

Review of Session 1:

- What are you going to be doing 10,000 years from now? Reigning. That is your destiny!
- What is the kingdom of God? The range of God's effective will. Where God is acting. Where what God wants done is done.

Other Kingdoms in Conflict:

God allows people not to live in his kingdom, at least for now.

- When humans decide to go their own way, they immediately come into conflict, not just with others but within themselves.
- The general story of humanity is internally conflicted, because when they turn on their own will, the only thing they have left to guide them is their desires.
- Desires are essentially chaotic; that's the nature of desire. ...
- Desire as the guide to the human kingdom always leads to disaster.

The invitation of Jesus is to do the arithmetic again and bring your kingdom into the kingdom of God. That's basic gospel.

- Within that framework is fitted Jesus going to the cross. Jesus going to the cross has many dimensions but one is the end of the human kingdom (which has many dimensions in turn). Jesus himself set the example of giving up himself, becoming a servant, going to death, even the death at the cross...that is setting aside his will for the Father's will.
- And as he did that, he simultaneously showed that the highest level of human development, Jewish religion on the one side and Roman law and civilization on the other, failed, because **the best people on earth killed the best man on earth.**
- But there's hope because you can look for the Resurrection and the life of the kingdom of God!

The eternal life now is a life that is so intertwined with what God is doing that our life becomes eternal.

- Eternal life is described in John 17:3: **What is eternal life? Knowledge of God and his son Jesus Christ.**
- Knowledge is interactive relationship!



Today's Topic: What is the Spiritual Life and Who is a Spiritual Person?

Spirit is the most substantial reality.

- Matter is an expression of spirit.
- The physical universe is very small when put up beside the God who made it.
 - We don't have a little God struggling with a big physical universe. We have a little universe in the hand of a great God.
- We too are spirit! This is hard for us to deal with because we're so obsessed with the physical.

Spiritual life is one kind of life.

What is Life?

Life is self-initiating, self-sustaining, self-directing activity.

- God is the source of all life. He's the only One who has life in himself. All other life is dependent on him.
- Understanding God, who is primarily Spirit, will help us understand ourselves.
- God is the ultimate source of life – Paul in 1 Tim. 6; John ch. 5;

God is constantly acting around us.

- We need to be attentive to see it because he does not run over us.
- Knowledge of God does not run over you. You have to seek it.

Moses turned aside to the burning bush and asks, "Who are you?" The right translation is:

"I am THAT I am." I am the one whose being is predicated on itself.

- "I AM" is one of the great names of God.
- The Gospel of John: I am the door/ the light/ the bread / the way, the truth, the life.
 - He IS the great I AM.

Our life is dependent on God. Our life is distinctive.

- A cabbage is alive. It grows up; doesn't turn into a bean.
- A kitten doesn't eat dirt. A kitten will chase marbles. Those are *different kinds of life*.
- A child can chase a marble but in time a child can learn arithmetic. A kitten cannot. It's a *different kind of life*.



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What is the life of the human being? ...to live interactively with God as a creator of good.

- They have a mind but are not just a thinker, they are an actor.
- The purpose of the human system is to relate to God and draw life from God;
- You draw life from God and as you do that your kingdom becomes incomprehensively great.
- You master your body and you move out from that.

The Chambered Nautilus by Oliver Wendell Holmes:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

You can do that because **you're a spiritual being**.

- That's why death does not separate you from God.
- God is spirit and you are spirit.
- You have a body and in that body, you are learning to reign.

Spiritual life is activity from a non-physical source, "from above."

- We must train ourselves to be non-physical – that does not mean non-existent.
- Spiritual is not nothing! The world pushes that what really matters is not the spiritual but the physical.
- Your body is a wonderful and beautiful thing – in subjection to God – as a part of the spiritual life.
- Your body is essential to you and who you're becoming and that is why it will be resurrected.

What is "Spirit"? Spirit is non-bodily personal power.

NON-BODILY: it doesn't come from the body.

- Non-bodily doesn't mean it can't be in the body; it can; that's the incarnational idea of life in the human being.
- Incarnation is not *only* a teaching about Jesus and his coming in the flesh.
 - It is also a teaching about us – we are incarnate beings -but we are **spiritual** beings who are incarnate.
- Spiritual is not from the physical. The physical is from the spiritual.
 - God said let there be light and that was the beginning of the physical reality.



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PERSONAL: – Spirit consists of thoughts; feelings; choices; character; all the things that go into making personality.

- **You don't work the spirit; the Spirit is a person.** You don't work persons. You learn how to live with them in love and understanding.
- **Prayer is a way of communicating. Prayer is a power-sharing device for a world of recovering sinners.** It is a main part of what we are training for reigning in. We come to God and we talk with him. He allows us to share his power in ways that are safe.

POWER: Spirit is power. You as a spirit are power.

- You have the capacity to change things. That's fundamentally, will.
- Will is the heart of spirit because it's the heart of personality.
- Your will is a power, and its primary function is to integrate with God.
- What is the purpose of the will? For dependance on God.

God is Spirit. He has life in himself. John 4:24, 5:26, Ex. 3:14, 2 Tim. 6:13 & 15-19

Spirit is invisible. That's the nature of spirit; you can't see it.

- That doesn't mean you can't know it. You can't see it; smell it; touch it; but you can know it.
- John 14...Jesus is talking about sending the Spirit – *"the world cannot receive the Spirit because it cannot see him."*

Two landscapes open up here, best described in 2 Cor. 4:16-18. *"Though we perish...our outward man is perishing but our inward man is renewed day by day."* We're not looking at the things that are visible, but the things that are invisible.

How do you look at the things that are invisible?

- You pay attention to what you can't see.
- You direct the mind to it. It's how you direct the mind.

Faith is not opposed to knowledge; it's opposed to sight. "We walk by faith not by sight." Paul is talking about how we are able to apprehend what we cannot see. More than anything else, that's God.

Two Landscapes – **the visible and the invisible.**

- The invisible is the world of the spirit.
- Acts 17:28 ... you can't get spiritual from the physical.
- The spiritual is both human and divine.



Human Beings Are Spiritual

Our experiences, not our body, make up our life.

- We love to see things. Seeing is a spiritual experience.
- Knowing is substantial to you. That's why knowledge is so important.
- Near-death experiences: knowledge and love are much more important to them.

You are already by your nature in the spiritual landscape.

- If you turn your back on it, you have what Paul has called "the mind of the flesh." That is, you only think about the natural things.
- One of the main things we need to do to take care of our body is to understand they are not us.

You are a being that others treasure. What is it they treasure about you?

- The world manipulates people in terms of their bodies.
- We don't want to be treasured just for our bodies.
- We want to be treasured for our experiences, our love, our knowledge, our character...
- All of that is spiritual, not physical. It is unbodily personal power.

A dog does not have the capacity of soul and spirit to be a person that relates to you.

- Dogs have life, but not spiritual life.
- "A chimpanzee has ~98% of the DNA of a human being.... that just shows there's a lot more to a human being than their DNA!"
 - That's an expression of a worldview that wants to treat human beings as if they were physical creatures.

Will, Choice, Intention.

Will, the power of choice - the ability to initiate things and events - is the most precious part of the human spirit.

- Law incarnates this by making intention a major part of judgement.
- Remorse goes into the will, intention, character.
 - To not feel remorse for an awful deed reflects something deep about the person.



The Two “Landscapes” and the Basic Human Choice

Living the eternal kind of life now...I have a choice as to where I put my life. In the visible, or the invisible.

- My life will be determined by where I choose to put my mind.
- This is what Paul calls in Romans 8 the mind of the flesh.
- If I put my mind on the flesh, then my life will come to nothing. If I put my mind on the Spirit, then I will enjoy life and peace.

The most basic freedom we have is where we put our mind.

- It's not unlimited – your mind can become so enslaved that you don't have any choice about that.
- What we call possession in the demonic sphere is primarily a matter of imprisoning our thoughts and our mind.
- A demon is a complex of thought and feeling and will of sufficient complexity to take on a life of its own.

Sowing to the Flesh, Sowing to the Spirit

We can place everything under God and have the mind of the Spirit. That's the fundamental choice.

Psalm 16:8 – I have set the Lord always before me. He is at my right hand; I will not be moved.

- Nothing is going to shake me.
- Steadiness, strength, right direction, life beyond the normal.
- We now have the choice of sowing to the flesh or sowing to the spirit.
- We can invest our lives in the spiritual, the invisible, and the result will be eternal living. (Gal. 6:8, Rom. 5 and Rom. 8)
- Or we can choose to invest our lives in the visible, the natural abilities or “flesh,” and the result will be “corruption.”
 - Corruption means it will all fall apart.

Investment in the Spiritual Life of God

- Provides a “greater weight of glory” to the individual... C.S. Lewis // it's actually Paul's phrase (2 Cor. 4:16-18) “Our light affliction which is but for a moment works for us an exceeding greater weight of glory while we look not at the things that are seen but the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are temporal but the things that are unseen are eternal.” That's the two landscapes.



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- The greater weight of glory does come also in terms of the experience of death, and it makes it disappear.
- Reading from Amy Carmichael, a missionary in India for many years. **"What must the fountain of joy be, if the spray from the edge of the pool can be like that?"**
 - That is why Jesus said those who keep my word will never taste death.
- Jesus abolishes death and frees us from fear of death. John 8:51-53, 2 Tim. 1:10, Luke 12:4 & 22, Heb. 2:14-15, Acts 20:24, Phil. 1:21



QUESTIONS:

Q: Can you expound on knowledge as interactive relationship? Particularly as more than or different from an assent to a propositional statement.

- Knowledge is fundamentally interaction.
- Propositions are guides to action and we need them. But they are tied to knowledge by interactive relationship.
 - You don't know how to ride a bicycle by reading a book. It might be that you could learn something about it, but you get on the bicycle, and you interact with it.
- It's the interaction that is knowledge.
- Biblically that's the way knowledge is used.
 - The prophet says to Israel, "You only have I known of all the people on the Earth!" God knew about the other people – but Israel was the only ones that he had entered a covenant interactive relationship with.
- We live in a period where much of what we call evangelical religion has been thought to be a matter of assenting to propositions.
 - To live in a world where someone was born of a virgin is a different thing.
 - We don't score points for getting the propositions right.
- The importance of propositional knowledge is HOW it integrates with life.
 - To live in a world where Jesus was born of a virgin...that's a different world! So now how will I act differently? How will my interactions with reality differ, because I believe that.
 - If I believe that the Bible is the Word of God, how will I relate to it? Having a high view of Scripture doesn't do me any good unless I hold the Scripture at that level in my activities.
 - We don't want to set propositions aside – we need them. But then we need to put it into practice.

Q: Last night you said that God was not aware of where Adam was (or he didn't want to know where he was) – yet Scripture tells us God knows all things, he's in all places at all times, and we can't get away with nothin'. He will hold us accountable, even for our thoughts. Can you expound on that because (I believe) he knew where Adam was, but he wanted Adam to admit what he had done.

- **Omniscience** does not mean that God **knows** everything anymore than **omnipotence** means that he **does** everything. It refers to what he CAN do. ...
- I don't think God has to know everything to be in control of it; that's a human image we are projecting God. ...



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- God can certainly know anything. And if he decided he didn't want to know something, he could do that too.
- **Nothing is hidden from God.**

Q: How do we contend with the impact of others' wills and choices on our own lives, which is part of the roots of our own fear?

- The important thing to say is that by submitting our lives and our wills to God, then we can say as it says in Hebrews 13 – I am with you, God says, therefore I shall not fear what men may do to me.
- It's only as we are submitted unto God that we are safe.
- Human beings while they can affect us cannot draw us out of the good that God has in mind for us.

Q: "All governments govern by the fear of death..." What about the United States?

- What happens to you if you don't obey? There's a continuum of what happens but basically force comes into play.
- The limit of force is death.
- There is no government on Earth which does not have the power to kill and does not exercise it in certain conditions.

R: We're motivated by fear or love...and I can choose to live a godly life and to obey the laws not out of fear but because I know it's going to be the best thing for me and those I love...so then the fear of death doesn't hold power over me.

Yes, but you are not being governed by human government in coming to that position. You are being governed by the kingdom of God.

Q: When you say we're not our bodies are you emphasizing that we're not merely our bodies or are you saying in some fundamental way that our bodies are less us than our spirits?

- Classically dualism says that there is nothing essentially bodily about a person. *I don't want to say that.*
 - For example, **my identity is tied to my body.**
- I certainly want to say that I **am not merely my body**, but I want to say a little more than that.
- **Our bodies are integral to our identity.**
- **But don't draw the conclusion that if I don't have my body that I don't exist.**
 - How does my body carry over to the person that still exists when my body no longer exists? It carries over in the character, memories, relationships, that involve this body. Those are carried on during the time my body does not exist -and then when I am reunited with a resurrected body there is a different kind of unity that is involved there.



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- Will I know my loved ones in heaven? Yes, but not because of their fingerprints.
 - That body is going to be very different than this one even though it is a continuation of this one. The person continues to exist even when their body no longer exists.
 - God doesn't have a brain!

