

# The Radical Kingdom - Part 2

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz explores the biblical mandate of dominion and the church's role in establishing God's kingdom through authority, prayer, and societal engagement.*

**Duration:** 1:11:53

**Scripture:** Leviticus 26:46, Daniel 7:13-27, Matthew 5:13-14, Revelation 2:28

**Topics:** "Kingdom Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Joshua and the city of Jericho. Joshua initially feels overwhelmed by the monumental task of conquering Jericho and doubts whether his people can handle it. However, in his moment of despair, he encounters the captain of the Lord's host, who has cosmic purposes beyond Joshua. The key to the subsequent taking of the land is Joshua's immediate and explicit obedience, as he humbly falls down before the captain of the Lord's host. The preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing our weakness and submitting to God's authority in order to fulfill the prophetic world that God intends for the church. The sermon also highlights the significance of being together in Christ, not just physically, but in a quality of integration and relationship that the world does not understand. By functioning together in spiritual authority, righteousness can reign and impact various aspects of society. The preacher emphasizes that this will not be achieved through human tactics or cleverness, but through the unfolding of God's strategy and the foolishness of God. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the need for believers to die to themselves and live unto God in order to carry out His purposes.

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## Transcript

I want to say something this morning about rule. And indeed the word rule has its appearance early in scripture, even in the dominion mandate that I referred to previously in Genesis 1. Verse 26 of that first chapter we read, Then God said, Let us make men in our image according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. And God created men in his own image, and in the image of God he created him male and female.

He created them and God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over everything that moves on the earth. The difference between dominion and domination is that dominion is intended for

those who are made in his image and who are conscious of their creator and of the mandate that is given and bring his law and his rule into the earth in the spirit of the king himself. Man honors God by fulfilling this dominion mandate and this honors him by refusing it.

I wrote a quote here into my Bible, the idea that men are responsible as faithful servants to bring the whole world under the rule of God's law is repulsive to the vast majority of his professing Christians. And yet from the very first, God brings to us the concept of rule, of dominion and of mandate. Another writer says that sin is the attempt of self-proclaiming autonomous men to exercise humanistic dominion apart from God or God's law order.

No longer exercising a power under God or to his glory but a perverse desire to be as God. That's domination as distinguished from dominion. The two things that go together is he made man in his image and man who is conscious of that creation and the responsibility that is implied in it is called to rule over the earth that God has made.

There are a number of scriptures that speak of rule and I just want to cite a few without the time to make any kind of comment about them. Remember in 1 Corinthians 6 Paul talks to those who are ready to bring a matter of the body to the secular courts. In verse 2 of chapter 6 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? The word judge and rule is virtually synonymous and the judges in the ancient Hebrew economy were rulers.

Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world and if this world shall be judged by you are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know you not that we shall judge angels?

How much more things that pertain to this life. 1 Corinthians 15 verse 24 Then comes the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death for he hath put all things under his feet but when he sayeth all things are put under him it is manifest that he is accepted which did put all things under him and when all things shall be subdued unto him the same word as in the dominion passage then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him that God may be all in all he must reign until needs to be seen in connection with 1 Corinthians 9 7 of the increase of his government and

peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever so from the advent of the Son something has been brought into being that has no end and is continually being increased until all authority and rule shall be under his feet and I leave it to you to understand what the word feet represents in terms of the symbolism of the body of Christ that the authority that is coming under the rule of the Son till all kingdoms shall come under his rule and shall be given to the Father comes first under the feet which is to say the body that is a continuous and a progressive activity that it began with the advent of the Messiah for of the increase of his government and his peace there shall

be no end from henceforth even forever these scriptures speak to me of a continuum, an unbroken rule and reign of the mandate of dominion through the church that is continuous until the appearing of the Lord when he shall himself complete it in his coming Revelation 2.26 and he that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end to him will I give power over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers even as I receive of my Father and I will give him the morning star and he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches in the book of

Daniel in the 7th chapter the vision that came to Daniel that was so great that when he proclaimed it to Nebuchadnezzar an earthly, secular, and Babylonian king the

king came down on his face before the splendor of the vision that was given to this Hebrew saint in chapter 7, verse 13 I saw in the night visions and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him and there was given him dominion and glory and the kingdom it was given him implies that something was in formation before his coming the church has in modern times I think had a rather different concept that the king when he comes brings the kingdom we have no obligation toward it it comes in one fell swoop automatically with his coming but what seems to be implied here in the other scriptures that I've read is that something is coming progressively under the feet of him which is his body that brings

increasingly all rule and authority unto him that when he comes he doesn't come simply to bring the kingdom he comes to complete it and to occupy that which was prepared for him that the kingdom is an ongoing activity in which we need to be engaged now there was given him dominion and glory and the kingdom Paul says in Thessalonians that we should walk worthy of the manner to which we were called unto the kingdom and the glory that all people, nations and languages should serve him his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away in his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed verse 18 but the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever even for ever and ever verse 22 until the ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints

of the most high and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom verse 27 and the kingdom and dominion these are synonyms and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him hitherto is the end of the matter these are just some scriptures that pertain and periodically express themselves through both Old and New Testament scriptures to suggest the rule and reign of God through saints in the earth and I think that our whole concept of reigning and of government needs to be understood in the kingdom way because that word like every word has suffered atrociously in our generation when we think today of government and administration we think

of paper shufflers we think of bureaucrats we think of men occupying office it's a kind of a drudge a wearisome and a monotonous activity but we have not understood that rule and reign in God is a far different thing from the way that it has been secularly handled the office of government is an educational office it has to do with raising the whole quality of life it is inspirational it's not just merely administrative it teaches men how to live it brings the moral dimension of God into the practical realities of the life and the conduct of men and that's why I said yesterday that righteousness and truth have no point of entry into the earth except through the church as the channel of the holiness of God except that the church provide the contrast there's no way for the world even to see

the issues of truth and that's why we're told let your light so shine that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven and though our father and our king is in heaven the works that we do by the enablement of his life glorifies him for it reveals his light his righteousness and his truth another statement only a biblical people know the effect upon society and nature itself by the repentance, prayer and obedience of God's people and this concept is wholly alien and lost to modern and materialistic men only the people of God know the efficacy of repentance and prayer as it affects practical things in the life of men therefore the scriptures address to us when my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face suggest a kind of

prayer that is more than just polite or religious it's a humbling prayer a prayer accompanied by fasting by the stretching of ourselves out before God when my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face I will hear from heaven and forgive them first their iniquity and heal their land only we know that we know those verses and we know the God who gave those verses and we know the God who will honor that kind of prayer we know that wholesome living and authentic faith has redeeming effect upon man's environment all you need to do is travel a bit in the world as is my privilege and come out at certain airports or certain countries or certain capitals or cross certain borders and the atmosphere distinctly changes in one fell swoop you can feel the actual

oppression in the air you can feel the unrighteousness and the holiness unholiness and the perversity which prevails in certain lands that know not God and do not have a vital presence in their nation as the church praying and bringing the radiance and the presence and the peace of God into their countries we're spoiled because we enjoy that here far more than we know but we ourselves have not sufficiently recognized that the righteousness of the saints their conduct before God the presence that they constitute in the earth and in nations has a redeeming effect even upon their own society just as a local illustration when we came to Cass Lake and in the early years there was as I mentioned yesterday racial tension between the Indians and the white kids in the school there was a pot

continually on the stove seething, threatening to boil over some of our own kids who then were in their early high school years elected to conduct a daily prayer meeting at the Cass Lake High School they began in the room I think the room was taken from them and they went down to the boiler room if I'm not mistaken but from the day of that prayer the atmosphere of the school changed and there has never been from that day to this a racial eruption it's a little minute or minuscule illustration of the efficacy of prayer and the presence of God's people in affecting the secular situation in which men live their lives when I went to Kenya in my first trip to Africa about a year ago it was only a few weeks after a coup a military attempt to take rule had taken place it was a one day coup it

was violent and it was bloody there were a number of rapes and pillaging and lootings and the body of Christ in Kenya was stung because they had looked upon their nation as being the most politically stable of all of the African nations there had never been an incident of that kind previously as has been the history of almost every African nation in the continual upset of rule and coups and takeovers of power by force from that day to this the saints elected to have a daily noon prayer meeting in Nairobi and from that day to this a political peace has prevailed in that nation we need to have our eyes opened to the realities that come by our prayer in concert as it affects the conduct of nations and the atmosphere in which people have their life and their being wholesome living and

authentic faith have a redeeming effect upon man's environment whereas wickedness and unbelief have an opposite and ill effect upon it man's cumulative sins trigger earth's convulsions and if we don't recognize that earthquakes, social upheavals violent revolutions nature itself groaning and vomiting up the things that are unholy and unrighteous we do not see as God himself sees we ourselves have allowed our minds to be conditioned by Time Magazine and Newsweek and we see and we interpret national and international events in the same secular way as the world itself does and do not see the hand of God as judgment in the earth when I spoke in Japan and this was without premeditation before a conference of ministers I said to them that the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was not the

result of some arbitrary and capricious decision of American political and military officers it was a judgment of God upon a nation that has historically rejected God and the truth of God a nation that is eclectic which

is to say that draws from many different religions to fashion for itself an expedient kind of religion that serves the purposes of the state and has no desire to know God in truth it's no accident that the word sin is not even to be found in the Japanese language and that I said that the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the cities that were engulfed in flames were a preliminary judgment and a mercy of God because God's judgments are not punitive they are redemptive to save that nation from an eternal fire that will not be quenched I can't begin now just in the mere

rehearsing of this to describe to you the enormous unction that was upon those words when I spoke them to an unsuspecting Japanese audience of ministers but one minister and you know the Japanese propensity for saving face leaped up out of his seat the tears were streaming down his face and he cried out God he said make me a prophet unto my own nation when the fact of the matter is that the church itself ought to be that prophetic presence in the nation to interpret for the nations the meaning not only of their histories but of their present circumstances why their presidents are assassinated why their societies come to a boil why there's racial turbulence why there's calamities of nature and freakish storms and other kinds of devastations we need to see as God sees and we need to

interpret the meaning of the events of our society to the nations itself that they might repent and acknowledge God who is already judging them the reason that we have failed to exercise this prophetic office as the church is that we do not ourselves recognize God as judge even in our own lives personally therefore we suffer our accidents and our broken legs and our various other kinds of things and dismiss them as happenstance because we do not see by the spirit because we are not in the environment and apostolic atmosphere in which God intends for us to live our lives and because we've allowed the secular world so much to shape and to mold our thoughts man's cumulative sins trigger earth's convulsions especially in those lands that have the knowledge of the righteousness of God and

refuse to walk in it the world's present turmoil is an indictment against a self-indulgent and prayerless church and if righteousness is to reign it can happen now if God's people will function in the dimension of spiritual life and authority available to them only together in Christ you guys taking notes? these are remarkable statements and they need to be pondered again and again I want to repeat this last one if righteousness is to reign if we are to fulfill the dominion mandate if we are to rule and reign if we are to bring all things under the authority of Christ and under his feet if righteousness is to reign it can happen now if God's people will function in the dimension of spiritual life and authority available to them only together in Christ those last words are the key together

in Christ I'm going to have something to say about that in just a moment and we said something about it already earlier today this is more than just being alongside each other in pews this is together in a quality of integration and relationship of which the world knows nothing it's being together in truth and in love and if we will function together in that spiritual authority that comes to us only corporately together in Christ righteousness can reign now it can affect our high schools it can affect the atmosphere of our communities it can affect the decisions of our governments it can affect the quality of relationships between nations it can affect race relations that will either come to a boil and bring another kind of holocaust or a remarkable peace and reconciliation we need to

come alive to the enormous task that is before us as the church functioning in spiritual authority and power together in Christ the kingdom of God is not waiting for the extermination of all evil to begin it is the very functioning of the kingdom which uproots the evil of the increase of his government and of his peace there shall be no end henceforth even forever the church is the necessary point of reference and standard in the

earth only the church has a prophetic history only the church knows the theocracy of God only the church knows the consequence for Israel in disobedience and apostasy only the church knows that man is culpable and responsible and is in danger of imminent judgment only we know because we have such a history only we know because we know what God has done with

regard to Israel when they have refused to walk in his statutes and in his ordinances and in his law but we're not living as if we know and we're not communicating that knowledge to the secular and the unbelieving around us and it says of the history of Israel which is written in the blood and the sweat and tears of that people that these things are written for our admission upon whom the ends of the age have come we need to have a totally different view of the scripture another attitude toward the quote Old Testament has something more than just some quaint reference to ancient history that has no valid application today we need to see the unbroken continuum of God's ages old intent through men in the earth from the beginning our covenant mandate is to the world you are the light of the

world you are the soul of the earth and now I come to the substance of this morning's talk what is the basis for our rule? by what authority do we rule? how is kingdom rule established? there's a ruling concept thy kingdom come in earth as in heaven there's a ruling motive the glory of God and his kingdom there's a ruling mandate in dominion and let them rule there's a ruling opposition the principalities and powers and the rulers of darkness there's a ruling authority and a power all authority is given unto me in heaven and earth go ye therefore behold I have given you jurisdiction over all the power of the enemy and you shall receive power when the Holy Ghost comes upon you what I want to speak about now is what is the position by which we move in the authority and the power of God

there can never be power except that we are in the right position in God God will only put his power in those who are in the authoritative position that is the position that is incorporated into his death, burial, resurrection, ascension and reign in their present experience what I'm doing now is raising the cross and I want to speak about the centrality of the cross in terms of the kingdom the cross has established for us a position and the only place that God will honor us with his power and authority is in that position with regard to the cross to reject the cross by a bland dismissal or only to acknowledge it theoretically but not actually is to lose the only place available to us by which the power of God and the authority of God can be expressed as rule and reign in the earth the

jurisdiction of Christ through his cross has to function through the members of his body in concert this is not just an individual matter see this whole individualistic thing which is so in keeping with the spirit of the world has blinded us to the genius of the corporateness of God I think a good figure for this is Israel passing through the Jordan together as a people to enter the land, to possess the land on the wilderness side they were yet a mob but when they came up through the Jordan and on to the other side they became a disciplined army prepared for the taking of the land they went as it were through a corporate death together entirely as a people Jordan means descent into death and they came up on the kingdom side prepared for the taking of the land in the authority that is not

given to a rabble or to a mob but to an army that acts in concert and in union under authority without whimpering, without complaining, without murmuring without the expressing of its individualistic tendencies or its rebellion or its criticism every man it says in his place giving one shout in the appointed moment of God that brought the walls down that is a picture of the mode by which we are to possess the land at the end of the age one shout many voices constituting one in the moment of God not when we feel like it or don't feel like it as is our present tendency are you coming to the meeting? well I'll see if I feel like

it but at people under authority because the things that are contrary to the authority of God namely our individualism our rebellion, our self-will the variableness

of our feelings have been crucified and buried in the descent unto Jordan now I tell you that if we're just speaking posy if this is just a little sleight of hand a little biblical flourish and these things have no actual meaning or possibility of attainment we have no position, no power, no authority, no rule I'm staking all on the cross I believe that God has made available to us a position that can actually be appropriated that there's a death that's available to us in experience and not just hypothetically and theoretically and it's the key to the dunamis of God that is given to those who have passed through that death because it says in Exodus 30 about the holy anointing oil that it shall not be poured upon flesh this oil which is the authority of God and the unction of God for the

performing of kingdom things and the taking of the land and the establishing his rule shall not be poured on flesh it's a holy unction and upon man's flesh it shall not be poured the only place that I know for flesh where it can be safely consigned is to the cross of Christ Jesus and it's been my observation as I approach my 20th year as a believer and myself the product of an evangelical and charismatic generation that if there's been any subject that has suffered a complete... what's the word? dismissal and indifference it's the cross of Christ Jesus I'm even stung by God to recognize that in my own life there has been a progressive deterioration and a moving away from the reality of the cross in my earlier years, in my simplicity and naivety I believed the cross, I believed the reality

I believed Romans 6 I believed burial unto death but as I went on somehow it began to dissipate I didn't want to be so bold as to proclaim that let anyone say, what are you the evidence? to say that to see you is to see Christ that to hear you is to hear Christ that you can say with Paul for me to live as Christ because I'm crucified with him yet I live yet not I every pressure religiously and secularly is to contradict that testimony and to move us away from our position in the cross do you know why? because the devil recognizes better than we it is the only position that he needs fear he is not afraid of our innate humanity he's not afraid of our programs of evangelism he's not afraid of our devices our religious rhetoric he's only afraid of the cross because the cross has permanently

and eternally robbed him of the basis for his authority and power and nothing else only thus can we become the instruments of that authority over the power of the enemy in every sphere where his victory that is the victory of Jesus is not yet recognized by putting out of action the works of the devil this is wrought out progressively only on the ground of Calvary because on that ground, that is the Lamb slain the ground of the evil power judicially and morally was broken I'm saying these things for the first time I have never before said them I have never before understood them and I can't even say now that I understand them as I ought but here's what I want to say to you with all that's in me we need to understand what is the constituent moral makeup of the cosmos we need to understand

the largest sense in which the whole spiritual drama is being enacted but we have been fixated as Christians evangelically and fundamentally at the narrowest level of the cross only in terms of atonement and I'm not in any way decrying that or none of us would be here but we have not seen the issue of the cross in the things that go beyond the mere issue of atonement the issue of atonement has to do with man in time but there are issues that pertain to the cross that go beyond time and into eternity and even into the heavenlies that fulfill a moral requirement of God for God is a moral creator and a moral basis is the foundation for the whole creation and the whole conflict between light and darkness and the kingdom of our God and the kingdom of the devil is a moral conflict between two

kinds of kingdoms opposed on moral grounds what happened at Calvary was a defeat for the enemy on his moral and judicial ground by another kind of morality that completely contradicted his own the morality of unrighteousness is predicated upon force upon violence upon fear upon intimidation upon threat upon manipulation upon self interest upon vanity upon ego but another came as the lamb slain in meekness endured all of the power of hell poured out upon him on the moral grounds of hell itself and death and triumphed in patient endurance and love that prayed and loved its enemies and had mercy upon them a moral victory was won at the cross on the basis of a lamb slain and that is the basis also for our victory that ever as often as we in the same meekness and the same endurance of

adversity in uncomplaining love will pursue the things of God and the opposition that will come against us increasingly because of our kingdom pursuit to that degree we shall make manifest the triumph that was established 2000 years ago at Calvary and on no other basis the cross is the key at Calvary Satan's worst was defeated by God's best the wisdom of God which is foolishness triumphed over the wisdom of the world that seems to have all the marbles all the power humility, meekness, patient suffering adversity endured mercy and forgiveness love of the enemy triumphed over the power of hatred, cruelty, fear and death the worst of Satan evoked the best of God at the cross demonic malignity evoked divine magnanimity sorry that I have to be so fancy but do you know what I'm saying? yes,

it's worth hearing the worst of the enemy evoked the best of God divine malignity to be malign the viciousness of evil brought about divine magnanimity and that's why the enemy had to cry uncle in other words when your worst brings about his best what more can you do? see what further ground do you have to accomplish anything? don't you understand what happened at the cross?

Satan was defeated on the basis of the ground of his own morality because love triumphed over hatred and life over death by patiently enduring all that was visited upon it and yet raising from that death we've got to understand the moral dimension of Calvary because it is the position that we must occupy if the dunamis of God is going to be given to us because it will not be given on any other basis and Satan is not required to acknowledge us on any other basis it's only the cross that terrifies him because it's the cross that robbed him of his power that took the rug out from under his feet that removed the foundation or the base for his being we need to understand that something much larger was worked at the cross than just the issue of our atonement the universe is inherently moral and

the great drama in which we are part and I'm going to speak about that after lunch is even going beyond what I'm now saying it's beyond the issue of government it's beyond the issue of rule and reign in the earth it's beyond the issue of earth it's beyond the issue of time it's the issues that pertain to eternity and the fulfillment of God's own righteous heart which is that through the church shall be demonstrated to the principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God there's a glory to this, there's a mystery to this that goes beyond expediency or things that pertain to our life with the nations it fulfills a moral requirement in the whole drama of the cosmos and God has elected to perform it through the church the manifold wisdom of God shall be demonstrated to the principalities

and powers know what the manifold wisdom of God is? the cross the foolishness of the cross it's suffering meekly endured it's patience under adversity it's loving those who persecute you the worst of Satan evoked the best of God at the cross divine malignity evoked divine magnanimity so that the cosmic struggle for the mastery of the creation was run on the moral ground of God the cross has destroyed the enemy's ground and God's authority only operates on moral ground that is the ground that is in keeping with his own nature the conflict between kingdoms the conflict between two moral orders righteousness

and unrighteousness respectively therefore the cross goes beyond atonement where we ourselves have been fixated and puts the church in the strong position of a moral and spiritual

authority in the very realm where the evil forces have their seat the cross took Satan's moral or judicial ground from him that's not to say that we just speak the cross or invoke the word that somehow the enemy is terrified what needs to be evoked and demonstrated is the reality of the cross in our own experience in life as we face opposition and persecution and adversity for its spiritual authority therefore the church must stand in all the power of the cross Satan's whole aim therefore is to move us off that ground to have us to operate on the basis of a human power outside of faith, outside of the righteousness of God outside of lamb likeness and to seduce us on earthly carnal and unholy ground can you see that? if Satan can move us to have a campaign to do something humanly to

expedite something expediently to do something that is born out of our mind and performed by our energy he has won he's not afraid of religious activity he wants to move us off the ground of the cross the union with Christ in death by which also we have access to the life which defeated him at Calvary and terrifies him anything that he can do to move us off the ground of the cross is the device of the enemy to bring us away from the righteousness of God to have us to employ tactics or devices to have not their origin in the life of the resurrected son of God if he can get you to live by principles he will have won a victory because principles don't scare him because they're being lived humanly by the strength of your will and your ability that doesn't terrify him it's the life that

terrifies him and the life will live its own principles we need to understand that the wiles of the enemy is to move us off the ground of the cross because it's only on that ground that he's terrified and it's only on that moral ground that we receive the power and the dunamis to complete the works of Christ Satan's whole aim is to move us off that ground to have us to operate on the basis of human power expediency outside of faith outside of the righteousness of God outside of land likeness if he can only spoil our mood if he can only get us to act out of temper out of indignation out of envy out of jealousy out of spite out of competition out of rivalry he has won if he can only get us to be competitive if he can only get us to affect our church conduct in terms of being better than the

other church down the street he has won he wants to get us off the grounds of the cross the ground of self-denial the ground of identification with Jesus in his death every minister who ministers by preaching the word that is born out of fear of men that is political that is to say self-consciously calculated not to bring offense has been moved off the ground of the cross the cross is death again and again and again it's a willingness to stand and to trust God it's a willingness to speak what you believe he has put in your heart and in your mouth without fear of consequence it's the willingness to take the risk to believe that if you're dead to yourself you'll be alive unto God it's a wholly different ground than religious respectability or religious ability it's the cross it's union the

devil wants to remove us from the centrality of the cross but our union with him is on the basis of the cross being conformed to his death is the path to power and being baptized into his death is the whole means of entry I don't want now to spark controversy or to reveal the ancient controversies of the church about infant baptism or believer's baptism but I think I understand better than ever why it is that the Anabaptists were burned alive at the stake why their flesh was hacked off their bones why they were tortured in the cruelest and most maniacal and demonical ways because they insisted upon a believer's baptism because they counted as null and void that convention of men that baptized infants and counted that as being birthed into the kingdom the entry to the death is by being

buried with him in baptism so if Satan can induce us to operate from principles from expediency from custom from fear of man rather than from the life that issues from the union with him and death we are robbed of our position and our power in apostolic times the church as a heavenly resurrection body moved out and registered the moral triumph of Christ behind the outward and the temporal world in the spiritual kingdom of Satan and it worked they applied the victory in the conscious knowledge of what had been worked morally to the principalities and the powers and it brought release to men the cross is still the moral axis of the church and the evil system still fears its overthrowing power the great question therefore is what is our position with regard to the cross is the cross an event

or a piece of our theology have we crossed over to use a play on words have we actually come to a Jordan and crossed over and brought into that death all that pertains not just to that which is defective in us but to all that is natural because on man's flesh it shall not be poured what is our position with regard to the cross do we desire union with him in death can we believe for the resurrection life as often as we do join him can we pass into death as for example by being misunderstood despised or rejected of men to be of no reputation or to be weak see this is something real that needs to be tasted again and again and again Paul said it's a death that worketh in me but life in them it's a real place of position that opens to us the place of power but it needs to be experienced what

is our position with regard to the cross and what kind of union are we willing to enter with him in death are we fearful for our reputations do we desire the approval of men are we unwilling to be misunderstood are we willing to give our mouths to the life of the Lord who is in us who will speak things that will confound men or anger them against us or do we want to maintain the control and speak the thing that is yet religious though expedient are we willing to taste of death have we crossed that Jordan are we willing to cross it together and come up on the other side as God's disciplined people or rather said before there can be a Pentecost there must be a Calvary before the fire of God there must be an altar and a sacrifice and not just a sacrifice that is nicked but a whole burnt

offering in which everything is conserved have we crossed the Jordan of this ever deeper baptism into death death to ambition to self confidence death to our views death to our influence death to everything because death by its very nature is total or it is not at all you know what my experience has been on every occasion even now today that I have ever spoken about the cross about identification with Jesus in death there is an enormous wall of unbelief that wells up from those to whom I speak those things that I experience as a resistance to the word that I have never experienced in any other subject preached there is something almost involuntary that adheres in our flesh and in the very spirit and the air that we breathe that is contrary to the cross and to its meaning we do not believe

and maybe the heart of our problem is we really don't desire to and yet it's the key to the position alone by which our authority to rule and to reign rests are we willing that death should work in us that there might be life in them or would we rather have a fixed program and print it a week in advance that people can receive the bulletin as they come and safely know what the entire content of the hour is going to be are we willing to take the risks of that which is unstructured which is death to give the life of God by his spirit free sway and opportunity to express what he will, when he will even if it jars and disturbs those who are before us if we ministers will not operate on the basis of death what shall we expect of our congregations if we will not be examples to them of

resurrection men who are willing again and again to taste of death what shall we expect of them the cross has suffered a terrible rejection and I don't know of any kind of rejection more terrible than to acknowledge

it verbally or theoretically but to dismiss it actually from the reality of our lives I'm just coming to an increasing conviction to go for broke on the basis of the cross to believe what God says of it and what has been worked through it and that there's an identification and a union possible with him in it now this is the key to all I don't want to succeed on any other basis because I don't think that there is any other success that can be called a kingdom success outside of our position at the cross this was and is the initial position which alone means power and any

seeming power which is not resulted from the deep death of the natural life of the individual or community is not the true oil the anointing of God I'm not above suspecting that a lot of what we have called anointing or charisma in this charismatic age is some pseudo and counterfeit and devious experience and not the true oil of God because the true oil it says upon man's flesh you shall not be put it is reserved only for those who have joined him in death and they bear the fragrance therefore of the spices of that oil as resurrection men I'm suspicious of anything that appears to be that which is like it and we even warned in Exodus beware lest you make anything like it we want the excitement, we want the halo we want the charisma effect we want the electric, we want the dynamic but we

don't want the crossing, we don't want the death if there's going to be a kingdom come if there's going to be a rule and reign if there's going to be a fulfillment of the dominion mandate if we're going to rule over nations and over angels it's going to be on this basis or no other Christ has the jurisdiction and we are incorporated into him if we have on all points accepted and claimed our identification with him and thus we have become the instruments of that authority over the enemy by a life in the spirit we are able to receive by discernment direction from the head and then command the situation and put the enemy's work out of action here's the way, the mode of operating the modus operandi is by the discernment of the spirit of God not by our stratagems not by our committed

discussions or what we think constitutes the means by which the kingdom should be obtained whoever would have thought that the way to take the fearful Jericho that stands in the way to the whole of Canaan is by encircling it seven days and on the seventh day seven times what stroke of human imagination would ever come up with the foolishness of that strategy who would have said that to walk seven times a five mile stretch to a place of utter exhaustion is the necessary prelude to invade and to take this great Canaanite stronghold everything about that formula is contrary to the reason of men and so also will be the tactics and the strategies of God by which we are called to take the land at the end of the age and to establish the kingdom it's not going to be by our tactics it's not going

to be by our devices it's not going to be by committed decisions it's not going to be by what we think is clever it's going to be by the foolishness of God it's going to be by the unfolding of his strategy in the time and circumstance that pleases him it may well mean that we'll be walking around Bena or Cast Lake and around these strongholds of principalities and powers to see them come down in silence while we are jeered, even as they were jeered by the foolishness of what we're performing I want to tell you something that the only men who can do it for seven days and seven times on the seventh day are men who are dead to themselves and alive unto God you do not have the stamina you do not have the courage for such foolishness you cannot withstand the jeers and the taunting except you

be dead you cannot occupy your place in the line of march you cannot give your voice and shout in the moment that it's called for except you're dead to self and alive unto God it's for the army of the crucified and the resurrected and for no other and there's no easy way to enter it it's a very real death and we need to be willing to receive it and then by our life in the spirit we are able to receive discernment from that

which issues from the head you know why we receive it by the life of the spirit? because we have no other life we are dead and our life is hid with Christ and God until His life is revealed then our life is revealed with Him unto glory see, this is the issue of glory and not just the issue of tactics or strategy it's beyond the issue of victory it's the issue of triumph

victory is only that which relieves us from our distress but triumph is that which brings glory to God we need a divine tactic and a divine enablement it's called the resurrection life it's called the holy anointing oil and it's available to as many as are joined with Him in death and in burial and resurrection unto newness of life is your faith sufficient to grasp that? do you desire that? are you willing to see the end of your natural life and to go down into a Jordan of death in which the one who comes up again is not the same one who entered it you know what's waiting for the Israel of God to enter? is that the priests must go first and that the waters will not part until their feet go in first in a certain sense that's what we did 8 years ago when we left New Jersey to come up to

Minnesota God made it very clear your feet need to go in first you don't know what community is you don't know what it's going to cost you you don't know what humiliation awaits you but accept that your feet go in first the waters are not going to be open for others to enter and I know that I'm addressing not just a mere collection of men who believe I'm addressing ministers and servants and leaders your feet have to go in first you're the first ones in and you're the last ones out and if you don't go in first the waters don't open and neither does all Israel follow because something is waiting for an army in agreement to give a shout that is more than just solitary and a few random individual voices we are in this together and we need to cross together it was their absolute union with

their victorious Lord and the recognition of their judicial authority over Satan and his kingdom which was the ground of the apostolic church and the Holy Spirit's seal and anointing the things that I'm speaking to you this morning which sound so theoretical in our ears so unattainable almost a kind of religious fiction were not so for the apostolic generation these were viable truths they were real they lived them, they knew them Paul addressed them as men who had no life unto themselves who had come back from the dead for indeed that's what they were and indeed that's what we also ourselves need to be I want to end this morning with this question shall we end the age on any basis other than by which it began? shall the consummation of the ages and the final chapter and the clash of

kingdoms end on any basis other than by which it began in the book of Acts? are we going to end by human strategy and religious planning what began by the operation of the life of his spirit? what is your position with regard to the cross? is the critical question is it theoretical or is it actual? do you approve it as a doctrine or do you attest to it in your life? and are you willing to make that the principle by which you live daily, hourly, individually and corporately? this is the whole question about a kingdom come the issue of the cross is central to the issue of the kingdom and it's not at all an accident that as the kingdom has fallen into abuse or into neglect so also the cross and if the one is to be revived so also is the other it's a voluntary and a willing death Israel was

not compelled to pass over and indeed two and a half tribes never did and they were forever lost to the purposes of God and even to their own people we have only this melancholy reminder in the book of Acts about the demoniacal man in the cemetery who burst his chains who was a Gadarene from the tribe of Gad who refused to cross over God's inviting us to cross over my first message of January 1st, New Years of 1983 was the crossing over it was the Joshua call God raised his trump to his lips and it was a very feeble trump if you heard it at the junior high school in Bemidji it was for me who spoke it an altogether

dissatisfying and ungratifying experience in the flesh God spoke it in a foolish weakness without any evident or visible or felt anointing and yet by the ear of the spirit you

could recognize that it was the trump call of God that an hour had come in the history of the church in which God was bidding us to cross over to pass through this Jordan and to come up on the other side we have been in this wilderness long enough when Joshua saw the Jericho that was before him he staggered this was too monumental this was too great an undertaking could this mob handle it? this double walled city these fierce Canaanites their terrible reputation their bloodthirstiness this demonic stronghold had blocked the whole way to the taking of the land and yet he despaired when he saw the visible weightiness and impressiveness of the Jericho that was before him and in that very moment of despair and the acknowledgement and the recognition of his weakness there was a man standing

before him the captain of the Lord's host who was neither with him nor against him but had purposes beyond him that were cosmic take off your shoes for the ground upon which you stand is holy ground and then follows these beautiful words and he did so don't you love that explicit and immediate obedience he went right down on his Jewish face before the captain of the Lord's host and that was the key for the subsequent taking of the land he went down everything that was natural in him and especially his Jewish mind racing with stratagems racing with devices racing with programs of how to build the church and how to establish the kingdom went down before the captain of the Lord's host into the dust and into death and that is the necessary recognition that is required of us in crossing over

if we had more time to sketch the dimensions of the kingdom you would tremble it's fearful if we really understood the prophetic role that God intends for the church to fulfill we would tremble if we understood the magnitude of our high calling in Christ Jesus, we would tremble if we are living a Christianity that we are capable of performing on the basis of our own religiosity and good will and intelligence, we are outside the faith God has called us to that which is patently impossible and beyond any power of our attainment there is an unction and an anointing for kingdom faking for kingdom establishing for possessing the land for fighting the battles for coming against the principalities and powers and rulers of darkness and high places but upon man's flesh it shall not be poured there

is an authority but it waits upon a certain position union with him in death because it was on the cross that Jesus made an open spoil of the enemy what's your position with regard to the cross? even now if there was a Jordan before us would you cross it? would you go down into it knowing that you will never come up on the other side your reputation your hopes of attainment, your ambitions are never to be seen from again you are only to occupy the lowly place that will be appointed for you and if someone else is walking before you and is kicking his dust into your teeth you eat it and you eat it for seven days without a murmur or a complaint or raising your voice in discontent when it comes time to shout, you shout whether you feel like it or you don't feel like it because you're under

authority because the priests have gone before you because you're in the place which is assigned and the walls will come down and if they won't we've had it instead of the walls coming down, the Canaanites come out and the river that opened to admit us is now closed to prevent us and we'll be hacked to pieces by a merciless Canaanitish beastly people who fornicate with animals and despise Hebrews willing to take all the risks of faith by crossing it's a death you know, true faith isn't dying true faith isn't acting if you had the opportunity today to commit yourself to the cross and to know that you're not going to leave this hotel alive that the man who comes back to his wife and family today is not the same man who left Friday afternoon that he has no life unto himself no ambition for

himself and no purpose in himself he will not live by his own energy by his own wit and by his own will his life is not his own he's a dead man who lives by the life of another and for another he's a servant and a slave and therefore the first time potentially capable of being also an apostle or apostolic Paul, a bond slave and an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ if you're a servant putting your slavery does not perceive your apostleship, you're a phony you need to be a dead man and a slave before you can be an apostle and if God gave you that opportunity this morning, what would you do? would you elect to die? to receive the cross? to make it your position? and to make it the principle of your life and our corporate life together? are we willing to suffer the death of silences? willing

to suffer the death which is waiting? willing to see people discontent and agitated because we don't have a program for them? because they're not going to be whiz kids and see them through an hour's service in which they go home happy are we willing to see them perplexed and discontent and agitated? are we willing to witness to men as Jesus witnessed to Nicodemus and see them bewildered by the strange answers that they get from our mouths that don't seem to answer their questions but raise the ultimate questions it's not very gratifying and I say that if this is not real and we can't enter into this death if our baptism has not meant this we of all people are most to be pitied we're play actors we're hypocrites we're condemned to a religious game that has no true efficacy either in earth

or in heaven either in time or eternity do you know what I want to say this morning?

I believe with all my heart in Christ and him crucified I believe with all my heart that there's an entry and a union with him by baptism unto death I want God to know that that's what I understand my baptism has meant I believe it to be the factual operating principle of my life I want consistently and consciously to walk in it do you say that? what's your position with regard to the cross? because it's only on that position that God will give the authority and the dunamis to destroy the works of the enemy and to see a kingdom come I just want to end in prayer if you've never consciously reckoned on the cross I know all about the deeper life teachings and all that jazz and we can make of this a game also, but God never intended that it should be so when I preached once in Oslo in Norway,

my interpreter said to me, Artie said, I want to see you privately he's one of the leading evangelical and charismatic figures of his nation, a brilliant young man, already had an impressive ministry when he saw me privately, you know what he said? he said I want to die he said, I recognize that all my achievement is on the basis of my own life and my own ability he said, how do I die? how do I come to the cross? and I took an imaginary death warrant out of my pocket and I said, supposing this had your name on it and God was now asking you to sign it will you sign away your future, your ambition and your hopes of a career that's already acknowledged and brilliant and successful and the tears broke out of this guy he grabbed this imaginary thing, he slammed me up against the wall of the

building and he said, where do I sign? he meant it and he signed by faith and prayer right there and I watched the man die on the sidewalk and I watched the resurrection take place and that man's ministry has been multiplied many times over because he can say with Paul for me to live as Christ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live yet not I this is real, or we of all men are most to be pitied I believe it's real and I believe it can be appropriated I believe that there's a God who will make it as a death unto us that our baptism will be something more than religious obligation and getting wet if we choose to see it for what God intended that it should be a burial unto death you willing not to leave this hotel alive? mark my words that if you'll say yes if God will not hold you

to it and show you that it's a very different man who's going to be leaving and a very different quality of life and service that will ensue from that time forth so precious Jesus I just trust you now Lord, it's by faith Lord that the cross is raised and preached and proclaimed if I look with my natural eye Lord, if I try to assess whether it was impressive or effectual, I would despair but I believe that there's a power in the cross it is not foolishness to them that perish but it is power unto salvation to the utmost to them that believe and I believe my God that it is you who have raised this cross in our midst dusting it off as it were from years of evangelical and charismatic neglect and calling men in truth to embrace it unto death and I just ask you my God to look out over this sea

of men whom you have assembled for the hearing of this word and to receive from everyone who will their death sentence who will sign on the dotted line that they might rule and reign with you from the throne of the Lamb in power and authority in an anointing that is not to be poured on any man's flesh I just ask you in these concluding moments of this session to turn a speaking into an event by your own voluntary response right where you sit or stand or kneel or prostrate yourself I just invite you as the minister of this word to covenant with God to transact with God to take the cross seriously, to reckon upon it to come to it once and for all if you're afraid to pray aloud in such a prayer of acknowledgement then you're not really coming to it if you're fearful and self-conscious and

wondering what other men will think, you're not coming to the place of death death is total and it's abandoned

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