***The Marks of Christian Royalty, No. 3

RV101-02***

In Revelation 5:10, the apostle John has indicated that there is a marvelous tradition which church-age saints possess as members of God's family. People around us, as members of this family, expect and demand a great deal of us as Christians because we are so associated with the living God. They expect Christian royalty to act better than the common citizen. They expect Christian royalty to achieve more than the commoner does; they expect Christian royalty to think better than the commoner; and, they expect Christian royalty to be an example in every way which others may follow to their advantage.

**The Marks of Christian Royalty**

The truth of the matter is that God also has certain demands upon the lifestyle of Christian royalty, and we have been looking at that in some detail. We will briefly review:

1. We have found that Christian royalty is not to indulge the evil lusts of the sin nature and injure other people in the process.
2. Christian royalty is not to profess devotion to Jesus Christ and then compromise personal integrity in daily living.
3. Christian royalty is to support other members of the royal family in times of spiritual failure, and seek to restore them to godliness.
4. Christian royalty performs Christian service for the Lord's glory – not for personal glory and gain.
5. Christian royalty will enjoy rewards in heaven forever for divine good service, as well as being prospered on earth.
6. Christian royalty maintains a dignified public image by dealing with personal failures privately with the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. Christian royalty is doubly blessed because of possessing God's absolute righteousness and being in Christ in position.
8. Christian royalty is always to act in such a way as to preserve the personal freedom that God has given each person in terms of volition, privacy and property.
9. Christian royalty is not to act with arrogance and abandonment to other members of royalty who act like commoners. It's easy to want to wash your hands of people.
10. The character of Christian royalty is formed on the inside of a person through the Word of God, and then it is expressed outwardly.
11. Christian royalty is not to respond to undeserved abuse by insulting and abusing in return.

**Love**

We continue now with the demands that God makes upon the lifestyle of Christian – royal characteristics. The next one is that royalty functions on the biblical distinction between mental attitude impersonal ("agapao") love, and emotional personal ("phileo") love. This, of course, is obviously a very important characteristic of Christian royalty. It is very important that the devil has zeroed in on this one and fouled it up in a tremendous way among believers. One of the least known qualities among Christians is love – among people who are biblically oriented, and who talk about love. It is one of the least understood qualities. In the average church, whatever people know and don't know, you can almost always count on the fact that they talk about love and don't know a Fig Newton about it, because they have picked it up from an emotional human orientation, learning it from the guff of the sin nature instead of going to the Word of God. So, here's a very important principle. In the Word of God, there are two kinds of love.

**"Agapao" Love**

One kind of love is impersonal. There is a Greek word for it: "agapao." This word is a clear word in the Greek Testament. We have all kinds of evidence from other languages and from historical use as to what this word for "love" means, and it does mean "love." You would translate it as "love." But it is impersonal love. It is has nothing to do with the individual that you are exercising this love toward. You could be exercising this love toward a bosom buddy, or you could be exercising this love toward an enemy on the field of combat under wartime conditions. And while you are snuffing out the life of an enemy soldier, you do it with the quality of impersonal love.

**"Phileo" Love**

The other kind of love is an emotional love. That is a different Greek word: "phileo." The word "phileo," again, is a distinct word in the Greek language. And you translate that one as "love" as well. It indicates a personal, emotional type of love. It is distinctively different. It is the kind of love that involves your feelings. Obviously, while you can have this kind of love for members of the royal family of God toward a person that you're married to, and toward your children, you do not have this kind of love on the field of combat toward an soldier that are in mortal combat with. You do not have an emotional love attachment. The Bible is very clear; very distinct; and, very careful on using these two types of love. When you understand the difference, then you will take your first little baby step toward becoming a loving Christian.

Most Christians never get to first base on this, and it makes people mad when you say that. It makes them hopping mad. The average Bible church Christian foams at the mouth if you suggest that he doesn't know anything at all about the subject of love, nor has he developed the quality within himself. Failure to understand and to practice this distinction will create enormous tensions within your soul. When you understand that there are some people toward whom you have an impersonal relationship, and yet there is a love; and, with others you have a personal and emotional relationship (and that is a different kind of love), and that each of them has a proper place, it will remove you from having a lot of personal conflicts within your soul.

**Scriptures on "Agapao" Love**

So, let's take a look, first of all, at some Scriptures that deal with this one: the "agapao" impersonal love. This one has no emotion attached to it. We should add the phrase "mental attitude" to the "agapao" type of love. Personal love is emotional love, while impersonal love is mental attitude love. Mental attitude is a spirit which is free of ill will. You can indeed be in combat, killing a soldier, without hating him. You do not have mental attitude ill will toward him. You are dealing with him, and you are taking his life, because he represents a threatening force to the sovereignty of your nation. Therefore, as a Christian, and as a mature Christian, you perform the function on the field of battle, and you take the life of that person. You do it in an impersonal way without mental attitude ill will.

We'll look at a few Scriptures, and then I'll give you a list of others, and you will find this to be a profitable and interesting study on your own to look up these Scriptures in order to get straight in your mind exactly what the Bible expects of us as Christians in terms of love. Matthew 5:43-44 use this this impersonal "love" word, "agapao:" "You have heard that it has been said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say unto you: love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who deceitfully use you and persecute you."

Now, if that verse is to make any sense to you at all, you have to understand that the English language with the word "love" hides the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is calling upon us to have an impersonal mental attitude toward our enemies. Suddenly, you see that it's possible to do that. As a mature Christian, saturated in your soul with the Word of God, you can be free from mental attitude bitterness and hate toward an individual who is indeed your enemy, and who, in a variety of ways, is seeking to do you in.

This is why the Word of God repeatedly presents that position: Don't try to get even with people. Don't pursue vengeance on your own. The person who has treated you like a dog; they have disgracefully used you; and, they're way out of line. What should you do? With mental attitude goodwill and impersonal love, you do not respond with a vengeance of your own. Instead, the Lord Jesus says, "You don't just love your neighbor – the nice folks. You don't just have a nice mental attitude toward them. You also have a mental attitude free of bitterness toward your enemy."

That is because if you permit that enemy to bring mental attitude bitterness out in you, it will corrode your soul; and, when your soul is corroded, it will affect you physically. A lot of physical ills and a lot of emotional trauma that people have is just because they are bitter. It is just because they are haters of everything. They just have that kind of a bitter attitude.

Somebody comes along and you meet them, and there's a certain type that always has that kind of bitter, grim attitude. You come to them and say, "It's a bright sunny day. It's a wonderful day, isn't it?" They say, "Yeah, but it's raining somewhere in the world." Well, right away, you know what type you're dealing with. They have that bitter, ugly, mental attitude of hatred. The Lord Jesus said that you're not only to have "agapao" love toward the nice people, but also toward your enemies. I know that the average sermon will send you out saying, "Now, I'm going to be a nicer person. I'm going to stop acting like this. I'm going to have a better attitude." No, you won't. It is only as you recognize that you have the problem, and you go to the one source that will solve the problem. You start taking doctrine into the mentality of your soul. Then you will discover that more and more, you just won't want to be bitter. You'll have less and less ill will toward the worst kinds of treatment that people give you.

There are these emotional conditions where people will snap some remark at you. And if you have an impersonal "agapao" love toward them, free of mental bitterness, you're not going to strike back. If you're going to be a worker; if you're going to be a leader in the Lord's work; or, if you're going to minister in some way, you have to learn to take this in stride.

Once in a while in summer camp, where we're under a lot of heavy demands and constant activity all day long, carrying a lot of responsibilities, somebody will snap back. And sometimes they do it to me, which they really shouldn't. There's nothing really to snap back at me for. Then I could really cream them and put them in their place, but I know that, at the moment, they've got a problem, and they're acting in a bitterness, and the problem that they have reflected by saying what they said is a whole lot greater than anything that could injure my feelings, or anything that they have said to me. They have violated the principle of a royal code of ethics in mental attitude goodwill. And you act accordingly.

Notice another example in John 8:43: "Jesus said unto them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me.'" There it is. This is an impersonal, mental attitude: "You would love me, not because you're all emotionally caught up with me as Jesus Christ." He's saying, "You would have a mental attitude, receptive goodwill toward Me. If God were your father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God, neither did I come out of Myself, but He sent Me." This is a very clear declaration of having an attitude toward Jesus Christ that was a mental impersonal attitude. It had nothing to do with their emotional quality toward Him.

Matthew 22:37 uses this type of impersonal love: "Jesus said unto them, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Isn't that interesting? How are you going to love the living God?

If you get into a charismatic meeting, they will immediately convey to you that the way you love God is by getting all blubbery, and weepy, and emotional over God, and how wonderful He is. Sometimes I watch the programs on Sunday nights after church to keep in touch with the religious world. And I see the charismatic groups with their large auditoriums filled with people, and the guy gets his handkerchief out, and he starts praising the Lord. And he starts really speaking about how wonderful everything is, and, "Hallelujah" and "Praise the Lord." And pretty soon the crowd is whipping it up. You can just see that whole crowd emoting. What are they doing? They're expressing their love for the Lord. Then he looks at his clock, and sees that it's time to go to the next segment, and he cuts it off: "Now I'm going to read a letter from so-and-so," and everybody sits back, and they're through praising the Lord. They turn it on, and turn it off. It's an emotional emptiness.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "You are going to love the Lord your God, not with an emotional expression," though indeed you may love Him that way. But what is required of us is mental attitude goodwill toward the loving God. When something comes into your life that isn't pleasant, you don't respond with that stupid, low-spiritual-caliber remark, "Why did this happen to me?" I have seen things happen to people, and I have heard them say, "Why me?" I can immediately think of a half a dozen reasons why. What are they saying? They're expressing a bitterness toward God: "What is wrong with You? Don't You know who I am? Don't you appreciate me? Why me?" But the Word of God says that you don't have a mental antagonism toward God. You love God with that mental goodwill.

Luke 11:43: "Woe unto you Pharisees, for you love the chief seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the marketplace." It wasn't even emotional with them. It wasn't because they got a big kick out of it. It was the fact that it was prestige. It was a calculated, unemotional love for being in a position of honor and praise and glory. And the Lord says, "Woe unto you Pharisees for that."

In John 12:43, we see impersonal love again: "For they love the praise of men more than the praise of God." Again, they loved the praise of men – having people say complimentary nice things to you. It was not because it was emotionally satisfying, because of emotional kicks. But it was just because, in some mental impersonal way, you calculated that this was to your advantage; it was to your gain; and, you therefore loved that place, because it enabled you to achieve some goals and objectives in life.

Let's look at one of the epistles, in Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it." How many times have you heard that verse quoted? And how many times has somebody explained to you very carefully that that verse isn't saying, "Husbands, be all emotional about your wives. Have warm, oozy feelings about your wives." Now, that kind of rapport indeed is there. But what the Word of God is commanding is that you don't have a mental block toward your wife. You don't have a mental resentment. You don't have a mental ill will that is constantly poisoning the way you treat her, because you're come from the frame of reference of some bitter antagonism. The Word of God says that you have an impersonal love toward your wife. It's a mental attitude. The way that these two are connected is that out of that impersonal mental attitude love, there develops personal rapport. You don't develop personal rapport until you have the impersonal, free-of-bitterness mental attitude; then comes emotional attachment.

**The New Age Movement**

2 Timothy 4:8 demonstrates the impersonal "agapao" type of love: "Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing." This is not an emotional excitement over the rapture (though that's involved), but those who just think it through on the basis of doctrine, and have a deep appreciation for the return of Christ: "And they love His appearing." That's a very simple statement, but in our day, the return of Christ is one of the most hated doctrines of Scripture. It is being fed by the whole New Age movement. The New Age movement is the current expression of the ancient Eastern mysticism religion of Hinduism. The New Age movement is sweeping this country. The New Age movement is moving into all of the areas of our society: educational; religious; political; social; and, economic. It is pure Eastern mysticism that there is godhood within all of us; we are all deity; and, we should not be looking for the return of a God who is going to judge. They don't like to think about God that way, because if you are thinking about a God who is going to turn and evaluate what you're doing, that then raises the question of your deciding what that God says you can do or cannot do. Then you are faced with a code of rules that someone higher than man establishes.

So, those who have this mental attitude, impersonal, goodwill receptivity toward the appearing of Jesus Christ are the people who understand where history is moving. Those who do not have this mental attitude goodwill toward the return of Jesus Christ are Satan's agents who hate the idea of God coming to this earth.

Ephesians 4:10 tells us about one of the associates of the apostle Paul: "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica." Demas was once a member of the team like Timothy and Titus, but Demas got a mental attitude impersonal love for the world, and for the things of the world. He wasn't even emotionally involved with what the world had to offer in glory, and money, and fame, and whatever else. This was just a step to higher things for Demas. It was a mental calculation. This is the kind of thing that the world is characterized by – a mental attitude that is being used to make your way.

**Scriptures on "Phileo" Love**

On the other hand, there is this other type of love, and we should look at a few verses to distinguish that. It is necessary to give clarity to this, because you can't tell which of these Greek words is being used in the Bible from the English translation. For example, in Matthew 10:37, we have personal, emotional love described: "He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." You can readily see that that's the kind of love that you have for parents. That's the kind of love that you have for children. It is a very emotionally oriented and emotionally attached feeling that you have for them. This verse says that your emotion can be greater toward them than for Jesus Christ. And you see that you do have an emotional attachment to God as well. If you have first developed the impersonal, mental attitude devotion to them, then you'll have a personal emotional attachment. And if your emotional attachment is greater toward some other human being than for Jesus Christ, then you're not worthy of Him.

In John 11:3, we have this word used again: "Therefore, his sisters sent unto him saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick.'" Now, that tells us a lot about the attitude of Jesus Christ toward Lazarus. It wasn't just that He had a mental good will toward Lazarus. The Lord Jesus Christ loved this man with an emotional attachment. And it tells us a great deal more about how close the Lord felt to Lazarus.

John 11:36: "'Then,' said the Jews, 'behold, how He loved him.'" The Jews who saw Jesus weeping upon this occasion sensed that this was an emotional type of love, and that's the word that was used.

Notice John 15:19: "If you were of the world, the world would love its own" (an emotional, personal attachment), but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hates you." Jesus said, "If you were part of the world system (if you were part of the devil's world), then they would have an emotional attachment to you. But because you're not part of the devil's world, they do not have an attachment to you at all.

John 16:27: "For the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God." Here, God the Father is declared to have an emotional attachment for those who are emotionally attached to the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 20:2: "Then she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved." The person that this phrase refers to ("the disciple whom Jesus loved") is John. And again, how much He loved him is indicated by the fact that it uses the word "phileo," the emotional personal attachment that Jesus had for this one disciple.

In John 20:15-17 (we won't go through these, but these are the variants of the word "love"), where Jesus kept asking Peter whether he loved Him: The Lord says, "Peter, do you 'agapao' Me?" And Peter said, "Lord, You know that I 'phileo' you." And finally the third time, Jesus said, "Alright, Peter, do you 'phileo' Me?" Peter said, "Yes, Lord, I 'phileo' you." For some reason, He just could not get him to say, "Lord, I 'agapao' you. I don't resent you. I have no mental attitude bitterness. I have no resentments. I have no reservations toward anything you want me to do." At this point, Peter could not quite say, "Lord, I have no reservations. And that's a good word that stands in the way of impersonal love – if you've got some mental reservations. You have some mental reservations there. You have some low-grade bitterness, and it's an interesting play on words in the Greek language.

1 Corinthians 16:22: "If any man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let it be Anathema Maranatha." There is a word for emotional attachment.

Revelation 3:19 uses the emotional word: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent." This is the Lord's emotional attachment.

Well, I'll give you a few more. You can look them up on your own: Titus 3:15; Matthew 23:6; Luke 20:40; John 12:25; Revelation 22:15; and, Matthew 6:5. All of these speak about personal emotional love.

Failure to distinguish between these loves in practice leads to hypocrisy in dealing with people, and to a hardened cynicism, and to emotional confusion and breakdown. If you feel that you have to be emotionally attached to every other Christian, you're going to create some bad internal conflicts, because there are some people who are members of the royal family that you, as another member of the royal family, are not going to hit it off with. All that God asks of you is that you have impersonal mental attitude ("agapao") love toward them – that you do not have mental reservations; mental illness; or, anything that you hold resentful against them. As to whether you have an emotional attachment for that person, that is something else that develops in a variety of ways.

This concept that churches like to put out, that you must love everybody, does not come from the Bible in the terms in which they mean that you must get emotionally warm toward everybody else. That does not come from the Word of God.

Of course, it is the Bible doctrine alone in the soul that enables the members of the royal family to distinguish and to properly apply the two kinds of love.

**Help those in Need**

There is another characteristics of the royal family. Christian royalty is ready to assist those who are in genuine financially need. In James 2:15-16, this principle is laid out for us: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you says unto them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled;' notwithstanding you don't give them those things which are needful to the body, what does it profit?" This very clearly declares that members of the royal family of God, when they see other members of the royal family of God who have genuine financial needs; they are destitute; or, they are experiencing privation, no matter how little you have, you come to their assistance with what you have. However, again, the Word of God gives us guidelines on how to give this assistance, and you should not supply funds in such a way so that people become dependent upon it, and they find that it's easier not to work, and they actually do not become concerned about not working – they prefer riding along on your beneficence. It is the principle of the Word of God that he who will not work shall not eat. So, that must guide us as well. Christian royalty also learn to be content with what God elects to provide for their legitimate needs.

Young people have a big problem with this. Their parents have spent many years accumulating things and building up reserves. Along come these kids, and many of them will start off with salary rates far higher than their parents began with. And they assume that they should have all the things that their parents have. I have had people come to me and say, "Can I get some help from the church fellowship fund?" But they have two people in the family who are working! I say, "Well, why do you need the help?" They say, "Well, we just got kind of carried away. We bought this house, and we bought this furniture, and we have this, and we signed up for that, and we have payments to make right now. They are breathing down our neck. We've got to have this money this week to make this payment."

Now, that is real gall – to come to the church fellowship fund for assistance, because you've lived so high on the hog because you thought that was your right in life. It's just because you're imitating a standard of living that your parents have. Christian royalty operates on what they have. The apostle Paul could say, "Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned that whatever state I am in, in this to be content." Paul knew how to be prosperous, and Paul knew how to be in poverty.

In 1 Timothy 6:8, Paul puts it this way: "Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content."

Hebrews 13:5: "Let your manner of live be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. For He has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you. That is one precious verse. It is true that some members in the royal family of God are going to have a lot more materially than others do. They will be prospered more for whatever reason. By the grace of God, they are prospered. But all of us have the promise that He will never leave us, and He will never forsake us. When we have acted with responsibility, He will see that we are provided. I remind you again that *it is the purpose of the living God to prosper us.* It is not His purpose to see how hard He can make it on us. If we are being hurt; if we are being shortchanged; or if our prosperity is on the low side, it is because we ourselves have not risen to the challenge of doctrine to be able to have the capacity to be blessed – so that God can give us things, and we use them in the right way.

**Dying Grace**

Another principle is that we are to face physical death with dignity by using dying grace as God's means for transferring from this earth into the perfect happiness of heaven. Christian royalty are people who need to learn how to die with grace. In 2 Corinthians 5:4-8, Paul says, "For we that are in this tabernacle (a physical body) do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon: that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that has wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit (the down payment of the Holy Spirit). Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." And that is the principle that the Christian has to understand and to remember: "We walk by faith; not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." That is precisely what takes place at the point of death in the experience of a Christian. And Christians should learn to be prepared to have dying grace functioning.

In Philippians 1:23, Paul says, "For I am in a strait between two: having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful to you." The apostle Paul did not look upon death as some great traumatic thing that was going to take him into a frantic tizzy. But he had grace from the Word of God to take that death as a royal person should take it.

For the unbeliever, death, of course, is separation of the soul from the body. For the believer, it is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. The unbeliever's human spirit is dead. The Christian, in his soul and spirit, go immediately into the presence of Christ, while the soul of the unbeliever goes immediately into the torments of Hades. The body is placed into the grave. It returns to dust, but it is replaced in time for believer and unbeliever alike by a resurrection body.

**A Christian's Last Will and Testament**

It is a demonic practice that leads people to venerate the dead body in the attempt to circumvent death. Christians who have not learned dying grace make a lot over the dead body. If you have a will, I would certainly strongly commend to you that you explain to them how they are to transfer you to the world above in a manner that's befitting the royal family of God. When they start carrying you out feet-first, you ought to have thought a little bit about how to do that with royal dignity. If you have a will, there are certain things that would be advisable for you to put in it in order to show that you are a person of royal dignity, and that you understand dying grace.

You should say in your will: "I want to be buried in the cheapest possible casket you can find." Don't let that mortician take you into that big room that he has. That's how they do it: They have a big room, and all of these caskets are there. And they play this little soft music in the background, first of all, to start working your emotional love. Then they come over here, and they say, "Now this is our 432 model. This has a flip-top on it which makes it easy at the rapture, so it will automatically flip open. Then we have this one over here which is a genuine cow's hide. This is a more of a Texas kind of model here. Then we have this one." I mean, those guys are weird. I've had to go through this several times. There are real wackos out there in the mortician field. And they have an opportunity to take advantage of your problem at the moment.

So, you want to think it through: "I don't want you to be putting me on display." You want to think about that – whether you want them to put you out on display where people can walk by and look at you, and say, "Oh, it looks like he's sleeping there." How do they know that? When have they seen you sleeping? I've often thought of something that would certainly be nice: I've been very tempted sometimes, at these funerals that I have to conduct, to get a little snoring device such that it sounds like you're snoring right in the background. Somebody would walk by and say, "It looks just like he's sleeping." And somebody else would say, "It certainly does. I can hear him snoring." I mean what kind of royal dignity is this?

So, you tell them to slap the lid down, and it's all over. I guarantee you that at that point you're not interested in what's going on down here. You have entered the realm of the palace of the King, and you are on a binge like you wouldn't believe possible. The least thing that you're interested in is what they're doing back there with their ceremonial ritualism in Satan's world. Put the burial out there, and then ask them to conduct a memorial service without you there; in your memory; and, where the Lord is honored. That is royal dignity – not going by and viewing the body.

Some people actually turn it into a party. If you go down to New Orleans, they always take you to the cemetery with the band playing. They play very serious and very grim morbid funeral music; and, they slowly walk one-step-at-a-time. But as soon as they shove you into that oven that they have down there in New Orleans, and they slam the door – they turn around and they come back playing When the Saints Go Marching in, and everybody is clapping. Are they happy that he's gone, or what? It's purely emotional. What kind of a royal mental attitude is this?

And man, I've seen these funerals. The day before, they run these wakes, and after a while, you wonder, "How long can you stand there and look at a dead body?" ... And pretty soon, the poor dead person is completely forgotten. Somebody needs to write a book on royalty conducting a funeral befitting its status.

Christians die for a lot of reasons. John 21:9 and Luke 16:19-31 tell us that they die to glorify God. For example, the death of Stephen the martyr was a great honor to the Lord Jesus. There is the normal time of death for every spiritual Christian (Philippians 1:20). There comes a normal point in time when the purpose of living has been fulfilled. Service on earth is completed. That's another reason that Christians die (2 Timothy 4:7, Revelation 4:11, John 19:30). When your service is done, you will check out, and until it's done you will not check out. There is a plan for each believer's life (Ephesians 2:10). While you're alive on this earth, the work of the believer is not finished. If you're still breathing, that means that God is telling you, "I have something for you to do. I still have some exercise of your spiritual gifts. I still have one more summer camp for you to go to. I still have one more school year for you to face. I still have a ministry for you. When I'm through with you, you're going to stop breathing." While alive on earth, it is a signal that the work of the believer is not finished.

**The Sin unto Death**

Of course, there is a sad reason why Christians die, and that's because of maximum discipline – the sin unto death, which is for a Christian who will not come back into confession and into alignment of his life with the Word of God. 1 Corinthians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 1 John 5:16; and 1 Chronicles 10:13 all indicate that persistent residing in temporal death (that is, carnality) builds callouses on the soul until we become emotionally and intellectually and volitionally so hardened toward God that He cannot use us to exercise gifts on this earth, and He takes us out.

**Sudden Death**

The case of sudden death is particularly a warning which is given in connection with coming to the Lord's Supper without known sins confessed (1 Corinthians 11:23-34). That's exactly what that passage happens to be talking about.

**Ambassadors of God**

One of the most important characteristics of the royal family of God is that they act as the ambassadors of the living God. Often in human realms, members of royalty are sent out as ambassadors of their country. This is one of the most vital and dramatic and marvelous roles that God has attached to your ministry – that you, as a member of the royal family, are the ambassador of God to this earth. I guarantee you that if you do not have that concept about yourself; if you do not see yourself as an ambassador; and, if you don't think in terms of your life and your ambassadorship, you won't execute it. And one of the greatest losses to you at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be failure to have functioned as an ambassador. A member of the church royalty had better understand what ambassadorship means, and consequently, how to execute it in your daily life. Please remember that your livelihood is your avocation (your vocation). The business of your life is your ambassadorship. We will begin with that next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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