

Chapter Twelve

THE CARROT THAT DOMINATES THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER

The materials for this booklet concerning the Kingdom principles are from the teachings of two renowned leaders in the Apostolic Era, along with a brief word from Jesus. One of these men is the first and greatest pastor that God ever had, apostle Peter, while the other is the humble Paul, who became His greatest missionary. These two men did more to motivate the first century Christians than anyone else.

The senior pastor, Peter, led the first church in Jerusalem to win and then develop between two and five hundred thousand disciples in a period of five to seven years. This feat caused the religious leaders of his day to declare, “...ye have filled **Jerusalem with your doctrine...**” (Acts 5:28), meaning they were good, solid, practicing Christians.

The zealous missionary, Paul, almost single handedly, led in the evangelization of most of Europe and Asia. He was also used of the Holy Spirit to pen fourteen of the New Testament books.

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focus on in order to give a **picture of the carrot that shines so brightly** on the other side of the river. These

two spiritual giants of the faith revealed this carrot through their final writings in the twilight of their lives, just before they took their leave for Heaven.

Pastor Peter attempted to motivate through the power of the pen, while missionary Paul attempted to inspire through the example of his life, as God's role model.

The term **"carrot"** comes from the motivational world, and is used as an overwhelming stimulus to motivate people to super human efforts. **Since God created man as a teleological, goal-striving being, it is only fitting for God to dangle a "carrot" before men to stimulate them** to attempt super human efforts.

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Man also needed a carrot to help him as he traveled through what would seem to be a “hopeless situation”. As this hopeless situation loomed so darkly up ahead in the believer’s life, **there was a desperate need for a beacon of hope to dominate his horizon**; this beacon of light would serve to give him joy as he traveled through those dark waters. As men acquainted with trouble and anticipating their soon coming deaths, both Peter and Paul attempted to trim the wicks and stoke the fires of hope and victory as **they prepared to cross over to the other side of the river.**

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It is imperative that this generation catches the vision that these two spiritual giants taught that inspired their converts to such superhuman accomplishments.

PAUL, OUR ROLE MODEL

We will examine the life of one of God’s most zealous saints who, as our role model, was stimulated by the carrot on the other side of the river. It is obvious that Paul was motivated to be obedient and pleasing

to his Savior, **regardless of personal cost or sacrifice.**

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EVERY BELIEVER'S LIFE

After a bold statement that sinners are saved by grace, followed by the accented statement that sinners are not saved by any works on their behalf, Paul revealed that every person has a prescribed plan to follow after becoming a Christian. It is written in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his [God's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Again, in II Timothy 1:9, Paul states that each one of God's children is saved for "a purpose," or for a definite job.

GOD HAS A GOOD PLAN FOR EVERY BELIEVER'S LIFE

The loving Father, who gave His Son as our substitute to die on the cross to pay for our sins, has a good life planned for each of His children! Think about it. God, after demonstrating His great love for you by

paying that unspeakable price, **must have something special in mind for your life.**

One does not have to depend on reasoning to deduct this truth, because Jesus

“For we are his (God’s) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

announced the purpose for His coming to this earth. He said that He came in order to

give those that trust in Him life (eternal life), and to **give it to them more abundantly.** (John 10:10) This means that His plan for each of His children is to live a victorious life. Paul stated clearly that God has a **“...good, and acceptable, and perfect...” plan** for each child of God to live. It may not be an easy life, but He promises never to leave or forsake His children. He will always be there to help them.

GOD HAD A SPECIAL PLAN FOR PAUL’S LIFE

Before Paul’s conversion, he was the enemy of Christ and a leader in an opposing religion. Paul, referring to himself before his conversion,

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said he was “the chiefest of sinners.” He persecuted Christians, hunting them down and jailing or executing them. After his conversion to the Christian faith, he became one of God’s humble preachers.

God revealed the startling reason He chose (or saved) Paul. Listen to Paul describe that purpose. **“Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.”** I Timothy 1:16

Paul said that God saved him to show what God’s grace could do in the life of any sinner who would fully yield to Him. Not only did God save Paul, but He made him a pattern for all those who would hereafter become a Christian.

Paul taught in the Word (Phil 1:29), and showed in his life, that a person should not only believe on Christ, but suffer for Him as well. Paul demonstrated that God’s grace is **always** sufficient. (II Cor 12:9)

Paul’s life showed that a Christian could be joyful while in prison and, through God’s enabling grace, could be more than conquerors in any situation. (*Rom 8:37*) Then Paul commanded his disciples to

follow him (imitate his lifestyle), as he followed Christ.

Dear friend, how does your life stack up? How close are you in conforming to your pattern, Paul?

God's plan for Paul's life was to make him a role model for the saved to imitate and follow. Many justify that they are not imitating the life of Jesus by saying, "He is perfect. He cannot sin and I am human and oh, so weak."

God's answer to them is, "I saved the worst of the worst and, by

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my grace, conformed him into a pattern for all future children of God to imitate."

THE PRIZE PAUL WORKED TOWARD

To say that the apostle Paul was highly motivated would be an understatement. Perhaps, no other man had the intense focus and drive for Jesus and lost souls as Paul did.

PAUL'S ZEAL MANIFESTED IN HIS DAILY LIFE

Paul told the Corinthians that he commended himself only so they could answer his critics. (II Cor 10:12) He was saying, "Compare my service with theirs and you will see who God's true servant is."

Please note part of his record of suffering for Christ.

"Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I."

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft."

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."

"Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep:"

"In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in

the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;”

“In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”

“Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” II Cor 11:22-28

PAUL SPOKE OF HIS BURNING DESIRE TO KNOW JESUS

Although Paul was a devout Christian, he spoke of his burning desire to know Christ. He said that he counted all of his religious accomplishments as nothing compared to the personal daily fellowship he had with Christ. (Phil 3:4-8) His consuming desire was to totally live his life trusting in Jesus and doing things through Christ’s righteousness. Paul stated, **“And be found in him [Jesus], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.” Phil 3:9**

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Paul gave the reasons for his focus in verse Ten

Paul said, **“That I may know him”** – have a closer relationship and fellowship with him.

Paul wanted to **attain “the power of his resurrection”** – to have a body more like the glorious body of Jesus in the resurrection.

Paul wanted to know **“the fellowship of his suffering”** – endure some of the same pain, suffering and difficulties that Jesus endured while ministering on earth.

Paul desired **“being made conformable unto his death”** or suffer martyrdom for Christ, or die like Christ. Every person must die. The apostles sought ways they could best glorify Christ through their death. John 21:19

The question may have been asked, “Paul, why do you have these burning desires?”

Paul’s answer is found in verse 11, **“If by any means** [whatever pain or suffering it takes]

Paul wanted to know *“the fellowship of his suffering”* – endure some of the same pain, suffering and difficulties that Jesus endured while ministering on earth.

I might attain unto the resurrection of

the dead [That I may obtain a higher, closer ranking in the resurrection.]”

In the next two verses, Paul stated that he had not reached the level of attainment that his heart yearned to obtain. Because of this burning desire to obtain a closer fellowship with Christ, he stated, “For this reason I am **forgetting those things which are behind** [all of his great revivals and church plantings of yesteryear], **and reaching forth unto those things which are before.**” Phil 3:13

He was totally focused on the future coming of Jesus and in completing the work he was saved to accomplish. This would give Paul a higher position in the resurrection. His exact words were, “**I press toward the mark [goal] for the prize [first place] of the high [upward] calling of God in Christ Jesus.**” Phil 3:14

There was something in the future Millennial Kingdom, and a promised position near his beloved Savior for 1000 years, that caused Paul to abandon personal comforts and **endure anything** in order to attain it.

**PAUL’S DETERMINATION WAS TO
FINISH HIS COURSE WITH JOY**

God reveals Paul's purpose. As previously stated, God saved Paul to fulfill a definite work. In Acts 26:13-19, God told Paul,

“At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me,

And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

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And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”

Prophets revealed Paul’s suffering and death. Many years of intense ministry had been fulfilled as Paul was traveling toward Jerusalem. He encountered prophets who warned him of suffering, and perhaps even death, if he continued.

“And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.”

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God

Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 21:12-13

Paul revealed his consuming desire to finish his course (ministry) with joy. “Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:23-24

THE PRICE OF ENTERING AN HONORED POSITION IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Please examine carefully a particular segment of Paul’s missionary journey. It will reveal part of the great motivating force of Paul’s ministry. The story of this journey is found in Acts Chapter Fourteen.

GREAT SUCCESS IN THE MINISTRY

The apostles were having multitudes saved. Verse one of this chapter states that “a great multitude was saved.” God was working miracles through Paul and

Barnabas, which brought them and their followers' persecution.

GREAT PERSECUTION AND SUFFERING TO THE SAINTS

As they were preaching, a huge crowd got worked up to oppose the preachers and was soon incited to stone the apostle Paul. (verse 19) He was stoned and left for dead. Soon afterward, he revived and continued preaching and encouraging the churches.

GREAT REALIZATION OF KINGDOM TRUTH

After Paul recovered from his stoning, the apostles **returned to their sponsoring churches** and gave their missionary reports.

One would think they would have been thrilled to report **of the thousands saved and new churches started**. Nothing is recorded about these great victories.

One would think that they would have given a report of **Paul's stoning and the great dangers they faced while preaching**. Nothing is recorded of their personal troubles and suffering.

What is recorded gives a resounding testimony of what it will take to **have a place of royalty and leadership during the 1000-year reign**. When they got to Iconium and Antioch, they admonished the members to “continue in the faith.” That is, do not compromise God’s Word! Now, mark the message that the apostles preached to the members, “...**that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**” (verse 22) Paul was stating, “If you are going to have a position of honor in the coming Kingdom, then you must be willing to suffer, if necessary, in order to obtain it.”

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Paul told Timothy, “**If we suffer, we shall also reign with him....**” II Tim 2:12 Paul told

the Corinthians, “**For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, [compared to eternity] worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.**” II Cor 4:17

As a role model, Paul’s life showed that to have a position of leadership and close fellowship with Jesus for the coming Millennial Reign one needs to surrender to the purpose for which one is saved. Paul, as

our role model, reveals that the blessings this committed life brings far outweigh any problems. In fact, Paul's testimony to the Roman church states, **“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”** Rom 8:18

GREAT CHALLENGE: “FOLLOW ME AS I FOLLOW CHRIST”

This was the admonition that Paul gave pertained to the suffering one must endure, as well as the lifestyle one should live in following Christ.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

How did Paul go through all of the trials and suffering he encountered and still manifest a happy, joyful disposition? He was following the example of his Lord. No one ever experienced the pain and suffering

The way Jesus was able to teach the apostles while living a normal life with this impending judgment hanging over His head by fixing **His mind on the results beyond the cross.**

that Jesus endured in His lifetime.

How could Jesus, as a man, endure the cross – the pain and suffering physically, along with the total

rejection? That physical suffering was nothing compared to the suffering of becoming sin and enduring the pain of hell. As a man, He suffered the same pain that any other man suffers. As God in the flesh, He foreknew the pain and suffering he had to endure in order to pay for our sins. How could He endure that horrible ordeal that He endured; the sinless becoming sin, the Holy taking upon Himself the deeds of the ungodly, and dying as a sinner dies?

The way Jesus was able to teach the apostles and live a normal life while the impending judgment loomed over His head was by fixing **His mind on the results BEYOND THE CROSS**. Jesus kept His mind on the coming glory of the Millennial and eternal Kingdoms. He looked beyond the cross, with its shame and suffering, **to the results it would bring**.

Paul wrote in Hebrews 12:2, **“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God Jesus focused on the victory that He would gain through being obedient. He looked forward to the time when His Father would give**

Him His Kingdom, and that he would reign with His redeemed saints. (Matt 19:28)

Paul, as our role model, was able to go through all the trials He faced with the same victory and joy. He was looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, **to the time he would join his Lord in close fellowship** as they ruled the earth together.

THE PINNACLE OF PAUL'S LIFE

The pinnacle, or highest experience, of Paul's great life was spent in a Roman prison, where he was executed. Paul was basically forsaken, falsely condemned, and died alone; yet when one reads of his final moments on this earth, he sees **a man who is elated and victorious**. Why was Paul's death the pinnacle of his whole life?

HE HAD FINISHED HIS COURSE IN LIFE

As Paul climbed the mountain of life with his focus always toward his Lord's return, he looked back over the race he had just completed. With joy he exclaimed, **"...I have finished my course..."** II Tim 4:7 The intensity of the verbs in this verse

gives one the impression that Paul was shouting. He was a victorious Christian that **had been assigned** a difficult task in life, which he had just **completed in victory**.

HE FOUGHT GOD'S BATTLES IN LIFE

Paul referred to himself as a soldier of Jesus Christ. He was a leader in the army of the Lord. He did not use physical weapons in this warfare to save people from hell, but his enemies used physical force against him. He could look back over the beatings, the times in prison for preaching the Gospel, and all the days of hunger and difficulties, and shout, **“I have fought a good fight!** As a soldier, I have been true to my commission. I never turned back or dipped my Lord's colors. I have been His ambassador and stood in the gap to save men from hell.”

His heart must have been bursting with joy as he realized that the final battle in his life had been fought, and that he had won. Oh, the shout which must have burst from his lips, **“I have fought a good fight!”**

HE HAD DELIVERED GOD'S MESSAGE

Paul was God's ambassador to the world, with a message from the King. He had faithfully followed the instructions that were laid down in the Great Commission. He had never been intimidated to compromise or water down God's message. He had faithfully delivered the whole council of God. Now, he was facing his departure from this earth. He was reporting in to his captain, who was awaiting his arrival in Heaven, with the absolute assurance, **"I have kept the faith."**

THE PINNACLE OF HIS DEPARTURE

From his lonely Roman prison, we see the pinnacle of Paul's departure from this earth.

HE WAS READY TO DEPART FROM THE EARTH

Paul, referring to his death, stated, **"...the time of my departure is at hand."**
II Tim 4:6 Paul knew he wouldn't go through an agonizing experience of death

because Jesus had overcome and tasted death for every believer. Paul looked at death simply as a departure. **He would take his last breath on earth and his next breath in Heaven.** He would see the face of his executioner, who would expedite his departure from this earth, and the **next face to burst into his vision would be that of his beloved Savior.** Death held absolutely no fear for Paul, but gave him a rippling sense of excitement and anticipation.

HE COULD FACE HIS SAVIOUR WITH CONFIDENCE

With his battles all fought, with his course safely run, and God's message faithfully given, Paul could now turn his attention to seeing his Savior in Heaven.

HE COULD ANTICIPATE HIS CROWN

The sudden flight into Heaven and the glories he would be engulfed in would cause the time before his coronation day to pass rapidly. We know Paul **was looking forward to seeing Jesus** and hearing him say, "Well done, Paul, my good and faithful

servant.” We also know Paul was **looking toward the Judgment Seat**, where he would be crowned.

Paul said, “[Because] ...I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith...**there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...**” II Tim 4:7-8

Again, we see Paul as a perfect role model, demonstrating how to handle trauma and death. He was **looking beyond any pain** that he would personally suffer to the time he would stand before the royal courts of Heaven and be rewarded by his Lord and Master, King Jesus. **He even leaves a victors cry of encouragement** to all the following generations of the Lord’s soldiers. His cry, referring to a victor’s crown was, **“NOT TO ME ONLY, BUT TO ALL THOSE THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING.”**

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