

UNSELFING SELF

WILLIS 11/8/09

Heb12:25-29

Our focus these past few weeks has been the unshakeable nature of the Kingdom of God and the unchanging person of Jesus Christ. So far in our attempt to define the indefinable, we said **the Kingdom of God is the government of God. It is the realm, the rule and the ruler of God's governmental expression on the earth.**

- The unfortunate question however is, how does man who is naturally resistant to any governmental rule other than the rule of self, interact with the government of God?
- The answer is of course...he doesn't, he can't unless he is as Jesus said, "Born Again."
- Jn3:3 "Unless one is born again they cannot see the Kingdom of God."
- **Self is incompatible with the Kingdom because self is inherently resistant to the rule of God. Self must be unselfed for it to enter the Kingdom.**

I have entitled what I want to share today "Unselfing Self." I read a story this week about a 7 year old boy who called his ailing grandfather and asked, "Papa have you died yet?" Not a very appropriate question in relationship to physical death but entirely appropriate in relationship to unselfing self so we might enter the Kingdom.

- **"Have you died yet?" would be a question we would all do well to ask each other daily as we seek to advance with Christ's advancing Kingdom.** Without the unselfing of self we are unable, in fact not permitted to advance with the Kingdom.
- What I am suggesting is a funeral for our selfish 3. Unselfing self is the death and burial of me, myself and I. Unselfing self makes room for the resurrection of the Sovereign 3, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Unselfing self is the crucifying of self sovereignty. How many have grown a little too accustomed to your own "self sovereignty?" **To become somebody in God's kingdom, we must become nobody in our own.**

The central issue of the Kingdom is the Throne, specifically who sits on it...Him or us? Unfortunately, there stands the possibility of have a saved heart but an enthroned self. **The Gospel of the Kingdom is the good news of the King which dethrones man and unselfs self.**

- Jer1:12 "A glorious throne exalted from the beginning is the place of your sanctuary." From the beginning there was only one throne but when Adam and Eve sinned and man fell, everybody became a throne unto themselves.

Problem is man is not made to rule self. Man left to himself is not good for himself. So the Throne of Christ is the means by which Jesus unselfs self. **Unselfing self is moving yourself away from the center of your own life. It's dethroning self and enthroning Christ.**

- It was Augustine who spoke of The Doxology of Self; he described it as a person whose center lies not in themselves but in God's transformative presence.
- The throne literally means "The governing seat." Just like praise gives Christ a seat to sit and commune; an embraced throne gives Christ a seat to sit and govern.

All of which brings us to the second aspect of what the Kingdom of God is:

1. The Realm of God
2. The Rule of God: The rule of God and the love of God are one and the same.

Not only is the Kingdom of God a territorial realm it is also a governmental rule. The Kingdom is both a domain as well as a law. The Kingdom is a truth as well as a way. Most won't argue with it being a territory as long as you don't enforce the rule.

- Claim whatever territory you want or propose whatever truth you want, just don't enforce the rule. **It is not the territory that stirs the contention, it is the rule.**
- The realm for the most part can stay conceptual, but the rule immediately brings you to the actual. "Of the increase of His realm" and everybody says, amen. "Of the increase of His rule" everybody say O my. But to increase His rule is to increase His love.

Brian Watts in his book "Treasure in the Field" said, **"The coming of Jesus was not primarily to save that which is ours...Jesus came to rule that which was His."** Pg59

Rev2:27 "And He shall rule them with a rod of iron" Perhaps that sounds a bit harsh but the word "rule" means "to shepherd, guide, guard or lead into nourishment." Jesus Christ is a King who has the right to rule any way He pleases but being He is love, He chose to rule benevolently.

- Just because He is benevolent it doesn't mean He is passive or lenient. Though He rules like a shepherd He is still a King whose rule is absolute and self enforcing.
- **"Self enforcing" means if you break it, it breaks you.** The rule of God is enforced by the law of sowing and reaping. How you sow to His rule determines what you reap from His rule. If you sow submission you reap blessing; sow rebellion you reap death.

As we saw with the root meaning of the word government meaning "to contend with," the primary focus of Christ's rule is the self will of man. His rule doesn't come to annihilate the will of man, just to unself the will of man.

- Col3:15 "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." The seat of Christ's rule is the heart of man. **The rule of Christ goes for the heart; Father is after a yielded will not a forced behavior.** It's not a zombie, void of will self, God is after; only an unselfed will.

Ultimately, the issues of life come down to how do we relate to the throne. Look at Heb8:1-5. The central focus of true Tabernacle in heaven (which we are to copy here on earth) has Christ sitting on the throne. The throne of Christ is the central focus of the Kingdom of God.

- The throne represents His right to rule our daily lives. **We may be saved but are we ruled? We may be forgiven but are we governed? Is the throne of God a concept in our lives or is it a daily recognition?**
- How many of our life decisions are based on assumption? O we want God's will but do we lay our right to decide at the foot of the throne? Is our concept of grace more about enablement to do His will or forgiveness for doing our will?
- **Are you led more by permission or by forgiveness?** Forgiveness acknowledges the placed of the Cross; Permission acknowledges the place of the throne. Both are essential but the throne is to take the governmental lead and rule our daily decisions.
- We unself self every time we yield our will to the will of the only Sovereign and embrace His rule in our every decision.

Being that the throne is so central to the Kingdom, I want to develop six characteristics of Christ's throne and what their implications are in our daily lives:

- 1. The Throne is Untouchable: Ps93:2 "Thy throne is established from of old."** "Established" is the Hebrew word "Kuwn." It means "an incontrovertible, indisputable, incontestable, irrefutable existence." Nothing can touch, alter or challenge the throne of God.
 - The throne of God is established by God's own Word. It stands firm because no one or nothing stands next to it or has authority to revoke it. God and God alone is the one and only Sovereign and His authority cannot be overthrown.
 - His realm is infinite; His rule is untouchable. He doesn't run for office so His popularity is irrelevant. To ignore it, relegate it or reduce it doesn't make us exempt from it.
- 2. The Throne is Unalterable: Ep1:20-21** The throne of Christ is supreme, far above all rule, power or dominion. You can accept the throne or reject the throne but you cannot redefine the throne. If you seek to alter the throne, the throne alters you.
 - In 1536 King Henry the VIII began the dissolution of all the Monasteries in Great Britain. The buildings and their contents which had been dedicated to God were redistributed among the Kings supporters. In total 630 families benefited.
 - 100 years later only 14 of those 630 were still in existence, their posterity cut off by God. In one part of England 260 men received portions of the spoils. Of those 260 men only 60 were able to bear sons. 80% of them lost their land in less than one generation.
 - Malachi 4 says "if you rob God you come under a curse." **If you mess with the throne; the throne messes with you.**

Most of life's problems can be traced back to a throneless experience with Christ. The Kingdom of God is not a throneless love nor is it a loveless throne. The Kingdom is the fullness of both. The Love of God and the Government of God are one in the same; to seek one is to need the other.

- When both work together, they work to unself self and conform us into the image of Jesus Christ.

So I close today borrowing from the wisdom of this 7 year old boy, **“Have you died yet?”**