

Understanding the Kingdom - the concept of keys.

All nations and Kingdoms contain inherent principles and laws that must be adhered to by each citizen in order for the citizen to benefit from his citizenship, privileges and rights. These laws and principles are called by Jesus – '**Keys of the Kingdom.**'

In the Roman Empire the Senate – the 'ecclesia' – was like the Cabinet in a modern democracy. The Senate was the powerhouse. These individuals were hand picked by the Emperor to receive his thoughts, his desires, his passion, and his intent. Their job was to take the mind of the King and turn it into legislation that could be implemented in the kingdom. In other words they were to know his mind and to see that everything he wishes was carried out. This meant that they had to stay in close contact with him. They had to talk to him, and he had to give them information about what he wanted in the kingdom.

Jesus used 'ecclesia' to describe the body of followers that he was establishing and was in effect creating his cabinet as the anointed King – the Lord of hosts and Son of the living God. He said to Peter 'upon the rock of your confession of who I am, I will build my government, I will build my senate, my cabinet, my administration who will carry out my wishes and my will. The 'ecclesia,' therefore is a group entrusted with secret information critical to the operation of the Kingdom. This group will be so powerful that even the gates of Hades will not overcome it. Hell itself will not be strong as the 'ecclesia' that Jesus is establishing.

What is the secret information that Jesus gives to His Cabinet? Jesus says 'I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' (Matthew 16 v 19) He has given us the keys of the Kingdom. As Kingdom citizens, we are already in the Kingdom; we don't need keys to it. What we need – and what Jesus has given us – are the keys of the Kingdom – that will unlock the power of the Kingdom and make it work in our lives. Kingdom citizens and only Kingdom citizens have these keys. Citizenship is a prerequisite of getting them.

What this means is that we who are Kingdom citizens should be operating at a level and have access to power that mystifies those who are not yet in the Kingdom. We are supposed to be living at a certain level where we are tapping into resources that others cannot explain. The key is knowledge – knowing what the keys are for and how to use them. On another occasion Jesus told the disciples 'The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God have been given to you.' (Luke 8 v 10)

The Kingdom of Heaven is not a secret society, but it has keys that have to be learned. A secret is anything you don't know, especially if someone else does. Miracles fall into this category. A miracle is something humans cannot explain, an event or occurrence that seems to defy the natural order. They had seen Jesus walk on the water, heal the sick, raise the dead, shrivel a tree by speaking to it, calm a storm, multiply loaves and fishes and many other 'miraculous' things that were beyond normal human experience.

But to Jesus, none of these were miracles. He taught that these are no miracles, I am just using keys. I know how to put them into locks, and they are unlocking prosperity, healing, peace, and authority. Watch me and you will see the Kingdom at work and also how it should work for you. My Father has given you knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom. I will teach you how to use the keys.

Jesus left us in no doubt that the Kingdom was supposed to work for His 'ecclesia' just as it worked for Him, for on the night before His death He told them:

'I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even

greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask for anything in My name, and I will do it.' (John 14 v 12 – 14)

Jesus' 'ecclesia' (which includes us) was going to do the same things He was doing – and more – because of the Holy Spirit who would come after He was gone would teach them the keys of the Kingdom and how to use them. One significant key is embedded in this passage; the key to opening the 'warehouse' of Heaven. The key that opens the lock is prayer – asking in Jesus' name – and whatever you ask will be done. This is not to satisfy our own selfish wants and desires. We must use the right key. We must ask in Jesus' name – according to His will and in line with His purpose. That is what will open Heavens floodgates or 'warehouse.'

When the disciples faced the challenge of feeding 5000 their response was not what key do we use but 'All we have is' They were limited by what they could see. When we understand the keys of the Kingdom we will never again say 'All we have is.....' Look what Jesus did – He looked towards Heaven and gave thanks. He put in the key of prayer and unlocked the 'warehouse.' He then broke bread and gave to His disciples who then distributed among the people. It will work the same for us. But we have to know what opens the 'warehouse.' That knowledge is Christ's promise to us, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you.'

Seven Principles of Keys

Knowledge leads to understanding. Once we know the principles behind the keys we can understand how they work. There are seven principles that define the properties of keys.

- 1) **Keys represent authority.** If you possess a key to a place, it means you have authority in that place (e.g. work place, home, and car) Christ says, 'I am going to give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.' I am giving you authority in heaven, the same authority I have.' What an awesome gift! Few have done more than scratch the surface of what that means.
- 2) **Keys represent access.** A key gives you instant access to everything that key opens. The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven give us immediate access to all the resources of Heaven. But we have to know how to use them. A Kingdom mind set totally changes our perspective. When you have the keys of the Kingdom, you have no lack or crisis because the King is greater than them all. Jesus said that He would teach us to walk in the kind of authority, access, and confidence.
- 3) **Keys represent ownership.** Possession of a key gives you de facto ownership of whatever the key opens. *Therefore when you possess the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, you have ownership of Heaven on Earth.* Jesus said, 'Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. This means that you should never judge how your life is going simply by your circumstances. The King is preparing to bless and prosper you from a completely unexpected direction.
- 4) **Keys represent control.** If you possess the key to something you control it. You control when it opens or closes, and who gets access to it. A key helps you control time. If you need something now, you operate a key. The story of the poor widow and Elijah is an example of this in practice. She and her son were about to starve. Elijah makes a bold, some may say even selfish request. 'I know that you do not have much, but feed me first and then yourself and your son. Trust the Lord he will take care of you.' This is not selfishness. Elijah was offering the woman a key. By FAITH and OBEDIENCE she unlocked heavens larder and brought down to herself and her family supernatural provision that sustained them until the drought ended. HER ENTIRE LIFE AND MINDSET SHIFTED FROM THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF WANT AND SHORTAGE TO A KINGDOM PERSPECTIVE OF UNLIMITED ABUNDANCE.

- 5) **Keys represent Authorisation.** This is similar to authority. Authorisation means to be given the authority to act in the name of or on behalf of who ever gave you authority. By giving us the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus gives us the authority to influence Heaven. He has authorised us to act in His name and on His authority to request whatever we wish that is in accordance with His will and purpose.
- 6) **Keys represent power.** Whoever gives you the keys gives you the power at the same time. This is similar to control. You have control – power over whatever you possess the keys for. If you know how to use the keys, whatever they unlock is at your disposal. When Jesus gave us the keys to the Kingdom, He gave us power in heaven. Whatever we bind on earth affects Heaven; whatever we loose on earth on earth affects Heaven; whatever we close on earth Heaven closes. The King does not want us to live as victims of the earth's system, so He has given us the ability to tap into a realm that is invisible but absolutely real and can literally affect the physical earth. This is why Christ was able to live an abundant life in times of crisis. He had power from Heaven and He has given that power to us.
- 7) **Keys represent freedom.** When you have keys, you are free to go in and out. You are free to go in and out. You are free to lock and unlock, to open and to close. The keys of the Kingdom give us freedom from fear. Remember when the storm broke and He was asleep. Jesus said 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid.' In essence He was saying what is the matter where are your keys? Then He locked up the storm and it stopped. The keys of the Kingdom are the keys of ultimate truth. The knowledge of which brings true liberty. Jesus said – 'If you hold to My teaching you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' (John 8 v 31-32)

By teaching Jesus is not referring so much to Scripture verses as much as the principles, laws and precepts contained in those verses. Freedom comes from knowing the truth. Truth alone is not what sets you free. **WHAT SETS YOU FREE IS THE TRUTH YOU KNOW.** The keys of the Kingdom can bring you into a knowledge of the truth.

Seven characteristics of keys.

- 1) **Keys are laws.** They are fixed, reliable standards that never change. When used correctly they always work e.g. sowing and reaping.
- 2) **Keys are principles.** When Jesus spoke of the 'keys of the Kingdom' He was not talking literal physical keys to open physical locks. The keys of the Kingdom are principles, systems that operate under fixed laws. When He gives us the keys, He gives us the principles by which the Kingdom of God operates. We gain access to the systems that make the Kingdom of Heaven work. And once we learn the laws, the systems, and the principles, all of heaven will be available to us.
- 3) **Keys are systems.** Every government runs on systems; the social system, the economic system, the political system, the educational system, the telecommunications system and so on. Control the systems and you control the government. Disrupt the systems and you disrupt the government. Destroy the systems and you destroy a nation. That's how powerful systems are. Even more that's how knowledge can be.
The systems of the Kingdom of Heaven are beyond the reach of those outside the Kingdom and we are in no danger of being disrupted or destroyed. Kingdom citizens, on the other hand, have access to those systems and can bring influence of Kingdom systems to bear in earthly situations. That is why Kingdom citizens can rest confident in victory and success no matter what circumstances may suggest. So the most important thing any of us can do is to make sure that we are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.
- 4) **Keys activate function.** A car operates on petrol. Without petrol petrol the car will not run no matter how many keys you have. Religion may look beautiful on the outside but it has no keys and lacks the ability and power to activate the Kingdom. The keys of the Kingdom activate

heaven so that we can fully enjoy our rights and privileges as Kingdom citizens. This is far more secure than depending on the systems of the world for our enjoyment. Paul says, 'Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.' (1 Timothy 6 v 17). The keys of the Kingdom allow us to enjoy all the blessings of the Kingdom without measure.

5) Keys initiate action. Just as the key to a car initiates action by starting the engine, the keys of the Kingdom, when we know how to use them, initiate action in heaven.

6) Keys are the principles by which the Kingdom of God operates. Not only are keys principles, but specifically keys to the operation of the Kingdom. They give us access to the blueprints, the flow charts, so that we can understand and appropriate the inner workings of the Kingdom of Heaven.

7) Keys cannot be substituted by feelings, emotions, wishful thinking or manipulation. Religion is built on feelings, emotions, wishful thinking and manipulation. It is different with the Kingdom. The Kingdom of heaven operates on keys. You can wish and feel and beg and plead all you want, but without the right keys you will still be locked out all the good things God promised you because feelings do not open doors. Keys do.

To get ahead you must do the opposite of what you do in the world - giving, releasing, loving, declaring, fasting, praying, praising, exercising compassion and moving in faith and the power of the Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdoms of this world operate by completely different principles. Once we get into the Kingdom and start functioning properly we inevitably prosper. It is a natural product of Kingdom living. But we must live by the standards of the Kingdom (righteousness) in order to prosper and to be blessed in the Kingdom.

The rich young ruler was not prepared to give away all that he had. This is why Jesus said that it is hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The keys, the principles, the systems of the Kingdom are the opposite to those of the world from where they acquired their wealth. The opposite nature of the Kingdom makes it difficult for many people to understand. The young man could not understand the principle of a Kingdom where you get by giving.

Ignorance can destroy – 'My people perish through lack of knowledge. (Hosea 4 v 6) The young man did not know how to become richer – he chose to hold on rather than let go. A key principle of the Kingdom of Heaven is – 'The blessing of the Lord brings wealth and He adds no trouble to it. (Proverbs 10 v 22). Once you get the Keys of the Kingdom and learn how they work the blessing of God will bring you wealth without sorrow. And He can do it in an instant if He is so inclined.

In the Kingdom of Heaven we are stewards, not owners. Because of our fallen nature and human reasoning the principles and keys of the Kingdom of God are completely foreign to the ways we have been trained to think. Jesus said – 'Repent, change the way you think.'

Principles work but are not always understood. Principles are established by the manufacturer – Our Father God. Kingdom principles bring God's provision – abundant life.

Additional recommended reading on the Kingdom :-

1)Rediscovering the Kingdom

2)Kingdom Principles

3)Applying the Kingdom

Myles Munroe – Published by Destiny Image and Diplomat Press

Don Latham

From the beginning, God's original purpose and plan was to rule the earth from Heaven through his family. He created man for this reason. Man's original purpose was to dominate the earth through Kingdom influence – so that the earth would take on the culture of heaven.

The heavenly Kingdom would permeate the earth through every citizen through every citizen of the Kingdom expressing the lifestyle and culture of heaven here on earth. God's intent for us as Kingdom citizens is that we take on the culture of Heaven so that in whatever we do it is evident that we belong to the Kingdom of Heaven. As Kingdom citizens we are from God's country and both our language and lifestyle should reflect that.

The Kingdom of God is not a religion. It is an eternal Kingdom. Daniel said of God, 'How great are His signs, how mighty His wonders. His Kingdom is an eternal Kingdom; His dominion endures from generation to generation.' (Daniel 4 v 3)

The Kingdom of Heaven is our inheritance (Daniel 7 v 18) 'The saints of the Most High will receive the Kingdom and will possess it for ever – yes forever and ever.' Saints is another name for Kingdom citizens. We are destined to possess the Kingdom that Jesus Christ came on earth to announce and establish.

Christ did not bring a religion but a Kingdom a royal government. Religion does not work. You can practice a religion but you can't practice citizenship. This is why some people are good on Sunday but a mess the rest of the week. They practice religion. But a Kingdom citizen is 24/7. We are in the world but not of it.

In bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to earth, Christ was restoring what man lost in the garden of Eden. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.' (Matthew 5 v 3) Poor in spirit means spiritually bankrupt, spiritually destitute and in great spiritual need. Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is reserved for those who recognise their spiritual poverty.

You will never be satisfied until you receive the Kingdom. This is why Jesus was so insistent that we seek first the Kingdom and righteousness of God and trust Him to provide all the things that we need for daily life. The enemy will distract us into pursuing things because it keeps our attention away from the Kingdom and our Kingdom destiny.

Jesus always talked about the Kingdom. It was his only message. 'The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked through all the dough.' (Matthew 13 v 33) This is a picture of the influence of the Kingdom. Once you add it you cannot remove it. Although it works slowly at first eventually it permeates the entire batch of dough.

In the same way, now the Kingdom of Heaven is on earth, it will never depart. And like yeast, the Kingdom is growing and will continue to grow until thoroughly covers the earth. Although human governments come and go, the government of God will last forever.. His Kingdom is eternal.

The earth is now divided into two groups – those who are citizens of the Kingdom and those who are not. When you become a member of the Kingdom – the culture of the Kingdom should begin to manifest in your life, your speech, and your behaviour. When you go to work your boss and

colleagues should notice a change because your life will now reflect a new culture. One of the clearest characteristics of this new culture is service and self giving.

Jesus made it clear in His teaching that 'Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.' In other words the one who is most important is the one with the reputation for working the hardest. If people are always calling on you or turning to you that's a good sign. If you do not have a spirit of service and hard work not only will people avoid you – prosperity will avoid you as well.

Being a servant does not mean that you become subservient. It means that you find out your gift and give it to the world. This is what makes you great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

At the end time Jesus will sit on His throne of glory and the nations will be gathered before Him for judgement. There will be two groups. Sheep – the righteous at His right hand, and the goats, or the unrighteous, at His left. 'Then the King will say to those on His right, come those who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited Me in. I needed clothes and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you came to visit Me. 9Matthew 25 v 34 – 36)

Notice that the inheritance of the righteous is not Heaven but the Kingdom of Heaven. This Kingdom is a country with a government and influence on the earth. Jesus is saying to us today – come take your inheritance.

Jesus describes the character of righteousness – it is service and a servant heart. Practical service – feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, visiting the sick, the imprisoned. Remember what Jesus taught - 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.' (Matthew 25 v 37 – 40)

Service is so natural to those with a servant heart that they do not think of themselves as having done anything special or of a particular merit. True servants love to serve and they are delighted to do so. Jesus says that whenever we serve the needy, we serve the King. We have an assignment from our King to serve Him by serving others. We do not focus on our own needs – they will be met if we keep our focus on advancing the Kingdom.

We are Ambassadors for the Kingdom and we have a mission. That was the subject of our first talk in this Kingdom series. In the Kingdom of Heaven no service, is unimportant because the Kingdom is built on service. Contrast this with the attitude of the unrighteous, the goats at Jesus left hand – 'Then He will say to those on His left, Depart from me, you who are cursed, into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite Me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after Me.' They will also answer, Lord when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick and in prison and did not help you? He will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for the least of these, you did not do for Me. Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.' (Matthew 25 v 41 – 46)

Righteous servants do not serve for personal gain. They serve out of obedience to the King. Our service is a byproduct of our right standing with God. We serve because of our love for Him and for

other people. We should be service oriented that we serve without even thinking about it. It will not always be easy, and is often not and unrecognised but we are moved by compassion and that desire to share the love of God with those in greatest need.

We need to recognise those divine encounters with people as not simply coincidental but special moments when we can show the love of God and introduce another person to His Kingdom. How do we welcome new people into the workplace. New neighbours and new people into our churches?

Feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothe the naked. We all have a responsibility and there are so many excellent Kingdom channels through which we can give. Tend the sick. We can pray, support health care professionals, visit, telephone, send cards – provide support for the family. Lay hands and exercise faith. Visit prisoners by joining a visiting team.

Service is powerful. Service is integral to the Kingdoms greatest ministry to mankind. When people see Kingdom citizens in action they see first hand what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. This culture of service prepares the way for the gospel of the Kingdom to be received and attracts the Kings blessing. He says - ' Because you serve Me well, I am going to give you the Kingdom. I will take care of your whole life. I will feed you cloth you, provide for you, and bless you with everything else you need to continue serving Me faithfully. Because of your faithfulness, I will give you the whole country.'

Faithful service guarantees the Kingdom inheritance. Full access to the Kingdom and its resources is reserved for those who get their priorities right and put the Kingdom and righteousness of God ahead of their own desires, ambition and comfort. There is nothing we can give up for the sake of the Kingdom that the King will not return to us multiplied many times over.

Service is the highest manifestation of Kingdom culture. The heart of the Kingdom of Heaven is the love of God. Service is God's love in action. It is when we are doing these acts of service that we most reflect the likeness of our King. God is love – and this is expressed in its most important way by sending His Son Jesus to die on a cross for us while we were still sinners and in rebellion. He met our needs and we must do the same as Kingdom citizens in meeting the needs of others.

We do what is right and God promises to meet our needs. Most service takes place in secret. It is done because we love God and we love people. We recognise that every person is created a unique individual entitled to basic dignity and respect. When we serve those in need we serve the King.

Kingdom service is a calling – we are called to be servants, and it is for a lifetime. You can retire from a career, but you cannot retire from a call. You cannot retire from being yourself.

Service is a manifestation of the gifts God has given you. Work your gift and the Bible says that it will make room for you in the world.

Ambassadors for the Kingdom

2 Corinthians 5 v 20

Paul says 'So we are Christ's Ambassadors, God making His appeal as it were through us. We (as Christ's personal representatives) beg you for His sake to lay hold of the divine favour (now offered to you) and be reconciled to God.'

We are Christ's Ambassadors. 2 Corinthians 5 v 17 'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come.'

We are no longer sinners we have been made righteous. We are now family members of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We are no longer servants but sons and daughters. We have God's favour on our lives and He has made us Ambassadors for Christ. We are God's Ambassadors for the Kingdom of Heaven.

What is an Ambassador? Oxford Dictionary – 'Minister sent by one Sovereign or State on a Mission to another; minister permanently representing Sovereign or State at foreign court – with full power to sign treaties etc. Official messenger.'

Where do Ambassadors live? In a Embassy – that is his residency. Paul says that we are Ambassadors for the King of Kings. So we need to know what that entails.

- ⤴ We are on a Mission.
- ⤴ We are permanently representing the Kingdom of Heaven in hostile territory – the world.
- ⤴ We have been given full authority and power.
- ⤴ We are official messengers called to speak on behalf of our Sovereign King.
- ⤴ We are representatives of the Kingdom of Heaven.

So we need to understand our mission, our role, and our authority. We should speak with clarity and represent the Kingdom with compassion and integrity. We can take the Kingdom into the workplace and into every sphere of society.

But our primary Embassy is our home. It is an Embassy of the Kingdom of God and should reflect the best of God's Kingdom. Our homes should be a place of peace, joy, order, and creativity. When people visit us they should experience something special in the atmosphere and this is a challenge to us. Do our homes reflect the best of the Kingdom of God. That does not mean being lavish or full of material wealth but are they a haven and place of God's presence?

Obviously it is important that we do not have objects in them that would be incompatible with the Kingdom of God for example objects of other religions. Things associated with the occult (satanic books) or immorality. If God shows you things that are incompatible with His Kingdom do have a clear out of everything that offends.

We are on a Mission. To extend the Kingdom of God. We have a message of salvation to share with the world. There is salvation in no one else other than Jesus Christ. 'That in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.' 2 Corinthians 5 v 19.

In many parts of the world God's Kingdom is advancing and we have to pray that God will show us how this can happen in the UK and Europe. We see positive evidence in Bath - the home of Embassy Bible College - where Ambassadors are being trained and equipped to extend the Kingdom of God.

We are permanent representatives in hostile territory. That means we have to reflect the Kingdom in all aspects of our lives. We are Ambassadors 24/7 – every moment of our lives. Our family, work, church and social life is open to public scrutiny and must not cause dishonour or criticism to the one we represent. There is a great honour in being an Ambassador but there is also a cost and a need for personal discipline.

We have been given full authority and power. An Ambassador has a seal of office. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. We are Ambassadors in the name of Christ and all authority is in His name. When we pray in His name and speak in His name we are releasing the power of the Kingdom into those situations so that the will of God can be done and the Kingdom extended.

We need to know that we have the power of the Holy Spirit filling us. We need to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and constantly refilled with Spirit in order to walk in all the authority God has given to us. We release that power as we speak, through prayer, love and compassion, and understanding the will and purpose of God.

We are official messengers called to speak on behalf of our Sovereign King. If you are in a foreign land you need to be able in the language that people understand. We have a Kingdom language that we need to use. To be effective we also need to understand the cultures in which we are called to operate. To remain distinctive to the one we represent – but to be relevant. That means not spending all your time in the Embassy but getting out to meet real people and to understand their needs and pressures.

Of course for us as Christians we have other places where we meet with others who share our calling. Our churches should be places where when people come they experience the Kingdom of God. A place of praise, prayer, joy, peace, excellence, security, generosity, support, hope and inspiration. A haven for those in need and friendship for the isolated and lonely. The challenge for us is do we have activities/meetings places where we would be comfortable to bring our neighbours, work colleagues, friends and acquaintances.

We are messengers – so we have to understand the message. We need to be able to simply and clearly tell others what makes it so special to become a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. Testimony can be one of the most effective ways of doing this. We need to be in constant contact with the Kingdom we represent. Good communications are essential to success. This requires time and discipline.

We are representatives of the Kingdom of Heaven. This is a challenge for us to live lives worthy of being called an Ambassador. When people look at my life do they see something of the Kingdom of Heaven or do they think that we are boring, odd and frenetic. If we are truly fulfilling our role as an Ambassador of Christ than at times it will cause contention and may even result in hostility and persecution – but even through that our lives should show the life of the Kingdom and this should create a hunger in others to know the Christ we represent - the Christ living in us.

If there are things in our life that would undermine the Kingdom of God being seen in us we need to repent and turn around to be conformed to the image of the one we represent. It is a process called sanctification – and we are all works in progress. A desire for holiness, Christ likeness, the determination to be a good representative.

We cannot fulfil the role of Ambassador without being totally submitted to the one we represent. To be an effective Ambassador we need to be regularly in touch with our Sovereign, or State, that we represent. What an honour - what a calling!

Don Latham