

2019 WCCC

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Be A Vessel to Honor (2)

We are on our way from grace to glory. We have been saved by grace. We have been filled with grace. Of His fullness we have all received grace upon grace. But the end product is glory. And on the way to glory, we must become vessels of honor. I have been asked to speak on this matter of vessels of honor. Let us turn to II Timothy and we will read a few verses.

II Timothy 1:6 – 12 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was granted in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. For this reason, I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

II Timothy 2:11 – 13 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

II Timothy 2:19 – 21 Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.” Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Notice the verses where vessels of honor are being mentioned.

II Timothy 4:1 – 2 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

Let us pray

Lord, we gather together as Your children even in this large house. We all know ourselves as earthen vessels. But each of us has a treasure inside. And that treasure is to transform us into gold and silver, vessels of honor. As we come nearer to the moment of glory, we pray this transforming will be known in all the vessels who are here tonight. We pray that You continue to do Your sovereign work here in our midst during this conference. We depend upon the Holy Spirit. In our weakness, we need strength. And the grace to rise up and to fulfill our calling. Gain for Yourself vessels of honor. We pray in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

We have been going through I and II Timothy and watching the development of Timothy's spiritual life. The Lord made a vessel of honor out of Timothy. When we read those verses in II Timothy 2, who could wish anything more than this: to be a vessel of honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared for every good work. By the grace of God, Timothy was saved probably in his hometown of Lystra on Paul's first missionary journey. We know those days recorded in the Book of Acts were miraculous days. As Paul and Barnabas set out on their first missionary journey, many were gathered together into the kingdom of God by the preaching of the gospel. We certainly believe that Timothy's mother and grandmother were faithful Jews who immediately responded to the gospel of the Messiah. And even though Timothy was a young person in his late teens, the word has been hidden in his heart. And when he heard the gospel, he was saved as well. And in that out of the way place in the Galatian province of Lystra, Timothy began to grow with a growth which was from God. In those early days in the Book of Acts, God sovereignly built His church and the gates of hell could not prevail against it. Paul and Barnabas did not stay in Timothy's town for long. But while they were there, they laid a foundation of Jesus Christ. And as they continued their travels from place to place, Timothy saw the miracle of the church there being built by the Lord Jesus. The Lord has established a household there; probably a small number of Christians but they were a family. They loved one another. They learned to submit to one another. When they did not know what to do, they prayed to the Lord and the Lord gave them answers. They probably only had a few men among them that knew how to read the bible, and Timothy became important in this way. Despite the fact that it was a young church, the testimony of the Lord was there. If anyone asked whose church was this, they immediately would reply it was the Lord Jesus'; the Messiah and it was His meeting. And the Lord began to build this church sovereignly, almost without the use of human hands. This is what I call the first stage of church building that Timothy encountered. The building work was done by the Lord Jesus Himself.

After some time, Paul set out with Silas on the second missionary journey. When they went through that Galatian region, Iconium and Lystra, the brothers in the two different towns asked Paul whether he had seen young Timothy. They felt there was something in Timothy that was of God. When he explained the word of God to them, they saw Jesus. Now Paul and Silas did not know Timothy up to that point, but based upon the recommendation of the elders, they laid hands on Timothy, and Timothy joined Paul and Silas in this apostolic building of the church. Timothy saw how God built His church, and when we come to I Timothy, we see that Timothy understood that God built His church through human instruments. He takes earthen vessels; He reveals Christ in them. He deals with their characters and lives by the work of the cross. He gives unto them gifts unto the ministry. And when these brothers went from city to city, and proclaimed the gospel, the church was surely built. It was built solidly upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. And as Paul explained in Ephesians 2, upon that foundation, the apostles and the prophets began to build up the church. When Timothy looked at Paul and Silas, and the others in the party, Timothy saw Jesus in these people. They were vessels of honor. They did not take people's money. They did not think about themselves. They were useful. They were sanctified. And they were prepared for this work of building the church. What a revelation! It was to see Christ in human vessels building His church, the body of Christ. Timothy was fortunate to work with these master builders. And after a period of time of traveling with these men, Paul began to send Timothy on errands to the various places that they had built the church. Timothy had seen these brothers did wonderful things. But now he had to stand by the grace of the Lord and be faithful. He knew how to build the church because he saw before his eyes how it was built by the Lord and the apostles. And thus Paul said to Timothy, 'stay there in Ephesus and order the church. Teach them the doctrines so they will not listen to heresies and false teachings. Encourage all the saints to be faithful in serving in the body of Christ'. The goal was for every brother and sister, from young to old, to become vessels of honor. And Timothy ministered by the grace of the Lord.

The third stage of the Church being built

And now we come to the third stage for Timothy as he perceived the church being built. In II Timothy, he still needed to minister and serve the church of Jesus Christ. But the situation had been made much more difficult because the church was not so clearly defined around Jesus Christ as it once was. In II Timothy 2:20 Paul spoke about this situation as a large house where there were not only gold and silver, but also wood and earthenware vessels. Now there were a lot more people. The Lord had gathered many people into the kingdom of God by the gospel. But in this large house, which once had been so wonderfully defined by the testimony of Jesus as the pillar in the midst, you did not see the Lord Jesus Christ so clearly. Rather you saw many human vessels – some good

vessels, some golden vessels, some silver vessels. Now I think probably the sisters were the golden vessels. Some brothers perhaps, silver vessels. But there were a lot of other people serving as an old clay pot. Perhaps they had a lot of knowledge but the vessel had not changed very much. And because of the lack of discipline in the large house, everyone was teaching many different doctrines. Everyone was a preacher now. Everyone read a book and knew the truth. This was then much more difficult to serve. How many of you would like to serve a church like the church at Ephesus at the beginning? It is like you die and go to heaven to serve in such a church. Do you think you would like to serve in the church of Corinth? In Corinth, there were some vessels of flesh and there was confusion of vessels. What comes to your mind when you hear 'the church of the living God'? It is that God is very real among those people. If a sinner comes in, he might say, indeed God is here. And if someone wants to lie and steal like Ananias and Saphira, they die right there in the church. When God is in control of the church, there is no messing around.

But now in the large house, there is a lot of messing around. I would rather serve in a church where everyone is under the Lord. It is tough when everyone is messing around. When Timothy looked at that present situation, it was difficult. He saw the spiritual decline. He saw the world was making inroads into the church. But worst of all, he heard that his mentor, his spiritual father was going into glory. It was different when building a church and you have someone like Paul standing next to you. But it was different when there was no Paul and just Tim. Even as a faithful servant for years, he came to a new place where he had to step up to be faithful. We read these words where Paul was trying to help Timothy to understand something vital.

In II Timothy 2:19 Paul said that no matter how confusing things look, the firm foundation of God still stands. Whether you can see that foundation of Jesus Christ or whether it is obscured, it is still there. And just like a seal, it has two sides. Side number one, the Lord knows those who are His. There are lots of people who call on the name of Jesus and who use the name of Jesus and heal in the name of Jesus. But the other side of the seal are those who use the name of Jesus and abstain from wickedness.

The Spirit of the book of second Timothy

There is something very unusual about II Timothy as a book. And when you read the book of II Timothy, there seems to be an entirely different atmosphere and spirit to this book, especially when you compare it to I Timothy or Titus. For one thing, in many of Paul's letters, he fought the good fight. Some of the letters he wrote, he did it wearing boxing gloves. Galatians, what were you doing? Why were you being foolish? It is the same with the Corinthians. Paul was a fighter. But not in II Timothy. In all of Paul's letters, he almost always wrote something like I am pursuing my upward call in Christ Jesus and I do not want to be left

behind. He was striving because he did not want to be a castaway. But now he was no longer pushing and pursuing. There was a quiet confidence in Paul that he had already gained what the Lord wanted in his useful life. Now there were many charges and many commands that Paul gave to Timothy in the second letter. But why is the spirit and the atmosphere of II Timothy so different? Some bible scholars think II Timothy could not be written by Paul because somehow it is so different. Have you discerned that as you read this wonderful letter? When we look at the personal Paul in II Timothy in chapter 4, we see that Paul was all alone in a crude Roman jail. He had been sentenced to death. He received news of many churches with the various problems that were going on. He said he was very near the end. His time was at hand. There alone in that Roman jail, he said at the end of the letter, Timothy will you please bring my coat because I am so cold. I do not know when they are going to execute me, but can you bring the bible so I can read those parchments until I die? And actually, more than a cloak and more than a parchment, he wanted to see his son Timothy before he died.

Here is a picture of a man at the end. And yet strangely, there was a peace and a contentment about him. He seemed to be spending more and more time in the presence of his King. How he loved His appearing. And perhaps there in that lonely jail, sometimes in the middle of the night, maybe somebody heard singing. I Timothy 1:17 *'Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.'* Have you ever sung this song? You know what happens to one who loves the Lord's appearing? You might think he has gone slightly crazy. But what happens is that his heart is filled with kingdom come and the thoughts of eternity. I imagine Paul looking at the scroll of Daniel where he was being persecuted by the fourth beast. And the fourth beast, empire Rome would be the final empire before the kingdom of God will come through the cloud and the Son of Man comes and set up His kingdom on earth. Paul did not know when the Lord will come. But really what else did he have to live for? And I made my point. We see it even in the theme words of II Timothy 4:8. The coming of the Lord and His kingdom was at the center of Paul's thought.

The crown of righteousness

Let us break down II Timothy 4:8 *'In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.'* Do you see it? There is the judgment seat, right there in the middle of the verse. That is the judgment seat that the Christians will stand before when the kingdom comes in. Then he said 'there is a crown laid up for me'. The King eternal has reserved a crown just for me in His kingdom. Now what is that crown of righteousness? Our brother Ted spoke about it this morning. The crown of righteousness is a specific reward. Do you see? Paul said the Lord will award him this crown. What is the crown of righteousness? Christ is our

righteousness. Christ has become our righteousness. But the crown of righteousness is for those who have done righteousness by the life of Christ. If you remember in Revelation, when the bride has made herself ready, her linen garment is the righteousness of the saints. Not just saying Christ is my righteousness but able to do righteous work like building the church by the grace of God. There is the crown laid up. It will be awarded to him and then he said on that day. What day is that? That day is the day when His kingdom comes. So II Timothy is a letter from the view of the coming kingdom. Just notice these two verses. They both mention that day. II Timothy 1:12 *'For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.'* What was Paul saying? I have done and served my Lord. Though the service is imperfect, I committed my service back to the Lord and the Lord will keep that and bring it out in remembrance on the day of judgment in His kingdom.

What a wonderful thought. And when you stand before the Lord in the judgment seat, have you got treasures stored up in heaven against that day? This is not the white throne of judgement regarding salvation. This is the judgment and reward seat that every Christian will stand before. You come before the Lord and the angel said, roll the video tape. There is a lot of knowledge to keep in the bank for that reward day. Have you got anything invested up there? Paul said, I got confidence these things will be remembered in the day of judgment. Notice in II Timothy 1:18 that as Paul talked about Onesiphorus, and his kindness in finding Paul and helping Paul while he was in prison, he said *'the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day'*. Now there are books in the bible that speak about the kingdom of God. And in Paul's writings you can find statements and quotations about the coming of kingdom of the Lord. And this is what is unique in II Timothy. This is not the teachings regarding the coming of the kingdom of the Lord. This is the sharing of the kingdom from the perspective of one who is like he is on the threshold of the kingdom. Do you understand what I am saying?

Paul was writing under a broader vision. His exhortation was set in the light of the eternal kingdom. And he was writing from an EPOV - eternal point of view. As an example, let us go back to II Timothy 1:8 and see how Paul revealed the strategic importance of his ministry in terms of God's eternal purpose. *'Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.'* It is possible to despise gospel preaching. It is possible to become discouraged with all the work that we put in and sometimes we find just the little fruit. Well Timothy, said Paul, do not be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus. Sometimes we look at other Christian servants and we can be ashamed of them. But Paul said *'do not be ashamed of me. But join with me in preaching the gospel'*. Listen to verse 9 *'who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity'*. You may have a very small ministry. I think Timothy's ministry

probably could not be compared with Paul's. But Paul said that was not the point. Has your service served God's purpose? Have you served the kingdom of God or have you served yourself? Our ministries, whether large or small need to be reviewed in the light of the coming kingdom.

Three things happened when the Kingdom come

Now having said all these, maybe we can answer some of the questions we asked last time. The question is how could Timothy produce vessels of honor when he could no longer see the clear testimony in the church? How could Timothy serve faithfully as a vessel of honor when there was not the living sense of the presence of God in the household? And how could the young people become vessels of honor when there were so many teachings or doctrines floating about with people calling themselves Christians. How was Timothy going to do this? He needed a clear vision of the kingdom to come. He always needed the clear vision of Jesus Christ and the coming kingdom before him. I see Paul in those last days, in his last letter, standing on the threshold of the kingdom. He got one foot in, in anticipation and still he was upon the earth. He longed for the Lord's return. And as the Lord comes closer and closer, standing in the doorway, Paul seemed to be standing with Him. Paul was living in a different time zone than Timothy was. Timothy was living in an Ephesian time zone. Paul was living in kingdom time zone. What a difference in reviewing our service and ministry if we are living in the kingdom time zone. Timothy, 'it did not matter what the confusion was about. You need to see that the kingdom is coming. You need to be as if you are in the threshold'.

Let me explain a little bit here. Our God is one who works through the human history. And we notice from His word that when there is going to be a change of epic, a change of age, there are three things that are consistently seen. When the children of Israel were about to come out in Exodus, these things could be seen. And when the kingdom of God was to be established under David, these things were seen. And when the remnant came back to build the city of God, these things could be seen. And when Jesus and the kingdom of heaven came, these things could be seen. What are these three things?

In the background there were always great tribulations and troubles. When God is about to move sovereignly there are always great trouble among God's people here on earth. You can read in II Timothy of the list of trouble that the saints were going through. Before God raised up His king David, the fall of Saul's kingdom and all Israel being in the hands of the Philistines was a terrible situation. Before Jesus and John the Baptist came, the people of Israel suffered greatly under the Roman rule. So when we see great trouble, it is a sign that God is about to move. Even before He sovereignly moved, before it comes to the end of this very age and before Jesus comes back, there will also be a sovereign

move of God about to take place. And the time of His coming will be a time of great tribulations.

The second thing is that there are appearing of the Lord. There are epiphanies. There are angels. There are prophetic whispers. (Matthew 4:3-6, 23-26)

The third thing is that you will find that God has chosen and prepared a remnant of people to stand as that new age ushers in. We will just use the example when Jesus came the first time. There was great trouble. But there was this little community mentioned in Luke 1. These were the remnants of those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel to come – an old priest and his wife, an old prophet and an old prophetess. They were God's little people but they were part of the remnant of the people that God had prepared for the coming of the kingdom of God. And just before the first appearing of Jesus Christ, there were angels' sightings. There were words spoken prophetically. There were whispers from the glory. Paul felt that he was standing at such a moment. He felt the kingdom of God was so near. And he knew the immutability of God's purpose. What God has started; God will finish. And so he had confidence. Despite of all of the problems, God has His people. God is sovereignly at work, and the God who started will finish and the kingdom of glory and eternity will come.

So from the eternal point of view of Paul, standing on the threshold of glory, Paul saw things in a different point of view. He saw as it were there were those who were sealed and that the Lord knew were His. He could look and see with the eyes of faith that there were those who have overcome and abstain from wickedness against all the onslaught of Sodom and Gomorrah. He could see within this large house that there were some who hoped for the appearing of the Lord; that it was their blessed hope and they waiting like the five wise virgins as vessels of honor.

Standing on the threshold of glory will adjust the time of our living and administration.

The threshold of the Kingdom

Maybe you think this term the threshold of the kingdom is a little crazy. But I will point out some cases. We love to sing hymns. You even sang the hymn that you do not know because I asked for it tonight. You sang very well. But there are some hymns that we specially love. They have the depth to them. Sometimes when you begin to sing a hymn, you begin to cry. Why is that? It is because the writer is standing on the threshold in the kingdom when they wrote these hymns. As our brother said tonight when he introduced the two hymns of Margaret Barbara, she walked upon this earth in the threshold of the kingdom.

She wondered whether she would meet the Lord as soon as she turned the corner. And so even in a difficult spot, she found her life in calm repose because of El Shaddai. Our brother Nee wrote some hymns that are almost impossible to sing without a tear. As he penned some of those hymns he was standing on the threshold of the kingdom. And we know that there are servants of God who served and ministered on that threshold of the kingdom. We can clearly sense when we read the apostle John's epistles that as he wrote his letters that he was writing from the threshold of the kingdom. Perhaps we should listen again when our brother Kaung shares. I wonder sometimes that we do not understand because we are not at that threshold.

I want to speak just a humbling word for a moment. We all consider ourselves very wise and smart and that we can understand everything that was written in these words. But in fact, there are something that are still closed to us because our spirit cannot enter into the feelings of the words. And so we can read Timothy and take from it doctrines and commandments and all kinds of outward things. But I wonder whether we can really feel the love our brother Godwin spoke about as Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. So Paul was at that point of departure and he wanted to come to Timothy one more time. Timothy, examine everything according to the coming of the kingdom. Are we there? Do we have any kind of sensitive spirit to the Lord's coming? It is a wonderful doctrine. But it is actually a spirit. And the spirit and the bride say to the Lord, 'come'. At some point our desire for the Lord's appearing will cause our Lord to come back and receive His kingdom and His bride when our spirit is in that love.

Things to watch out in the light of the eternal kingdom

Let me finish by giving you a few things where Paul was bringing Timothy back to God's eternal purpose of His coming back and His eternal kingdom. If you turn to II Timothy 2 you will find this familiar passage. Now Paul was telling Timothy to take grace to be faithful in service in the last days. 'Be strong in the grace, Timothy, because you are vital link'. Dear sisters, every mother is a vital link to the kingdom of God for their children. 'Timothy, you are a vital link. You have received much from me'. You see that in verse 2. 'Now pass that on to the next generation and then let that generation pass that on to those who are faithful'. Paul's gospel of the kingdom is to be passed along so people know that the kingdom is coming. And then Paul emphasized the rewards to those who are faithful. If you are a soldier, suffer so that the general will be pleased. If you are a runner, there is a prize ahead. If you are a farmer, there is a prize ahead. These rewards of the kingdom were very much in his mind. And then he went on in verse 8 where he emphasized two more kingdom matters.

The first is that the kingdom involves sufferings and rewards. Notice what he said in II Timothy 2:8 – 9, *‘Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffered hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned’*. Now if your eyes have been opened, you can see that Paul was talking about the kingdom. When he spoke about Jesus Christ risen from the dead, he actually said Jesus Christ risen out among the dead – those who were faithful and who will receive the rewards in heaven. They will be the first resurrected and will serve with the king for a thousand years. Paul also said ‘this is my gospel that Jesus is the son of David’. In other words, as a result of my preaching that ‘Jesus is the king of the coming kingdom’, I suffered. It was because the Jews did not want to hear that ‘Jesus is the King and the Messiah. But that was my gospel’. Then he went on and said something in verse 10. *‘For this reason, I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.’* What was Paul saying? We preached the gospel and people were getting saved. But now I endured sufferings for the sake of these ones chosen, that they not only were saved, but that they might obtain eternal glory. Brothers and sisters, how we need to prepare all those in our midst for the coming of the kingdom and the glory. Then he went on and spoke about rewards in verses II Timothy 2:11 – 13. *‘It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself’*. Then look at II Timothy 4 :1 – 2 and you see the whole charge and all of the commandments that Paul gave Timothy are based on serving the kingdom. *‘I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction’*.

The mystery of the heavenly Kingdom

Do we have a kingdom view? Do we realize that we are on the clock in our service and in our lives? Do we sense the change of age is about to happen? Then we are to be servants and vessels of honor as we wait.

The parable of the mystery of the kingdom of God in Matthew 13 makes us wonder about the confusion in the kingdom. Why was it that the Lord sow His seeds and only some fall on good grounds? We would think kingdom seed would be hundred percent effective. But no, it is only limited. How come we sow wheats in the kingdom and some other people sow tares in there. It is all kinds of mixtures. Why is it a little mustard seed grows into a huge tree, and evil birds lay in this human kingdom and Christendom? And who puts the leaven in the loaf and spoil our church life? Jesus spoke those parables to the multitudes to tell them that the kingdom of God is not what you think on the surface. On the

surface, there appears to be limitations, compromises and problems. Why would the Lord even come to establish the kingdom when there are such problems? These certainly are the problems of the large house today. But we cannot stop with those four parables. When Jesus went inside with His apostles, He shared three more parables. And in those three parables we found out what was really going on. The kingdom of heaven is like treasure buried in the ground. And that is you and me. We are old clay pots in the ground. But the Lord finds in us His treasure. And He paid it with His life to buy that field to gain us as His treasure. As we look around us, we see us as clay pots which do not have much value. But the Lord sees kingdom value in you and I. And then Jesus pictured Himself once again. The kingdom of God is like merchants who buy gems and pearls and find the pearl of greatest price. We love this hymn 'I found the pearl of greatest price' which is talking about Jesus. But the parable is talking about us. Jesus saw the church – that pearl of greatest price. And He sold everything to gain that bride. Do you feel like we are a pearl? When the kingdom comes, we will be a pearl. I know right now I am an old oyster shell. But there is something hidden within. The Lord said it is of great value. And the last parable in Matthew 13 is the net. Jesus was saying that we do not worry about all the mixtures and all the compromises. When the kingdom comes, all these will be sorted out. And the good will be over here and the bad over there. Jesus was standing at the threshold and looking at the saints to be saved by His death on Calvary. And now that we have been saved by grace, He calls us to be vessels of honor until His kingdom comes. And we enter into His glory as His bride. The Lord is preparing His bride even now. and the time is much nearer than we think. Are you in the kingdom time zone? Are you evaluating what you do, large or small in terms of how it serves the mighty King? Indeed, these are those who love His appearing. And those who love His appearing serves Him as vessels of honor.

Let us pray

There is a whisper from the glory for the coming of the Lord. Lord, Your spirit seems to be whispering that to our hearts these days; awakening us to the soon coming; asking us to evaluate everything regarding the kingdom. Lord we come to You seeking Your kingdom first and Your righteousness. We believe the time is very near. Help us to have the same heart that Paul had as he stood on the threshold and saw the kingdom and the King coming. Give us such an ascending vision as we stand upon mount Zion by faith. We pray in Jesus' precious name. Amen.