

The Kingdom God's After, An Army January 20, 1988

Let's start in the Book of Revelation. I want to read several scriptures there and then I'd like to go first to Revelation 12:7. There are many scriptures I could have chosen from to bring out this particular truth, but I just happen to choose Revelation.

"And there was war in Heaven, Micheal and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." And for those of you who may not be aware, Satan was originally an angel of God and he sinned against God and convinced a whole bunch of angels to go with him and those angels are called principalities or powers or demons or many other names they go by. But here we find Michael and the angels. "And the dragon was angry with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." And now, if you will turn with me to I Timothy 1:17-18. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invincible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever Amen. "This charge I commit unto thee, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest was a good warfare."

The common denominator of all those scriptures obviously is war. The first one, there was war in heaven. The second one dealing with the dragon making war apparently with some people on earth, called the woman and her seed. And here in verse 17 we are getting a glimpse of the kingdom because it says "unto the King immortal". This is not a kind of spiritual statement here, but a governmental, royal, regal type statement. The King is the commander in chief. "This charge and commit unto thee that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." God is raising up an army, not an audience. God is not just after a congregation, but a kingdom. Interesting statements. And we pray that way. "Thy congregation come to church." No! "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." You know church can go to church and the will of God still not be done. But in the kingdom that cannot happen cause you are not really in the kingdom in a practical manner unless Jesus is King, and is ruling. So God is not just trying to save His people, but he is trying to save them from, to redeem them unto, that His Sovereignty might come into their life again, that they might have righteousness, peace and joy. That is some of the manifestation of that kingdom and so, he tells the Christians, "seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." If you don't seek the kingdom first, you are going to have problems with things. Because you are ruling and your rule is fleshly. Put me on the throne of the universe and we will have to hock the throne to pay the bills. If we put you there, then we are going to have to go into debt and sue the pearly gates. When Jesus rules on the earth, there is going to be prosperity, blessing, no more war, beat the war instruments into plowshares. People will see the great fruitfulness of a righteous rule. These are more than concepts, this is what God is after.

He is not after an audience, but an army, he is not after a congregation, but a kingdom and when he comes back, he is coming for those that are his at his appearing. That have loved his appearing. And he is working right now toward getting that rule in our life. Some may look at the rule of Christ as a negative thing, but those are only those who have never had his rule in their life. Cause there is nothing better than Jesus being Lord of our life. In as many areas of our life, we can't say every area, but we want every area. And yet the kingdom is at hand and that is the message that we preach. Jesus is Lord now. Well, it doesn't look like it! Well, that is because everybody isn't submitting to him and that is why I am preaching this. Right now he doesn't want any to perish, but he calls all "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly." But for those who come to him, he doesn't leave you a sinner saved by grace. You will always be a sinner saved by grace in one sense. But from then on the Bible calls us saints, fellow heirs, joint heirs with Jesus. We are soldiers of the cross, we are called many things but this is what we are in God's eyes. And so, we go boldly with a message that the kingdom of God is at hand and you know what? There are people out there that are ready to hear that. because the preaching of the gospel is the power of God.

The cross isn't a negative or a bad thing. My goodness, where would you be without the cross? The cross is the only avenue by which we have life. Out of resurrection comes life. The cross is not a negative message, unless you are just totally in the flesh and you want to be in the flesh. But there is not that many people that want that. Now, they may do that and resist certain avenues, but the truth is there are people out there and they want life and they are tired of cute sayings and formulas and they want a life and if it comes through the cross and it comes through the flesh layed down, they will lay that down. Is the cross negative to you? The preaching of the cross is the power of God, the wisdom of God. And there are people out there prepared to hear this message. God prepared! And I think that we slip into the negative side and the only thing you ever heard was the negative of the cross of what it does to the flesh, but you know what? Christ comes in us and he begins to rule and reign. And he begins to bring righteousness, peace and joy and my flesh says ouch!! but I am not flesh-you see what I mean? I am born again. The old man must be crucified, yes. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit exalts in God my Savior. And in certain realms where you have to deal with this or that it is negative. If you are dealing directly with somebodys flesh, it is negative. But in the greatest sense it is called Good News!

Good News to who? Well not to the glesh. It is preached to the person who will be born again, joined to the Lord, but they are living in the flesh. Chances are God has prepared them and they are ready to get hold of something finally, that is going to bring them into life. Not just a life that is on the throne up there

or somewhere in here that will manifest a gift every once in a while - But Christ in them becomes their hope of glory and they begin to walk in Christ. "In Him we live and move and have our being" And there is joy unspeakable and full of glory. To the flesh? NO! But remember, he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Now, if we just address flesh, their flesh will rebel. But, we have to realize that somewhere in there is a spark of faith, whether born again or not. Then we speak directly to their spirit and we tell them of the Good News of what the cross did and what it brings us.

I remember some of you, the first time you heard it; and your testimony and you said, "Man, I never heard it like that before. It sure is good! I've heard others say, "This is what God was sharing with me and I couldn't find where anybody was preaching it. This is life, this is the greatest stuff!" And you know there is a whole bunch of people out there that want to hear their Bible. They want to hear what Jesus did, They want to hear! And they are already prepared by God when you speak that word. That is not everybody. Just like Paul when he went into a city. Some of them believed and some didn't. And there was division among the people. Same with Jesus. But, you don't center down on the negative of "Well, half of them are not going to believe anyway." Well, half of them might. If we can get one, it is worth it. Why? Because if they are not born again they come into the Father's house, if they are born again they come out of the hog pen into the Father's house. They find out, leading their own life, only leads to the hog pen. And though they're a son, though they are in the family, and God is their Father they see that doing it their way doesn't work and they come back to the Father. They say, "Look I'm not worth to even be called your son." I'll be your servant and then he starts treating him like a son. Cause they have the spirit of the family. It's not me, but I submit myself to you Father. There are people that are just sick of their life and sick of their flesh and no one has told them the answer yet. No one told them what that cross can do. But emphasis more of the negative side, the death side, when folks, life comes out of death! It's his life that's coming forth and that's what everyone of us wants. His life coming forth! I mean we would not even continue if it were just death, death, death!! But we continue so that his life can come forth. Others may never really see it or they may. But, the important thing is we see it and we want Him more and more. Well, back to the thought of God wanting to raise up an army instead of an audience. Everyday we face battles as individuals. We fight against the enemy. We face things and we have the power of God that casts out the devil. We have the power of God to lay hands on the sick and they will recover. But in reality all that is, is hand to hand combat. God wants to raise up an army! God is calling the church to attack fortresses that one individual couldn't do.

One will put a thousand to flight, two ten thousand. How much more a whole army. But we sporadically try to chip away on those big dark fortresses and we get nothing! We get attacked back by a fortress and we run off! Then we get faith, and we get built up a little later and we give it another try. But the truth is God wants an army and if there is no army, there is not going to be any war

won is there!? God doesn't just want an army, he wants one that is going to win. If God is raising up an army, it's going to call for team work, isn't it? This is what God is doing and is going to do and the end results - it is not going to be the pew crowd, it is going to be the army of God, the kingdom of God. So, the church is going to have to come to that isn't it? She is going to have to realize that this is greater than just me. Our job right now is learning and receiving the seed which is the word of the kingdom. No seed, no fruit! We are looking for fruit and many don't even have the seed. There will be no fruit until the word of the kingdom is sown described in Matthew 13. The parable of the sower is the parable of the sowing of the word of the kingdom in different kinds of ground and he is after a kind of harvest. If he wants rice, he will plant rice. If he wants apples, he plants apples and if he wants kingdom, he plants kingdom seed, not just saved soul seed, not just gospel seed in the sense we think of but a certain kind of thing. Then you see the other parable.

The other one in that same chapter that deals with the harvest. But we can't think about harvest right now, but planting. And that is what God is doing right now. We can just be a field sitting out there with no seed and be saying, "Oh, God, I want this thing so bad." But we end up saying to each other - "You clod!" and pushing each other around. But if the ground has the word of the kingdom sown, then you will get what God wants. The particular harvest. No doubt about it! I gave the example the other day of "Well, what if I die?" Well, I'm nothing, but I have been charged with dispensation of the grace of God, the mysteries of the kingdom. But not just me - YOU! And as a matter of fact, it is so clear in Matthew 13 that unto you are given the mysteries of the kingdom. To them, hearing they hear not, seeing they see not. So it is not just to a man but to everyone. But if something should happen to me then each of us need to know the gospel of the kingdom and see that plan and be able to rise up and say, lets do it. I realize that the seed is working in many of you already. But, I know that what God is trying to do right now is get those seeds planted and growing then no fowls of the air are going to come pluck it up. If it is good ground, it is settled. It is just a matter of time, devil. The kingdom is coming up! The job and task at hand is to get this stuff of the kingdom in me and get it in there as seed, not just get it in my head so I can parrot it back. But get it in there and get it planted. And if it is there and in you and others all over the world then it is just a matter of time the harvest of the kingdom is coming up and the enemies kingdom is going to be pushed back.

In the next parable he takes them in whom the seed is sown and matured and he calls them seed also. And they are called the sons of the kingdom and the word son is a mature person established in the kingdom. And he sows them. But, he isn't ready to sow you yet until you have got the word of the kingdom growing in you. Then when it matures in you, then you are a mature seed and he will fling you out there and the kingdom will start coming up all over. Because if one seed fall into the ground and die - If it doesn't it abides alone - But if it die, it brings forth much fruit. It proliferates and the kingdom of God comes in the earth as it is in heaven. It is not just a little message we preach, it

is something God has gotten hold of us with. Then an army can be raised up. Individually, we fight our little hand to hand combat, but we are not doing any major dent to the devil's work. We see that God is looking at this kingdom and this war on a global scale. There was war in heaven! The congregation is not just gathering a couple of times a week, but it is an army - a revolutionary army. Because everywhere they went with it they revolutionized cities.

Oh, it tore things up and caused problems too. I was reading where they went into a city and they started preaching the word of the kingdom and people got mad at them, beat them and the magistrate said, "Now, get out of here." They went back to the brethren and comforted the brethren! You see when you have got the kingdom on the inside of you, you know the kingdom is at hand and you don't go, "Oh God!! I've done that so many times it is ridiculous." Now there is nothing wrong with that in its place. I'm not putting that down, but I'm trying to get a larger picture across. We need to love one another, pray for one another, we need to confess our faults one to another. That is not what I am saying. But I am making a point. What if these great kingdom preachers come back all the saying, "Oh, pray for us!" No, they came back and said, "We're going to pray for you all. We are going to comfort you all. And that was kingdom manifestation. Just as big as any miracle in my opinion. When you have been beat up and pushed around and you go back and people go, "Man, these people must really believe this stuff. They must really be under the rule of Christ. But we go, "Well, I can't make it to church because my hangnail hurts!" Well, what if you had been beaten!?

So we've got to get a kingdom mentality and we have got to get a kingdom stance that gives us power and authority and where the righteous are bold as a lion and where we are ready to move forward and move back. As I said, fortresses of darkness, not just hand to hand combat. Where Jesus is Captain of our salvation. God has got a plan and it is going to happen. Somebody, somewhere, some group and it is going to be fantastic! God has global warfare in mind as we saw in Revelation 12:7. And he wants to get past our hand to hand combat individually and eventually to get past it on a church level. But you see that is where people of the kingdom stretch their wings. You get it in your life, then in your family, then in the church. That is the way it should all be working. That is the vision of the church. We are supposed to be doing this. This is the vision of the church. And there will come to be times when whole churches come together as the army of God. Or we will pray in concert with other churches all over the world. Maybe not even knowing we are in concert. But you see we have got a Captain and he is giving orders and he is on a global scale and he is not all worried and upset. We don't have to know everything. Let me tell you, I was in the army and you didn't ask a lot of questions. You just did what you were supposed to do. I was a sergeant and had men under me, but I was under men. I had a platoon, but the general of the company would tell the battalion leader something and I didn't say, "Well, I don't know if I will go along with that." And he would say, "You either do what I am telling you or go to the brig." You are messing all these people that are

under you by acting this way." No, I said "Yes, sir, whatever you want." Well, now I don't say yes sir, but Yes Lord. And I do it because I love you. But I am disciplined and willing to suffer for the cause. There is a good scripture right in here that talks about, "They that go to war do it that they might please him that called them into the army. But then we are Lord and we want Him to bless us. We are not going to get into the army cause we understand what that means. The revelation will revolutionize my life. But you see that is really what you want. That is one reason why people are so frustrated, so bogged down spiritually cause they are wanting their way instead of the Lord's way and they are losing to gain. This is glorious, not terrible, unless you are centered on the flesh. But hopefully we will let him deal with us till we say "take it!" But you gain in the kingdom of God by losing. You gain happiness and fulfillment and it begins to work in you and out of you. But otherwise it is all drawn in and self centered and would be no world wide global war least not one we are involved in. Because we are down here going, "Oh, well...." He is just so gentle and kind he just reaches down and ministers to our need and then gets back over here in the war and says, "Yeah, let's black his eye again!" The Lord has a cause and it is exciting to him and it is exciting to those who have lost their identity and you do that in the army.

I mean the first thing they do when they get you there is march you in and cut your hair off. Then they give you a green suit that looks like everybody else's. You lose your identity for the greater of the whole. And if someone didn't do it we would all be run over by the communists. Now if someone didn't fight in God's army then we would all just be overrun by the devil. We are the only thing in the earth stopping him. We are God's agents in the earth to release his kingdom in the earth. There is nobody else to do it but us. And if there is a church over there that doesn't have a clue to the kingdom, they are not releasing anything into the earth. But if we understand and are working with the keys of the kingdom we are opening things that are in heaven which is bringing things into the earth. That's what we want to do but not for us, not for our ministry. This whole thing is the total opposite of thinking that says - "Well, I hope I get to be a big preacher. I want about 5000 people." That doesn't please God, that pleases your flesh. You're not trying to bring in God's kingdom, you are trying to bring in yours. But when you enlist, for there is no draft in the army of God. It is a volunteer army. You say, "Man that's a terrible way to do it." Not too many people join. No, but you know what? I think one of the reasons that is, is we don't have any recruiters for the kingdom of God because they are preaching personal blessings and personal salvation. Now personal salvation is a great thing but it is only a small miniscule part of it. There are few recruiters for the kingdom of God and therefore there are few soldiers that say where can I sign up? But you see that is where we preach. We don't just preach salvation though we preach it. You know we got a message to the Christians.

It is just as important to preach to the Christians the Kingdom of God. They have already got salvation under their belt and hopefully they have run the

thing dry of the other mess and they are looking for the bigger part the Kingdom of God. So they can get involved and give their life away to something. There are people out there just waiting. But you see we are growing into this. You get little bits and pieces and something will spark in you, then it will go away and you will say, will this does not last very long and then you will hit something and you will say lets do it and then it will go away. What we need to see is the word of the kingdom firmly planted and growing. You will know the kingdom of God by the Holy Spirit of God and you are going to be a part of what God is going to do in the end time harvest and it is going to be a glorious thing but we have got to continue through this part. The harvest is the fun part. It is this hoeing and breaking up the clods, and digging and sweating and planting and birds coming and steal three or four of them and you go, "Bring them back!" This is the rough part here, but once it gets going, it is like a snowball. You put a little snowball at the top of the hill and you push it off and with each rotation it increases and picks up speed and when it reaches the bottom it just eats what ever is in it's way. That is exactly what the kingdom of God will do. In terms you will understand - It is seed time and harvest, the laws of reciprocity, it just takes off. And it will take off quickly but you have got to start somewhere and that is what we are trying to do. We are trying to start right here and work through the hard part. That is the labor part but it is going to pay off. And what does the Bible say, "You will reap if you faint not, be not weary in well doig. For you shall reap if... Conditional folks!! Because if you stop, you get nothing. Look at Colossians 1:11. I was reading this and thinking about the kingdom of God and kind of jumped the gun. Verse eleven says strengthened with all might and it says according to his glorious power," and I'm going "man, we are talking glorious power!" " Unto all patience and longsuffering!? Patience and longsuffering! We have been strengthened with all might and glorious power so we can be patient, longsuffering with joyfulness!!!

I mean I was ready to bite the back of the chair that I was sitting in. But then I saw He is strengthing us to be patient with longsuffering. Go to James 5:7. "Be patient, therefore, brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the former waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient like farmers, establish your heart for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." We are talking about the coming of the Lord. The kingdom come in earth. We are talking about seeing the glory of God. The greatest part of the glory of God is when Jesus returns as Lord and just takes the rod of iron and takes over but you know there is a harvest written up in Matthew 13 that is coming before he comes back and it relates to the kingdom of God. Let me give you a story.

Once there was a man. He was a great king and had a big family and was so happy. He loved his wife and had all these kids and was so happy. And one day an evil person cam in and stole all of his kids and took them away and scattered those kids all over the world. And most of those kids were too young to realized who they belonged to and so, they grew up in foreign lands not

knowing who their Father was. Some were scattered in places that were poor and they were poor and some had done well and they were rich, but all knew there was something missing. There was something they lacked, some purpose and glorious thing related to my being that I don't really understand. Then the King calls in a bunch of messengers and says, Listen, I want my kids back. It has been years and I don't know where the wicked one has put them all. But I am sending you to go out there and preach the message of the kingdom. "Say, there is a king and he is your father" and there will be certain ones that the message will mean nothing to, but there is going to be some who will say - "That's what it is!" They are going to be prepared because they are my kids. They will be poor, rich and in different places. You don't know exactly where they are but you are to go and preach and tell them there is a King and that king is your father. He loves you and he wants to bring you back into the house and he wants to love you and for you to be fulfilled. And those ones will say "Yes, this is what I've longed for, this is what I want and they will fall on their knees and weep and they will go back with the servant and have a glorious reunion!

Folks, there are people out there prepared. They do not know what they want to hear, but they know there is something they have got to hear. And oh, the joy of those servants which seek to be obedient. Their attitude is not affected by rejection. They simply think, it could be the next one! The joy of those servants when they see that face light up and they say, "The king is my Father! I want to come home." Those servants cry with joy when they see that one coming back to the King. They say, "Look I've found one" and the king says, "Oh, my child." These children separate and apart don't look family but when you bring them all together there is that family resemblance that begins to form more and more as they hang out together.

Let me tell you this thing is bigger than a salvation message or a little group of people. You know we get discouraged but let me tell you the truth is the truth. God has called us. God has called me and you and I'll die trying to do what God has told me to do. If I never do it, I will die knowing that I tried to do what God wants. Maybe I can leave a writing or something that was planted in you and someone else. Maybe they will be raised up, but it is going to be done because people are giving themselves to it. Not because it is fun, but because they believe it. Because they obey the king out of love not fear. They will endure anything and if I don't see it give me the where with all. '

Either the seeds to preach that will go in people or write something that 100 years from now, someone will stumble across and read and they will see. I don't know, I just know that's your heart, that's what you want. You want a kingdom, you want an army and I'll do whatever I can. I've enlisted. You see if you are drafted they don't give you a hard time. Be proud you joined and stay in and see through what he has given you. Keep going, know what God said and stick with it. Do it because it is God's will. I'm doing it because he asked me to and I am an obedient child of God. I am so messed up and fall short of the

glory of God that I would almost wish that he would not do it, so that I don't get involved in it. I know that others can handle it a lot better than I can. I'd rather he use you and if I can plant something, then glory to God! I don't want to mess it up. I believe what I believe and I believe it more now than I ever have. This is what I've been called to do and this is the message that I am called to preach. It is sowing time right now and sowing time is not as much fun as reaping. It is rough right now but if we do not faint we will reap. If we faint we reap nothing and we stand with shame on our face before our God and say, "I couldn't trust you in a trial." "I had to go jump out of the boat and go swim somewhere it looked really good." I hope that nobody does what they shouldn't do. That boat was rocking and reeling when Paul was in it and Paul said, "God appeared unto me and said, If everybody will stay in the boat, no one will drown. And everything said, Let's get out of here! I'll take my chances alone and a lot of people are so individual they will take their chances alone. God said, "Let's stay in the boat." One holiday we are celebrating right now is Martin Luther King day and he said, "I've been to the mountain and I see the light." The man saw something and he died for it. He had a vision of something and I've never forgotten those words. Folks, you know from my preaching tonight that something has happened to me since last Wednesday night. I know the will of God and I know what I am about. And I plan on sticking with it. I don't care if I do it alone. I'm not doing it because of crowds, but because of God. Now, God may call you to another place, but I must be about my Father's business.