First Class, Wrong Flight

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Brethren, in the year 2000, the humorous Gospel singer, Mark Lowry, released an album containing the song “First Class, Wrong Flight”, which is a humorous song about a man who wrongly gets on a plane for Omaha, Nebraska when he was wanting to fly to Nashville, Tennessee. The words of the song are as follows:

Had to catch a plane to Nashville but was running oh so late
Checked my luggage at the curb and prayed the plane would wait
I looked like OJ Simpson, racing for gate three
The pilot turned the engines on and I yelled 'Wait for me!'

The flight was overbooked and there was someone in my seat
So they took me up to first class where they get real food to eat
I buckled up, we took off, things turned out after all
Until the pilot said 'Welcome to your flight to Omaha!'

First class wrong flight,
What a situation.
First class wrong flight,
Should have checked the destination.

I sat there 20 minutes just deciding what to do.
I guess I could take up skydiving or hijack all the crew.
I thought why should I sweat it, I'll eat my steak and smile.
It's not important where I go, I'm going there in style.

Styling comfort, may be grand,
But it's important where you land.
Make sure the way you choose is right.

Well I won't be eating peanuts or hearing something cry
I'll have a lot more leg room it's the only way to fly
I'll get the royal treatment those in coach will envy me
But when we touch down they'll be where they want to be.

First class wrong flight,
What a situation.
First class wrong flight,
Should have checked the destination.

Brethren, we live in a world today that places extremely high value on comfort, on convenience, on prosperity, on the good life, on having an easy path.
Many preachers and pastors of many churches preach a prosperity gospel, a health and wealth gospel. One famous megachurch pastor preaches this health and wealth theology every Sunday. He has over 48,000 members in his one large church. He preaches that God wants only good things in our lives.

Prosperity theology can be defined as a religious belief that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for mankind, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth. Prosperity theology views the Bible as a contract between God and humans: if we have faith in God, He will deliver security and prosperity to us. If we have health problems or personal problems or financial problems, then it’s because we don’t have enough faith. Health and wealth is the measure of how good our relationship is with God.

This doctrine emphasizes the importance of personal empowerment, proposing that it is God's will for His people to be blessed. The atonement (reconciliation with God) is interpreted to include the alleviation of sickness and poverty, which are viewed as curses to be broken by faith.

The preachers of prosperity theology place all their emphasis on the journey, the comfort and the pleasures of the journey. They do not emphasize the destination.

Is the health and wealth gospel correct? Did God the Father and Jesus Christ promise a pleasant and comfortable journey to the Kingdom? Is the depth and strength of our relationship with God the Father to be measured by our health and wealth and pleasantness of life?

In the sermon this afternoon entitled “First Class, Wrong Flight”, I would like to explore these questions more deeply: Did God the Father and Jesus Christ promise us a pleasant and comfortable journey to the Kingdom of God?

To discuss this subject in more depth, I would like to explore five points concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God.

The first point concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God is:

1. It’s not about the journey; it’s about the destination

Mankind has always been focused on the journey, and mankind wants a pleasant and comfortable journey. However, God the Father and Jesus Christ never promised a health and wealth reward in this life. Far from that, most saints in history have suffered greatly during their lives.

Please turn with me to Isaiah 55. Brethren, God the Father does not think like we think. He doesn’t view the world like we do. He doesn’t act in the way that we act. He doesn’t react the way we react.
**Isaiah 55:08** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

So to begin with, it is important to understand that God the Father views our lives from a completely different vantage point that we view our lives. God the Father takes a long-term, goal-oriented view at our lives. His goal and purpose with each of us is that we enter into His Kingdom. Nothing else is more important to Him in our lives than that goal.

Please turn with me to Luke 12. One of the great desires of our Father is for Him to give us His Kingdom.

**Luke 12:22** And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23) The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

24) Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25) And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26) If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27) Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28) If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

29) And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30) For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31) But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32) Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Our destination, the Kingdom of God, is the focus of God the Father. And it is His good pleasure to give it to us.

Please turn with me to Hebrews 11. Again, the history of the saints that God the Father has called out of this world has not been a pleasant one as a whole. Satan and the world hate God’s way, and they have always mistreated and persecuted God’s saints and called out ones.

**Hebrews 11:35** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:
36) And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:
37) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;
38) (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.
39) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:
40) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

Please turn with me to 2 Corinthians 11. The Apostle Paul was a great example of one of the saints, one of the called-out ones who was used mightily by God to spread the Gospel of the Kingdom and to proclaim that Jesus the Anointed One was the Son of God the Father. Yet, Paul had a far-from pleasant life during his ministry.

2 Corinthians 11:23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.
24) Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.
25) Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;
26) In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
27) In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.
28) Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

If God the Father were more interested in the journey rather than the destination, if God the Father governed with a health and wealth doctrine, the Apostle Paul would have lived a lot more comfortable life than he actually did. If it was true for the Apostle Paul in his journey to the Kingdom, the same will be true for us today in our journey.

The second point concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God is:

2. We must focus on our destination

The great baseball manager Yogi Berra made quite a few great quotes. One of them is the following: “If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.” It is so important to know our destination.

Just like the words of the song said “Styling comfort, may be grand, but it's important where you land. Make sure the way you choose is right.”

My wife, Martha, and I returned recently from a trip to Madrid, Spain and to Lisbon,
Portugal to visit our daughter, Erin, who was until last week studying abroad this semester in Madrid. It is truly God’s blessing that she is safe and sound back here in Houston.

Madrid is a beautiful city and has about 6 million people in the area. The city is served by a wonderful subway system which seemed to have stations everywhere. There are currently 10 subway lines. The one we used the most was Line 1 or the Blue Line. The subway stations at each end of Line 1 were Pinar de Chamartin on the far north side of Madrid and Valdecarros at the far south side of Madrid. So when we entered the Bilboa subway station, which was near where we were staying, to go toward the heart of the city, we had to know that we needed to go southward in the direction toward Valdecarros. At one major junction in the Bilboa station, we had to make a choice to either go down the hall for the platform for Pinar de Chamartin or to go down the hall for the platform for Valdecarros. We had to know the destination before we could make the right decision on which subway train to take. If we made the wrong choice, we would end up travelling far away from where we wanted to go.

The same is true in our lives today. Do we know where we are going in our spiritual lives? Is God’s Kingdom real to us? Do we think about God’s Kingdom during the day? Do we meditate on it? Do we think about what it may be like? Do we look past the trials and the tests and tribulations and the troubles that we have on a daily and even persistent basis and focus on the Kingdom?

In September 2008, the Houston area was hit by Hurricane Ike. The eye of the hurricane landed east of the city, but the winds were still very powerful. For a short period of time, the sustained winds in Houston were 110 mph. During that storm, the winds blew an 8-foot by 6-foot section of the shingles completely off the roof down to the decking above a room on the second floor of our house. Water began to pour into the house. I was up in the attic trying to catch as much water in pails that I could, but to no avail. It truly is a helpless feeling to watch water pouring into your house.

Every room of our house was damaged, either on the walls, or the floors or the ceilings, or a combination of all three. In the recovery and remodeling that took many weeks, our house was not our house. The furniture was all moved about. Plastic sheeting was hanging in every room and in every doorway.

I remember telling Martha that we could not focus on the present and the disastrous condition that house was in at the time. We would go crazy if we did that. We had to focus on the future and picture how wonderful and beautiful the house was going to be when all the repair work and remodeling work were finished. And that’s what we did. We focused on the future. And that future indeed did come, and we wound up with a better and more beautiful house than we started with.

Brethren, do we focus on our trials, on our tribulations, on our health issues, on our daily problems in life, or do we focus on the future and focus on God’s Kingdom? If we totally focus on this life, we will become disheartened and discouraged and fearful.

The Apostle Paul wrote the Corinthian congregation in 1 Corinthians 15:19 that – “If in
this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” We have a hope which God the Father and Jesus Christ have given us. That hope is the Kingdom of God.

Please turn with me to Matthew 6. God the Father and Jesus Christ want us to take the long-term view in our lives and to focus on the Kingdom.

Matthew 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?
26) Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?
27) Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?
28) And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:
29) And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
30) Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?
31) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?
32) (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Brethren, as we read earlier in Luke 12, it is God the Father’s pleasure that He gives us His Kingdom. Is that Kingdom the focus of our daily lives? Do we keep our minds on our ultimate destination?

The third point concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God is:

3. God the Father has planned our journey to get us to our destination

Please turn with me to John 6:44, and we will read a very well-known verse within the Churches of God. God the Father has called each and every one of us. We cannot come to Christ and we cannot receive the Holy Spirit unless God the Father first draws us and calls us.

John 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.
44) No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

So, God the Father at some time earlier in our lives studied us, examined us, and chose us to be called into His way of life and to be exposed to His truth. For whatever reason,
and that reason only He knows, He chose us out of the 7 billion other humans on this earth. He started a process with us that put us on a journey toward His Kingdom.

Please turn with me to Matthew 20. There is a purpose for everything that God the Father does. He doesn't make mistakes. He doesn't do things capriciously. There is a specific reason why God has chosen each of us. God the Father is filling positions in Christ’s Kingdom for Christ’s reign on earth. We read about this in Matthew 20 where James and John’s mother was trying to negotiate a deal with Jesus concerning her sons.

Matthew 20:20  Then came to him (Jesus) the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshiping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.  
21) And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.  
22) But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.  
23) And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

So the positions that we will hold in Christ’s Kingdom are decided by God the Father and not Christ Himself. God the Father has called us into His Church of believers, a Church headed by Jesus Christ Himself. God the Father has called us, and He alone is deciding what our role will be in the Kingdom. And both God the Father and Jesus Christ are preparing us for that role.

So the purpose of our journey is to prepare us for whatever role that God the Father has chosen for us to have in the Kingdom.

This is why our journeys are so different. This is why our trials and tests are so different.

Many in our congregations and throughout the Church are undergoing severe trials. Many times we just don’t understand why we are having the trials that we have. Sometimes we can feel that we seem to go from one trial to another to another to another, seemingly without end. Maybe it seems that bad things just keep happening to us.

Brethren, our Heavenly Father is not asleep. He hasn’t take a long trip or has taken a vacation. He is not absent. We do not serve an absentee Father. He and Jesus Christ know full well what we are going through. There is a reason for everything that happens in our lives. God the Father steers events and circumstances in our lives in order to produce the ultimate outcome in our lives that He desires. That outcome is entry into His Kingdom.
Please turn with me to James 1. This is the very reason why James wrote what he wrote in his epistle concerning the trials in our journey.

James 1:01 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.
02) My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (Greek word is πειρασμος - peirasmos meaning trials or adversities);
03) Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
04) But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

God the Father uses trials and tests to hone our hearts, to strengthen our resolve, to deepen our relationship and reliance on Him.

Please turn with me to Daniel 12. Daniel wanted to know many things but was told that that knowledge was sealed and hidden until the time of the end.

Daniel 12:08 And I (Daniel) heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?
09) And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.
10) Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.”

A main element in purification is heat. In fact, the English word “purify” comes from the Greek word “πυρ” (pur) which means fire. God purifies us by allowing us to undergo trials and tests. Again, His main focus is on us entering His Kingdom.

Please turn with me to 1 Peter 4. Have we ever wondered why in the world we are having this severe trial or that severe problem or issue? Peter discusses this question and states that trials are an integral part of the Christian life.

1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:
13) But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
14) If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.”

In verse 12, the Greek word for fiery trial is “πυρωσις” (Purosis) which means fiery or burning test or trial. Again the use of the Greek word for fire which is “pur”. And fire is used to describe our tests and trials.

Brethren, God the Father has to come to a point with each and every one of us where He can say to us, “Now I know.”
Please turn with me to Genesis 22, where we will read about a very well-known test that God the Father gave to Abraham. God had instructed Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, as a burnt offering. This was an extreme test of faith and obedience. Would Abraham put God the Father's desires and will above his own desires and will?

**Genesis 22:09** And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.
10) And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.
11) And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.
12) And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.”

Brethren, Abraham loved his son, Isaac, more than just about anything else. And he did not hold him back from God the Father.

Please turn with me to Luke 14. Likewise, brethren, Jesus the Anointed One told His followers that they had to put God the Father first in their lives by forsaking everything else or that they could not be His disciples.

**Luke 14:25** And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,
26) If any man come to me, and hate (love less) not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.
27) And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.
28) For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? (Skip to 33)
33) So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Brethren, God the Father, the greatest and most powerful Being in all the universe, is working with us on an individual basis using a tailored plan for each of us and for our salvation and for our entry into the Kingdom of God.

The fourth point concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God is:

4. **We cannot coast into the Kingdom**

Brethren, are our spiritual lives in a holding pattern? Are we just drifting downstream wherever the current takes us? Are we coasting in our spiritual lives?

Please turn with me to Matthew 11. Jesus said a very strange phrase when He was teaching the multitudes concerning John the Baptist.
Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

This verse has always been a strangely worded and little understood verse in the Bible.

The Greek word for “suffers violence” is βίαζομαι (biazomai) which means to “lay hold of something with positive aggressiveness.” The Greek word for “violent” is βιαστής (biastes) which can mean “positive assertiveness or one who is eager in pursuit.”

So Christ is saying in verse 12 that “the Kingdom of Heaven is layed hold of with positive aggressiveness and that those who are eager in pursuit of it will claim it.”

Jesus was saying that we cannot just coast into the Kingdom.

Brethren, are we nonchalant in our spiritual lives? Are we country club Christians? Are we getting soft in our spiritual health? Are we getting too comfortable in our daily and weekly routines? We work. We play. We come to Church on the Sabbath. We sing. We listen to the messages. We fellowship together. All in a safe place. All in comfort, whether with air conditioning in the summer or heated air in the winter. It’s a comfortable routine. We are living the good life. Are we becoming nonchalant about keeping God’s way of life and being faithful to Him?

Please turn with me to Revelation 3. There is a severe warning to the Church of Laodicea concerning how the good life, the pleasant life, the comfortable life, can corrupt us, making us soft spiritually, and giving us a false image of ourselves.

Revelation 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;
15) I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.
16) So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.
17) Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
18) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.
19) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Brethren, if we begin to coast, we too can develop a Laodicean attitude toward our relationship with God the Father. Brethren, are we crowding Him out because of our busy schedules? Are we too busy to pray and to study? If the answer to that question is yes, then we must do whatever is needed to correct that in our lives and make God the priority in our daily lives.
Please turn with me to Mark 4. If we don't, we can become that seed falling among the thorns as shown here in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed.

Mark 4:13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?
14) The sower soweth the word. (Skip)
18) And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,
19) And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”

There is no coasting in this perfecting process. There is no vacation. There is no respite. Satan continuously engages a full onslaught frontal attack on each and every one of us. Satan wants us destroyed. He wants us dead. The only Beings preventing Satan from destroying us are God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Church is not a country club. The social aspects of Church are important. We are instructed in Hebrews 10:25 to not forsake the assembling of the brethren together. But all the socializing, all the pot lucks, all the activities, all the accoutrements of services and of being in a congregation do not amount to anything in our spiritual salvation if we do not have the right heart and right relationship with God the Father.

This leads me into the fifth and final point concerning our journey to the Kingdom of God, which is:

5. Our Father’s most important work is transforming our hearts

One thing that God the Father cannot do is to make us love Him. We choose to love Him. We choose to follow and obey Him. We choose to please Him. That choice only comes through His Spirit and through a complete transformation in our heart.

Everything that happens during our journey is allowed by God the Father in order to mold and soften our hearts to Him. God the Father has called us, has chosen us, and has worked with us for the express purpose of softening our hearts to be obedient and to be loving and respectful and pleasing toward Him.

Please turn with me to Acts 13, where we will read a passage from a sermon that Paul gave in Antioch concerning David.

Acts 13:21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.
22) And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king: to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.”

Brethren, are we after God the Father’s own heart? How is our relationship with Him? Do we yearn to be with Him? Do we yearn to communicate with Him? To spend time with Him? To pray to Him? To study His Word? Do we yearn to be obedient to Him?
Do we yearn to please Him? If we are going to spend eternity with Him, how much do we really want to be around Him?

The most important aspect of our calling is to transform our hearts to be in line with God the Father’s heart. Brethren, in the past, we have been told that the Work of preaching the Gospel was the important aspect of our calling. We were told our main duty and purpose was to support that Work. We heaped praise and adulation on the heads of the Church, the evangelists of the Church, the movers and shakers of the Church on the frontlines performing that Work. We were told that that the work that they were doing was the most important of all and that they were the most important of all.

Brethren, our Church is spread out across the world. Many of us are older. Many of us are by ourselves. Many if not most of us are remote. We just don’t have large congregations. Many of us may feel very isolated. Many of us may feel that we don’t really play a role in the Church, or that we are just insignificant. Maybe we feel because of these circumstances that we cannot, and do not, contribute anything to the Church or the Work.

This just is not true in any way. God the Father has called each one of us for a specific purpose. We just do not know what that ultimate purpose is in the Kingdom. God the Father makes no mistakes. He makes no error in judgment. Your calling is not a mistake. None of us are here by accident. All of us are so important to Him.

Please turn with me to 1 Corinthians 12, where the Apostle Paul discusses this very issue of the wide range of membership in the Church.

1 Corinthians 12:14 Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part.
15) If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body.
16) And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body?
17) If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?
18) But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it.
19) How strange a body would be if it had only one part!
20) Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.
21) The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.”
22) In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary.
23) And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen,
24) while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity.
25) This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other.
26) If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.
27) All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.” (New Living Translation)

Brethren, the biggest work that God the Father can perform is to help us transform our hearts toward Him, so that we will change our hearts to respond to Him, to acknowledge Him, and to please Him as our main aspiration and desire in life. His work in us is for Him to be able to say to each of us “Now I know!”

Yes, there is a work to be done in this end time age. Yes, there are responsibilities to be performed. And those responsibilities need men and women to perform them. But the main work that God the Father and Jesus Christ are performing today is in transforming our hearts, our minds and our thoughts. This is a very personal and private work which is the most important work in all the world.

That most important work is being done in each of us, whether we are advanced in age, whether we are remote and by ourselves, whether we are currently in a position where we cannot physically help others in the Church.

God the Father’s main work is accomplished by us turning to Him, yielding to Him, praying to Him, obeying Him and desiring to please Him in every way.

It doesn’t matter what your health is, or your intellect, or your financial status, or your circumstances in life, or any other part of your life condition.

At the resurrection, God the Father and Jesus Christ can give us instant knowledge, instant abilities, instant understanding of all facts, history, and languages. We will be given spiritual bodies which will never be sick, which will never tire, which will never be without boundless energy, which will never have a need for rest, and which will have perfect minds and intellect. God the Father and Jesus Christ will give us all this. Again, one thing that they cannot instantly give to us is a heart that will respond to them and will never depart from Their way of life and love.

This is Their greatest work, and it is also our greatest work and responsibility. Brethren, God the Father and Jesus Christ never promised us a pleasant and comfortable journey to the Kingdom. We naturally desire one, but the truth is that God the Father uses unpleasant trials and tests in order to shape our hearts toward Him.

So let’s remember that “It’s not about the journey; it’s about the destination.” The journey is not the end. It is the means to the end.

Let’s remember that “We must focus on our destination.” We must keep our eyes on the prize. We must keep our focus on the Kingdom.

Let’s remember that “God the Father has planned our journey to get us to our destination.” God is honing us and shaping us in the journey in which He is leading us. We all have different and unique journeys.
Let’s remember that “We cannot coast into the Kingdom.” We cannot stop striving and overcoming. We cannot drift. We cannot fall asleep in our comfort zone.

Let’s remember that “Our Father’s most important work is transforming our hearts.” His plan of salvation for us will not work if we do not respond to Him, if we do not love Him, if we don’t earnestly yearn to please Him in everything we think, in everything we say, and in everything we do.

In closing, please turn with me to 2 Timothy 4. The Apostle Paul knew that he was to be executed and would be put to death shortly. He knew his life was at its end. Paul did not have a pleasant journey as we read earlier. Yet, even in the suffering of awaiting his impending death, he remained positive. He learned to be content in whatever state or condition He was in. He always focused on the destination. And he was confident that he would reach that destination, and that he would be in the Kingdom.

2 Timothy 4:06 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
07) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
08) 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 also that love his appearing.”

In his closing remarks, he mentioned us and all the saints who love God’s appearing. We will all receive a crown of righteousness when we reach our destination.

As told in the song “First Class, Wrong Flight”, we can have a very pleasant journey, we can be the envy of others with our comforts, we can have the easy life, and we can totally wind up in the wrong destination with a very bad ending.

Brethren, let’s remain positive in our outlook, no matter what circumstances, trials, tests, tribulations, troubles or problems that we may be facing. Let’s look past those issues, and let’s focus our attention on our ultimate destination, the indescribably wonderful, joyous, and exciting Kingdom of God.