

Born Again

Unless someone is born again, he cannot see
the Kingdom of God.
You must be born again! (John 3:3, 7)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with
God, and **the Word was God.** (John 1:1)
The seed is the Word of God. (Luke 8:11)

For you have been born again not of **a seed**
which is perishable, but imperishable,
through the living **Word of God,** which remains forever.

And this is the Word which was preached
to you through the Gospel. (1 Peter 1:23, 25)

Being Born Again

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The Kingdom of God

“A Country/Kingdom with golden streets”, where there are no tears, no suffering, and no death. Such a place can stir the interest of many. We believe that if provided the opportunity, no man would refuse the chance of having a better life, without death. (...and He shall wipe every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more. There shall be no more mourning, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed. Revelation 21:4; Each gate was made of one pearl. The street of the city was pure gold. Revelation 21:21).

However, in addition to these “golden streets”, there are also spiritual aspects within this Kingdom, which are difficult to comprehend and hard to register for the human mind. To most of our dear ones, these things are pure nonsense. (...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. 1 Corinthians 2:14)

These things will turn the values of our lives upside down, since they are incompatible with the things we have learned from this world. For these reasons, the “Kingdom of God” will remain a mystery to most of us. (Things which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor have entered into the human heart, so are the things which God has prepared... 1 Corinthians 2:9)

The Son of God said to seek not only the Kingdom of God, but also “**His righteousness**”, which means that the Kingdom of God is much more than just a place of comfort. (Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Matthew 5:48)

Many of us want to be saved, to be part of Heaven, and not Hell - but reaching the righteousness or perfection of this Kingdom is not that easy; it requires us to give up on many things that have so far been our way of life.

One of the things we often use and will have to give up is lying, whether it be small or big. We can easily observe that there is no human to have never used a lie. It is used when we are late for work or when we arrive home later than expected by our dear ones. Lies are also frequently used in business, sales... However, those who want to give up lying will have to pay the price of losing the advantages it brings.

Another thing we all have chased after is self-love/selfishness. Since we're born, we are directed solely towards ourselves. The entire episode of life is then concentrated on this. We must however note that self-love cannot be found among the things of the Kingdom of God.

The Holy Scriptures point out some of the world's values and traits, which cannot be found within this Kingdom: self-lovers, lovers of money, braggers, prideful, demeaning, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, not loving what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited; lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. (2 Timothy 3:2)

“For everything in the world: the desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one’s possessions — is not from the Father, but is from the world.” (1 John 2:16)

To find out what values can be found within the Kingdom of God, it is crucial not to go by the crowd or according to traditions, but to perform a personal investigation and find out for oneself. Whoever will not be drawn to these values and will not understand that he is called to live in the peace, purity and “perfection of God,” will not come to know the mysteries of this hidden Kingdom.

There are many questions that we have to ask ourselves, the answers to which we are unable to find anywhere else other than in the Holy Scriptures. (You are lost because you do not know the Scriptures... Matthew 22:29) To find these answers, we are required not only to read the Scriptures, but to study them attentively and in humbleness. Here are some of the questions that we shall ask ourselves:

1. Who belongs to this Kingdom and what are their citizens like?
2. What are the values of this Heavenly Kingdom? (Things which the eye has not seen... such are the things that God has prepared. 1 Corinthians 2:9)
3. We know that every birth is based on a seed out of which new life is born. This seed contains the genetic information required for the new life. The Scripture tells us that the birth in God’s Kingdom is also based on a seed from which new life will germinate. (Whoever is born of God... His seed remains in him. 1 John 3:9) Have you ever wondered what type of genetic information can be found within God’s seed? Whose image is in this seed from which man is born again? What does this image look like?
4. Have you considered that this Kingdom has laws regarding the new way of life? Can you enter/be born again in this Kingdom without knowing them and without concluding a contract/a solemn pledge by which you undertake to respect them? (Read: Exodus 24: 3-8)
5. What are the criteria by which God selects the few, out of the many that are called? (For many are called, but few are chosen. Matthew 22:14)
6. Are we required to reach Christ’s stature, the perfection of our character during this lifetime? (...nothing unclean will ever enter it. Revelation 21:27)

Within the next pages we will try to provide you an answer to these questions, which we hope will awaken in you a burning desire in getting to know the mysteries of this Kingdom and knowing God as He is. (Eternal life is this: to know the only true God. John 17:3) The Scriptures reveal to us that God foresaw the creation of beings that would have His features, beings made in His image and likeness. (So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him. Genesis 1:27)

The purpose of creation was for man to live in communion with God, according to the laws that govern His Kingdom. However, man was deceived by Satan and got separated from God, losing as such His likeness/image. (You were once

dead in the sins... Ephesians 2:1)

The Word shows us that even before He founded the world, God foresaw the possibility of the fall and prepared a solution for restoring and making man perfect once more. (...in Himself, God chose us to be holy and faultless before Him, even before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:4) Thus, God made it possible for man to be born again of God and to grow towards resembling Him again. (We are God's children now, and what we will be is not yet known; but we know that when He will appear, we shall be like Him. 1 John 3:2)

But just as Adam and Eve faced Satan's cunningness, so will those who want to reach God's Heaven. As he deceived the first humans, undermining the authority of God's Word, so will he come to us using the same temptations and methods. (*Did God truly say so?* Genesis 3:1)

Nowadays, one of Satan's great battles is for man not rise from the "spiritual death" in which he finds himself in. He does everything he can to keep us away from being born again, since that is the moment when he loses his right over us. (Unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. John 3:5-7)

His purpose is for us to remain in a purely mental (dead) faith, preventing us from understanding that we are called to live in the peace and perfection of this Kingdom. (When someone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. Matthew 13:19) Similarly as it was the case with Lord Jesus, Satan shall even come using specific passages from the Scriptures. (Matthew 4:6) Thus, to annihilate any pursuit or preoccupation related to resembling the Lord, Satan comes through his servants to deceive us by teaching us that in order to be saved, faith in the Lord's sacrifice is sufficient, while our acts of faith/efforts are not needed.

For this reason, these teachers only point out certain texts of the Word, such as, "For by grace you have been saved". (Ephesians 2:8) They will however never mention nor highlight the texts which clearly point out that our effort is needed. (Seek the peace and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14; Whoever says "I know Him" but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 John 2:4)

If we look at the reality which surrounds us, we find that Satan has deceived many with this teaching. It can be seen that those who were deceived have reduced the Scriptures to only a few verses, one of which is: "Not through acts, so that no one may brag". (Ephesians 2:9) Those who have received this teaching will have to hope that during resurrection, God will have a special formula to "somehow" cleanse their character of all the vices with which they depart earth: the anger, envy, pride, slander... (think of the countless existing doctrines and theories which aim to tackle this crucial aspect of God's Kingdom: the purgatory, different thresholds of heaven, the thousand-year reign...)

It is true that for those who believe in Him and His sacrifice, forgiveness of sins and redemption is made possible through the work of the cross. (Colossians 1:13-14) But to get to resemble Him, the Lord does not work alone, but with the acts of our faith done in humble obedience to His teachings. (For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor... counts for anything, but only faith which works... Galatians 5:6) The work of the cross will not benefit us if we have a dead faith. (...so also faith without works is dead. James 2:26)

The Word of the Scripture warns us that if we hear the gospel message and are not hungry and thirsty for the righteousness and purity of the Kingdom, God will give us a work of delusion in order to believe a lie. (Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but found pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thessalonians 2:11)

The Scripture tells us that if we do not adhere to the words of Lord Jesus, we shall be contaminated with the disease of pointless research, which will ultimately lead to our destruction. (If anyone... does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ... has an unhealthy craving for controversy and quarrels about words... is depraved in mind... and of the truth. 1 Timothy 6:3)

If we look at the multitude of religious groups, (each declaring that it has the truth) we can easily see how many go on this path of supporting teachings specific to their group, which can only lead to arguments between various parties. If we won't research the Scriptures with the purpose of living our lives in the holiness and righteousness of the Kingdom and according to the law of Christ, but limit ourselves to studying and supporting "certain teachings" such as: speaking in tongues, concerning the return of the Lord, the importance of the "Jehova" name, the importance of keeping a certain day... then the devil will have won the battle.

Many have thus been deceived, believing that the true spiritual life consists of being concerned with supporting the teaching of the group to which one belongs to or the various other existing theories. Whoever has eyes will see that these teachings are in fact intended to keep us away from the true calling - that of living in the peace and righteousness of the Kingdom.

In order not to be deceived by Satan, every God seeking man has to understand that he is called not to uphold a theory, but to be born again and grow so that he can become just like Him! (You, therefore, must be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48) If we shall be honest with ourselves, we will have to admit that we know very little of this. When we think of this resemblance to God, many of us tend to think of it as something that can be perceived by our physical eyes. God however does not reveal Himself to us in this regard. When we talk about His likeness to man, this type of external knowledge will be of no help to us in getting to know Him.

There is however an inner part in which we can resemble God, an aspect which can be known by man, but is ignored by most.

This aspect is God's heart, namely His way of being. We have to understand that we will not be able to become like Him and be like Him if we do not want and are not eager to get to know Him, if we are not motivated in knowing His character, without wanting to have a heart like His. (Please, show me now your ways, so that I may know you. Exodus 33:13)

Here is how the Scriptures describe **God's Image/His heart**: "Lord God is merciful and abounding in patience, slow to anger, and full of steadfast love and faithfulness." (Exodus 34:6); "Lord God is gracious, full of compassion and of great mercy." (Psalm 145:8); "...all His works are perfect; a God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and upright is He." (Deuteronomy 32:4); "God is love." (1 John 4:16).

Thus, to become like Him, we will have to love His way of being, to be drawn to the beauty of His character. (No one can come to Me unless he is drawn by the Father. John 4:44) Then we will have to throw away all the things which were values to us, and start following/imitating Him, just as a child does with his parent in everything the parent does. Just as a baby becomes accustomed to the new things in life by copying and mimicking his parents, so will the one born of God. The Lord will be our Father and He will work with us to imprint His traits unto us.

Only if we allow ourselves to be processed by Him will our hearts become more and more like His, as we find written about David, who was a man after the heart of God. (I have found David...a man after My own heart. Acts 13:22)

The Kingdom of God on Earth

The Kingdom of God is first and foremost a spiritual Kingdom, which is described by the Holy Scriptures as a place of righteousness, holiness, peace, and love, and is the opposite of the Kingdom of Darkness. (For the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17)

As is the Kingdom, so are those who belong to it. If we examine the Scriptures, we will discover that the defining traits of the Heavenly Kingdom are also the traits that define both its citizens and God Himself.

The Scripture also describes God as Lord of righteousness, Lord of peace and love. (He is righteous and faithful. Deuteronomy 32:4; For He is first the Lord of righteousness, then the Lord of peace. Hebrews 7:1; God is love. 1 John 4:16)

Due to the fall of Adam, man by natural birth is born spiritually dead and has no right to the citizenship of this Kingdom. (Remember that you were once separated from Christ, without citizenship... without hope. Ephesians 2:12)

To be able to redeem us and make the forgiveness of sins possible, Lord Jesus Christ paid the price of the ransom fee with His death. He died so that we could start a new life. (He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the

Kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:13)

This Kingdom of God that has descended from heaven can illustratively be viewed as a territory or an embassy in which the heavenly laws govern.

Lord Jesus Christ was sent as the ambassador of this Kingdom, with the mission of bringing this “Holy Territory” into our hearts. He is found at the entrance or at the door of this embassy, bringing to the people the laws that govern it. (I must preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose. Luke 4:43)

The Laws of the Kingdom of God

Many of us would like to be part of His Kingdom, we would like to be saved and avoid the wrath that is to come; few, however, are bothered to understand that this place they seek is governed by God’s laws, which are eternal and unchanging. (... but the word of the Lord remains forever. 1 Peter 1:25) The Scriptures tell us that God sent us these laws so that we shall avoid eternal death by keeping them. (I say to you, if anyone keeps My Word, he will never see death. John 8:51; For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2)

On a closer inspection it can be observed that God’s laws express His way of thinking and His way of being, they are His reflection, an image of Him. (For who has got to know the mind of the Lord? 1 Corinthians 2:16) Thus, we can consider without mistake that the Lord is putting His laws in our hearts to rewrite and imprint His image in us. (I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. Hebrews 10:16; But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16)

We can see by ourselves that some of the laws of the secular world do not contradict God’s laws. We will take the tax law as an example. It is the Lord who has ordained the “State” as His servant for the collection of taxes. (That is also why you pay your taxes, for the authorities... are God’s servants. Romans 13:6)

Thus, the laws that are given by these God-ordained governments do not contradict God’s laws, which means that we will have to regard them as subordinate to the laws from above. (Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. Romans 13:1)

However, if a law of the lower countries comes into conflict with a law of the Kingdom, we will have to put into practice the law of the Kingdom. (You judge for yourselves whether God wants people to listen to you rather than to Him. Acts 4:19)

We will take an example from the field of human rights. In the lower countries/ in the world, if it ever so occurs that you are wronged by someone, the legislation gives you the right to defend yourself. Thus, you are given the opportunity of appealing to law enforcement/the police and to the courts, in order to make justice.

However, in the upper/heavenly country, the law works the other way around. It forces you to live in peace with all people. If someone wants to sue you for your coat, in order to keep the peace, the heavenly law tells you to also leave him your shirt. (Matthew 5:40)

The Purpose of the Laws of the Kingdom — The Perfection of Man

In the world, humanity lies within the darkness of sin. There is no man to do good. Because man has a leaning towards evil, the secular world has laws which make it possible for us to coexist. They condemn and punish bad deeds, but they have no power to work towards the perfection of man. The Scriptures also tell us about the law of Moses, which was “added” due to transgressions/breaking of the laws. (Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions. Galatians 3:19)

In the Heavenly Kingdom however, things are not the same as in the world. Those belonging to the eternal Kingdom of God live in the light, they are perfect and sinless. In order to live together with God in eternity, man must be born again and reach the standard of perfection required by the Kingdom/the Image of God. (Be therefore perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48)

The law of the Kingdom or the law of Christ was brought to us in order to reach the perfection required by the Heavenly Kingdom; it speaks to the inner man, with the purpose of changing our hearts, for this law is far superior to the law of Moses. (...being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. 1 Corinthians 9:21)

We shall be careful not to confuse the law of the Kingdom, which is also called the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, with the Law of Moses (Romans 8:2). The Law (of Moses) is holy and just (Romans 7:12), but it could not make man perfect. (... for the Law made nothing perfect. Hebrews 7:19; for the Law was only a shadow of the good things to come... it can never... make perfect those who draw near. Hebrews 10:1)

The law of the Kingdom or the law of Christ, in which the moral law of Moses is included, aims to transform us into being like Him, in other words to assimilate His features into us. (He who loves another has fulfilled the law. Romans 13:8; Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2) As such, he who fulfills the law of Christ will not abolish the law of Moses, but will strengthen it. (Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law. Romans 3:31; So that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who... who walk according to the Spirit. Romans 8:4)

The teachings of Christ are a School of integrity, peace and love. They will come to life in our hearts as we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit of the Lord and obey them. (Put on a holy, beloved and compassionate heart, full of kindness, humility, gentleness, patience... Colossians 3:12)

Thus, not only the external works, but also our thoughts will have to be subordinated to the law of Christ. (And teach them to follow everything that I have commanded you. Matthew 28:20; We take every thought captive to obey Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5)

Within the person that is guided by Him, the Holy Spirit uses these teachings to form an image similar to that of Christ. (And we all are being transformed into the same image... through the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

One of these teachings tells us not to resist the one who hurts us. By putting this teaching into practice, it will work by bearing fruit in us: peace, abounding patience; a fruit of the Spirit - a part of the image of God. (Do not resist... Matthew 5:39)

Those who will enter or be born into the upper Kingdom are taught and guided by the Holy Spirit, after which they go through the testing of the faith in order to be strengthened and to reach perfection. (The testing of your faith produces patience. And let patience have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:3)

The tests we will go through are no greater than human power and are aimed at overcoming darkness, to make us worthy of living together with the saints. (Those who are considered worthy of attaining... Luke 20:35)

Questions for personal reflection:

- Which Kingdom do I belong to? The one above or below? Which laws do I give priority to? Have I changed the values of the world for those of the Kingdom of God?

- When I find myself in a difficulty/a clash with someone, to which of these laws do I appeal to?

Life in the Kingdom of God

God created the universe and put all things in perfect order, each one of them with their respective laws of operation. One of these laws is the law of gravity. Due to this law, the earth does not deviate from its trajectory either to the right or to the left. The sun also has its precise course in the constellation of the universe. All these things were made by the Word of God and follow His perfect laws. (The heavens were made by the Word of the Lord. Psalm 33:6)

The same is true of man. God's laws according to which man must live are perfect, as they lead him to the ultimate goal, which is perfect love. (The goal of the law is love. 1 Timothy 1:5) The only option is therefore to accept God's obedience standard, and this will ensure their success. Any deviation from these perfect laws will make us miss the mark. (If the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Hebrews 2:2)

God's obedience standard

Lord Jesus came into our world to teach us through His personal example the way of living in the Kingdom and to show us what type of relationship is required to be had between God and those who will be admitted into the upper Kingdom. He was sent by the Father to be a model for us. A model in everything: in love, in abounding patience, in kindness, in humility... and above all - a model of obedience. He was obedient in all things, unto His death. (He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:8; His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11:3)

Lord Jesus gave up His own will, renounced Himself and took the form of a slave. (I can do nothing of myself: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous; because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me. John 5:30; He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, and being made in the likeness of men. Philippians 2:7)

When we are called to salvation, to be saved, Lord Jesus asks us to follow His personal example and deny ourselves, just as He did. (If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. Luke 9:23; The one who says that he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked... 1 John 2:6)

Through the way He lived His life on earth, He shows us the path that leads to perfection. He kept the Word before telling us to keep it. (But I do know Him and keep His word. John 8:55) We can see this from the way he kept the law of the Kingdom concerning judgment: "Judge not, so that you will not be judged". (Matthew 7:1)

Before telling us "not to judge," He first kept this law unto death. ("Man" answered Jesus, "who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?" Luke 12:14; I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. John 12:47) He submitted Himself to God and did not judge even those who killed Him. (In His humility, His judgment was taken away. Acts 8:33; When he was mocked, he did not mock... but he committed himself to Him who judges righteously. 1 Peter 2:23)

Moreover, in order to better understand the way we should live in the upper Kingdom, we also have the Lord's angels as an example. When they find themselves in the position of keeping the Heaven's law regarding judgment and slander, they do so without transgression. (Read 2 Peter 2:11) One of them is archangel Michael. He did not dare to break this law of the Kingdom. (Michael, when he was fighting the devil over the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment. Jude 1:9)

Many will perhaps excuse their disobedience by saying that it is normal for those that live in the presence of the Lord to have the power to obey without deviating. However, the Scriptures also give us as an example of obedience in Noah and Abraham, this time they are representatives of ours, people subject to mistakes, just like us. When they found themselves in the position of keeping the Lord's command, they did not murmur, did not negotiate, but only did exactly as they were told. (So did Noah: according to all that God had commanded him. Genesis 6:22; By faith Abraham, when he was tested, brought his son (Isaac) as a burnt sacrifice. Hebrews 11:17)

To understand the consequences of partial obedience, the Scriptures give us King Saul as an example of someone who kept God's command, but not entirely. When God told him to utterly destroy everything that belonged to the Amalekite people, Saul obeyed, but did not follow "everything" that the Lord had commanded. (But Saul and the people spared king Agag and the best of the sheep... and were not willing to utterly destroy them. 1 Samuel 15:9)

At a first glance, he obeyed God because he kept much of what God had commanded him to do. (Saul told Samuel: "I did obey the voice of the Lord, and went on the mission on which the Lord had sent me." 1 Samuel 15:20) However, this type of partial obedience, which Saul was convinced to be obedience, God calls disobedience, which is as guilty as guessing. Here is what Saul believed and said: "I have kept the word of the Lord". (1 Samuel 15:13) It can be seen that God's answer is quite different: "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned his back from following Me and has not carried out My commands". (1 Samuel 15:11)

We will have to understand that we are not called to obey a trivial or superficial God - obedience is crucial in ensuring our salvation.

Just as Noah had to build an ark in order to save himself from the flood, so will we have to work to have the image of Christ in us for our salvation. (I feel the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! Galatians 4:19; Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27) In order to be saved, Noah kept all that God had told him. In the same way, in order for Christ to take shape in me, I will have to keep everything that the Lord has commanded me to do. (Obey Him in everything He tells you. Acts 3:22)

We must keep the law of Christ in its entirety, because in it we find the God's thought, namely the image of His character, an image that nowadays is seen by

very few people, but it nonetheless cannot be otherwise seen. (The one who says, “I have come to know Him” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 John 2:4; ... so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4)

Here are some of these commandments that show His way of being: “Whoever wants to sue you for your coat, leave him your shirt as well.” (Matthew 5:40); “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.” (Luke 20:25); “Beware of slandering.” (Matthew 18:10)

The question is: How are we currently keeping these commandments? The way Noah and Abraham did; doing all that God told them to do? Or are we partially keeping them, just like Saul did?

The Lord wants to work with any person that allows himself to be shaped by Him, just as He has worked with Noah/Abraham, in order to bring that person to the stature where he can say that he is worthy of inheriting the Kingdom of God. (I am confident that He who has begun this good work in you will finish it until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6; ...until we all reach... the stature measured by Christ’s fullness. Ephesians 4:13)

For the Spirit to work towards perfecting our character, we will have to live in full obedience/as slaves to the Lord and His laws. (You have become slaves of God, your fruit is sanctification, and the end is eternal life. Romans 6:22)

Only he who will be in this position of full obedience, of unwavering loyalty that characterized Noah and Abraham, (which lies at the opposite pole of Saul’s (dis)“obedience”), will be able to finish building the “ark of salvation”. We are sorely deceiving ourselves if we live our lives in an obedience similar to that of Saul, telling ourselves and others as a justification that we are all weak, and believing that we will be made perfect during the resurrection, on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice.

The blood of Christ has flowed for the forgiveness of sins, but the perfection of our being is done by the Holy Spirit; and this only if we keep the word of the Lord. (We are transformed into His image... by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

Let us ask ourselves: Can Christ take shape in us without full obedience? (My little children... I feel the pains of childbirth until Christ takes shape in you! Galatians 4:19)

The Nature of the Kingdom of God

We can easily see that the secular world has a totally different standard compared to the standard of the Kingdom of God. Ever since we were little children, in order to achieve the goals we had set ourselves, we have used, to a greater or lesser extent, the principle which states that: “the end justifies the means”. As a result, for the man who finds himself in trouble, the thumb rule is to: become angry, lie, appeal to cunningness, act with hidden intentions, flatter, use bribery, copy, demean, steal...

But the things from above, which God has prepared for us to walk in, are totally different from the things of this world; they are things which do not reach the mind of the spiritually dead man. (Things which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor have managed to enter into the human heart, so are the things which God has prepared... 1 Corinthians 2:9; If you have risen with Christ, seek the things from above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:1)

If we are going to walk after these things as for a hidden treasure, only then will we succeed not only in finding them, but enjoying them, now and for eternity. (Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Matthew 6:33; If you seek it like silver and search for it as for a hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God... Proverbs 2:4)

The heavenly things, though so simple, are the complete opposite of the things man seeks; for many of us these things things are complete nonsense. (The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him. 1 Corinthians 2:14)

In the following lines, we will try to detail some of the values that are found within the Kingdom of God and which define its nature. We hope you will allow yourself to be attracted by them!

1. Perfection - It is a Kingdom of Righteousness

One of the upper things/the great values of the Kingdom of God is perfection, also described as holiness, purity, righteousness. (Holiness is the ornament of Your House, Lord, for as long as time stands. Psalm 93:5) Therefore we can speak of a law of faultlessness/perfection that rules within the Kingdom of Heaven. (But based on His promise, we seek new heavens and a new earth, where faultlessness dwells. 2 Peter 3:13)

Those who are hungry and thirsty for the values of righteousness and perfection are received into this Kingdom. (Happy are the hungry and thirsty after righteousness! Matthew 5:6)

Dictionary definition for **faultless**: free from defect, perfect, flawless, without fault, correct, impeccable. We will list some of these values that are found in the Kingdom:

Honesty/Fairness

Within this Kingdom, no one enjoys injustice/bias; its citizens do not deceive or use gifts/bribes, they are not cunning, they do not slander. (Everyone who remains in Him does not sin; anyone who sins... has not known Him. 1 John 3:6)

Those in the Kingdom do not crave or assume for themselves the things of others. They do not use things from work, which do not belong to them. Example: They do not use the company car or other assets for personal use. (Do not yearn for any... thing that belongs to your neighbor. Deuteronomy 5:21) They do not use stolen/pirated softwares on their computers. They do not work illegally, and they declare and pay taxes for all their incomes. (That is also why you pay your taxes, for the authorities... are God's servants. Romans 13:6)

When they have to take an exam, they do not copy/steal what is not theirs. If there are things they had stolen while they were in the darkness, they will stop using them, return them and compensate where possible. (The person is to confess the sin he has committed. He is to pay full compensation, add a fifth of its value to it; and give it to the individual he has wronged. Numbers 5:7)

Verification: Do you have things from work, or from somewhere else that you have assumed for yourself and your personal use? Do you have stolen software on your computer? Do you steal taxes by not declaring your work/incomes?

The citizens do not accept the use of gifts/bribes. The Scriptures tell us that those who practice bribery have a rotten heart. (Bribing corrupts the mind. Ecclesiastes 7:7; They took bribes... and perverted justice. 1 Samuel 8:3; But the one who hates bribes will live. Proverbs 15:27)

Bribing according to the dictionary: persuade (someone) to act in one's favor, illegally or dishonestly, by a gift of money or other inducement, in order to determine someone not to carry out their duties, or to perform their duties more conscientiously.

Perhaps few of us are in a position that gives them the opportunity to receive gifts/bribes, however, most of us are in the position to give. Many, in order to solve their problems, find themselves in the position of appealing to gifts/bribery. We must understand that when we initiate a reward for an already paid for service, either publicly or privately, we give the other person an opportunity to sin, to fall into sin.

To corrupt our hearts, Satan brings many such opportunities in life. (An example being at the hospital, at the doctor.) When we are on the hospital bed and we are in need, if we are going to make the nurse be kinder by putting something in her

pocket, we will be the ones who had tempted her, bringing her the opportunity to sin.

Through our gift we are asking her to take more care of us and she will thus end up neglecting the ones who do not have the means of giving her anything. By receiving these gifts, she will corrupt her heart and wrong the one without means. (You must not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and corrupts the words of the righteous. Exodus 23:8)

Through our gesture, we are the ones who challenged/tempted her to break God's Word, we are the ones who corrupted her heart.

The teachings of the Kingdom warn us in the most serious way, illustrating how dangerous tempting other souls and corrupting their hearts is. (It is impossible not to give others the opportunity for sinning; but woe to him through whom they come! It would be more useful for him to have a millstone tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea. Luke 17:1)

To understand the seriousness of this sin, it is worth noting that the laws of the secular world condemn the one who instigates bribes more strongly than the one receiving them.

The citizens of the Kingdom must always be on the alert so as not to be among those who bring the occasion of sinning, so as not to do the work of the devil. (Judge for yourselves... not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. Romans 14:13)

Those who decide to keep the law of perfection or righteousness will be persecuted. But they will also be rewarded with the peace and rest from above, a peace that certifies their membership in the Kingdom. (Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew 5:10; The work of righteousness shall be peace, the fruit of righteousness: rest and eternal peace. Isaiah 32:17)

A Clean Heart

Those who belong to the upper Kingdom do not contaminate their hearts with filthy things. They do not listen to the advice of the wicked, they do not put anything corrupt before their eyes, they cover their eyes so that they do not see evil, and they close their ears so that they do not hear inappropriate words. (Isaiah 33:15) They do not love the things that nourish and awaken the cravings of the flesh and neither do they use them; some of them consisting of the world's inventions: magazines, books, newspapers, the radio of the world and the world's television/internet. (Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15; Blessed is the man... who does not stand in the path of sinners. Psalms 1:1)

Within the Kingdom/the Church, they make sure that no one spoils their hearts with filthy things and thus contaminate others. (See to it that no one comes short... and there be no worldly person among you. Hebrews 12:15)

For this they will watch over each other so that each of them has a clear heart. If there is a need for someone to use the internet, they will make sure that this is done in a controlled and filtered way, so as not to allow Satan to tempt us and feed our earthly nature or to awaken our desires. (I will not set iniquity before my eyes; I despise the transgression of sinners. Psalm 101:3; Turn away my eyes from seeing vanity. Psalm 119:7; Do not bother about the flesh, so as not to awaken it to your lust. Romans 13:14) They do not go to places like the beaches, by the sea, so as not to feed the flesh and not to defile the heart with the naked, nor to give others the opportunity to sin. (Adorn with proper clothing, modestly and with prudence. 1 Timothy 2:9)

They are very careful not to awaken the lust of the eyes, as it directly affects the body. (The eye is the light of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Luke 11:34; I had made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I have gazed...? Job 31:1)

They keep their hearts pure and clean, as it is the only way they shall see God! (Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God! Matthew 5:8) For these reasons, they have removed everything in their sight which would have otherwise given them the opportunity to fall into sin. (If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. Matthew 18:9)

They avoid and run away from the earthly desires/desires of the flesh which harm the soul. (Beloved ones, I urge you... to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 1 Peter 2:11; For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 1 John 2:16)

Questions for self reflection:

- Am I searching for the peace and purity of this Kingdom just as one would for a very valuable treasure?
- Am I hungry and thirsty for this holiness, to reach purity and be without sin?
- Do I live according to the laws that govern the Kingdom of God?

2. Peace - It is a Kingdom of Peace

Christ's peaceful Kingdom has most often been misunderstood, even by those who call themselves faithful. Very few belong to the group who understand, accept, and live by this heavenly standard. (And they will hammer their swords into farming plows and turn their spears into pruning-hooks; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war. Isaiah 2:4)

The dictionary definition for peace: free from trouble, conflicts, friction; harmony, calmness, understanding. To destroy peace = to reach conflict with somebody else.

Many do not notice that the message of the Kingdom is in fact the message of peace. Few observe that the Lord of peace has come to bring on earth the peace that reigns within the Heavenly Kingdom. (I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other towns also, for I was sent for this purpose. Luke 4:43; The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching the message of peace through Jesus Christ. Acts 10:36; May the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. 2 Thessalonians 3:16).

When Lord Jesus said, "Let God's will be done, as in heaven, so on earth"; He tells us that the peace that is in heaven will also be on earth among those who belong to Him. (Glory to God... and peace on earth among His people. Luke 2:14; Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest places! Luke 19:38)

It is extremely important to understand that the law of peace that rules in the heavenly Kingdom also rules on earth among the people of this Kingdom. All born of God citizens must guard them and therefore must not learn or teach war, but live in perfect peace with one another, be kind, gentle, easy in understanding, blessing one another, not speaking ill of anyone, free from anger, foreign to quarrels, of no hostility, not judging, not opposing their fellows, not harming anyone.

In order not to spoil the peace of their hearts, as well as the peace of the Kingdom, they will not initiate nor enter into any type of conflict. They do not sue others to do justice. (No nation will lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war. Isaiah 2:4)

Conflicting situations can occur when interacting with citizens of the Kingdom of darkness. In order to solve their problems, they will be applying the laws of the upper Kingdom, which will take over the laws of the lower/earthly countries. They will do everything in their power to avoid conflicts so as not to cause trouble/upset. (As long as it will depend on you, live in peace with all men. Romans 12:18) They seek the peace that comes from walking in/after the things from above. (Walking in the things of the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:5)

When they are wronged, in order to keep their peace, which comes from above, they are left with one option: to address their Lord and then to gladly submit to His will. They do not have the police or the courts at their disposal... as the citizens of the other kingdom do. (When he was mocked, he did not mock, and when he was tormented, he did not threaten, but committed himself to Him who judges righteously. 1 Peter 2:23)

This law of peace will bring trouble and suffering for those entering the Kingdom of God. When a conflict will be initiated with them, the world's attitude will only help in further humiliating them; they will be ridiculed and mocked even by those at home. In order not to spoil the peace and rest of their hearts, to which they have been called to, they will proceed to follow the example of their Lord. (For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in His steps. 1 Peter 2:21; Pursue peace with all people, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14)

This peace will guard their hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. They will do nothing which will disturb their hearts or the peace within. (And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7)

The only options they have at hand during times of persecution are either patience or fleeing. (When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. Matthew 10:23)

Peace is a result of the hearts attitude, of living in righteousness, of giving up resistance, anger, and judgment, and this is obtained by keeping the teachings of Christ. (The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:6; Had you known the things that could give you peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Luke 19:42)

In order to reach the peace and resting of the Kingdom of God, we have to apply the teachings of Lord Jesus; some of these being: Judge not so that you will not be judged, do not condemn so that you will not be condemned, if someone asks you to walk a mile, walk two, give to the one that asks you, do not turn your back on the one who wants to borrow from you, if he wants to sue you for your coat, give him also your shirt, if he slaps you on the cheek, return the other one... (The work of righteousness shall be peace, the fruit of righteousness: rest and eternal peace. Isaiah 32:17; I am giving you My peace. I am not giving it the way the world does... John 14:27)

Even if we are innocent, resistance produces conflict/lack of peace and can give the other person the opportunity of becoming disturbed, angry, or in other words, to fall into sin. (Be wise not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way... Romans 14:13; It is impossible not to give others the opportunity for sinning, but woe to him through whom they come! Luke 17:1)

We must be alert to any clashy situations and remain at peace. If we are at peace, we must do everything in our power to keep the other person to be at peace as well. (As long as it will depend on you, live in peace with all men. Romans 12:18; Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be... sons of God! Matthew 5:9)

Lord Jesus, as the representative of the Kingdom of God, was the first to keep this teaching of non-resistance/peacekeeping in the absolute way and taught us to live in the very same manner He did. (If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must... follow Me. Luke 9:23; The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. 1 John 2:6)

We can see this through the story at Capernaum. Although He was not obliged to pay the Temple tax, Jesus did all He could to avoid conflict so as not to allow others to sin. (What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take taxes or tributes? From their sons or from strangers? Peter answered, "From strangers." And Jesus said to him: So the sons are exempt; however, in order not to cause them to sin, go by the sea... Matthew 17:24-27)

When He was captured to be put to death, He did not resist, did not cause any conflict/disorder, He was led like a lamb to the slaughterhouse. (He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. Isaiah 53:7)

The Lord had a heart full of peace, at rest, which was not disturbed at the outbreak of that conflict. The lack of a resiting attitude shows us what the citizens of the Kingdom of Christ should be like. ("Friend, do what you have come for". Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. Matthew 26:50)

At the opposite pole we see the turmoil and anger present in his disciple Peter. He resisted and actively participated in the conflict. The disorder that manifested itself in Peter is specific to the nature of the Kingdom of Darkness. (We were naturally children of anger, just as others were. Ephesians 2:3; "The wicked have no peace", says my God. Isaiah 57:20)

Self-reflection:

If a conflict arises, can you say: "Friend, do what you have come for"? Are you at peace just like Lord Jesus, or rather you find yourself troubled, like Peter? (And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7)

3. Love - It is a Kingdom of Love

One of the fundamental values/things that define the Kingdom of God is love. (God is love. 1 John 4:8; Hereafter, brothers, be perfect and live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11)

Many of us do not understand that without “love” we will not reach the proposed goal of living with God. The Scripture tells us that we will not enter the Kingdom of love if we do not come to know God, who is love, and without obtaining in us this attribute of His. (Anyone that does not love has not come to know God; for God is love. 1 John 4:8) Love is the bond that binds together all the citizens of the Kingdom of God.

To reach this standard, we will have to assimilate the law of love that rules in the territory of the Kingdom. (Love does not seek its own benefit ... 1 Corinthians 13:5) Love is altruistic, it does not seek its benefit, but the benefit of others. The love from above does not randomly come into our hearts, but is brought through the Holy Spirit by keeping the teachings of Christ. (Romans 5:5) Whoever attends this school will ultimately have as a result the love from above. (The goal of the commandment is love. 1 Timothy 1:5)

The distance between the natural, earthly love, and the love from above is as large as the distance between heaven and earth. The love from above is abundant in patience, full of kindness, does not envy, does not brag, does not swell with pride, does not behave indecently, does not seek its own benefit, does not get angry, does not have evil thoughts, does not enjoy injustice, it enjoys the truth, covers everything, believes everything, hopes in everything, suffers everything. Love will never die. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

To learn and experience this perfect love, God puts us in His Family, which is His Church/His Body. (But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 1 Corinthians 12:18)

Herein Lord Jesus is found, taking good care of each of us. (For no one ever hated his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does with His Church, because we are members of His body. Ephesians 5:29)

The church is part of God’s plan for perfecting the saints. It is the place where the love from above is learned and practiced, where babies, children and young people learn from their elders how to wear abundant patience, kindness, walking in holiness, learning to forgive, to love, or in other words, learning how to walk in the things from above/in the things of the Spirit. (...for the perfection of the saints... to the building up of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12)

Here we learn to seek the benefit of others, and not to live for ourselves. (Each one receives the appearance of the Spirit for the benefit of others. 1 Corinthians 12:7; No one lives for himself. Romans 14:7; Let no man seek his own, but every

man another's wealth. 1 Corinthians 10:24)

We learn to be closely connected to one another and to carry out each other's tasks. (The whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. Ephesians 4:16; Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2)

In the Church we are taught to love the ones outside of it as well, even those who are going to hurt us. When we come in contact with those outside the Kingdom of love, we must follow the example of the Lord; let us love our enemies, let us bless those who curse us, let us do good to those who hate us, because we are sons of our Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:44)

To obtain this love, which has not reached the mind of the natural man, it will become possible only by following the school in which the teachings of Christ are taught. Otherwise, no matter how hard we will try to get it, it will not happen. In Him is the recipe of love and whoever respects it shall end up obtaining it. (And love stands in walking according to His commandments). This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning. 2 John 1:6; The goal of the commandment is love. 1 Timothy 1:5)

If we learn to keep the Word of Christ, we will reach the point of being able to love our fellow men. (By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 1 John 5:2; And teach them to keep all that I have commanded you. Matthew 28:20)

Love will be poured into our hearts to the extent to which the urging of the Holy Spirit will make us accept the teachings of Lord Jesus. (The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5)

To better understand this, we will highlight a situation in which we all could find ourselves in. Suppose that in the succession of an inheritance, (which could be a land, a property), a brother of ours demands that we give him a big share of that which belongs to us.

If we belong to the world, in order to refuse him, we will have at our disposal the solutions that the world gives. These may be resistance through the use of words, by force, or through the help of law enforcement, courts...

However, if we are citizens of the Kingdom, our position will have to be different; we will have to face him according to the solutions provided by the laws of the Kingdom. The requirements for those belonging to the upper Kingdom are: to live in peace with all people, to have abounding patience, to be full of kindness, to have love.

As far as we are concerned, the first thing we need to do is not give the other person the chance of falling into sin, to do everything we can not to cause him anger or unrest. For this, we have at our disposal the commandment of peace. (Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be... sons of God! Matthew 5:9; As long as it will depend on you, *live in peace with all men*. Romans 12:18) To remain in the peace of Christ, we must not oppose him who wants to take away our belongings. (Do not resist the one who does you evil. Matthew 5:39; Whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold... Luke 6:29)

Afterwards, we will have to do one more thing, which is complete madness for the natural man. To pour the burning coal over our brother's head, we will have to also give him our "shirt" - not just the thing he initially wanted to take away from us. This teaching which makes us give him even more is not related to human logic, but comes from above. (If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat. Do not allow evil to overcome you, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:20)

If our brother wants to take some of the land which belongs to us, we will have to let him know that we are willing to give him more than he wants to take. (Whoever forces you to go one kilometer, go with him two; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, let him have your shirt as well. Matthew 5:40-41)

This attitude of being ready to give more when taken by force is not of human nature, it does not come from the self, but comes only by keeping the laws of the upper Kingdom. Keeping Christ's commandments gives us the perfect love, which drives away all fear and gives us full confidence in the day of judgment. (Love stands in living according to His commandments. 2 John 1:6; By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have full confidence in the day of judgment. 1 John 4:18)

4. Joy - It is a Kingdom of Joy in The Holy Spirit

When we are admitted to the university we dreamed of attending or when we are employed in a position we longed for, we cannot help ourselves but rejoice.

However, we believe that there can be no greater joy than knowing that you have been admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven, to know that your name is written in Heaven to dwell in eternity with the righteous ones. (Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but be glad that your names are written in heaven. Luke 10:20)

It is a great joy to know that you have been admitted to the school of Christ, that the Lord has chosen you to work together in perfecting you/to make you like Him. (Brothers, count it all joy when you go through various temptations, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4)

For many, being persecuted/mocked is something unbearable, but for those who have chosen the Kingdom it is a great joy, since they know that they have been considered worthy of being processed or transformed in the school of suffering. (So they left the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. Acts 5:41)

Similarly, for the vast majority of people, it is a great misfortune when the things they have long chased after are being taken away from them; this leads many to the brink of depression, but for those who have opted for the Kingdom of God it is a cause for joy when the Lord gives them the opportunity of freeing themselves from earthly possessions. (...you gladly accepted the seizure of your possessions, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. Hebrews 10:34)

Compared to the world, which rejoices after gaining something or after being promoted, those who are in the Kingdom rejoice when they go through troubles, being filled with the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit. (You have received the Word in many troubles, with the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 1:6; I rejoice now in my sufferings. Colossians 1:24)

As we keep the Word of peace and righteousness, so will come the persecution, but also joy! (Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew 5:10; It is a joy for the righteous to do that which is good; but to those that do evil it is something terrible. Proverbs 21:15)

The joy that comes from the Holy Spirit is the thing that we will find in the eternal Kingdom, which will be permanent. (And the ransomed of the Lord will return, and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads, they will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. Isaiah 35:10)

Joy is the result or crown of keeping the Word/commandments of Christ. Joy is the crown of the fruit of the Spirit; the joy that you have gone through the tests in order to reach abounding patience, kindness, gentleness, love. (Let ourselves fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross. Hebrews 12:2)

Giving up the old things

In the world, “someone” has arranged things in such a way that in order to cope in this life, we are tempted to use inappropriate means. Satan comes to us just as he came to Lord Jesus and tempts us with various “advantages” which only aim at wrapping us in his web. (All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me. Matthew 4:9)

He does it in such a way that when we hear the Word of the Kingdom and we want to change the old things with the new ones from above, we end up being entangled so hard in the old ones that we are unable to make the change. (...sin which so easily entangles us. Hebrews 12:1)

To make it through this life and to have an acceptable standard of living, many of us have given into Satan’s offer. He is going to give us the things we desire, which we would otherwise have not been able to access; but he does so under the condition of not telling the truth, using bribery or gifts, appealing to cunningness, theft. We will take a couple of examples that will show us the way in which Satan catches us into his net through the advantages that come as a result of theft and lying. These advantages can range from small ones, to insignificant, and up to very large.

1. An example is undeclared work, which involves working without an employment contract registered at the ministry/state; or having a lower salary on paper and benefiting from the tax-free difference in hand. The advantage obtained by accessing this “black offer” is the gain of a significant amount of extra income. For many who find themselves in this situation, giving up this “old” way of living will be extremely difficult, as their income would be nearly halved and life would have to become much more difficult.

2. To ensure ourselves a better living standard, most of us attend a school that ends with a diploma/qualification that will then be used throughout our lives. We can easily observe that during the exams before graduation, Satan will come up with a tempting offer, into which many of us will give into. He will help us get the diploma by copying/stealing, thus giving up the truth. Later on, he helps us find a good job provided we present, prior to employment, the diploma which we have obtained through theft. However, by presenting this diploma or certificate, which certifies that we have the necessary knowledge to fill the position, we will be living a lie.

By using it and then enjoying the benefits of what we have in fact stolen and lied about, we will entangle and wrap ourselves in a chain of injustice and sin, out of which many shall never be able to come out of. (Every thief, and anyone that swears falsely, shall be utterly destroyed. Zechariah 5:3)

3. Another case in which we are caught in Satan's trap is the offer of earlier retirement (eg. "due to an illness"), through the use of lies. However, the lie is then accompanied by theft/receiving unjust incomes, which also brings with itself permanent spiritual consequences.

4. Another significant financial benefit that Satan offers us is a lower cost for many of the services to which we appeal to. The condition set by him is to agree to work with those who steal taxes/who do not issue receipts for the service they provide. If these services were to be legally taxed, the household expenses of many would increase by 20-30%. To most, such a measure would be very difficult to bear.

To better understand what these services may be, we will be mentioning a few examples: house constructions, house paintings, gardening, repair of the washing machine, repairs for thermal/electrical/sanitary installations, apartment rents, car repairs, activities related to agriculture: plowing, sowing, harvesting... buying and cutting wood, drilling a well... Let us however pay attention to what the Lord says: "He who partners with a thief hates his own life." (Proverbs 29:24)

Not paying taxes attracts the material advantage for everyone, both for the seller and the buyer. If you buy firewood worth 500 euro, but without an invoice, then the 20% VAT tax, which is 100 euro, will remain in your pocket; a significant amount for the lower-income class. Many do not view it as a sin, but imagine if the government went by the same rule; this month they send us 100 euro less from our retirement pension, the next month 105 euro less... We must sadly note that many of those who declare themselves "born again" are caught in this chain of injustice.

Failure to pay taxes shows us that we are not following the things from above/ the righteousness of the Kingdom of God. (Pay your taxes, for the authorities and the rulers are God's servants. Romans 13:6) If we say we are in the light, but not pay taxes/follow this commandment, we lie and do not live the truth... (If the light in you is darkness, how great must that darkness be! Matthew 6:23)

5. Gifting/bribery is another thing that is practiced in many places today, even with garbage collectors. If we give up gifts, it will bring us difficulties of all kinds, the most difficult being in the hospital where neglect and suffering will come. However, if we accept suffering on the hospital bed because we do not give gifts, it will be crowned with the fruit that it produces, respectively abounding patience. (Know that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing... James 1:3)

To live in the Kingdom of righteousness, God asks us to give up the old things that are specific to the course of the world, even if we have to suffer the losses and replace them with the new things of His Kingdom. (He who steals must steal no longer. Ephesians 4:28; and pay taxes. Give to all what is due to them. Romans 13:6)

To be motivated in giving up the old things, we have the promise of eternal life and the values of the Kingdom of righteousness, values that will bring rest and peace to our souls. (The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17)

If we want to be in the Kingdom of God, we will have to give up tax theft, replace the old things with the new ones from the Kingdom, and stop craving what is not ours. (Give therefore Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Matthew 22:21; Do not crave the things of your neighbor. Deuteronomy 5:21)

When we are determined to stop using or crucifying the old things, we will lose the material advantages we once had. Difficulties will arise in our lives, there will be tough situations, but it is worth trying. (In the world you have troubles, but take courage; I have overcome the world. John 16:33) Together with these troubles, Lord Jesus tells us that He will give us His peace. (The work of righteousness shall be peace, the fruit of righteousness: rest and eternal peace. Isaiah 32:17)

For those who understand the values of the upper Kingdom and are determined to give up the old things, they must have faith that God will not leave them alone and that He will fulfill their daily needs. (Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6:33; Be content with what you have, for He Himself said: "I will never leave you". Hebrews 13:5)

Many of those that are called to benefit from the things of the Kingdom of God are not willing to pay the price, which often seems too high. But we must add that such an attitude shall only keep them away from the Kingdom. God warns us that the one that sins does not know God!

If by this point we are not subject to God's command, if we work illegally or drive our vehicles indifferently to traffic laws, if the world's television/internet is our food, if we use bad words... it means that we are still in the fallen state, in which sin is a way of life, we are not yet born of God. (Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Romans 13:1; For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1 John 2:16).

We will have to understand that even if we perform multiple religious rituals: if we go to church, pray, speak in tongues, prophesize, but we do not walk after righteousness, God tells us that He does not know us! (Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Matthew 7:21; Many will say to Me on that day:

“Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” and then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.” Matthew 7:21-23)

If the Holy Spirit has not convinced us about the state of sin, it means that the new birth has not occurred. The first thing the Holy Spirit does to the one who receives the Word of God is to entrust him about his state of sin. This is the beginning. The Spirit cannot dwell in man without having entrusted him about this state. (And when He (the Holy Spirit) comes, He will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness... John 16:8)

The Scripture makes a clear distinction between darkness and light. For the one who walks in the light, sin is no longer a way of life. He is characterized by giving up on the old things and is hungry/thirsty for righteousness and purity. (Whosoever is born of God does not sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 1 John 3:8)

Let us be very careful not to confuse the born from above person who has a fall, with the one who has not yet given up the things of the Kingdom of Darkness. We should not fool ourselves and state that there is no man without sin, and by doing so let ourselves indulge in the things of darkness. (Whoever sins is of the devil. 1 John 3:8)

There is an incomparable difference between someone living in darkness, not fully subject to God's commandments, and someone who is fully subject but falls into a mistake/sin.

In the first case, we can speak of a permanent sin and living in the darkness of the old things, without God, even if that person declares that he has returned to God. (If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we are liars and do not have the truth; 1 John 1:6; Whoever sins is of the devil. 1 John 3:8)

In the second case, we speak of unwanted accidental sin. In this case, by confessing the sin, there is the possibility of cleansing through the Lord's blood. (But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7)

The Scriptures tell us very clearly how we can verify ourselves. If we are a new creature: the old things are gone. (Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away... 2 Corinthians 5:17)

A resisting attitude

Another old thing that is hard for us to give up, which provides us with a way of life which lacks too much trouble, is the attitude of resistance towards the one who wants to hurt us. When someone seeks to take our belongings, to humiliate us, the old “man” will look for various solutions to prevent it from happening. These vary from simple gestures of resistance, to harsher and even harsher attitudes; it could be an outburst of anger, or even calling the police...

Let’s look at an example: If we come home from work during the evening and observe that someone has taken over our personal parking lot, we have at our disposal the option of lifting up his windshield wiper to manifest our dissatisfaction. Perhaps he won’t care and we will have to lift it up once more, then if it persists we will have to leave him a threatening note... or call the... By appealing to worldly/resisting methods for solving the problem, we will certainly have found ourselves a solution, but if we are going to resort to the upper things/non-resistance, all that we will have left is to be humiliated.

We may perhaps agree on some minor aspects (allowing someone to skip the line to get to the doctor) of non-resistance - however, when our financial stability or physical integrity comes at risk, our priorities suddenly change and we can no longer clearly see these values/things of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Nonetheless, if we want to be in God’s presence and to have His peace, we have to accept the price of giving up this old thing which only brings trouble, and replace it with the Lord’s teaching. (But I tell you: do not resist...)

If we won’t understand that we are called to carry out our salvation unto the very end and that we must grow to be just like Lord Jesus, if we won’t understand that the Kingdom of God requires us to live in righteousness, be men of peace, abounding in patience, love... then we will hold on to the old things in order keep ourselves out of trouble. We will end up keeping a little resistance, so that when we are surrounded from all sides, in order to make our lives easier, we will still maintain a few hidden intentions, a half-truth of sorts, some undeclared work, bribery...

However, in order to enter the Kingdom of God, we must sell everything we have in order to give up on all the old things so that we can buy that new treasure/things with which to replace the old ones. (The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matthew 13:45; But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness. Matthew 6:33)

The one who makes the decision for the Kingdom will have to leave himself in the strong hand of God, and God Himself will start working. He will trace our path, which will lead us to peace, abounding patience, love... (This is why He is also able to forever save those who draw near to God, through Him. Hebrews 7:25)

Self-reflection

- Are the old things still a way of life for me?
- Do I love the values of the Kingdom of God, am I thirsty for its purity?
- Have I searched for the things above as for a treasure?

The Things of the Kingdom of God

The Word of the Scripture tells us to seek the upper things of the Kingdom of God, and not the things below, which can be found on earth. (Therefore if you have risen with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is; Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. Colossians 3:1-2)

But to seek these things from above, the main condition will be to know them. We sadly notice that for many, the Kingdom of God and the things within it remain a mystery and they fail in ever getting to know them. (Things which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor have entered into the human heart, so are the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9)

Lord Jesus gives us as an example the city of Jerusalem, which did not know the things He brought - things that could have given it peace. (If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. Luke 19:42) By this statement, Lord Jesus warns us most severely about the fact that many of us will be in the very same situation.

The things of the Kingdom of God are also known in the Scriptures as the upper things/things above, the things of God/the things of the Spirit. These things are an authentic image of the nature of this Kingdom and the heart of God. The things of the Spirit are identical with the things of God; we can see them by looking at the fruit of the Spirit in one's character, which is: abounding patience, kindness, peace, love...

These things above, which God has prepared for all of us to walk in, are complete nonsense to the spiritually dead/worldly man; that is why he will not follow them, since he is unable to understand them. (But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him. 1 Corinthians 2:14; read also Matthew 13:19)

No one will agree on giving up an old thing which works in this life, with a new thing of the Kingdom which he does not understand and that will get him into trouble; he will never give "everything he has" for something that he does not understand the value of.

If we look more closely, we will see that many of those who are convinced they know God and that they are "born again" naturally use opposition/resistance,

(starting verbally with words, and ending even with the justice system), which they use in solving many of their problems in this world; they also do not see the reason for giving it up. However, if we want to be abounding in patience, and to truly know God, we will have to give up any type of resistance. For those who have not yet learned how not to resist the one who harms them, we can tell them from our own experience that this is the only way they will arrive to the blessed situation of experiencing abounding patience, but at the same time be a doormat for many.

Many have heard about the fruit of the Spirit, but few have experienced the pursuit of the things of the Spirit. By only hearing about the things from above, we will not manage to get to know them, we will have to try to get to know them through our own powers. Only by keeping the commandments of Christ and experiencing them can they become known to us. (The goal of the commandment is love. 1 Timothy 1:5; And love is life according to His commandments. 2 John 1:6)

The natural man flees from suffering and from humility... but this is in fact the way of knowing God. Let's put ourselves in the situation of being the employee of a boss who insults us, does not pay us our full salary, forces us to work harder... What would we do? Would we look forward to this opportunity of cultivating abounding patience in us? Or would we be dissatisfied and resist him whenever we would have the opportunity, telling everyone what a difficult situation we are going through? (Consider it all joy, brothers, when you encounter various troubles, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. James 1:2)

If someone offends you and makes you angry, what will you do? Will you take water in your mouth so you won't be able to talk, as some teach us today? Or will you not resist, as the Lord teaches us? This is the only solution to getting to know abounding patience. (When you do what is right and suffer for it and patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 1 Peter 2:20)

If we do not understand the nature of the Kingdom to which we are called to, we will certainly not sell everything we have, neither will we give up the old things which ensure our standard of life. This will only happen if we love the abounding patience that is part of the things above and if we will seek it as a treasure, only then will we get to know it, only then will we come to know the heart of God. (And this is eternal life, that they might get to know the only true God. John 17:3; And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Ephesians 4:24)

If we won't keep the commandment of the Lord, who tells us not to resist those who harm us, we will not end up experiencing abounding patience, much less the peace, the blessing, love... (Do not resist the one that does you evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him as well. Matthew 5:39)

Without abounding patience, you will not be able to bless the one who curses you, you will not be a peacemaker and neither will you be able to feed your enemy. We also won't get to know God, who is full of mercy and compassion, slow to anger, and full of goodness. (Exodus 34:6); "The Lord is abundant in patience." (Psalm 145:8)

If we have not yet sought and walked after these things from above, then we may question whether the Holy Spirit dwells in us, since those who live by the urges of the Spirit walk by the things of the Spirit. (Romans 8:6)

We cannot speak of a new beginning if we have not rejected the old things and do not love the new things of this Kingdom. (If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, for new things have come. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Entering into the Kingdom of God

The Scripture tells us that to have this new beginning, to be picked up from under the governance of the devil, to be washed from sin, and to be redeemed and delivered into His Kingdom, the Son of God had agreed to die on the cross. (... to give His life a ransom for many. Matthew 20:28; We have... through His blood the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:13)

The work of the cross is God's gift for every person that enters into a contract/covenant with the Lord and repents of his evil deeds, renounces his own will, and puts all his faith in Lord Jesus. The bloodshed on the cross gives us the opportunity of being put in a new state, in which He can work with us through the Holy Spirit towards our complete restoration. (...the sanctification of the Spirit. 1 Peter 1:2; Being transformed into the same image through the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

In ancient times, God delivered His people from the harsh enslavement of Egypt and made a covenant/agreement with them by which He promised to take them to the land of Canaan. Today, for those who renounce the sinful past and put their trust in Him, God frees them from the enslavement/bondage of sin through the sacrifice of the cross and concludes with them a covenant (the New Covenant) by which He promises to take them to the eternal Kingdom, but not unconditionally.

In order for me to benefit from the gift of the cross, I too will have to commit, just as the ancestors did at the conclusion of the old covenant. My commitment to this covenant must be the promise and taking on the responsibility of keeping and fulfilling everything that the Lord has commanded. (All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do! Exodus 24:3)

Just as the Jews had the book of the old covenant through Moses, so we have today the book of the New Covenant through Lord Jesus Christ, which is the gospel or the Word of Christ. (I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command Him; it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which He shall speak in My name, I Myself will judge him of it. Deuteronomy 18:18-19; Read also Acts 3:22-23)

God commits Himself to those who enter into the covenant to begin the work of salvation; this is the moment of entering the territory of the Kingdom, of being born again, a birth of which so few people end up having, which will remain a great mystery to most of us. (Many will seek to enter, but will not be able. Luke 13:24)

Born Again

The Scriptures tell us that to see the Kingdom of God and be able to enter it, we have to be born again. (Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. You must be born again! John 3:3,7)

Being born again or receiving the right to enter/becoming a citizen of the Kingdom of God is the greatest event that can take place in a person's life.

Just as every biological birth is based on a seed, so does the Scriptures tell us about being born again; it is based on a seed and that is in fact the "seed of God"! (Whoever is born of God... His seed remains in him. 1 John 3:9) God sows in the heart of man His seed from which a new creature is born, which will have the nature of God/His way of being.

If we are born of God, of His seed, it is extremely important that we know what this seed contains, what is imprinted in its genetic code, to understand what it is that springs new life from it. We know that every biological seed has in its composition, on a microbiological scale, all the basic components of the image of the one from which it spans from. If we go by the same rule, then the seed of God will have in its configuration all the basic components of His image.

The first chapter of the Gospel of John describes God as one and the same with His Word. (In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1) Similarly, Lord Jesus is described as the incarnate Word and one with the Father. (And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us... John 1:14; I and the Father are one. John 10:30)

If God is identified as the Word, as well as His Son, then the seed from which we are born will also have the Word in its configuration. Just as in the biological seed we will not find the eyes, the heart... but only the cells corresponding to them, so in the seed of God will we not find the abounding patience, the kindness... but we will find the embryonic words corresponding to their formation.

If we carefully research the Scriptures, we will quite easily see what these words are: "I will put (my seed) My laws in their hearts, and I will write them in their minds." (Hebrews 10:16); "...the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, which is the image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4) As such is sown in the heart of man the Word of Christ - His laws, which will grow, reaching maturity through the fruit of the Spirit/image of Christ. (read about the image of God on page 6)

For example, in the configuration of the seed we will find the teaching: "Do not resist the one who hurts you", which will grow through the Holy Spirit and develop into the abounding patience, which is part of the Lord's image.

This specific truth is extremely important in understanding how our new birth takes place, namely knowing why we must be born of His Word. His Word/laws will have to take birth in us, to grow, so that in the end we will merge with Him/be one with the incarnate Word. (I pray... that they may all be one. John 17:21) Let us not be mistaken having the conviction that it is sufficient to only believe in the sacrifice of Lord Jesus. Without receiving His Seed/Word that is planted in our hearts, there will be no new man. This type of faith is dead and does not save us!

The inseparable connection between His Word and the new birth is shown to us by Lord Jesus in the parable of the sower, as well as in many other places. In this parable, the Gospel of the Kingdom/Word of Christ is described as the seed of God, which is sown in the heart of man and from which springs new life. (The seed is the Word of God. Luke 8:11; see also Matthew 13:19)

Apostle James resumes and reinforces this teaching of the Lord, which tells us that man has a share in salvation only if he receives the Word planted in him. (Gently receive the Word planted in you, which can save your souls. James 1:21)

Apostle Peter also reminds us of this seed which is the Word/Gospel of Christ. (You have been born again not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable; and this is the word which was preached to you. 1 Peter 1:23,25)

Apostle Paul as well, just like the other two apostles, tells us that the birth from above is through the Word of Christ/Gospel of the Kingdom. (You do not have parents anymore, for in Christ Jesus I gave birth to you through the gospel. 1 Corinthians 4:15)

Just as three main elements naturally participate in the birth of a plant, these being the earth, the seed, and the water, so in the new birth we find three main elements: the human heart, the Word of Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

The human heart resembles the soil. (The seed which fell on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. Luke 8:15)

The Word of Christ/His Teachings is the Seed from which life germinates. Out of this seed sprouts new life and has in its composition the elements from which we will grow to reach the stature of a mature man. (I will put My laws (seed) upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them. Hebrews 10:16)

Careful! Let us not confuse the Word of Christ that is the Seed of which the Scriptures tell us that had to come, with the Law of Moses, which was given due to unlawfulness. (Why the Law then? It was added because of unlawfulness until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made. Galatians 3:19)

The Holy Spirit is the third obligatory element. Just as the biological seed does not germinate if it does not have water, neither does the seed of God germinate without the Holy Spirit. (...by the renewal of the Spirit. Titus 3:5; ...born of the Spirit. John 3:8)

Earth/The human heart

In the parable of the sower there are four kinds of soil:

1. Those who hear the Word of the Kingdom and do not believe it, because they do not understand it. In this case the earth is rock-solid, the heart is hardened. (Matthew 13:19; Luke 8:12)

2. Those who hear the Word of the Kingdom and receive it for some time. (The seed fell on rocky ground. Matthew 13:20)

3. Those who hear the Word of the Kingdom and receive it, but the worries of our days... (The seed that fell among thorns. Matthew 13:22)

4. Those who hear the Word of the Kingdom and receive it in a good heart. The last case shows us a clear, clean soil. (The seed that fell on good ground. Matthew 13:23)

In the first category of people, the heart is hardened and the Seed does not germinate. In the second and third category of people, we find all the elements necessary for germination. The soil, the Seed, and the Holy Spirit are present, which produces the germination of the new life. However, in the second category, the soil does not have enough earth to bring the new life to fruit/maturity; and in the third, the soil is not prepared/cleared. The fourth category is a good heart that receives the sown seed within and then through the renewal and work of the Spirit grows and bears the fruit of the Spirit.

If the Scriptures tell us about many kinds of soils, we must investigate for ourselves to see what kind of soil we are. (Grow a new field, and do not sow among thorns. Jeremiah 4:3)

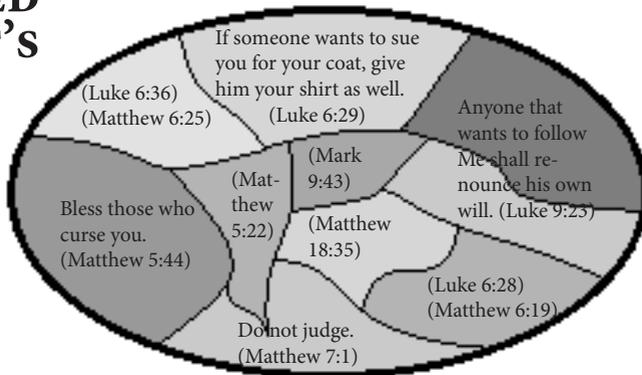
God’s seed and its composition

As we know, the human embryo includes in itself all the cells that will eventually form the future human that will be born out of it: the heart, the eyes, the brain... everything is coded on a microbiological scale and is put together without missing any detail.

We will see that this is also the case with the seed of God. All the primary components of the Image of God are included in this divine seed. (...the new man, made in the image of God. Ephesians 4:24) It has in its composition all the genetic information/Laws of the Kingdom, or in other words, the commandments of Christ. Every teaching of Christ is a primary component of the image of the Lord. (...the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, which is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:3)

God plants in our hearts the Seed “that was to come”/The Word of Christ, or in other words rewrites the genetic configuration of His face. (I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds. Hebrews 10:16)

**THE SEED
CHRIST’S
WORD**



Below are some genetic information/teachings of the Kingdom that are found in the configuration of God’s Seed:

1. Do not resist the one who hurts you. (Matthew 5:39)
2. Anyone that wants to sue you and take your coat... (Matthew 5:40)
3. Do not judge, lest you be judged. (Matthew 7: 1)
4. Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s. (Luke 20:25)
5. Beware that you do not slander. (Matthew 18:10)

The Holy Spirit will germinate this seed that is planted in us; more specifically, it will germinate each teaching and work towards our growth and perfection. Example: The teaching of non-resistance is sown in us and will produce, through the Holy Spirit, its respective fruit: peace, abounding patience, kindness, goodness. (We are transformed in His image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18; The Comforter, the Spirit of truth, will guide you into all truth. John 16:13)

All of the Lord's teachings are essential, they are part of the "raw material" out of which the finished product is made. No teaching can be set aside. Each is a primary cell, like the cells in the human embryo, which by growth will be a part of the image of the Lord; none is placed in the seed without a purpose.

Each teaching contributes to the formation of the image of Christ in us. The Holy Spirit will not leave us alone and will work with us as we grow. Let it be clear - God will not take us into His eternal Kingdom only based on a mental faith in the Lord's sacrifice, as most believe, but we must be born again of His seed and grow to the stature of fullness in Christ, as it's written. (...until we all reach the stature of a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13)

Let us ask ourselves what would happen if we broke the seed into smaller pieces and removed some lessons from it. Could we still speak of the birth of God? Let's imagine what would happen if we fragmented a piece of a biological seed. If we removed the cells that correspond to the liver, heart, or brain, would there still be a birth? Would life germinate out of that seed?

It would be good to understand that if we do not accept the reign of Christ in all things, not receiving all that He has said, the seed will not be whole and will not germinate. (When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. Matthew 13:19)

If we disobey just one commandment, the Spirit will not be able to use that teaching to complete His image in us/the fruit of the Spirit. (The goal of the gospel commandments/teachings is love. 1 Timothy 1:5)

If we do not receive the Lord's teachings regarding resistance, judgment, self-denial, blessing others... the seed will not contain the things necessary information for the germination of the heavenly life. God renews through the Spirit only those who obey Him. (We are witnesses of these things, as is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who listen to Him. Acts 5:32; ...by the renewal of the Spirit. Titus 3:5)

Below are some teachings that are missing from the hearts of many, which are also not accepted by the many who declare and believe that they are “born again.”

1. Give to Caesar what is Caesar's. (Luke 20:25)
2. Do not resist the one who hurts you. (Matthew 5:39)
3. Bless those who curse you. (Luke 6:28)
4. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet. (John 13:14)

Self-reflection: Are these teachings too much for you and is it too much for you to bear them? (Many... after hearing these words, said, “What He's saying is too much to bear. Who can suffer it?” John 6:60)

We must understand that it will not be possible to be born again of God if we disregard the laws of the Kingdom/the Word of Christ that is planted in our hearts. (Receive with kindness the Word planted in you, which can save your souls. James 1:21; ...I will put My laws into their hearts. Hebrews 10:16)

**A seed with
missing
genetical
information,
just pieces
of Christ's
teachings**



No teaching can be set aside. Each has its own purpose, none was given at random. Some are to prepare/cleanse the soil of things such as judging, condemning others, the desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes... and others are to obtain abounding patience, kindness, peace, love...

Only by keeping the commandments of Christ will we be able to strip the old man of his vices and clothe ourselves with the new man, made in the image of God. (Put on the new man, made in the image of God. Ephesians 4:24)

The clothing of the new man must have in its fabric goodness, patience, kindness, love... (*Dress with a heart full of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, abounding patience. But above all, dress with love...* Colossians 3:12, 14) This is *the wedding garment* (the responsibilities of the new man) that I must put on to be like Lord Jesus Christ.

In the following paragraphs, for the purpose of self-study and self-reflection, we shall discuss in more detail the topic of “defamation” and “blessing”. We will take some commandments that will help us eliminate judgment, condemnation, and slander from our lives, as well as some other teachings that shall bring with them into the new life: blessing, kindness, peace...

Denigrating others/Slander is one of the things which is completely forbidden in the Kingdom of God. If we look at the angels who are in God’s presence, they do not dare to break the Kingdom’s law concerning judgment and slander. They do not dare to judge even Satan, even less utter a reproach against him. (Yet Michael the archangel, when fighting with the devil over the body of Moses, did not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” Jude 1:9; Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring no railing accusation against them before the Lord. 2 Peter 2:11).

We can see that it is in our nature to judge one another, to condemn one another, and then to speak negatively of the one we judge. Most people fall into the category of those judged; starting with those in our family to those who govern us.

Many of us justify ourselves with this statement: “But when I speak ill of someone, I am only telling the truth.” However, the Holy Scriptures forbid us to speak ill of anyone. (Remind them not to speak ill of anyone. Titus 3:2)

To observe how much we are affected by slandering, we must examine ourselves in detail. Let us check ourselves for a few days in a row and note in a notebook, at the end of each day, the people we spoke ill of. This experiment will show us where we truly are. If you plan on honestly checking yourself, you will be surprised to see that you have a life predominated by evil thinking and speaking.

We must note that even before we speak ill of someone, we do many things that are otherwise not so noticeable. If we do not pay close attention to them, they will inevitably lead us to defamation.

Before we speak ill of someone, the first thing we do is to judge that person, disregarding the commandment that we should not judge anyone. (Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Luke 6:37) Many times we call on another friend to strengthen our judgment. The second thing that comes after a judgment is condemnation, which comes because we disobey another commandment of the Lord. (Do not condemn, lest you be condemned. Luke 6:37) A third thing is unforgiveness. (Forgive and be forgiven. Luke 6:37; If one has cause to complain to another, forgive one another. Colossians 3:13)

And then, for the sin to be as complete as possible, we disregard the Lord’s command concerning evil speaking. (Beware of slander. Matthew 18:10) If we examine ourselves sincerely, we will find that most of us, as soon as we find an opportunity, will trumpet to others about the ones we have judged and condemned.

We will pass on our bitter envy to others, who in turn will pass it forwards, thus smearing many. However, “He who slanders his neighbor is a fool”. (Proverbs 11:12)

To inherit the Kingdom of God, we will have to give up this grave sin, to clear our soil, to remove it out of our hearts, since we know that slanderers will not inherit the Kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:10)

We still will not succeed if we do not first give up judgment, condemnation, and if we do not learn to forgive those who wrong us. (Bear with one another, forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Colossians 3:13)

For the one who wants to live in the Kingdom of God, another essential thing he must do is to break off all friendships with those who practice defamation, even if they are brothers or sisters in the congregation. (Have no connection with anyone who, though calls himself a “brother,” is... a slanderer. 1 Corinthians 5:11, 13) We must do this because this sin contaminates like a plague. (Evil deeds spoil good habits. 1 Corinthians 15:33; Get out of their midst, and be separate from them, said the Lord; do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. 2 Corinthians 6:17)

Blessing is one of the upper things prepared by God for us to walk in. (If you have risen with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is; set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. Colossians 3:1)

Blessing is the opposite of slandering. Blessing excludes slander and vice versa, we will not be able to keep both. (Out of the same mouth comes both blessing and cursing! My brethren, it cannot be so! Does fresh water and bitter water spring from the same source? James 3:10)

In order to bless, we must clean the earth free of the sin of speaking evil; let us not sow blessing among the thorns of slander. (Grow a new field, and do not sow among thorns! Jeremiah 4:3) We will need to be guided by the Holy Spirit and keep the Lord’s commandments regarding blessing. Here are some of them:

1. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matthew 5:43) Bless those who persecute you. (Romans 12:14)

2. Bless, for you have been called to this. (1 Peter 3:9)

3. Do not resist the one who harms you. Anyone that wants to sue you for your coat... (Matthew 5: 39-41) Forgive and you shall be forgiven. (Luke 6:37)

We will be able to bless only as long as we stop slandering. We will have to let go of anger, judgment, stop condemning, stop opposing the one who hurts us, be willing to allow the one who takes things through force, forgive him, and if he is hungry, feed even our enemy...

The attitude of blessing even the one who persecutes you is not in the nature of the natural man, it does not come through the self, but only by keeping the Word

of Christ.

This type of attitude towards those who hurt us is strictly related to that love which has not yet reached the human mind. The old “man” will never do such a thing, for it is complete madness and nonsense unto him.

If we examine ourselves sincerely, many of us will find that they have not learned to speak well and that they have (perhaps) never blessed the one who hurt them. They will find that they have not kept the commandments concerning evil speaking, nor the commandment of blessing. (Love your enemies, bless those who curse you. Matthew 5:43-44)

Check yourself: Do you bless or slander? Do not deceive yourself in believing that you will be able to bless while still being angry, judging, condemning... These will only cause you unrest, along with evil speech/slander, not blessing. (James 3:16)

Ask the most serious question: Is the seed that was sown in your heart the seed of God? Have you received the Lord’s commandments/laws regarding defamation/ blessing? If you have received them, are you guarding them? Did they bear fruit? Check yourself thoroughly for a week or two and you will see where you are.

Examine yourself carefully: When you speak evil, are you scolded by the Holy Spirit? Analyze yourself if you live the new life that you have been called to, because many of us are called to bless, but so few do it. (Bless; for this were you called, so that you may inherit a blessing. 1 Peter 3:9)

If you speak ill of the government, those in politics, the people in the public health system, the neighbors... and those who hurt you in one way or another, it means that things have not occurred yet, it means that the new life has not begun! (If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they have become new; and all these things are of God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

We must understand that for the man who is born from above, of God, defamation or any other sin are just accidents, not a way of life! (Whoever is born of God does not sin. 1 John 3:9)

Lord Jesus tells us that only if we hate the old “man”, if we abandon the old things, only then will we be able to start a new life in the Kingdom of God, and this will be a life of discipleship/enslavement unto Him. (If anyone comes to Me and does not hate... even his very life, he cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:26)

The Lord will enter with us into the New Covenant only when we give up our own will and accept Him as our Master, obeying His teachings. From this moment begins the new life, a life of apprenticeship. We become His disciples from the day we accept Him in all things as Teacher and Lord.

This is the moment when God begins His work of perfection and will complete it only if we remain faithful to it. (I am confident that He who has begun this good work in you will finish it. Philippians 1:6)

To be a disciple of Christ means to be enrolled in His school, to learn from

Him the new things from above and to assimilate them, since they are strictly necessary for our life in the Kingdom. We become His disciples from the very first day of school, from the first day of the new life.

In the school of Christ, we are God's slaves, we are subject to Him in all things, in order to reach our sanctification. (You have become slaves of God, your fruit is sanctification, and the end is eternal life. Romans 6:22) Being born again is the beginning of the disciple's life, and the result of God's discipleship and work by the Spirit is man in the image and the likeness of God.

Questions for self-reflection

– Ask yourself: am I born again? Do I meet the conditions for being born again? Have I given up the things of this world? Have I entered into a covenant with the Lord? Are there still the pleasures of the world in my life: the world's television, going by the seaside...? (Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him: for the things of the world are not of the Father, but are of the world. John 2:15-16)

– Question yourself: am I subject to God's appointed authorities, do I avoid paying taxes, is it defamation or blessing that I practice?

– Have I sought the Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and love as a hidden treasure? Did I arrive at the Door of the Kingdom, hear the teachings of Christ, and did I accept/receive them?

– Did I receive the entire Word that was sown in me, or just fragments?

– If I have entered into the New Covenant, did I tell Him that I would listen and do everything He said? Did I promised to keep all the laws he has planted in my heart? Are these the laws of righteousness, peace, and love? (Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant; I will put my laws in their minds ... Hebrews 8:8-10)

– Have I renounced my own will, emptied myself, letting the Word planted in my heart work? (Luke 9:23) Or was it sown among thorns? (Jeremiah 4:3)

– Is He the Lord of my life or am I just at the point of calling Him *Lord, Lord*, without doing everything He says?

– Is there any teaching of the Lord that I do not keep? (check with: Matthew 12:36; Matthew 18:9, 10; Titus 3:2; Matthew 5:38-48; Luke 9:23; Luke 14:26)

– Is there a commandment that I don't agree with? (check with John 13: 13-17; Mark 10:11-12; Matthew 19:9; Matthew 22:21)

– Do I meet the criteria of becoming a disciple of the Lord? (And whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:26-27)

We ask you, as you are standing, alone with yourself, to check what situation you are in at the moment. Your eternity depends on this!

It is good to examine ourselves in the light of the Word and to ask ourselves what type of covenant/birth we had. What are the results? Is the image of God in us? Do we consciously work to become more and more like the Lord? Can the fruits of the Spirit's work be seen? Are we persecuted/troubled because of righteousness?

Do not be mistaken in believing that if you practice the teachings of the group you have joined, you will as such satisfy God. He will only sit at the table with those who will be just like Him.

If you have not yet sought righteousness as a treasure, **start now**. Then let God lead your steps in a clean assembly of people so that you can grow healthily towards perfection! (Flee the youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22)

By the same author:

CHURCH - THE BODY OF CHRIST

THE WEDDING GARMENT

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The Scripture tells us that God had a plan in which He created beings that would have His features/His image and likeness. (God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him. **Genesis 1:27**)

Man was created by God to live in His Kingdom, but he got deceived by Satan and died spiritually as a result of his disobedience, thus losing his likeness to God. (And you were dead in the sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world. **Ephesians 2:1**)

But God foresaw this fall even before He founded the world. Thus God provided in this plan of His not only the restoration, but also the perfection of His creation. (In Him, God chose us before the foundation of the world to be holy and faultless. **Ephesians 1:4**)