

IN THE BEGINNING—GOD

Creation as Conversation

MARK 4:30

- "Whereunto," asked Christ, "shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?"

NO EARTHLY EXAMPLE

"He could not employ the kingdoms of the world as a similitude. In society He found nothing with which to compare it. Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; but from Christ's kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished. This kingdom is to uplift and ennoble humanity. God's church is the court of holy life, filled with varied gifts and endowed with the Holy Spirit. The members are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom they help and bless."{AA 12.2}

THE NATURE OF GOD

- John 14:8

Philip said to Him (Jesus), “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

NKJV. 1982 (Jn 14:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

GOD—ONENESS IN COMMUNITY

John 14:10, 11

I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me,

NKJV. 1982 (Jn 14:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

GOD IN THE CHURCH

- John 14:10- I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?
- :16, 17- And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever —the Spirit of truth,

NKJV. 1982 (Jn 14:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

EXTREME ONENESS

- “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me”
 - Physical impossibility
 - Two persons cannot physically be in each other
- :18- “I will come to you”
 - Pronouns used interchangeably
- :20- “I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”
 - We are embraced in this radical oneness!

UNANSWERED QUESTION

- Matt 20:25-28
 - The *ἐθνῶν* (nations) Lord it over
 - Not so among you
 - Requires a different dimension from *ἐθνῶν*
- What dimension is Jesus referencing?

PRE-FALL DIMENSION

- What constituted leadership behavior prior to sin?
 - Trinity
 - Eden

“GOD” CREATED!

- Which one?
 - Father? Jesus? Holy Spirit?
- Yes—all
 - But who was in charge? (equipotency)
 - The Godhead does not compete for individuality!
- God (all three) created in community

CREATION—A COMMUNITY PROCESS

- “Let us make man in our image.” Gen 1:26
- The leadership process of creation was a community process—not individual
- A community conversation—not an individual command
- This is the foundation of Godly leadership

DIVINE “MO”

Lead and create by conversation
—not dictation!

GODLY LEADERSHIP—A MIGHTY RIVER

- A great river is mighty because of the collective not the individual.
 - Every trickle of water and every mighty torrent contributes
- Leadership at creation reveals leadership as contribution—not position.
 - Each member of the Godhead serves the process thus leadership is revealed as a function of community—not individual or positional.

PARADOX OF LEADERSHIP

- The Western world celebrates the individual but promotes the collective
 - Individuality
 - Democracy
- Much of the rest of the world celebrates the collective but promotes the individual
 - Group focus
 - Deference to great man leaders

ABIMELECH'S QUESTION

Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal (Gideon) reign over you, or that one reign over you? Judges 9:2

- How would you answer that question?

THE SINGULAR ASSUMPTION

- Our fallen nature assumes the singular leader
 - Abimelech assumed one to be better than many
 - Especially when one is self!
- God assumes many—not one.

MANY—NOT ONE

- 1 Corinthians 12:7, 12, 19, 20
 - “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all”
 - “For as the body is one and has many members”
 - “And if they were all one member, where would the body be?”
 - But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

THE CHURCH IS A MIGHTY RIVER

- Each member contributes to the process of leadership
 - Some in visible and impressive ways
 - Others in quiet and invisible ways
- Each helps to make the river a mighty and powerful force

CALLED TO LEAD

- Each of us is called to lead by proactively contributing the fruit of our spiritual gifts
- Each of us will be held accountable for the gifts given
- We all serve as leaders in God's kingdom