

God's Imperial Rule 12

Please refer to chapter 17 in the *Extraordinary* book, along with session 12 of the teaching series.

“When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God, He’s actually referring to the ‘rule of God.’ The Greek words most frequently used in the gospels for the Kingdom of God are *basileia tou Theos*. *Theos* refers to God, while *basileia* is defined as ‘royalty, rule, or reign.’ Some scholars believe the best translation for the Kingdom of God is ‘**God’s Imperial Rule**’ or ‘God’s domain.’ So Jesus literally communicates, ‘Our Father in heaven, God Almighty, Your *Imperial Rule* come, Your will be done on earth just as it is in heaven.’”

JOHN BEVERE
adapted from chapter 17

IMPERIAL

The word *imperial* “pertains to an empire or royalty; it denotes sovereignty as well as commanding and maintaining supremacy.”¹ Words synonymous with *imperial* are grand, regal, majestic, and royal.

1. Adam messed up in the Garden of Eden and gave Satan dominion over the earth. However, Jesus, as a man, won it back. Now final authority is back where God originally intended—in the hands of *His* men and women.

a. Why has God limited Himself in what He’ll do on earth? (See page 218 in the book.)

- b. Who ultimately determines whether or not the will of God is done on the earth? What does this say to you personally?

2. According to Amos 3:7, God revealed His will to His servants (the prophets) in the days of the Old Testament. Today, in the era of the New Testament, He reveals His will to believers. What is God's purpose in revealing His will to us—what does He want us to do?

Check out John 15:15; 16:13.

Heaven's

APPEAL

The heaven of heavens is for God, but he put us in charge of the earth.

—Psalm 115:16 The Message

QUICK REVIEW

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

What is your highest goal as a believer?

According to 2 Peter 1:3, how are you to carry out this goal?

Name three specific things that God's amazing grace provides for you.

Where does faith *originate*, and how does it enable you to receive God's grace?

Name the primary way in which you can *increase your faith*. (See page 176 in the book.)

3. It's important for you to have a clear understanding of the Kingdom of God (God's Imperial Rule). **Check out** Jesus' practical descriptions in these passages and allow the Holy Spirit to paint a fresh, vivid picture of His Kingdom on the screen of your heart.

SCRIPTURE	JESUS COMPARES HIS KINGDOM/IMPERIAL RULE TO:	WHAT DOES THIS SIGNIFY OR IMPLY?
Matthew 13:24-30	Sowing weeds among good seed	
Matthew 13:33 Luke 13:20-21	The effects of yeast	
Matthew 13:44	Hidden treasure in a field	
Matthew 13:45-46	A merchant looking for pearls	
Matthew 13:47-50	A fisherman's net; separating the good fish from the bad	
Matthew 22:2-14	The wedding banquet	
Mark 4:26-29	A man sowing seed/ growing seed	
Luke 13:18-19 Mark 4:30-32 Matthew 13:31-32	A mustard seed	

Heaven's

APPEAL

...those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness **reign in life** through the one man, Jesus Christ.

—Romans 5:17 NIV

Voice of the Ages

"Do all the good you can.
By all the means you can.
In all the ways you can.
In all the places you can.
At all the times you can.
To all the people you can.
As long as ever you can."

—John Wesley²

4. When Jesus walked the earth, He gave us an example of how to rule and reign in life. Before He ascended back to heaven, He commissioned all of His followers, including us, to do the same, continuing the work He began.

- a. In your own words, describe what it means to rule in life. What kind of things should be happening in your sphere of influence as you live this lifestyle?

- b. Give an example of how your extraordinary living is affecting others around you.

Heaven's

APPEAL

Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits.

—1 Corinthians 12:7
The Message

FASCINATING FACTS: DID YOU KNOW...

Johannes Gutenberg *invented the movable type printing press* in 1454, revolutionizing the world. The first book to be printed was the Bible. Gutenberg's superior invention opened the door for the common man to own and know God's Word. The reason for

Gutenberg's success, as he stated in 1460, is that his work had been under "the protection of the All-Highest, who often reveals to the humble what He conceals from the wise."

Isaac Newton was just an average student whose best grades were in religion. Nonetheless, his discoveries in physics, optics, astronomy and mathematics place him as the greatest scientific mind of all time. His *formulation of the law of gravity* was his highest achievement and came from his intense study of the Bible. In his words, "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatsoever."

Florence Nightingale was convinced at age 17 that God had a special mission planned for her, which she eventually discovered was nursing. Mastering five languages and intensely studying medicine, hospital administration

and nursing, Florence became an expert on public health and hospitals, in time overseeing the welfare of the British army. When soldiers tried to give honor to her, she would tell them, "Give praise to God." Indeed, Florence impacted history by *establishing nursing as a medical profession*.

George Washington Carver was the son of a slave woman who became an orphan raised by a poor family. After overcoming serious illness as a child, Carver invested his life in helping others. Describing himself as a "cook-stove chemist," George *developed 300 products from peanuts*, including dyes, soap, and dairy substitutes. He also *formulated more than 100 products from sweet potatoes*, such as molasses and rubber. Who did he give the credit to? God. He explained, "I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting system through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in."³

These people were all *ordinary* Christians who lived *extraordinary* lives in their field of expertise, doing what God called them to do.

WHAT LASTING LEGACY ARE **YOU** LEAVING?

5. Clearly, you have a specific assignment from God. No task, no matter how menial it may seem, is insignificant. Every part is important to the overall function of God's plan—including yours!

- a. To the best of your knowledge, what do you feel in your heart God has called you to do in this season of your life? Are you doing it? If not, why?

- b. What should your attitude be toward your task? Read Colossians 3:23-24 and write what this verse of instruction speaks to you.

Voice of the Ages

"The Creator has made us each one of a kind. There is nobody else exactly like us, and there never will be. Each of us is his special creation and is alive for a distinctive purpose."

—Luci Swindoll⁴

- c. How are you to use your time? Read Psalm 90:12 and Ephesians 5:15-17 and write what these words of wisdom convey to you.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

—Romans 8:35,37 NKJV

6. Many believers view trials and tribulation as a major roadblock to living an extraordinary life, but God doesn't want us to see things that way. He wants us to view adversity as major *opportunities* to manifest and advance His Kingdom in and through our lives.

- a. What has been your view of opposition and hardship until now? How do you think it has affected your circumstances?

- b. Read John 16:33, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 and James 1:2-3 and write how your perspective of trials is challenged and/or encouraged.

- c. Looking back over your life, can you see a time of trouble you went through that actually served to prepare you to rule and reign in life at a later time? If so, explain it.

I have a dream of a **light-filled** body of Christ comprised of all ages, inclusive of men and women, awakening to what God has hidden within and arising in His glory and power. These believers will live in such an extraordinary manner that multitudes will be drawn to the Kingdom of God, not merely by what they preach, but by the compelling demonstration of how they live and their remarkable feats.”

JOHN BEVERE

adapted from chapter 17

7. God doesn't expect us to take over the world and present it to His Son when He returns, but He does expect us to faithfully occupy until He comes.
- a. As a believer, what are some of the things you should be doing as you await Christ's return? **Check out** these verses for the answer:

Matthew 24:42-51; 25:1-13 • 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5

Heaven's

APPEAL

All of us must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent me, because there is little time left before the night falls and all work comes to an end.

—John 9:4 NLT

8. One day the man of ultimate evil, the antichrist, will arise and take center stage on the earth. But before he can, there is something that must be removed—something that is presently concealing and restraining him from being seen and known by all.
- a. What is restraining and concealing the antichrist, and how and when will it be removed? (See page 222 in the book.)

Check out 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Voice of the Ages



“Rise up, then, and lay claim to the power that is yours, because I am in you, and ye are in Me, and as I was in the world, even so are ye. I was victorious, and you too may be victorious. I withstood every encounter with the devil, and you too can stand against him. I healed the sick and wrestled tortured bodies out of the grip of evil forces, and you too can do the same.

Learn to reign, for lo, I have made you to become kings and priests. I have purposed that ye should come into that place where ye share My authority and thus I will be able to manifest forth My glory through you.”

—Frances J. Roberts⁵

- b. According to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7, what else is being restrained from being released in the earth?

9. In Scripture, the church is often called the body of Christ, but it is also referred to as the *Bride of Christ*. Read 2 Corinthians 11:2 and Revelation 19:6-8 and 21:2 and give a brief description of the condition of the Bride of Christ before Jesus, the Groom, returns. As part of His Bride, why is this important for you to know?

Heaven's

APPEAL

If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, 'Jump,' and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

—1 Corinthians 13:1-3
The Message

10. If there is any quality a groom wants his bride to have, it's *love*, and Jesus wants this for His Bride too. We can know the entire Bible from cover to cover and walk in the power of God 24/7, but if we don't embody the genuine love of the Lord, we're nothing.

- a. How do we *receive* the ability to love others like God loves us, and how does that love grow? *Meditate on the message* of these amazing truths for the answer:

Romans 5:5 • Ephesians 3:16-19
• 1 John 4:16-19

- b. What does love *think*, *speak* and *act* like? Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and write what the picture speaks to you.

Heaven's

APPEAL

And so faith, hope, love abide [faith—conviction and belief respecting man's relation to God and divine things; hope—joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation; love—true affection for God and man, growing out of God's love for and in us], these three; but the *greatest* of these is **love**.

—1 Corinthians 13:13 AMP

the
bottom line

You were created to live an extraordinary life—to radically change your surroundings by bringing God's Imperial Rule on the earth. Time is short...make the most of every opportunity you have. In an attitude of love, carry out the specific task you've been given. As salt and light, you will please the Lord and be prepared when He comes.

Voice
of the **Ages**

"Without expectation, do something for love itself, not for what you may receive. *Love in action* is what gives us *grace*. We have been created for greater things—to love and to be loved.

Open your hearts to the love God instills... God loves you tenderly. What He gives you is not to be kept under lock and key but to be *shared*.

Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. *Let us begin.*"

—Mother Teresa⁶

UNVEIL YOUR HERO

A stay-at-home mom takes on her call of empowering her children to greatness—allowing them from a young age to be themselves, think creatively, and be influencers to those around them.

Teri is raising world changers...

Journal Your Journey

“To live in the ability of grace, through faith, motivated by *compassion* and sincere *love* will avail much in the eyes of God and men. May you be one of the extraordinary ones of our generation! You’re needed to arise, shine, and reveal His Imperial Rule and glorious reign.”

JOHN BEVERE

adapted from chapter 17

EYE-OPENERS

One word from God, spoken into your spirit, is more life-changing than the knowledge received from thousands of books. What transforming truths is the Holy Spirit speaking to you?

REVOLUTIONARY YOU

As a son or daughter of the Most High, you have been called to rule and reign on earth. What new goals do you sense you must set in place to more effectively execute God’s authority?

PRAYER

*Father, I pray that Your love in me will overflow more and more to others, and at the same time I keep on growing in spiritual insight and knowledge of You. May I and all believers always see clearly the difference between right and wrong and remain inwardly clean, so that we don't bring dishonor to Your name. Take all that I have studied through this curriculum and help me apply it in my daily life so I can truly live **extraordinarily** from now until the time Jesus returns...in His name, Amen!*

SALT & LIGHT

Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be **salt**-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? ...Here's another way to put it: You're here to be **light**, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill.

—Matthew 5:13-14 *The Message*

Salt and light...that's what Jesus calls us. To understand what He is saying, contemplate the purposes for both of these everyday items.

What is salt used for? The first use that comes to mind is *adding flavor* to food. Sprinkling a little salt into the hot stew on your stove makes the flavors mix and come alive. Another use for salt, especially in Jesus' day, was to *preserve* food from decaying. Salt is also used for *medicinal* purposes, to purify and bring healing to the body.

As a believer, God has called **you** to *add flavor* to the world around you—to enhance and bring out the wonderful savor of the Savior. He wants people to truly “taste and see that the Lord is good” and come alive in Him (Psalm 34:8). As salt, God also has prepared and positioned you to *preserve* the lives of the people around you from spiritual decay. For those who are sick with sin, your life is to be the *medicine* that brings cleansing and healing to their lives.

In what specific ways are you acting as *salt* in the society that surrounds you? How does your “salty” life make others thirst for Jesus, the Living Water?

Check out Colossians 4:5-6.

Heaven's

APPEAL

You are the world's **light**—a city on a hill, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light! Let it shine for all; let your good deeds *glow* for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father.

—Matthew 5:14-16 TLB

Jesus also calls us “light.” What would life be like without light? Dark. The first and most obvious benefit of light is that it gives us the *ability to see* clearly and vividly the world around us, including the people we cherish dearly. Light is also a *source of life* itself. Light from the sun provides the energy needed for all vegetation to grow and produce food, not to mention the warmth it brings for life to exist.

Interestingly, the pupils of our eyes are designed to respond to light—not darkness. In darkness, they will dilate, opening larger and larger, searching for every ounce of light they can take in. Keep in mind, “Your eye is a *lamp* for your body. A pure eye lets *sunshine* into your soul” (Matthew 6:22 NLT).

In the midst of the darkening world we live in, there are people all around us whose eyes are dilating to take in the divine light of Jesus Christ. Whether they know it or not, they are desperately looking for illumination as to which path to take—their spirit and soul are yearning for the warm sunshine of the Son to bring life to their being. The question is: Are they receiving this life-giving Light from you?

In what specific ways do you believe your life is a *light* to those living around you? How can you enhance the radiance you are emitting?

Heaven's

APPEAL

For once you were darkness, but now **you are light** in the Lord; walk as children of Light [lead the lives of those native-born to the Light].

—Ephesians 5:8 AMP

Check out 1 Peter 2:11-12; Titus 2:7-8; 3:8.

So how can you, in a practical way, effectively be salt and light to those around you? The avenue of opportunity is to be *personally involved* in their lives. Through **relationships** with people in their everyday existence, we

affect them and earn the right to speak the truth in love. Check out these startling statistics that hammer home the power of the personal touch:

Eighty percent of all the people who have come forward to receive Christ during a Billy Graham crusade were brought by a *friend* or *relative*. That is the figure Billy Graham's Association has determined through decades of research. Elmer Towns affirms this statistic with his own research. Dr. Towns has been taking a personal survey in his seminars for 12 years all across America. The results of these surveys reveal the following about how people have come to Christ: 2 percent through non-personal advertising (TV, radio, literature, etc.), 6 percent because of the personal influence of a pastor, 6 percent through the intentional evangelistic efforts of a church, and *86 percent* found Jesus as a result of a friend or relative. Unfortunately, the church appears to be missing this important truth, because a recent Gallup poll showed that 63 percent of unchurched Americans have *not* been invited to church by their friends. Slick marketing will never replace a **personal relationship**.⁷

As we live in relationship with God, our very lives act as *salt* and *light* to others. The choices we make day in and day out, and the results they bring, preach volumes to others before a word is ever spoken.

It is the witness of our life that opens the door to the witness of our lips. Therefore, we must also be ready to share the Gospel message in a fresh, clear, relevant way at a moment's notice to anyone the Lord brings across our path. Read 1 Peter 3:15 and write how you are challenged by it.

Also **check out** 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:2.

What else can you do to act as salt and light? **Pray**. Prayer paves the way for God to move in the lives of the lost and gives you a heart of compassion to see them saved. Here are some specific points of prayer to consider as you pray for the salvation of your family and friends:

Lord, in Your mercy, I ask You to...

In prayer, speak a friend or family member's name in each blank.

Open the blind eyes and deaf ears of _____ so he/she can see and hear the truth; give him/her the measure of faith he/she needs to believe and receive Christ as his/her Savior and Lord.

Create the circumstances and situations necessary that will soften _____ heart and cause him/her to come (or return) to You.

Surround _____ with people (including me) who will show him/her Christ in their lives and speak the truth in love to him/her at the right time, in the right way.

Reveal Yourself to _____ through people, TV, radio, Internet, books, and anything else You know will grab his/her attention.

Show _____ that You are real, that You love him/her intensely, and that he/she cannot live without You...in Jesus' name, Amen!

FOR FURTHER STUDY

RULING WITH CHRIST

Luke 22:28-30
2 Timothy 2:11-13
Revelation 1:5-6; 3:21

THE NEED FOR LOVE

Ephesians 4:15-16; 5:1-2
Colossians 3:12-14
1 John 4:7-21

EXPERIENCING PEACE

Psalms 4:8; 29:11; 119:165
Isaiah 26:3
Matthew 11:28-30
John 14:27; 16:33

REMAIN IN THE LIGHT

John 8:12
2 Corinthians 4:6
Ephesians 5:13-14
1 John 1:5-7

1. Adapted from Noah Webster's *First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828), Republished in facsimile edition by Foundation for American Christian Education (San Francisco, CA, 1995). 2. *Fast Break, Five-Minute Devotions to Start Your Day* (St. San Luis Obispo, CA: Parable, 2007) Day 57. 3. John Hudson Tiner, *For Those Who Dare: 101 Great Christians and How They Changed the World* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, Inc., 2002) adapted from pp.20-22; 84-86; 187-189; 236-237. 4. See note 2, Day 123. 5. Frances J. Roberts, *Come Away My Beloved* (Ojai, CA: King's Farspan, Inc., 1973) p. 125. 6. Quotes by Mother Theresa (<http://dailychristianquote.com/doqteresa.html>, retrieved 6/24/09). 7. Raymond McHenry, *McHenry's Quips, Quotes & Other Notes* (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2004), adapted from pp. 177-178.

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GOD'S IMPERIAL RULE

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