

Chapter 3

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The Realm of the Kingdom of Heaven

When you look at a map of the world you find parcels of land with names such as Canada, United States, Russia, China, England, Africa, etc. These are the names of geographical territories. Here in El Paso we live only a few miles from the Mexican border and sometimes I drive down there to take friends who want to experience Mexico, or to shop or get dental work done. When I cross the border I am driving on soil that is called Mexico. When I return and cross the border again, I am back in a country called the United States of America. These are the names of these land masses. But when you listen to the news and hear that the United States has sold a million bushels of wheat to Russia, that Japan has sold a million automobiles to America, that Russia and the United States are working on an arms limitation deal, that Europe is sending peace-keeping forces to Bosnia — what are we hearing? The news-caster isn't talking about land, the soil that bears those names. He is talking about the people who live in these various lands. It is the citizens of Russia, Japan, the United States and Europe that he is speaking of. Not the places, but the people. The people that live in the places. The people are identified by the realm or territory where they live. In just the same way, when the scripture refers to "heaven" and "earth," it is not referring to places as such, but the beings who inhabit them. When the scriptures say, "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad," what is going to rejoice? Is it stars, suns, planets, and moons; is it hills, rocks, trees, valleys, and rivers? Of course not. It is the inhabitants of those realms who are to rejoice and be glad.

In the opening chapters of the Bible the Garden of Eden reveals the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. It is not the Kingdom IN Heaven — it is the Kingdom OF Heaven, the Kingdom that originates in and out of a heavenly realm. Our prayer is that the Kingdom will come, so that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. God is now creating a new reality on earth, a people that is heavenly but that walks on earth. They bring heaven down within themselves to earth. They have no desire to leave earth to "go" to heaven. They are not looking for either a rapture or death. They are the city that comes down from God out of heaven. "Behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

This new reality is formed in the elect of God in this hour and shall spread over all creation. God is creating something new. A new history is beginning. A new world is coming to earth. The earth shall be filled with the glory of God. God is raising up the life of Christ in a people and through the sons of God He is putting a seed into the earth. We are now the light of men and the light of the world. We are now the salt of the earth. We are the new seed for the new age. God's purpose in raising up Christ in us is that through us the generations of mankind may be lifted out of the curse of sin and death, toward the revelation of eternal life and glory. Why else did Jesus heal the sick and raise the dead? Why did He exalt the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed? Why did He touch,

with miracle power, the hopeless and possessed? Surely not in order to tell them that they would be blessed after death in some far-off heaven somewhere! He brought the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom of God to men great and small right here on the earth because the Kingdom of God was at hand! He brought heaven to earth. That is the homeland we seek. There is no other to be sought, for the tabernacle of God is with men. Strange, is it not, how all the churches on earth teach just the opposite! They teach that the tabernacle of man is with God — in heaven. But the goal of all God's redemptive effort is that finally He will be a God whom men will see on earth, a God who will make earth to be one with heaven, where Jesus is Lord over all men and they, in Him, will live in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some years ago Gene Edwards ministered a word of revelation of powerful import. I have shared this once before, but feel to share it again because of its special relevance to this subject of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In the following paragraphs I will unfold as faithfully as I can the concepts he set forth. In that wonderful day when the Lord God planted a Garden in Eden for the man in His image, God stood in the boundary between heaven and earth and did an incredible thing. He stretched forth His hands of omnipotence and took this terrestrial ball in one hand as with the other He grasped the heavenly realm. He moved the two toward one another. He brought the spiritual realm, the timeless realm, the dimensionless realm toward planet earth and moved earth toward the heavenly realm. The two moved closer and closer until they kissed each other. The two realms touched — entering into union with one another. The realm where heaven and earth met together and overlapped He called Eden. The place where these two realms met, overlapped, and interfaced became unlike earth and unlike heaven, that which had never existed before — not heavenly and not earthly — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The only thing it can be likened to is the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was visible, but utterly spiritual. He brought His physical body out of the tomb and appeared in a body possessing an earthly form and appearance, but it was a glorious metamorphosed body limited neither by time, space, or natural law. Here in this realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle all that is visible becomes spiritual, and all that is spiritual becomes visible. Everything on this earth which is seized upon by the spiritual is transformed by the spiritual, and there is created here the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When you take the heavenly and the pristine earthly and join them together, what is formed by that blessed union is far more beautiful and glorious than either.

Man, formed of the dust of the ground, lay just outside this realm of the interface. God came to man there — just beyond the shining Eden, just outside the glorious spiritual-physical realm. God came to man in the lowlands of the earth realm. He breathed into the man, so magnificently formed of the earth, He breathed into him the spiritual realm, the life-giving winds of heaven, the breath of divinity. Out from the mouth of the almighty Creator came a brilliant, dazzling, sparkling effervescence like living stars that surged with divine power into the nostrils of Adam and flowed through his body and soul, permeating every cell of his being. That wind, that spirit, that breath, that celestial air, that divine and heavenly life animated the clay model, creating within a dimensionless quality, condition, and state of being.

All the animal kingdom and each of the myriad life forms on earth has a “breath of life” — the air of earth's dense atmosphere. Man is the only being into whose nostrils GOD BREATHED THE BREATH OF LIFE. Man's “breath of life” is not air — it is the Spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding — intelligence and wisdom! Only the light that God IS was more glorious than this

exquisite creature — man in God’s image! And the magnificent wonder is that this man could see right into the heavenly, spiritual world. The animals can’t peer into that realm, the birds are unable to communicate with that realm, the fish have no knowledge of that realm — no creature on earth can see beyond this gross material realm except the man in God’s image. There is no “god” in any other creature that can awaken them to spiritual, heavenly realities. Please mark this! Here is a physical, visible creature who can see the unseen. He is not frightened by it, nor is he intimidated by any thing or any creature he beholds in that glorious realm. He is at home with who he is and who they are. He looks around and all things are open to him. He sees all, perceives all, understands all. The face of God bent down and looked into the face of man, and man looked up into the face of God, and they looked like each other! They looked like Father and son. They bore an incredible, remarkable resemblance. God stretched forth His hand, Adam stretched forth his hand, and stood up from the dust and faced his Creator. He belonged to this planet, but the winds of heaven were within him. He belonged to the heavens as well as the earth. He is the only creature that has ever been, is now, or ever shall be, that BELONGS TO BOTH REALMS!

Consider with me, my beloved, What is the natural habitat of man? He is spirit — his natural habitat is the heavens! He is dust — his natural habitat is the earth! Both? No! Neither? Yes! Neither. And yet, in some strange, mystical way — both. This glorious creature God created — where is his “home”? Ah — God prepared the place for man as soon as He created man. He created a place that corresponds to man’s true state for man to inhabit. The earth, contrary to all that you may have been taught, is not the natural habitat of man. And neither are the heavens the natural habitat of man! The Garden — and only the Garden — and no place but the Garden is your natural habitat. That’s where you belong — that is your true world, your homeland, your motherland — that unique realm where heaven and earth meet and mingle, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! The Garden was not heaven, neither was it earth. It was a realm where God could walk, and where man could walk and talk with God. It was the dimension of the spiritual body — spirit and body, heaven and earth, visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial, blended into one. The greatest of the glories of heaven was in that Garden — the tree of life was there. And that was man’s habitat. It was not merely where man was — it was what he was.

This great truth of man’s STATE OF BEING constituting the Garden of God is one of the tremendous themes which courses its way like a mighty river through the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. In the book of Revelation the Garden of Eden finally becomes the wonderful City of God — which City we are (Rev. 21:9-11; Isa. 60:2,14). “And I saw the New Jerusalem...having the glory of God: and her light was like a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded their fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 21:10-11; 22:1-5).

How do you suppose the tree of life was transferred from the Garden of God to the City of God? The simple truth is — it wasn’t! The Garden still exists. The Garden is in the City. The Garden IS the

City. In this City two realms interface once more — the new heavens and the new earth — not two separate entities, but that place where heaven and earth are joined, the Land of the Interface! This is where righteousness dwells — the new mind and the new body. That is your world, my beloved. You and I belong to an interface. We are an interface. We are part heavenly and part earthly; part spiritual and part physical; part visible and part invisible. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place of union with God in the interface where heaven and earth overlap. We are a colony from the heavenlies inhabiting the earthlies. We belong to neither and we belong to both. We are of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are in the Lord Jesus Christ, the HEAVENLY MAN. He, more than any other man, is an interface of these two realms. He is the second man, the last Adam. He embodies and reveals within Himself the true purpose of God in man.

Only in Christ can one understand the true nature of all things. He is of both these realms and He is in both of these realms. He is in both and He is in neither. It is a great and deep and glorious mystery. Oh, the wonder of it! He is a MAN seated in the higher than all heavens! We who have been born of water and of the spirit are of His species. We are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, mind of His mind, spirit of His spirit, life of His life. We belong to His realm. We walk with Him today in the Garden of God, in the City of God, in the LAND OF THE INTERFACE, for it is the only place where we can comfortably move in both realms. And yet it is not both realms — nor is it either realm — it is a combination, the union of the two, an entirely NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS! That's what you are! You are spirit and you are body. You are God and you are man. You are divine and you are human. That is our destiny — to be both in union in one! That is our habitat. And redemption progressively brings us into our inheritance in this blessed Land of the Interface. The salvation of the soul, the redemption of the body, will complete the work. Let us press on, saints of God! The full splendor and bountifulness of this precious Land lies just before us! As the crab lives in two elements — water and land — so the New Creation Man lives in two elements: the earth and also the heavens!

The Connecting Link

God has a great purpose in creation. He made the heavens and the earth. He made the world for Himself as a field wherein to unveil Himself and make visible what He is, in all the perfection, wisdom and truth of His Being. Creation has an origin and a purpose, and this origin and purpose were determined by the wisdom and pleasure of the omnipotent Creator. The world around us has a meaning. It is not a world such as materialistic science supposes, which came from nowhere in particular, has no particular aim and nobody knows where it is going, nor what the end shall be. Against that we set this divine declaration, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Creation came from God, it goes back to God. He reigns over it, and it will fulfill His purpose which is altogether and absolutely a glorious purpose. It will bring to God a revenue of praise and glory and adoration as no other device could do. Therefore it has a meaning. It is the field of the development and display of God's wisdom, power and glory, a means by which He makes Himself known and understood, a means by which too, not only is God known, but a supreme joy and eternal blessedness will be achieved. This is the secret without which creation cannot be understood.

God's purpose in man transcends by far the beauty and glory of creation. The unfolding pattern of God in creating man has never changed. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so God created man in His own image..." In this text the fall is shown not to be man's normal state. Man today, like Adam, may be far from God, yet in his heart, as in the scriptures, a witness will be heard, saying that this distance is through self-will. He may live in sin and sorrow; but deep in his conscience he knows that such a life is in opposition to the will and purpose of his Creator. Therefore the man in God's image is shown before the fall — to confirm the voice that speaks to every human heart, and declare that though all men walk as Adam, sin and death are not a part of God's eternal order, but a mere temporary arrangement in the working out of God's great plan. Man's proper place is seen IN CHRIST, the last Adam, prefigured by the first Adam before he fell. Adam, in the image and glory of God, ruling all the works of God's hands, is the type of man in Christ, as God ordains him.

A king in Europe, a kindly monarch, went to visit a school. Children were being taught concerning the various kingdoms into which nature and man were divided. The king wished to ask the children some questions. A sweet little girl stood forth, and the king said, "Now, my dear, tell me what these are," holding objects in his hand. She said, "A flower, a bird, a beast." "Tell me to what kingdom the flower belongs." "To the vegetable kingdom, sire," said the child. "Tell me," said the monarch, "to what kingdom do these animals belong?" holding up various animals. "To the animal kingdom, sire." "Tell me, my dear," said the king, "to what kingdom do I belong?" Now, I think if she had said he belonged, for the most part, to the animal kingdom, she would not have been far wrong; but the little one had great reverence for her king, although he had so often failed to recognize the Kingdom to which he belonged. The little, blushing maid did not like to say that he belonged to the vegetable or the animal kingdom, but "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise." The little one, with her eyes full of tears, for she had heard the tittering of the laughter

which was running through the school at her embarrassment, looked up into the face of the king. "Now, tell me, dear," he said, "to what kingdom do I belong?" "You belong to the Kingdom of God, sire." And the king bowed his head, for the arrow had gone to his heart. He said, "My dear, pray that I shall be worthy of that Kingdom, the Kingdom of God."

The answer of the child is the answer which I give you. Do you desire to teach the child that which will enable it to triumph over the lusts and passions of a mere animal nature? Train the child from the beginning to know that he or she belongs to the Kingdom of God. Teach them that they are the Offspring of the Father of spirits, and that first and greatest of all is the spiritual nature which they have, and not the physical or psychical nature. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Teach them that sex, station, and race are nothing in that Kingdom of God. Teach them that "there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all ONE MAN IN CHRIST JESUS." Teach them to seek for that New Creation which God's Spirit alone can impart, that they may be worthy of that Kingdom, and that they may have the Love which rules in that Kingdom from its divine center to its utmost circumference, and which crushes lust and sin and death beneath its feet.

By such stature, nobility and rulership committed to Adam we get some idea of what sort of beings we are. One might be so impressed with the majesty of the silent, speechless mountain that lifts its white peak high above the clouds as to worship in silence at its altar — so suggestive is it of the Infinite. But what is a mountain, or a star for that matter, or billions of galaxies of stars and suns and planets and moons as compared with a man? They think not, they speak not, neither do they feel or hope or love or plan or build or have a duty or a destiny. Man is God's image and likeness! It is interesting to note that the almighty Creator fashioned and formed everything of nature throughout all the unbounded heavens and unto the depths of the earth and then, after completing and ordaining all, He gave us the true estimate of man's greatness and purpose when He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness: and let them have dominion." Man is therefore not only the most important creature on the earth, but the most important creature anywhere in the universe. Can we not see by this that Adam stood in the midst of the vast creation as the REVELATION OF GOD to it all.

In the image of God and with dominion over all the works of God's hands man was the connecting link between the invisible God and the visible creation. Both heavenly and earthly, spiritual and natural, visible and invisible, dwelling in the Land of the Interface between the two worlds, Adam was the expression, representation and revelation of the invisible God to the visible creation. He was God's priest and God's king. As a kingly priest, with one hand he reached forth, taking hold of God with his spiritual nature, while with the other hand he reached out, taking hold of creation in his earthly form; and under his glorious dominion he brought the two together in himself into union. What a priesthood! What a kingship!

Adam was God's special gift to the entire creation, from the highest heaven to the lowest hell. He came not from the brute ancestry, nor from the muck of some primordial sea, nor from the mire of the jungle, but from the hand and spirit and breath of the divine Creator. Time will not allow us to dwell on the glories of man in God's image, but Adam was perfect, pure, and powerful. He was without spot or stain, taint or tarnish, pure in character, perfect in holiness, powerful in personality. He was the embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge. He was able to do on the morn of creation

what no sage, scientist, or naturalist could do today. He found himself surrounded from the beginning with vast kingdoms of living things — fish, birds, animals. These were brought to him and at the command of God he gave them names. In the typology of scripture a name denotes a nature. Make no mistake about it, my friend, Adam did something greater far than merely classifying all the creatures which God had created in the world. When he “named” these creatures the wonderful truth is that he “natured” them — that is, he spoke creatively into them the nature that his mind of wisdom and knowledge conceived. Sovereignty and authority rested like a crown of glory upon the head of Adam the magnificent. He was made the Lord over all the creation of God to rule and reign as the visible expression of the invisible Creator. In him God was to be seen and known and touched by every thing everywhere.

We are never told how long Adam lived in that wonderful Garden where the glory of God was revealed through him in dominion and blessing to creation, but that glorious reign of wonder and peace under the direction of a son in the image and likeness of God was but a dim figure of the day when a whole company of sons in God’s image would reign in splendor over all things in all realms throughout all worlds and all things in heaven and in earth would be gathered together into union with God in His life and purpose. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the first and Head of this glorious company, and as typified and shadowed by the first man Adam, He is the connecting link between God and creation — in spirit from God, in body from creation — the revelation of the invisible Father to the visible worlds. From the Land of the Interface He is the Word made flesh, dwelling amongst us, full of grace and truth.

The Kingdom of Heaven opens to us all the power, resources, and abilities of the heavens and puts at our disposal everything God has and is. BUT THERE MUST BE A MEANS OF EXPRESSION. There must be a means by which God can translate heavenly things into a language that the world can understand. The Spirit of God may be everywhere and moving everywhere but human, natural eyes cannot see the things of the Spirit. There is no way they can “tune in” to that world. But the world can see the moving of the Spirit IN US! The world sees a moving of the Spirit in men living upon this earth and the body of Christ is used to express, manifest, reveal and interpret God to the world.

God is now perfecting His sons in wisdom, holiness, knowledge, grace and power and God will set this Man before His creation and say, “Here is my image and my likeness. In this one is my dominion and my authority.” It will be as though God is saying to His creation that it is not necessary for them to see the Creator, for they will see this Man He has made. Was it not this very truth that Jesus spoke to His disciples one day and said, “Have I been so long time with you and you do not know me? He that has seen me has seen the Father.” So it will be with all the holy sons of God.

The word “Christ” simply means ANOINTED. When the Spirit of God came into the world and descended upon Jesus, He then became JESUS, THE CHRIST. He was a human, God man. He was a God, human man. He was the forerunner of the ultimate man that God is bringing into the universe as the revelation of Himself. This highest and ultimate of God’s creation will reign throughout the ages first from pole to pole, then from world to world, and finally from galaxy to galaxy, throughout all the unbounded heavens. There is one thing the Holy Spirit would impress deeply upon our hearts today — if we are not walking in the place that God has for us, then GOD IS BEING

SEPARATED FROM HIS CREATION. He is not then glorified as He should be before all worlds and all heavens, for God is to be GLORIFIED IN US. Not apart from us, but IN US. Oh, the mystery of it! It will be God's glorious New Creation filling all the earth and sky with the manifestation of Himself — the great Man that God brings forth. God and man, ONE CREATURE, to be praised and honored and glorified through all ages and unto the ages of the ages.

The Kingdom Family of God

The Bible is a book of faith and hope. It looks, not backward or downward, but forward and upward. Its face is ever set toward the Dawn. It always points us toward the best that is yet to come — the completion, maturity, fullness, consummation. In its first pages we read of the heaven blest Eden; of a time when mankind was free from pain, sorrow and evil, because man was free from sin. While man walked in his primitive state of innocence his home was a Garden — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He reigned splendidly over all realms from the lowest to the highest, symbolized in the dominion given him over the lowest realm of the fish of the sea, the higher realm of the beasts of the earth, and the highest realm of all, the birds of the heavens. These are but word-pictures of a dominion more powerful and extensive than mortal minds can comprehend. God was his familiar Friend and intimate Father. But we read on a page or two and a change comes over the order of things. Eden, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, disappears, becoming but a history recorded, a faint memory beyond the pall that hangs dreadfully over the mind of man. Joy, peace, glory, power, holiness and life vanish, and leave in their wake sorrow, discord, weakness, shame and death. When man sinned pain, limitation, frustration and death entered the world, man's heavens grew black with clouds; God no longer communed with him in the spirit of the Day, and he was driven out of the Garden, at the gates of which the cherubim were posted with swords of flame that pointed every way, as if to say, "No return, no return."

Then Jesus came! The message He gave was the Kingdom of God. It was the center and circumference of all He taught and did. After four tragic millenniums the gates of Eden suddenly swung open and the Kingdom of Heaven was seen again on earth. A man in God's image and likeness stepped forth out of that long-closed Land of the Interface and the glory and power and nature of God was seen upon Him. He came with a gospel — the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. He lived and moved in the realm of sonship full and complete. He lived and moved in the realm of the Kingdom which He came to proclaim and which for three years or more He demonstrated before men. He began His public ministry with preaching the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news." On His first circuit through Galilee, He taught in their synagogues, and preached the good news of the Kingdom, Himself saying, "I must preach the good tidings of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent." On His second circuit through Galilee, He went about through cities and villages, preaching, healing, and bringing the good tidings of the Kingdom of God. On His third circuit through Galilee, He went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, healing the sick, casting out devils, raising the dead, and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. When He was near Bethsaida, and saw the great multitudes who were as sheep having no shepherd, He had compassion on them, and ministered to their needs, and spake to them of the Kingdom of God. Even when He presented Himself alive following His crucifixion, by many proofs, He appeared to His apostles during forty days, speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Creation once more beheld God in the form of man.

Eden is God's picture of His plan for man. Eden is the proto-type of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This Kingdom plan was fully represented in the Garden of Eden. All four necessary elements of the Kingdom of God were there in Eden. Eden was the land, Adam and Eve were the people, the Lord was the King, and the Lord's command about the eating of the trees of the Garden was the law. God's own ideal for man was not a kingdom as we conceive of it, but a family. All the world was to be a Garden of Eden. God and man were to live together in sweetest, most intimate fellowship. The family is God's ideal for us. Israel was a family — the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were the tribal families of Israel. The family became a kingdom, but it was a family-kingdom. Joseph was given the birthright, Judah was given the scepter, unto Levi was committed the priesthood, and each tribe had its part.

Adam was the son of God, and Eve was his daughter-wife, with their home in a Garden, and God Himself a Father-Mother in the midst. Its atmosphere was love; its music the rhythm of their wills with His. Sweeter music never filled human ear. When the work of redemption is fully accomplished, and every bit of darkness and discord destroyed, we know again the glories of Eden — the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Then the ideal of the Father's heart is realized. The Garden becomes a City, but it is a Garden-City, all the sweet simplicity of the nature-life of the Garden, and all the authority and glory of the City, are joined in that wondrous Garden-City and City-Garden. God's elect are now citizens in that glorious City. We are a family of sons gathered into Christ Jesus. We see His face in the spirit, His likeness is upon our countenances, for His name is written in our foreheads. Our light is the glory of His presence, His life-giving Spirit the water that flows through our street and waters our tree. Our atmosphere is love; and the music of wills made one in Him pervades our land.

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth is the eternal union of heaven and earth. The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place in heaven or upon the earth. It is the blending, merging, intersecting of heaven and earth. The spiritual realm provides the government, the righteousness, the wisdom and knowledge, the peace and joy, the love, the wonder, the eternal significance, and the glory of the Kingdom. The people and things of earth are the outward forms and visible expression of the inward reality of the Kingdom.

The Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven

It will help us in our understanding of what it means to live in the Kingdom of Heaven, to look at the order of life in the realm of nature. I am indebted to Henry Drummond's wonderful out-of-print book NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD for a number of the thoughts shared in the following paragraphs.

Every day in the year more than 300,000 babies are born in the world. All have tiny faces and usually the same number of ears, fingers, arms, legs and toes. All are little humans, quite alike in size, and with the same needs for food, love, protection and learning. Each also has his or her own special features. Each is like every other baby and unlike any other baby born on that day, or on any other day in history. Now, if these same 300,000 people were to meet on their twenty-fifth birthday, their specialness would be even more obvious than at birth. Some would be very tall, some very short, and the rest would be somewhere in between. They would vary from very fat to very thin. Skin colors would be yellow, brown, white, reddish, black, and all kinds in between. Equally different would be the many types of personalities, mental abilities, talents, and ways of living in these 300,000 people. All were born on the same day and at the time were similar in many ways. All breathed alike, ate alike, and cried alike. But within twenty-five years, each had grown up into an individual who is like other human beings, but who is also very different from other humans. Some would like Mexican food, others American food, and others Chinese food. Some would speak English, others French, and others Russian. Some would worship God, some would be atheists, and others would revere ancestral spirits. They would dress differently, think and act differently.

There are two strong forces in nature which influence human life and determine what a person will be. These two forces are HEREDITY and ENVIRONMENT. Neither one alone is sufficient to mold a full and useful human life. Heredity is a word used to mean the way in which certain characteristics are passed from parents to children, generation after generation. Because of heredity, each baby is born with human characteristics that make him distinctly human. Environment is a word used to stand for all the conditions and influences from without which become a part of a person's life and affect his development. Included in a person's Heredity is the color of his or her skin, hair, and eyes, physical stature, facial characteristics, temperament, and many other physiological and biological features. Included in a person's Environment are the food he eats, the liquids he drinks, the air he breathes, the place he lives, the home he is brought up in, the values he is taught, the diseases he may have, and the ideas, people, and education he is exposed to. Thus it can be seen that Environment is altogether as important a factor in what a person will be as is Heredity. Perhaps even more so!

It needs to be very clear in our minds that the nature of man is received through Heredity, but the sustenance, development, and conditioning of that nature depends entirely upon the Environment.

For instance, a child may be born with an aptitude for music. Because of his Environment that talent may lie undeveloped, or he may become a rock star or a violinist in a symphony orchestra. Environment makes all the difference! The first and primary purpose of our Environment is to sustain life. The Environment is that in which we live, and move, and have our being. Without it we would neither live, nor move, nor have any being. Within every living organism is contained the principle and the power of life; but in the Environment is the power to sustain and develop that life, the conditions of life. Every living thing normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, water and food. When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and when we further bear in mind that the food supply is contributed by the Environment, we shall realize at once the importance of the meaning and the truth that without Environment there can be no life!

Almost three-quarters of the human body is water. Other important substances in the body are calcium, phosphorus, and carbon. These substances are called “elements” — they are among the hundred basic substances of which every thing in the visible universe is made! Your physical body is composed of some of the same elements as is the world around you, and only by being in harmony with that world, only by intermingling what it is with what you are do you have life. For example, through the secret pores of your skin two pounds of water are evaporated daily from every healthy adult. The water has to be replaced. And from where does it come? From the Environment! Meanwhile you are breathing, taking in air you can use and sending out air you cannot use. From the air you breathe in, your lungs take oxygen. You must have it to live. Matters not how much life you have in you, or if royal blood is flowing through your veins, you must assimilate your Environment to live! Heredity is not enough. The Environment is really AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. We and it must be one. We and it are one. Life depends upon that UNION — the Organism united with its Environment. An Organism in itself is but a part; its Environment is its complement. Alone, cut off from its Environment, it is not. Alone, cut off from my Environment, I am not. Without food, I am not. Without air, I am not. Without water, I am not. Without love and protection and communication, I am not. I continue as I receive. My Environment may change me, but first it has to sustain me. Its secret transforming power is directly molding body and mind and is sustaining the very life itself.

This is a great truth in the physical world. It is but a wonderful picture of the greater realities in the SPIRITUAL WORLD! This is a truth of so great importance in the spiritual world that we shall not mis-spend our time in pursuing it. In the spiritual world he will be among the enlightened and wise who understands this one great truth: Without Environment there can be no life! I speak of course of the Spiritual Environment of the Spiritual Realm of the Kingdom of Heaven. What does this amount to in the Spiritual World of God and His sons? Is it not simply the grand and glorious truth spoken by the first-born of the New Creation when He said: “Without ME ye can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). Through the mighty work of regeneration we have been birthed into the realm of the Kingdom of Heaven as SPIRITUAL ORGANISMS, spirit beings, begotten of God, the off-spring of our heavenly Father. There has been awakened within us a new principle and power of life — God’s very own divine life, the life of heaven.

But let every man consider this that I now propose: even in this, our New Creation Life, we require a SECOND FACTOR, a something in which to live and move and have our being — an ENVIRONMENT! The Kingdom of Heaven has an Environment. The Spiritual World has an

Environment. The whole universe is a type and shadow of this glorious truth. Every star has its gravity. Every planet has its Environment. Every living organism has its Environment. Without the Environment of the Spiritual World we cannot live divinely as sons of God or move or have any spiritual being. Without the Spiritual Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven the life of sonship within us is like the body without air, the fish without water, the eagle without its nest.

The great Pattern Son, Jesus, walked in the full and enlightened consciousness of the inter-relationship between Organism and Environment. He did not live independent of that Spiritual Environment which surrounds and envelops the sons of God. Jesus declared, "Believe me that I AM IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME" (Jn. 14:11). It was not only the Father IN THE SON (heredity), it was also the Son IN THE FATHER (environment). The Father was the center and circumference of Jesus' life. That blessed Christ also prayed for the younger sons who were to afterward follow in His steps, saying, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me (heredity), and I IN THEE (environment), that they also may be one IN US (environment)" (Jn. 17:11,21). Christ knew that as a son He was the Organism and His Father was the Environment. The Father was that IN WHICH THE SON LIVED AND MOVED AND HAD HIS BEING. Although He was the Son of the Father, He could in no way live independent from the Father. And what is the Environment of the sons of God today? It is God in Christ. God in Christ, and we in Him, is our Environment in which we live and move and have our being!

Multiplied thousands of God's precious saints have been lifted into new and wonderful realms of understanding and experience as the great truth of "Christ in you" has exploded within their quickened hearts. But I declare to you today that altogether as magnificent is the marvelous fact of OUR BEING IN CHRIST. To know "Christ in you" is to know the reality of your inward spiritual life, but to discover yourself as being "in Christ" is to apprehend the fact of Christ as your Environment, your sphere of existence, the realm of your new life and being. This Environment is a world that surrounds you and also separates you from whatever is outside of it. This Environment is so strong that it not only sustains but it also protects whatever is within it from all that is without, even as our atmosphere on earth protects us from the deadly rays in space. And again, it supplies, to whomsoever is within it, whatever it contains, as our atmosphere supplies all that is needed for our physical life. The Father of glory is most truly AN UNAPPROPRIATED PART OF OURSELVES. He is Himself the Environment of the Spiritual World of His sons. We live by the Father! By translation into the Kingdom of the Son we have been raised up into a new and altogether different Environment in the heavenlies, of which Jesus spoke when He said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. ABIDE IN MY LOVE, EVEN AS I ABIDE IN MY FATHER'S LOVE" (Jn. 15:9-10). In the light of Christ's union with the Father, our union with Him becomes clear. His life in the Father is the law of our life in Him.

Our present thought is a very simple one. We seek to show the boundless range and omnipotent power of the atmosphere of this wonderful Kingdom of Heaven. God's Spirit is bringing a truth of highest importance before us, compelling us to give heed that the spirit of revelation may unfold its marvels to our believing hearts. There is a deep design. Paul wrote that if any man be in Christ he is a NEW CREATION. Not only is he himself new, but he now lives in a new world, on a new "planet," as it were, in an entirely new order of things. The things, the Environment of the old creation have passed away and ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. Every created thing has its

Environment. Every created organism, on earth or in any other world, has to live and move and have its being in its particular Environment. The eagle is not afraid that when he flies in the sky he will have too little wind currents. Imagine a fish crying, "Cast me not into the water, lest I drown!" Imagine a sunflower refusing to turn toward the sun lest it get a sun-burn. The Environment of the New Creation is the Father in the Son. Ah, precious child of God, you can no more live and grow up into the image and likeness of God apart from daily and constant and intimate and vital union with the Father than a fish can live without water. Jesus forcefully expressed it thus: "Abide IN ME...he that ABIDETH IN ME ...the same bringeth forth much fruit. If ye ABIDE IN ME...ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn. 15:4-7). The Organisms is composed of the very same elements as its Environment, but it cannot live in separation from its Environment! The two must be one. The one must live by the other. We have been made partakers of the divine nature, but that fact will never bring us to mature sonship. We must live by the Father, in blessed fellowship, participation, and union with Him!

The most common error in the lives of many of the Lord's people is the attempt to live without assimilating Christ as their Environment, failing to make Him the absolute center of their existence, the sphere of their life. Friends, family, job, amusement, home, hobbies, worldly pursuits — all too often these are the Environment by which we live. No words could be more solemn or arresting than the statement of Jesus, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, DWELLETH IN ME...as the Father hath sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (Jn. 6:56-57). As the natural man must have sustenance from his Environment, so the spiritual man. The spiritual man must come to know how to live by his Environment.

After he has gotten life you must give him food. Now, what food shall you give him? Shall you feed him with knowledge, or with beauty, or with prosperity, or with blessings, or with religious exercises, or with creeds, or with commandments, or with gifts, or with power, or with programs, or with experiences? No; there is a rarer luxury than all these — so rare, in fact, that few have ever more than tasted it; so rich, that they who have will never live on any other fare again. It is this: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4). Nothing can satisfy the son's appetite but this — he hungers for the bread that cometh down from heaven. Nothing else will fill him. Nothing else will satisfy him. Everyone knows the world is hungry. But the hungry world is starving. It has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment in them. They are but sugar-water. It has pleasures, and amusements, and excitement, and works; but there is no food there for the immortal craving of the spirit. It has worldly society, and worldly books, and worldly events, and worldly knowledge, and worldly lusts. But these things merely intoxicate.

The church world is hungry, too. Starving, in fact. Oh, it has many meats and many drinks, but there is no nourishment for the spirit in them. It has impressive rituals, and stirring programs, and moving ceremonies, and splendid ordinances, and pomp, and show, and candles, and incense, and temples, and cathedrals, and priests, and preachers, and creeds, and organization, and abundance of activity. Its people get all involved "in the work," and committed "to the work," and "giving to the work." They do and do but in all this something other than CHRIST has become the central factor. The center becomes the movement, or the message, or the organization, or the program, or the ministry, or the experience, or the method, or the personality or some other thing. But I declare to you that all these religious things and activities merely intoxicate and millions of Christians are

drunk with them and in their inebriated hilarity think they know the living Christ.

There is no SUBSTANCE in them! The divine ingredients of the celestial atmosphere of the Kingdom of Heaven are missing. Sons of God cannot live in that Environment. So our spirit turns its eye from them all with unutterable loathing. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No possibility of starving or suffering malnutrition on this fare. It is eternal food for the sons of God to live upon. And notice — sons live on every word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. That is how the Greek expresses it. Is it not dreadfully true that the vast majority of Christians are living on words that have proceeded out of the mouth of God? They live on a by-gone revelation, a word spoken to another people at another time, a historical creed, that which God spoke through St. Augustine, or through Luther, or through Calvin, or through Spurgeon, or through Whitfield, or through Finney, or through the Pentecostal pioneers, or through the Latter Rain prophets! It is stale bread, spoiled meat, stagnant water and a dead word. It is a word that God spoke, but not the word that the Spirit is speaking. It is a word that in some ancient day proceeded out of the mouth of God, but not the word that is proceeding out of the mouth of God. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying unto the churches." It is yesterday's manna, and it has bred worms and stinks. It is truth, but not present truth. But the living bread of the living Christ in His living revelation to His elect sons in this day is meat that the world knows not of, meat that endures unto eternal life. In spring-time it is not sown, and in summer drought it cannot fail. In harvest it is not reaped, yet the storehouse is ever full. Oh, what possibilities of life it opens up!

How graphically Douglas Wilson illustrates our relationship with this Environment of the Kingdom of Heaven in one of his booklets. He wrote, "Can we imagine such a thing as this? A child is born into the world that has no hearing, no sight, no sense of smell, or taste, or feeling, and it cannot speak. Many children are born with one or more of these disabilities and there is a possibility that children could be born without any of these five senses, or the ability to speak. It is of such a one we are now thinking. It cannot see, or hear, or feel, or smell, or taste or speak.

"IS THERE ANY POSSIBLE HUMAN WAY TO REACH SUCH A CHILD LIVING IN SUCH A BODY? It is living in a world filled with normal human beings. It has the same life in it that is in the others. But it cannot communicate with those beings in any way. It cannot see what is around it, neither hear. It has no sense of feeling, and therefore would not know when it was touched. It has no sense of smell, nor of taste, and has no communication with the outside world or appreciation of anything in it. This child would have no means of learning from that world around it. It would only know that by some means unknown to itself it is surviving in its own little world. It has no conception of what mankind is. There is no way by which it can express itself to the surrounding world. What a horrible condition! But please know this. There are literally multitudes of God's people who occupy that very condition spiritually.

"It is these five senses and our ability to speak that give meaning and value to our existence in this world. It is possible to get along without one or two, perhaps three of these senses, but such a person is terribly handicapped. But to have none of the senses nor the ability to speak, would put such a person into complete isolation. There is no known means by which such a person could be communicated with. It would be a world alone.

“Let us suppose that the child grows, reaching at least a partial maturity. Then one day, by a miracle, it receives sight. We have no way of knowing what the emotions in such a person would be, upon its reception of sight. Suddenly out of a world of darkness, the sight would reveal the beings and all the proportions of the world about it. A WHOLE NEW WORLD WOULD SUDDENLY COME INTO EXISTENCE FOR THAT PERSON. Such a world would never have been dreamed of. There had been no means of even suspecting such a world. It would be confusing, bewildering, frightening. The mind of such a person would have had no way of conceiving anything that the eyes now see. YET THIS WORLD HAD BEEN THERE DURING THE WHOLE LIFE OF THAT INDIVIDUAL. This person had been right in the middle of it all the time. It was not a new world, but new to this person. And yet, the child would still have little conception of this new world. He would have no idea of what would be safe or dangerous in this world. He would have no knowledge of beauty or ugliness. He would have no sense of value of good or bad, or the meaning of the things he sees. Such a person would not understand the difference between a tree or a man. He would not know that an animal is an animal or that a bird is a bird. All of this would have been around the person all the time, but he had not known it.

“Again, this person goes on for weeks or months, and then another miracle is performed and its ears are opened. ANOTHER WORLD IS SUDDENLY OPENED TO THIS ONE BY THE OPENING OF THE EARS. A vast, expansive new world comes to this one in the world of sound. He would hear people talking and wonder what those sounds were. He hears music, and the chirping of birds, and marvels at what he hears. He has no ability yet to evaluate the sounds, so there must be a learning process by which they can all be sorted and arranged and catalogued as to what they are, pleasant or unpleasant. He had no means of even dreaming of such a thing as sound, having been locked up in his own world apart from it all. He has possessed no means of contacting those around him. And the people about him, though filled with compassion and a desire to help this creature, could not in any way ‘get through’ to him” — end quote.

Believe me, precious friend of mine, THERE IS A WORLD AROUND US THAT THE NATURAL MAN HAS NEVER SEEN. It is there now, and has always been. Little by little God is opening our spiritual eyes and we are beholding with wonder things that we have not suspected or even dreamed of as being about us. With our physical senses we have absolutely no comprehension of that world, because there has been no way for it to communicate with us. But the Spirit of God is opening the vision of His elect in this hour to see things that eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. There is a realm, a dimension of reality, a sphere of existence, a world, a universe, a Kingdom that God has prepared for His sons, and He is revealing it to us by His Spirit.

Strange and wonderful emotions stir within us as we begin to discern the value of the things we see by the eye of revelation. We are testing them and trying them to grasp their certainty and their purpose and intent. We are daily exploring this wonderful world of the Kingdom of Heaven that is opening before us. We know that it is the land our heavenly Father has prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. There is no way for this higher world that is around us to reach us until God opens a channel. Mighty angels and glorious creatures in heavenly realms may be possessed of a burning desire to make us understand about this new world, but they cannot do so. Never until God Himself quickens and transforms us by His Spirit is this new world opened to us. Carnal-minded men think of heaven in terms of golden streets, harps, gold slippers, white robes, palm

branches, trumpets, and so forth. But heaven is a busy world in which mighty things are accomplished. Heaven is an active, aggressive realm and it is all around us and within us. Some of us know by the moving of the Spirit that this spiritual world is in existence here and now, and it is our Fatherland. Jesus came and demonstrated heaven, but the people could not see it. Before their very eyes Jesus demonstrated the power and the glory and the life of that bright world about us, yet most were blind to it.

One morning the servant of Elisha awoke and stepped outside the house where they were visiting. He looked about and saw that he and his master were surrounded by a great and terrible army and he cried to Elisha to ask what they should do. He was frightened beyond belief because in his limited ability he could see no way out. But can we not hear Elisha saying, "Don't be fearful, we have more with us than they have with them." Consider the astonishment upon the countenance of this servant and hear him say, "I wonder what is the matter with you, Elisha. I went out and scanned the mountains, I saw all the host of the enemy there. I don't see anyone here with us." So Elisha prayed the Lord to open the eyes of the young man, and God did so. What a sight he saw! ALL THE TIME HE HAD BEEN IN THE VERY MIDST OF GOD'S ARMIES OF HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE AND DIDN'T KNOW IT. He had been surrounded by the very power of God and the world of God, but he possessed not one faculty that could reveal it to him. He was just as certain as the Russian Cosmonauts that there was nothing there. He could not see, taste, feel, smell, or hear what was all around him. There had been no connection between himself and this other world until God opened the eyes of his spirit and revealed it to him.

Men who witnessed the demonstration of the first telephone made by Alexander Graham Bell, refused to believe that there could be any such thing as a telephone or a voice coming through a wire. THERE IS A WORLD ABOUT US and we try to tell people about it but they inform us that they have seen all there is to see and heard all there is to hear, because they have the Word of God. But the Kingdom of Heaven is not a book, the Kingdom of Heaven is not a place, neither is the Kingdom of Heaven an age. The Word was not made a book, the Word was not made a place, the Word was not made an age — the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And now that same Word is made flesh in us, in all who are the sons of God. This is the power and glory of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! Hallelujah!