

Living Life God's Way

Chapter Five: Life is Designed to Make You a Ruler

Spiritual truth to be mastered: Recognizing that God has called us to both rule and judge upon the earth as we obey God, gain His perspective, and reject the fear of man.

Why do we need this truth operating in our lives? Without this skill, we permit our own disobedience to God using the excuse of “tolerance” to justify our refusal to hold ourselves and others accountable to God's Word.

FRIDAY:

I am committed, Father, to walking in the fear of You, not man— learning how to exercise judgment according to Your Word and the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 6:1-5: “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life? If then you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren?”

Revelation 2:26-27: “He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father.”

Matthew 7:1-5: “Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

Genesis 1:26-28: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

Romans 8:17: “...and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.”

II Corinthians 10:13-16: “But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you. For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach to you, for we were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ; not boasting beyond our measure, that is, in other men's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows, we shall be, within our sphere, enlarged even more by you, so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, and not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another.”

Rulers don't run, and runners don't rule

Rulers avoid the game, "I won't tell what I see if you don't tell what you see," also known as, "I won't judge you if you won't judge me." Trying to feel good about yourself is missing the point. This is about God. Because God accepts us, we are acceptable. It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks. If God is for us, who can be against us?

We were given the responsibility to rule the earth. Earth, not heaven, is our place of rulership. Our authority is on this planet. This means we need to know what our authority is and then measure it out in a proper way.

Father is incrementally bringing us up to the "full stature of Christ" ([Ephesians 4:13](#)). This "bringing" is how He fellowships with us. According to our faithfulness, God will put us over cities and nations in the age to come.

A man's view of heaven will tell you what he values in life. If our heaven is a picture of cookie-cutter automatons, we are seriously deluded and likely have offended our Father. He has so much power to give, but He won't give it to untrained hands.

The training in God that qualifies you to receive power works in such a way that by the time you get power, you don't want it anymore. Rulers hold their power as if it were someone else's. In reality, it is someone else's power—God's.

Luke 19:12-26: "So He said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.' But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done. The first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.' The second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' Another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.' He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already.' I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away."

What are you doing with what God has given? How long do you think God will wait for a people who can give an acceptable account? God is not after our comfort; He's after our growth. God isn't going to rescue us from our training.

Judgment is a critical skill that God wants us to have. Jesus is a judge; therefore, we must become judges. He has a way to judge, and we must follow it. Our spiritual immune system must be suppressing that which we are judging in someone else. If we are truly helping them in our judgment, we must have that thing suppressed enough in our own lives that we don't disqualify ourselves.

The Church is hated because of our hypocrisy. We must clean our own house. Judgment begins first in the house of God.

The saints as judges of the faith:

1. Personal
2. Saints
3. World
4. Release of the saints for the created order



What are the obstacles to proper rulership?

Our first major challenge is our own disobedience. We cannot, in the name of love, remove the consequences of disobedience. Don't cut others' cocoons. [Proverbs 12:10](#) says, "...the compassion of the wicked is cruel."

Our second major obstacle is the fear of man. We must care more about God's opinion than man's.

Our third major obstacle is the Church's ignorance of its responsibility to exercise godly judgment.

If you can't run with the footmen, what will you do when the horsemen come? If you have trained diligently, you will be prepared. Grace gives me the power to confront the fear of man.



Galatians 6:1-2: "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ."

You must get your spiritual immune system fixed. If you don't, you will approach everyone out of revenge. We must show others how to get free. We must approach them like a coach would. We must demonstrate how it works. You can't give something to someone if you don't have it. A disciple is giving away that which has been given to him and apportioned for others.

How many times do you honestly bring a word without fear of rejection? How much do you love them? Your discipline out of love is far better than the discipline that will follow in your absence.

Why don't we set up Christian law courts all over the world? Wouldn't the world stream to our courts if we obeyed God and lived in righteousness? This will happen even though it may not be the way we want. He will be obeyed regardless of the motivation. He will have a clean and spotless bride. He will be diligent to clean us thoroughly.

Making It Real:

As rulers-in-training, we must accept the authority and responsibility Christ has given His people to exercise rulership on the earth. Man has been given the responsibility to rule. It is on earth that man has rulership.

Psalm 115:16: "The heavens are the heavens of the LORD; but the earth He has given to the sons of men."

Psalm 82:1-8: "God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality Earth is our place of training and rulership to the wicked? Selah. Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. They do not know nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. Nevertheless, you will die like men, and fall like any one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth! For it is Thou who dost possess all the nations.'"

Matthew 16:19: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Earth is Our Place of Training and Rulership

As we exercise faithful rulership and it expands on the earth, we are preparing ourselves and others for God's next phase in His plan for man. Earth is our training ground. It is plain to see that the desire to "escape" or "fly away to glory" is in direct contradiction to the purpose God has for us in the earth.

As believers, we are to rule over ourselves, our families and churches, and bring Christ's discipline mandate to bear on all facets of public life within the nations.

Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

Ask God to reveal to you what the world would look like under the discipline of the sons of God. What is His response?

Read **Matthew 7:1-6**. Write a short strategy that you will use to judge yourself righteously.

Read **Romans 8:17-22**. What will you look like when the real "you" is revealed? Ask God to show you.

II Corinthians 10:6: "... and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete."

Is your obedience complete? If not, why not? What is your system or plan for completion? We cannot measure others against God's Word (judge) if we ourselves aren't obeying the standards in question. Man is afraid of God's standards and exercising judgment because they expose our rebellion and destructiveness, and they make us accountable.

In the United States of America, we have organized this rebellion into a legal structure and have used public funds to shield people from the consequences of their sinful choices.

Galatians 6:1-4: "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another."

We are called to judge sin for the sake of God's righteousness but not to have a judgmental spirit. In your journal, keep track of how people perceive your attitudes toward judgment.

Questions for Reflection:

What is the Spirit saying I should do in each of these five major areas?

- Body
- Possessions
- Finances
- Relationships
- Talents

As you reflect on this lesson, pray about it and make notes in your journal. What is the Lord saying, and what are you thinking about today's workout?