

LESSON FOUR THE DISCIPLES OPERATED FROM THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bound on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matthew 18; 18 KJV

The question here is how could this possibly happen through mere human beings? It would become possible through the Holy Spirit.

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and he said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. And when he had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." John 20; 19-22

Here Jesus speaks about breath of wind, Receive the Holy Spirit, the breath of life and be born again. At creation God had made man by breathing into him the dust of the earth, making man a living being. Breathing into man the Holy Spirit causes him to be born again to eternal life.

Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10; 9

The disciples had received the Holy Spirit (as in their salvation), but the Power of the Holy Spirit would be theirs at Pentecost.

And behold, I am sending the promise of my father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." Luke 24; 49

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2; 1-4

Pentecost was the fulfilment of the promise, which happened as the wind and power of the Holy Spirit came upon them.

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. Acts 2; 32-33

We receive the Holy Spirit when we ask the Lord to come into our hearts, but every one of us can also receive the power of the Holy Spirit later in their Christian walk as it was with the disciples as a separate experience.

And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him or knows

Him. You know him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while the world to see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live." John 14; 16-18

But now I am going to Him who sent me, and none of you asked me, 'where are you going?' Because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement. John 16; 5-6

The Holy Spirit could not come until Jesus was glorified. When Jesus was on earth he could only be in place at one time, but once glorified He could be with each one of us at the same time through His indwelling Holy Spirit. Jesus had through giving us the Holy Spirit, transferred us from the limitations of the earthly realm to become born again into the Heavenly Realm, able to perform miracles and totally live from a higher realm and giving us supernatural boldness as He did for the disciples.

Because of the Holy Spirit, Jesus could say to Peter in verse 18,
And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything that they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them. Matthew 18; 18-20

Let us now look at the book of Acts to find out how the disciples lived from the Kingdom of Heaven.

The disciples gave the word from the Heavenly Kingdom.

They preached in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And my speech and my preaching were not in plausible words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of man but in the power of God. 1 Corinthians 2; 4-5

This is speaking of two realms, to not rely on human wisdom which is from the worldly realm, but the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God from the heavenly realm.

For 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. 1 Thessalonians 1;5

The word was not just spoken, but demonstrated in the power from Heaven through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit who lives in us is given to us from Heaven. Do we yield to the Holy Spirit to do his work through us? Or are we lacking faith to step out in obedience? What kind of men and women are we? Are we just limiting the Holy Spirit to live from the worldly realm only? Or are we yielded to God through the Holy Spirit like the disciples were, rising above the limitations of this world into the Heavenly realm in obedience and faith, and allowing the Holy Spirit to flow through us in power from the Heavenly Kingdom?

And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. Acts 19; 8

But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. Acts 8; 12

Then towards the end of Paul's ministry

And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the Kingdom will see my face again. Acts 20; 25

Then Paul encourages those who are to continue preaching the word after he has gone.

Proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ, with all boldness and without hindrance. Acts 28; 31

It is by preaching the Kingdom of God that healing miracles take place as healing is from the Kingdom of God which is the Kingdom of Heaven.

The disciples healed the sick from the Heavenly Kingdom.

The lame man at the gate

But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do you have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. Acts 3; 6-8

And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Acts 4; 33

And Steven full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.

Acts 6; 8

While you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the Name of your holy servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the Word of God with boldness. Acts 4; 30

And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. Acts 5; 14-16

The disciples endured hardships from the Heavenly Kingdom.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfasten. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And the jailer called for the lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptised at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God. Acts 16; 25-34

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell: He struck Peter on the side, and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands.

And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself, and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me and he went out and followed him. Acts 12; 7-9

These are only two readings from Scripture and as you study the book of Acts you can read for yourself other times where the disciples endured hardships for Jesus, even with joy out of their devotion and love for Him.

A question could be, What is the difference between living from the Heavenly Realm or living from the leading of the Holy Spirit?

It is the same, because the Holy Spirit within us lives from the Heavenly Realm and only does what the Father tells him. If we obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit, then we are also living from the Heavenly Realm, just like the disciples.

The disciples are a real example and challenge for us to follow, especially in these last days.

Are we ready?

If we are living from the earthly realm the answer would be no we are not ready.

If we are living from the Heavenly realm the answer would be yes we are ready.

This is the challenge! This is the question we need to ask ourselves. Where are we living from right now? Are we prepared to truly come into this level of fellowship with Jesus, that He may raise us up to live In Him, and from His Heavenly Realm that we too can live in such victory In Him as the disciples lived.

Some years ago, when George my horse was stolen, I was about to use the law to get him back, when I felt a check in my spirit, so asked the Lord about it. He led me to the most difficult scripture. If he takes your cloak, give him your shirt as well. "Lord how will that get George back?" "Wait" came the answer. I waited two months and the Lord told me to put two hundred pounds in ten pound notes into a white envelope and give it to the woman who stole my horse.

I obeyed willingly and drove over that morning and put down the ramp. I found the woman sitting on a straw bale, watching her daughter ride George. I sat down next to her and said

"I know that inside you are a good lady and will release George today, so I am giving you this gift."

She released George and I drove home. The next morning she phoned me asking why I had treated her in this way and I said it was because God loved her. She burst into tears saying she would never hurt anyone again and how could she become a Christian. I led her to the Lord and her life was radically changed and she became a beautiful person.

I learnt from this experience that if she had gone to jail, which is the worldly way of dealing with such people, she may have come out just as hard and unchanged. By dealing with her from the Heavenly Realm with God's love, it changed her heart and life, for this word and all eternity.