

# Do You See Yourself in the Kingdom of God?

Terry Beohm

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This time of year, we are asked to close our eyes and envision what it will be like in the millennium, since we are celebrating it this time of year—what will be happening, where our place is. I can remember in Worldwide years ago there were these Basil Wolverton drawings of alabaster cities and waterfalls, and smiling children running with lions and leopards and that kind of thing, but I would like to ask the question, do you see yourself there? In your heart of hearts do you really see yourself in God's Kingdom, as part of God's government, serving God the Father and Jesus Christ? Do you have the vision to see and know that you are going to be part of that wonderful world tomorrow?

Certainly here in the Northwest we can look back into our not too distant history and see the pioneers who had the vision and the moxie to go from Hannibal or Independence, Missouri, with their oxcart and their covered wagon and all their kids, and they came out here and they had the vision to see that this would be a great place to live—that they would have free land, that they would have a fantastic farm, that they could graze their cattle and their livestock—this could be a paradise and all they had to do was get here. They had the vision. Some of them didn't make it but most did. Even in my home state of California there were hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of people who came out during the Gold Rush, seeking a better life, seeking the vision of, if I find that one nugget in a stream, my family and I will be able to buy that house on Nob Hill in San Francisco, and my wife will have a very proper double chin and she will be very happy, which will make me happy. Do we have that same vision for ourselves—do we have a vision?

Today I would like to explore with you—hopefully give you good fruit—do you see yourself in the Kingdom? I will have three points. How do you see yourself now, and words to encourage, and what will we be doing (and certainly this is not, and I repeat, *not* an exhaustive study; there's a lot, lot more). What I'd like to do is just pique your interest, and excite you enough to really consider and to do your own study, and to keep in mind that all of us were called to make it into the Kingdom of God. Let's start off in Philippians 1:1.

## 1. How do we see ourselves now?

(I'm going to be reading from the King James.)

**Philippians 1:1** *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*

**Philippians 4:22** *All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. (KJV)*

Let's look over at Colossians 1:4.

**Colossians 1:4** *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints ... (KJV)*

There are two things I want you to consider in that scripture: (1) The love that you have for all the saints and (2) the word that I'm trying to emphasize in the previous two scriptures: saints. Being brought up a Catholic that gives me pause, to be honest with you. I see a saint as being a little alabaster statue; you know, this is Saint Matthew, Saint Paul, Saint Bartholomew. It should not be a point of pride to be called a saint. It should not be something that we hesitate to call ourselves. Certainly God calls things what they actually are. Let me just give you a little something to think about. What is a saint?

A saint, according to Strong's Concordance #40, is somebody who is blameless, consecrated, holy, pure, full of mercy. Does that describe us? *Does it matter?* (—if I can steal a line from Terry yesterday. I'm going to do that a lot today.) I really think that in calling us or looking at us as saints, as elect, as firstfruits (and not just as Christians), that sets us apart because we *are* set apart, we *are* consecrated. We are set apart for a sacred purpose. We are supposed to be holy as God is holy. We're supposed to be pure, unaffected and unblemished by the world. We're supposed to be merciful because with mercy we can be better kings and priests, and that's the "end of the show" here, to be kings and priests.

As a Christian, I gave this a lot of thought because I have a friend who says he's a Christian and he goes to church on Sunday, he celebrates Easter, he eats pork chops, he does a few other things that are questionable, and to throw ourselves into that pot is probably not the wise thing to do simply because there is a big difference between what a saint is—who is called by the Living God, invited by their first name: I want you in My Kingdom, here's your invite—and somebody who says, I think we should pay our taxes and I don't think we should kill anybody so I'm a Christian. Just food for thought. We are also the temple of God.

**1 Corinthians 3:16** *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (KJV)*

Just like the temple of Solomon, just like the original temple, we have God's Holy Spirit and that is a tremendously valuable asset—that we have direct access to God, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and we can get down on our knees, or we can just cry out to God and we have a direct line to Him. We can use that Holy Spirit to guide our steps, to help us to overcome the world, to be pure, to be merciful, to be blameless.

**Colossians 3:12** *Put on therefore, as the elect of God [or you could say “saints”], holy and beloved [beloved by God the Father], bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;*

13) *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. (KJV)*

Good words, words to live by, words to challenge us—to go to the high ground, to live up to really being a saint, to being the elect of God.

**Titus 2:13** *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

14) *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, [as it says] zealous of good works. (KJV)*

A special people, a called-out people, a people who are zealous. Not just do it—“okay, I guess I’ll help the widow today”—but somebody who loves the brethren, loves the widows, loves the less fortunate and not only in the Body of Christ, which is where it should start first, but also throughout the world. To everybody with whom we come in contact we should be patient, we should be understanding. We shouldn’t blow our gasket because somebody cut us off on the freeway, or somebody made a vile remark to us, or somebody hurt our feelings. We should be better than that, and not only better but a lot better than that.

## 2. Words to encourage.

Let’s look at 1 Peter 1:15-16.

**1 Peter 1:15** *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (KJV)*

Another word that could fit in there very well, with all manner of your life. Consider that you are *holy* like God our Father, like Jesus Christ our Brother. We are associated with God in a really profound way.

16) *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (KJV)*

Once again, what is a saint?—blameless, consecrated, holy, pure and merciful. Something that we should make an effort—more than an effort—to set as our life target. As quoted earlier, *in all manner* of our lives. Confidence—the Father has called us personally. John 6:44, a very familiar scripture.

**John 6:44** *No man can come to me [meaning Christ], except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (KJV)*

That “draw him” is a fishing term and that means to bait, and I don’t know about all of you, but when God offered the Holy Spirit to me in the late ’80s, I can honestly say I went kicking and screaming. It was, I don’t want to do this, I don’t want to be part of this, it’s going to ruin my career, it’s going to ruin my life, it’s going to set me apart from all of my friends, and all I saw was negative, negative, negative. I didn’t see, I didn’t have the vision to see myself in the Kingdom, to be part of this amazing transformation for mankind to be redeemed and brought to God. I didn’t have the vision. But God called me. He said, Terry, I want you. He says that about Matthew and Laurie and Vivian and Jack—He says, I want you, I want you to be part of this Kingdom, I want you to be in My family. I know you can make it. I know that you have the moxie, the courage, the conviction to make it to the end, to endure to the end. I’m going to give you the nod.

**John 10:27** *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29) My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. (KJV)*

“Man” in my text is italicized; it was not part of the original scripture so I see that as nothing. *Nothing* can take you out of the Father’s hand. He wanted you, He loved you first and He wants you in His Kingdom, and nothing can take that love away. We have to take off our crown, we have to walk away, we have to say, I have no vision. What is it worth? What is eternal life worth in God’s Kingdom?

Faith, belief, trust—1 John 3:14. This is a very interesting scripture for me because it starts off saying, *we know*. Not we hope, not we pray, not we hope it will work out, hope that the stars align in such a way that this works out. *We know!*

**1 John 3:14** *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. (KJV)*

God and Jesus Christ loved us first. We need to love each other fervently, compassionately, being very, very forgiving because this is the example that we have. We need to follow it diligently. Do you see yourself there? Is it worthwhile, is it important? Hebrews 13. (I got this Bible when I was baptized in 1989 and I have worked this thing to death, and I’m praying it will go through one more message before it dies [[laughs]].)

**Hebrews 13:5** *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: (KJV)*

Certainly materialism can overtake any of us—we need to fast-forward through the commercials when we watch TV. Be content, be happy; we have a future.

5 continued) ... *for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*  
6) *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.* (KJV)

Are we fearful? Fear will keep you out of the Kingdom. We should be the most unstoppable, motivated, can-do people on the planet. There's one scripture—I didn't write it down but I always come back to it—it says that God will be your rear guard and it just gives me so much comfort to know that God has got my back. There are going to be trials, absolutely, because He has to test us, but at the end of the day, we will never, ever be forsaken or abandoned, or put to the side of the road, or kicked to the gutter. Jesus Christ is on our side; God the Father is on our side—He wants us there. Only we can make that not happen. 1 Corinthians 15:52.

**1 Corinthians 15:52** *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* (KJV)

When I read this scripture it always reminds me of years and years ago, back in the stone age when cameras actually had film, if you wanted to take a picture at night, or maybe a family portrait inside a house at Thanksgiving you had to put on a flash bulb. Remember what a flash bulb was?—it's the thing that blinded you after the turkey dinner. I can remember my dad had a Kodak camera, and it had this big old heavy plastic shield on it so that when the flash exploded, and sent glass all over the place, it would be contained by that shield so it wouldn't shower everybody with glass.

I look at this “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” like a flash bulb—poof!—with power—and this physical body, if we're still alive, will drop to the ground. We don't need it anymore, we don't need it. We're going to be spirit beings. If we're dead, if our place of safety is the grave, then we're going to be changed—we're going to be pulled out of there a new creation: Powerful, with eternal life, firstfruits, elect of God, saints—wow. It blows my mind! Psalm 16—do you see yourself there?

**Psalm 16:3** *But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.* (KJV)

Isn't it nice to know that we are a delight to God? Isn't it nice to know that when we pray to Him, He's delighted to hear from us? Even though at some of the stuff He probably shakes His head and goes, okay, why are they so tripped up over this? It's nice to know that we do have an ear, that no matter what it is, twenty-four hours a day, no matter what the situation calls for, God is there and He delights in hearing from us, He delights in our prayers, He delights in that relationship that we can have with Him, that is available, that He has called us to. It's there. Is it important? Do you see yourself there?

### 3. What will you be doing?

That's full of theory and conjecture, and certainly there are a lot of ideas, and some of us agree and some of us don't, but there are a few things that we can honestly look at and say, this is what the saints will be doing. Let's look at a couple of them—not several but just a few. What will we be doing? Psalms 132:9.

**Psalm 132:9** *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy. (KJV)*

There's going to be a lot of joyful spirit beings when we're called out, when we come out of the grave, when we shed this earthly coil. There are going to be shouts for joy because it's like, I endured to the end, I made it, God helped me every step. It was important to me, and I was willing to fight the good fight and keep my crown on my head, and there are going to be shouts for joy. Same chapter, verse 16.

*16) I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. (KJV)*

Once again, what a joyous thing that will be in the first resurrection. We're going to be part of a very elite crowd of people, who were called and endured to the end, who made it in the first resurrection. Psalms 149, just a few pages away.

**Psalms 149:1** *Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. (KJV)*

This reminds me of years and years ago in the '80s—way back in the '80s—when we used to go to a Feast site in Tucson, Arizona. It was in a big arena and there were probably 10,000 or so there, which seems incredible now; it's a different age but there were a lot of people there and especially on the holy days when everybody would come, the high days. We would sing and we had this tremendous festival choir that stood in the back; they were belting it out and you had 10,000 voices chimed in and I can honestly remember screaming because I couldn't hear myself sing. It was just so wonderful and so dynamic to hear that praise to God that you lost your voice in the crowd and as we'll see, that's going to happen again. We're going to shout for joy. We will be doing something else in the Kingdom; let's look over at 1 Corinthians. Like I said, this is not an exhaustive study, it's just enough to whet your appetite hopefully so you can dive into it yourself. 1 Corinthians 6:2-3.

**1 Corinthians 6:2** *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? (KJV)*

That's our future, we're going to be judges. We're going to judge the world. We're going to be kings and priests. We're going to be part of the elect of the government of God.

We need to practice because you need to see yourself there, you need to see yourself judging the world because that's your future.

3) *Know ye not that we shall judge angels? (KJV)*

Now there's a big one. We're going to be worthy to judge to angels. But we need to practice now—we need to practice making good decisions, right moves, and it starts with loving your brother. Loving God, loving your brother, being a saint—blameless, consecrated, holy, pure, filled with mercy. So we will be judging. This would not be a complete look, obviously, without looking into Revelation, so come with me to Revelation 19, which we have visited several times but there's nothing like repetition. What will we be doing in the world tomorrow? Do you see yourself there?

**Revelation 19:5** *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (KJV)*

What is one of the reasons we're here at the Feast? To learn to fear God. It's nice to have a wonderful meal and certainly we had one last night, but we should be here to learn to fear God, first and foremost.

6) *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (KJV)*

He's on His throne. You can take that to the bank.

7) *Let us be glad and rejoice ... (KJV)*

Isn't that what saints are supposed to do?—rejoice! Certainly we have an opportunity to rejoice here as a prelude.

7 continued) *... and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

8) *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (KJV)*

Pure, unblemished by the world, merciful, holy. Let's look over at Revelation 20. Do you see yourself there? Is it valuable to you? Are you willing to pay the price to be there?

**Revelation 20:4** *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (KJV)*

I don't think we really stop to consider what it will be like to live with Jesus Christ. What an awesome thing to share a dwelling with Him. He lives in us now but to really see Him, talk to Him, be there—what an awesome, super, wonderful future for us.

*5) But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. (KJV)*

We're going to be in that first resurrection.

*6) Blessed and holy [once again, we are to be holy as He is holy] is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (KJV)*

Authority, judging, power, eternal life; to be priests before the Most High God, to be priests before Jesus Christ—do you see yourself there? Is it really important to you? Are you willing to sacrifice now to be part of that?

*7) And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison ... (KJV)*

We have a lot to look forward to. We have a lot to strive for. We have a lot that we can work on. Like most mustard seeds it just needs to start and it starts here. Whatever You ask me to do, I will, because it's Your will, and let it be done. Proverbs 29—a cautionary ending here.

**Proverbs 29:18** *Where there is no vision, the people perish: (KJV)*

Who wants to perish, stand on your head. I don't. I'm willing to pay the price now, to do what the Father tells me to do, to try to grow, overcome, change, be better next year, be better at the Feast next year than I am this year. I've got a long way to go. But I know that God is my rear guard, He's got my back. He wants me to finish, He wants me to finish with a high hand. We have to have the vision. We have to have the vision that we will be in that Kingdom, that we will make it, that God is behind us a hundred percent, that we will be kings and priests.