. The Enemy Manifests in: Counterfeit miracles and demon possession

Matthew 8:28



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Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

²⁸ And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.

Matthew 24:24

²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

2 Thessalonians 2:9

⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,

Revelation 13:13-14

¹³ It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, ¹⁴ and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of^[a] the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

d. The Enemy Manifests in: The Presence of Evil Spirits

Matthew 8:28

²⁸ And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.

Matthew 12:22-29

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

²² Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw.²³ And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" ²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." ²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. ²⁶ And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Mark 5:2-5

² And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³ He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴ for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Mark 5:9

⁹ And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

Mark 6:7

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

⁷ And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.



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Acts 19:16

¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all^[a] of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Revelation 18:2

*² And he called out with a mighty voice,
“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit,
a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.*

e. The Enemy Manifests in: Sorcery, Witchcraft, Drugs & Occult Activity

Acts 16:16

¹⁶ As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling.

Acts 19:18-19

¹⁸ Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Galatians 5:20

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

Revelation 2:24

²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden.

f. The Enemy Manifests in: Acts of the Sinful Nature

Galatians 5:19-21

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

How I MANIFEST:

Through the Power of Yield

- Yield = Give right-of-way.

ASK: Who holds this? (You do, given at creation.)

1.) How I Manifest: To God

Ephesians 4:22-24

²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Hebrews 11:25 (Moses)

“He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a short time.”



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To God Yield Statements:

- I will not obsess about my old life: feeling lesser than or in old desires to engage in things that hurt Christ.
- I will do things that Christ did.
- I will repent when I have sinned.
- I will invest in my relationship w/Christ so I can fall more in love.
- I will make the choice on how to act by the illuminating light of scripture. (removing emotions from decision making.)

2.) How I Manifest: To the Enemy

2 Corinthians 11:14

¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
“And no wonder, for Satan himself **masquerades** as an angel of light.”

To The Enemy Yield statements:

- This is not wrong.
- It's really not that bad.
- No one will know.
- I'm only going to try it.
- Why R U getting your undies in a wad, it's not that big of a deal.

3.) How I Manifest: To Evil People

a. Ones you know

Galatians 5:19-21

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Evil People You Know Yield statement:

- They affect you w/o your choice. (e.g. drunk driver)
- Or you lie to yourself: Its not sinful, right?

b. Ones you are tricked by

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

Evil People You are Tricked by Yield statement:

- Don't be so judgmental. They say they are Christians. (Frame Semantics)
- No yield. You were exploited. Abused. (FEAR)

4.) How I Manifest: To Life

Matthew 5:45b

(Life happens)



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⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. *For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

Luke 6:35

³⁵ *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.*

1 Peter 3:9

⁹ *Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.*

Yield to 'Life Happens' Statement:

- It is part of being human.
- This is not Heaven.
- Oh, !#%+
- "Why me, Lord? I'm a Christian."

We LIVE in the enemies territory. Don't act like you don't...It's embarrassing...can you deal w/His sovereignty?

Which means: Do You TRUST HIM?

5.) To My Own Choices

Galatians 5:13

¹³ *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

1 Peter 2:16

¹⁶ *Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.*

1 Corinthians 8:9

⁹ *But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.*

Yield statement to My Own Choices:

- I will not bring alcohol into my home when my wife/husband is a recovering alcoholic.
- I CAN but if it is not good for everyone I WON'T (Scary movie watching, etc)
- It 's my life!

We hold the power of Yield so what are we suppose to do with it

KEY to Yield: Having TRAINED themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Hebrews 5:14

*But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment **trained** by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

Hebrews 12:11

*For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been **trained** by it.*

2 Peter 2:14

*They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts **trained** in greed. Accursed children!*



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GOAL: KNOW the authentic so well, we can spot a counterfeit in a minute!

2 Chronicles 16:9

“For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”

The Power of Pursued Principles

You take on the form of whom you worship. (SCRIPTURE)

(TRAINING, SELF DISCIPLINE)

1.) GOD

1 Timothy 4:7-8

“Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives tales, rather train yourselves to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”

2.) THE ENEMY

James 4:7

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

“Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch w/o yeast, as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread w/o yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.”

REMINDER: 1 John 4:4 He that is in you is GREATER than he that is in the world

3.) EVIL PEOPLE

Oprah-type:

John 7:24

“Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.”

1 Corinthians 15:33

“Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.”

Abusive –type:

Ruins good character

4.) LIFE

He holds us in the palm of his hand, REALLY?

I have questions:



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Child 5 yrs of drug addiction
Lyme's
Some abuse issues towards my husband, my children

Isaiah 41:13

“For I am the LORD your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, ‘Do not fear; I will help you.’ ”

This is where you will answer: “Do I believe God is sovereign?”

Do I trust Him? Or do I seek explanations of why this is happening? Do I look for whose fault it is? Do you not think someone who loves you so intimately will let you know, in that intimacy, if you have offended Him (sin)? Benefit of daily conversations w/Him.

(Haughty prov. 21:4 “Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!”)

5.) OWN CHOICES (SELF)

Repentance

John 9:31

“We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will.”

Galatians 5:16

“So I say live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

Hebrews 5:14

“For solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”

Solid food eaten develops Fruit of the Spirit. (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self control... grows as we yield into Him.)

Solid Food = Scripture

Eaten = learn it, believe it, understand it, believe it, DO it

PRODUCES FRUIT = (LIST)

Constant use:

- 1.) Do something you do not want to do & do it regularly: Devotions, Exercise
- 2.) Deprive yourself of something pleasant: Ice Cream, Shopping
- 3.) Demand definite quotas/performance of yourself: What end result am I looking for? Goal Setting
- 4.) Do something difficult: Take a class, Teach, Make new friends, Tithe
- 5.) Do not put things off: START

Galatians 6:15 “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation/changed life.”



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NOTES:

Consider The Kingdom
Week 1: The Definition

ASK: When you hear the word Kingdom, what do you think of?

Castle?

Princesses?

Knights: Black Kn. Vs. White Kn.

Serfdom, people that live there

This series we will look at:

Defining

Stages of the Kingdom (chart)

Three Kingdoms: The Enemies/Yours/God's

Proactive warfare

Praxis' of the Kingdom (established practices, applicable skills) via scripture

Examining the Parables

THE DEFINITION

ASK: What is the KoG?

His church

His people

ASK: When will it come?

ASK: How will it come?

- Theories:



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Subjective: (Adolf von Harnack)

KoG = Inward power which enters a human soul and takes hold of it.

Apocalyptic: (Albert Schweitzer, African Missionary)

KoG = Will be inaugurated by a supernatural force when history will cease and heaven will begin.

The Church:

As the church grows, the kingdom grows and is extended into the world.

Essential to offer personal salvations.

Societal Pattern:

An ideal pattern, if followed, society will be well.

Not concerned with individual salvations or with the future, but present.

- Scriptures:

O.T.:

Isaiah 2:4

“He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”

Isaiah 11:6-11

“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people.....”

N.T.:

After the imprisonment of John the Baptist, Jesus moved to Galilee (Capernum).

Matthew 4:17

“From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

5:20

“For I tell you unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

7:21

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

13:11

“He replied, ‘The knowledge of the secret of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.’ (This is why he speaks in parables.)

6:10

“Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”



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Luke 22:24-30

“A dispute rose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”

Matthew 25:31,34

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separate the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then, the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and came to visit me.’”

Present:

Romans 14:17

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating or drinking but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,”

Future:

Matthew 25:34

“Then, the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’”

Realm:

Present: (Which we are now in, as Christians)

Colossians 1:13

“delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.”

Luke 17:20,21

“The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Lo, here it is!’ or ‘There’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”

Future:

2 Peter 1:11

“will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Matthew 8:11

“Many will come from the east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 12:41,43

“will gather out of his kingdom all cases of sin and all evil doers...then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

SO...What is the KoG?

Western ideology = A realm over which a king exercises his authority.



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“A state or monarchy the head which is a king; dominion; realm”

OR

The people belonging to that realm.

Webster:

king-dom [kɪŋdəm]

n

1. **monarch’s territory:** a state or people ruled over by a king or queen
2. **sphere of activity:** a realm or area of activity in which a particular thing is thought to dominate
 - *the kingdom of professional tennis*
3. SCIENCE **highest classification for natural things:** any of the three groups, animal, vegetable, and mineral, into which natural organisms and objects are traditionally, as opposed to scientifically, divided

Kingdom may be:

A realm over which a sovereign exercises his authority

A people who belong to that realm

This subject can become so confusing because we do not embrace the complete definition:

The rank, quality, state, or attributes of a king; royal authority, dominion; monarchy; kingship.

Hebrew: Malkuth

Greek: basileia

Both = the rank, authority, and sovereignty exercised by a king.

Secondary meanings

Primary = the authority to rule, the sovereignty of the king

Reign

Psalm 103:19

The Lord establishes his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.”

Psalm 145:11

“They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might.”

Psalm 145:13

“Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endure through all generations.”

Daniel 2:37

“You, oh king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory;”

(right before the triumphal entry)

***Luke 19:11-27 (Parable of the ten minas (reap what you did not sow, ten minas)**

“While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. He



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said: 'A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money in order to find out what they had gained with it. 'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.' The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.' Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow. His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?' Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas. 'Sir', they said, 'he already has ten!' He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them – bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"

(Believe, seek, act prepares the groundwork for growth of more belief which leads to more seeking which leads to more action.)

19:14 The parable is based upon a historical event. According to the historian Josephus, after the death of Herod the Great, his son Archelaus went to Rome to be confirmed as king of Judea (v. 12). The Jews, however, sent a delegation to protest the appointment.³

What was the noble man seeking?

A realm?

Servants? People to rule?

Mark 10:15

"I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

What are we receiving?

Matthew 6:33

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be to you as well."

(what shall we eat, drink, wear)

What are we seeking?

Authority.

The kingdom of God is not just heaven, a place.

Or the church, his people.

³ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). *Spirit filled life study Bible* (electronic ed., Lk 19:14). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.



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They are meaningless w/o AUTHORITY

Which has been handed down to us via JC
(find scriptures where)
?Matthew 10:5-8

Some passages refer to the KoG as a realm
Some as a present reality
Some as a future reality

And it is all three

Greater things than these John 14:12

Ephesians 3:10-11

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. therefore go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matt 18:18

Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, loose...

John 20:21

Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you’

Luke 9:1-6 & 10:1-20

Commissioning of the 12 & 70

Luke 22:24-30

“A dispute rose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”

Heirs Ephesians 2:19-22

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. and in him you, too, are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

A Herodian Parable. According to Luke, Jesus told a parable about a certain well-born man who “went to a distant land to obtain for himself a kingdom and then return ... But his citizens hated him and dispatched a delegation after him saying, “We do not wish



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this man to be king over us' ” (Luke 19:12, 14). Their plea did not prevail. Having gained his goal, the new monarch conducted a purge of his hostile subjects (Luke 19:15, 27). Readers of Josephus have long seen in this parable a retelling of the violent transition of power that accompanied the death of Herod the Great in 4 BC (*Jewish War* 2.1–100; *Antiquities* 17.200–338). Herod had named the emperor Augustus as executor of his will. Unfortunately, Herod had altered his will as a result of strife among his children, so the matter of succession was in dispute and the claimants had to make their cases to Augustus in Rome. One of Herod's sons, Archelaus, secured rule over Judaea (though not as king), a grant that met with determined opposition from many Judaeans—as in the parable. Josephus reports that, on assuming power, Archelaus, “remembering their recent disputes [with him], savagely abused not only Judaeans but also Samaritans” (*Jewish War* 2.111; compare *Antiquities* 17.342). In other words, Jesus was not simply inventing this story, but was reminding his listeners of recent events. Without Josephus, this crucial dimension of Jesus' (or Luke's) message would be lost.⁴

31

The Parable of the Pounds

LUKE 19:11–27

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE must always be open to refinement. All interpretations of Scripture need to be *tentatively* final. They have to be final in the sense that obedience cannot wait for the disciple to read yet one more technical article in biblical studies. At the same time, all efforts in biblical interpretation are flawed. Our interpretation of Scripture, therefore, must never be closed to correction and revision.

One of the biblical stories that warrants a fresh look is the parable of the pounds. Lesslie Newbigin talks about the “plausibility structures” through which all of us see the world. What he means is that each of us perceives reality through the lenses of our language, culture, history, politics, economic theories, religion and military. As Westerners, one of our lenses is capitalism. Does the parable of the pounds need to be liberated from the presuppositions of capitalism that perhaps have unconsciously influenced our translations and interpretations of this story?

With this question in mind the introduction to the parable, whether from Luke or his source, makes clear that some of Jesus' followers were apocalyptic enthusiasts. The story before the telling of this parable concludes with Jesus saying to Zacchaeus and his friends, “Today salvation has come to this house” (Lk 19:9). Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, which was a joyful recollection of political liberation from Egypt. The phrase “today salvation has come” is dripping with apocalyptic overtones. If salvation has come for a hated tax collector like Zacchaeus, it surely has arrived for the nation! Passover is the perfect time for “the day of the LORD” (Amos 5:18) to appear. The text states that Jesus taught this

⁴ Seeman, C. (2016). [Josephus, Flavius](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



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parable, “because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately” (Lk 19:11).

In every age (including our own) there are voices announcing that the end of all things is upon us. Such speculation provides a convenient escape valve from responsibilities in the present. If the end of the world is imminent, then there is no need to speak truth to power! Efforts to create a just society are pointless. Why work for peace and reconciliation? All things will soon be over. Energy spent to protect and preserve the natural world is in vain. The prayer, “Thy kingdom come ... on earth” needs no commitment or response because the earth itself will soon pass away.

The New Testament presents three paradoxes on the subject of the coming of the kingdom of God. The kingdom *has come* in Jesus Christ and it is still *in the future*. The kingdom is *near* and yet *far off*. Followers of Jesus will *never know the timing* of the coming of the kingdom of God— and *here are its signs!*

The parable before us discusses the kingdom of God and makes clear that its completion “is going to be a while.” The text, with its rhetorical structure is shown in figure 31.1.

Herod the Great made a trip to Rome in 40 B.C. seeking a Roman appointment as king, and his son, Archelaus, made a similar journey in 4 B.C. to argue his case against his half-brother Antipas. Jesus used a political scene familiar to his audience as the background for this parable. As the story opens, a nobleman is giving a speech to his servants before he journeys “into a far country to receive for himself kingship and return.” Obviously, the nobleman is confident that he will receive the kingship he seeks. Not everyone around him agrees. The speech and the setting require scrutiny.

The nobleman calls ten servants and gives each of them a pound (the equivalent of one hundred days’ wages for a working man). Matta al-Miskin suggests that the talents themselves symbolize “Faith, hope and love, and are the vital components of the unearned salvation by grace that they had freely received.” The “pound” was clearly a free gift from a generous master to each of his servants. As the nobleman gives these gifts he tells them, “Engage in trade [*en ho*] I am coming back.” The little used Greek expression *en ho* literally means “in which.” It can also legitimately be translated “until,” meaning, “Engage in trade *until* I return.” A third option is to read it as a causative and translate the sentence, “Engage in trade *because* I am coming back.” English language translations have chosen the second and rendered the text “Engage in trade *until* I return.”

1. A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself kingship and return. Calling ten of his servants he gave them ten pounds, and said to them, “Engage in trade/in a situation in which I am coming back/because I am

coming back.”

FAITHFULNESS

2. But his citizens hated him and sent an embassy after him, saying, “We do not want this ... to reign over us.”

CONDEMNATION

3. And he returned, having received kingly power,



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and he said to *call* to him those *servants* to whom he had *given the money*, that he might know *what business they had transacted*.

4. The *first* came before him saying, “*Lord! your pound has made ten more.*” FAITHFULNESS

5. And he said to him, “*Well done, good servant!*
Because in a *very little* you have been *faithful*,
I appoint you in *authority over ten cities.*” RESULT

6. And the *second*, came saying, “*Lord, your pound has made five pounds.*” FAITHFULNESS

7. And he said to him,
“I appoint you over *five cities!*” RESULT

8. Then *another* came, saying, “*Lord, here is your pound, which I kept stored in a rag;*
for I was afraid of you,

because you are a *hard man;*
you take up what you did not lay down,
and reap what you did not sow.” THE SERVANT’S EVALUATION

9. And he said to him, “*Out of your own mouth*
I will *condemn* you,
you *wicked* servant!” CONDEMNATION

10. You *knew/experienced* that I was a *hard man,*
taking up what I did not lay down,
and reaping what I did not sow. THE SERVANT’S EVALUATION

11. Why then did you not *put my money in a bank,*
and at my *coming*
I should *collect* it with *interest?*” UNFAITHFULNESS
(What he should have done to be consistent)

12. And he said to those standing by,
“Take the *pound* from him, and give it to him who *has ten.*”



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And they said to him, “*Lord, he has ten pounds.*” RESULT

14. And I tell you, to *every one who has shall be given;*
and from *him who has not*, what *he has* shall be *taken away*.

15. But as for those *enemies* of mine, CONDEMNATION
who did not want me to reign over them, Announced
bring them here and *slay them before me.*”

Figure 31.1. The parable of the nobleman in the far country (Lk 19:11–27)

By turning *en ho* into a time reference (until), the whole point of the master’s command becomes: “Get out there and do your best. You have limited time to prove yourself in the market place. On my return I expect profits! See how much money you can generate! Make hay while the sun shines!”

On returning, however, the master summons his servants and commends the first for being *faithful*, not *successful*. What is the master really seeking?

If *en ho* is read literally, the text can be translated, “Engage in trade in a situation in which I am coming back.” This legitimate reading renders a significantly different understanding of the entire story. (If *en ho* is read as a causative and translated “because,” the result is the same.) There were no stable political institutions across the Middle East at the time of Jesus. Transitions were (and are) times of great stress and uncertainty. Imagine a scene where the Shah of Iran, in his last days in power, summons ten of his servants and tells them:

I am going away to take a little vacation. I have \$5,000 for each of you. I want you to open shops in downtown Teheran in my name! The sign on the shop will, of course, read, “His Majesty’s Royal Rug (or whatever) Shop.” Keep in mind that I *am* coming back! I know I have enemies. They will most likely follow me and try to destroy me. But never fear; I will prevail and return.

What will those servants do once they receive the money and the Shah leaves the country? The plot thickens with the very next phrase.

2. But his *citizens hated him* and sent an *embassy after him*, CONDEMNATION
saying, “*We do not want this ... to reign over us.*”

Once again this text is my literal translation of the original. It means, “We do not want this [expletive deleted] to rule over us.” During the American Civil War, every time the Northern Army lost a battle, investors withdrew large sums of money from the market. The price of gold went up, and the value of the new paper money, the green backs, went down. Many did not want Lincoln this ... (gorilla, country bumpkin, hairy ape) to rule over them!

The story assumes that the servants in the parable know all about the delegation that followed the nobleman with the intention to undermine him at all costs. Even so, anyone who understands the total instability of the political milieu in which they live will bury the money and



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wait to see who wins the right to rule: the nobleman or his known enemies. Anyone who dared to start a business as the known friend of the absent nobleman would surely be circumspect and try to stay out of the public eye. Perhaps some form of underground operation would be the most prudent. All the “smart money” in town would be buried under the floor of a back room.

Such is the real world of this parable. King Herod’s trip to Rome was successful; he received kingly power. His son Archelaus made the same trip and was banished. No one knows how such a perilous journey will end. The nobleman wants to know, “Are you willing to take the risk and openly declare yourselves to be my loyal servants (during my absence) in a world where many oppose me and my rule?”

It is amazing to note that after the reference to the determined enemies of the nobleman, the story continues almost as though those enemies did not exist. An elephant walks into the room and no one looks up. Matta al-Miskin makes reference to the servants who “struggled and endured hardships for the sake of the pounds that were given to them.” He writes out of the background of being part of a Christian island in the midst of a sea of Islam. He is thus sensitive to what it means to live in a world where the majority look at Jesus and say, “We do not want this ... to rule over us.” As the nobleman distributes gifts to his servants, he is in effect saying, “Once I return, having received kingly power, it will be easy to declare yourself publicly to be my loyal servants. I am more interested in how you conduct yourselves when I am absent and you have to pay a high price to openly identify yourself with me.”

It has been my privilege to teach short courses for the Lutheran Church of Latvia. While I was at the Luther Academy in Riga, I observed the interviewing of new students for the academy. I asked the interviewing committee what kinds of questions they asked the applicants. They told me, “The most important question is, ‘When were you baptized?’ ” And I asked, “Why is the date of baptism such an important question?” They answered, “If they were baptized during the period of Soviet rule, they risked their lives and compromised their futures by being baptized. But if they were baptized after liberation from the Soviets, we have many further questions to ask them about why they want to become pastors.” In the parable the master challenges his servants to live boldly and publicly as his servants, using his resources, unafraid of his enemies, confident in the future as his future.

Throughout history various movements have disliked the Jesus they found in the pages of the Gospels and have created their own. The best known of these fabricators were the ancient Gnostics, who preferred philosophical speculation to historical revelation. They wanted and created a Jesus who told them to discover God within themselves. Others, called Docetists, did not want a Word that became flesh, so they created a “spiritual Word” that did not become flesh. With the rise of Islam a new Jesus was invented who claimed to be only a prophet bringing guidance and warning. The persecuted church in many places in the majority world over the last two hundred years has been obliged to live out its life and witness in a world that despised Jesus and his message. The greatest challenge of the parable before us can be found in this crucial aspect of the story. The parable continues:

3. And he *returned*, having *received kingly power*, and he said to *call* to him those *servants* to whom he had *given the money*, that he might know what business they had transacted.



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In the story the nobleman does receive kingly power and returns (in spite of the delegation that followed him and tried to prevent his enthronement). On arriving home he summons the ten servants a second time. He wants to know what *diepragmateusanto* (from *diapragmateuomai*)? This is the only appearance of this word in the Greek New Testament. Its primary meaning is “How much business has been transacted.” Bauer lists “How much *has been gained* by trading” as a second meaning. From the second century onward the Syriac and Coptic versions of this text have consistently chosen the first meaning. Most of the Arabic versions have done the same. The difference is critical. If the master wants to find out what has been gained by trading, he will ask some form of “Show me the money.” But if he is asking, “How much business have you transacted?” he is seeking to discover the extent to which they have openly and publicly declared their loyalty to him during the risky period of his absence. A quick perusal of the account books will reveal the scope of the servants’ public exposure as loyal servants of the absent nobleman. The primary meaning of this key word reinforces my suggested understanding of the master’s original charge to the servants. Before the master departed, he challenged his servants to represent him publicly during the uncertain time of his absence, and assured them of his return. At his homecoming he wishes to check the extent of their obedience to his command.

A full ledger will reveal that the entire community knew the servant in question was his master’s man. A nearly empty account book will witness to the servant’s fear of showing public loyalty to him. Why has this key phrase usually been translated as, “How much did you gain by trading?” Has capitalism influenced the way Westerners have translated and understood this parable? Is the focus of the story on *profits*, or is it *faithfulness* to an unseen master in a hostile environment?

The conversation between the master and the first two servants unfolds as follows:

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------|
| 4. | The <i>first</i> came before him saying, “ <i>Lord! your pound has made ten more.</i> ” | FAITHFULNESS |
| 5. | And he said to him, “ <i>Well done, good servant! Because in a very little you have been faithful, I appoint you in authority over ten cities.</i> ” | RESULT |
| 6. | And the <i>second</i> came, saying, “ <i>Lord, your pound has made five pounds.</i> ” | FAITHFULNESS |
| 7. | And he said to him, “ <i>I appoint you over five cities!</i> ” | RESULT |

The faithful servants are the first to report. Each of them could have replied:

- I had a good product.
- I carried out careful market research.
- I burned the candle at both ends.



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I hired competent staff.

Here are the results: 1,000 percent profit on your investment.

Instead, the first reports, “Your pound produced ten pounds.” That is, “Your gifts produced the fruit of our efforts.” The master commends both servants for being faithful, not successful. Furthermore, their reward is greater responsibilities, not privileges. The first is given responsibilities over ten cities and the second over five.

In like manner Paul tells his readers:

I planted, Apollos watered.

But God gave the growth....

And each shall receive his wages according to his labor. (1 Cor 3:6, 8)

[Not according to his production.]

This brings us to the dialogue with the third servant:

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 8. | <i>Then another came, saying, “Lord, here is your pound, which I kept stored in a rag; for I was afraid of you,</i> | UNFAITHFULNESS
(What he did) |
| 9. | <i>because you are a hard man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.”</i> | THE SERVANT’S
EVALUATION |
| 10. | <i>And he said to him, “Out of your own mouth I will condemn you, you wicked servant!</i> | CONDEMNATION |
| 11. | <i>You knew/experienced that I was a hard man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow.</i> | THE SERVANT’S
EVALUATION |
| 12. | <i>Why then did you not put my money in a bank, and at my coming I should collect it with interest?”</i> | UNFAITHFULNESS
(What he should have done to be consistent) |

The third servant claims to be afraid of his master! But he was more likely afraid lest the master not return, in which case he would have backed “the wrong horse!” As it turns out the horse he failed to back won the race! When caught flat-footed, how does he attempt to defend himself?

It is impossible to imagine that when the servant fails his master’s test of faithfulness, he deliberately insults that same master. The intention of the servant’s speech must be to



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compliment his master. But how can this be true when he tells the master to his face (in effect), “I see you as a thief.” Can this be a compliment?

Such a label was indeed a compliment among the Gauls. Cicero, in *The Republic*, writes, “The Gauls think it disgraceful to grow grain by manual labor; and consequently they go forth armed and reap other men’s fields.”

Returning to the Middle East, the same has been historically true of the Bedouins. If the master in the parable is a Bedouin raider chieftain, what the unfaithful servant says about him is a high compliment. For the Bedouins of the past the worth of a man was measured by his skill as a raider. Friends of mine have told me that Bedouin love songs are full of praise for the noble clan leader who can swoop down on unsuspecting encampments and capture all their supplies and camels.

The Babylonian Talmud records a story about King David that says:

A harp was hanging above David’s bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it and it played of itself. He arose immediately and studied the Torah until the break of dawn. After the break of dawn the wise men of Israel came in to see him and said to him: Our lord, the King, Israel your people require sustenance! He said to them: Let them go out and make a living one from the other. They said to him: A handful cannot satisfy a lion, nor can a pit be filled up with its own clods. He said to them: Then go out in troops and attack [the enemy for plunder].

King David is presented here as a pious man who studies the Torah from midnight until dawn and at the same time recommends plundering as an acceptable economic enterprise. In harmony with this story the unfaithful servant most certainly thinks he is offering his master a compliment. The servant describes his master as one who plunders his neighbors and is successful at it—he takes up what he does not lay down and reaps what he does not sow.

But if the master is a nobleman in a settled agricultural community, such language is an insult. Jesus and his disciples are from settled farming and fishing villages. Clearly, the unfaithful servant has critically misjudged his master. The *faithful* servants had no difficulty understanding their master’s true nature. It was the *unfaithful* slave who completely misunderstood the big man, and in trying to compliment him the slave actually insults him. What is the master’s response?

The master observed, “You knew me [i.e., you experienced me] as a hard man ...” He does not admit that he *is* a hard man but says, “I understand that *you experienced me* as a hard man.” The judgment he then passes on this unfaithful servant is that the servant is to be left with the twisted view of the master that was produced by the servant’s unfaithfulness. The servant looks at the master through blue sunglasses created by his unfaithfulness. Looking through those glasses, the master (to him), appears blue. The master says, “My judgment against you is this: I will leave the blue sunglasses on your face. I will leave you with your self-created, distorted perceptions of my nature.”

Speaking of God, Psalm 18:25–26 reads:

With the *loyal* thou dost show thyself *loyal*;
with the *blameless* man thou dost show thyself *blameless*;
with the *pure* thou dost show thyself *pure*;
and with the *crooked* thou dost show thyself *twisted*. (italics added)



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This psalm goes beyond the parable. In this instance the psalmist understands that the communities' attitudes and ethical behavior influence God's revelation of himself to it. The parable places the blame solely on the servant. The *servant's unfaithfulness* produces a twisted vision of the master. Both texts affirm that the way we live influences how we see God, which is the unfaithful servant's problem.

The nobleman also points out to the unfaithful servant that he is inconsistent. If the nobleman were indeed a robber baron, he would care nothing about the law and would be happy to have his money invested in a bank and receive the interest. Interest was forbidden in Jewish law. But if the nobleman was a robber he would not care.

His pound is given to the man with ten, and there are cries of, "It isn't fair." Jesus then affirms that the one who responds with faithfulness to gifts received will receive greater gifts. But the one who proves to be unfaithful will lose the very gift with which he began. The life of discipleship provides many examples of such truths.

The more problematic text is the last sentence. The opponents of the nobleman are "on stage" at the beginning of the drama. At its conclusion the master orders them to be killed. Perhaps this final word reflects a church looking backward to the fall of Jerusalem and struggling to make sense of its horrors.

In the text, however, that order is given but not carried out. The master's enemies are not on stage when the story stops. The parable does not end, it simply stops with a final scene missing. A better option is to see this command as a statement of what the enemies *deserve* and to remember that the text does not record what they *receive*. Abraham received an order from God to kill his son. A second later command canceled that order. What conclusions would a reader of Genesis come to about God if he or she read the account of the first order, did not read further and assumed that Isaac was killed? Many of the parables of Jesus are left open-ended. Does the older son agree to be reconciled with his father in the parable of the prodigal son? We do not know. Does the wounded man taken to the inn by the good Samaritan make it home? We are not told. Do the workers in the vineyard accept the master as a gracious man or do they persist with their cries of "It's not fair"? There is no answer. Here the master declares what his enemies deserve. The reader is not told what they receive. Yes, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). The rest of the verse states, "but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the Middle East the word *no* is not an answer, it is merely a pause in the negotiations.

If a Westerner is told by his employer, "You're fired! Clear out your desk! I want you off of the property by 5 p.m. today!" the employee will understand that he or she is fired and start packing at once in preparation for departure at 5 p.m. A traditional Middle Easterner will listen to the same speech and conclude: "The master is clearly very upset! Hmm—I see that I have a long negotiating process ahead of me. I must seek help from my most influential friends. This is a very serious matter that requires immediate attention."

In this parable the master's command is an opening statement, no more. The story has no concluding scene and the reader is stimulated to reflect on the unfinished symphony that is the parable. At the beginning of the story the master gave his servants gifts that they neither earned nor in any way deserved. He demonstrated his generosity. That same generosity was again verified by the manner in which he treated his faithful servants on his return. He was even generous with the unfaithful servant, who had his pound taken from him but was not fined,



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punished or even dismissed. By this point in the story the master had demonstrated his generosity three times. As he arrives to settle with his aggressively active enemies, he publicly announces what they deserve. Everyone knows that this is the beginning of the process of dealing with them. What will the end of that process be? The wages of sin is death and ...? The reader/listener is called on to remember the master's nature and contemplate how such a master may complete his dealings with those who bitterly opposed him.

Another aspect of this command has to do with Luke's integrity. If the master's statement regarding his enemies is assumed to be his final word, then a serious question must be asked regarding Luke's view of Jesus. In Luke 6:35–36 Jesus teaches: "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

If, in Luke's Gospel, Jesus calls on his disciples to love their enemies, is the command in Luke 6:36 flatly contradicted by the last scene in the parable? Is Luke critically damaging his own presentation of the person of Jesus? Or does our understanding of the parable's unfinished conclusion need to be reconsidered?⁵

means or method of defending

- having no claim to the land under the *aegis* of the law, the cattle baron decided to claim it by force

Synonyms for *aegis*

Ammunition, armor, buckler, cover, defense, guard, protection, safeguard, screen, security, shield, wall, ward

Ephesians

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^(a) and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.^(b) ⁴ But^(c) God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

⁵ Bailey, K. E. (2008). [*Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*](#) (pp. 397–407). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.



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2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

CLARIFYING THE PROBLEM

Before examining various resolutions, I must clarify what is at stake in this problem. I note first that we find the terms “**compatibilism**” and “**incompatibilism**” in this discussion. We have seen these terms before, but in prior discussions they referred to different notions of free human action. In the discussions of freedom and foreknowledge, the terms appear again, but they are used in a different sense. **Someone who is a compatibilist on the matter of freedom and foreknowledge believes that divine foreknowledge is compatible with human free will (typically, the kind of freedom in view is libertarian). On the other hand, someone who does not think divine foreknowledge is compatible with human freedom is an incompatibilist. Those who hold a compatibilistic notion of free will believe their view of freedom is compatible with divine foreknowledge, and they charge that divine foreknowledge is incompatible with libertarian free will.**

Those who hold libertarian free will are divided on whether that freedom is compatible with divine foreknowledge. Libertarians have offered various proposals to harmonize free will and divine foreknowledge, but some believe they are incompatible. In a very influential and significant article titled “Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions of Human Freedom,” William Alston argued that those who hold a compatibilist line on the freedom/foreknowledge issue actually espouse a different concept of human freedom than libertarianism. In fact, they have adopted a view of freedom that places them in the determinist camp. I contend that many resolutions to the freedom/foreknowledge problem offered by proponents of libertarian free will are guilty of the error Alston mentions, and hence their proposed resolution doesn’t render a system with libertarian freedom internally consistent. But more on that as we proceed.⁶

Ephesians 2:1-3

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

⁶ Feinberg, J. S. (2001). *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God* (pp. 736–737). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.