

Our Culture & Our Character

Pastor Norberto Restrepo Sr.

2. As Little Children

In Sin we want to have Dominion.

In our Sinful State—we desire to have Power. Not only do we desire—but we exercise it.

In Sin, Power is not only a desire—but Sin and Power are almost synonyms.

Who doesn't desire Power?

Satan desired Power—possibly even before he sinned. And simultaneous with his rupture from the Lord, he desired to have a Dominion.

He wanted Power—and we are not an exception. The struggles that we have are struggles for Power.

Even as Independents—and within the family we want to exercise Power. And we have Bible texts for that—we have Bible texts to support any type of deviation. David had it—and modern human beings also have Bible texts.

“And towards your husband shall be your desire, and he shall rule over thee.”

We have Bible texts.

There is a Bible text in Scripture that I would like to understand. I don't understand it. I have to receive it by Faith. All of God's Word is received by Faith. All of God's true knowledge is received by Faith. There is no knowledge of God that is received in a rational way. Because all of God's knowledge is given through revelation because God knows that He needs to teach me that nothing is mine. Nothing is mine! Everything comes from Him. And Scriptures claim that the only Wise One is God. I am not wise. He is the Wise. How difficult it is to admit it. How difficult—especially for adults.

We believe that we know. We believe that we have. We know that we have power. But how difficult it is for God to teach us that.

And here there is a Bible text that I place before you as a homework, as I have for a homework for myself. My reason does not understand it. My mental capacity is not able to grasp it, but I have to come in faith. You'll find it in Psalm 8.

“O Lord, our Lord.”

For me it is very beautiful how David starts off. David is in complete recognition of God. He recognizes the Lord and the only great theme for him is the Lord.

“O Lord, our Lord. How excellent is Thy name in all the earth. Who has set Thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. . .”

And of sucklings!

“Hast Thou ordained strength.”

The strength—and the Power—in the little babies. I don't understand it.

In Goliath I see power. In David there was power. The adults are the ones that have power. In developed and mature men we find power. The rich have power. Those that have some type of recognition are the ones that have power.

But God says, "Out of the mouth of babes hast Thou ordained strength." I don't understand it. I don't know if you understand it.

But in matter of salvation we don't have to understand this—we have to experience it—as a fact. And these acts, if they don't come through the path of reason, if they don't come through that mental laboratory of ours—for us they are not truth.

But thanks be to God that scriptures are not given in a laboratory way. They are not of a sensorial nature—they are given through revelation. And our Lord Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11. Listen to what Matthew 11 says—we know it by heart—we know it as a Bible text—we have done exegesis on it—but we don't have the experience. Verse 25:

"At that time Jesus answered and said I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

The Lord is pleased in revealing Himself to children. That is His pleasure. Why?

And today this manifestation has been destroyed. Today children are Satan's objectives, because the old people—we are already possessed by him. So now his objective is reaching and taking control of the children.

Heaven has given us a science of education and you know that heaven's science of education is a redemptive science, because for Jesus, to educate is to redeem. To educate is to restore. To educate is NOT to inform—to be informed. Anyone can be informed, but to be redeemed, heaven says that the science of education is the science of redemption.

And many of us have failed in that area. We have informed our children but they have not been restored. We have given them a secular education. They have degrees. They have obtained power. They have dominion. They have received recognition. But they haven't been redeemed and God wants to redeem the children. He has purposed Himself to redeeming the children.

To Nicodemus the Lord said: "If thou wantest to see—ye have to be born again."

And to the disciples He said: "If you want to enter in." What is more, to see or to enter in? What is more? What do you prefer—to see—or to get inside? It is more to be able to get in, and we that are curious, we want to go in.

And to the disciples He said: "If you want to enter into the kingdom of heaven, you have to be converted and become as children."

But these children—to these children—God did not tell them that they would see, the Lord did not tell them that they would enter—the Lord said: "of theirs IS—of them IS—the kingdom of heaven."

How did Jesus teach? Different from how we teach. How did Jesus teach? With acts—He was very objective—and with the most simple—simple way. And He took a child—not like this child here—this child has a difference with the children of Jesus' time and age, because, in Jesus' time, children were more innocent than these children. 2,000 years ago—can you imagine a child of 2,000 years ago? It is kind of difficult to imagine it.

Can you imagine a baby in David's time and age? 3,000 years ago—the days of King David—a child—a baby—it is difficult to fathom it.

But 2,000 years ago—children, without sugar. A child today without sugar? Without a genetic trail of sugar consumption? A child without Television? It's a strange child. A child without internet? A child without pornography? What kind of child? What kind of children? Oh how much the Lord wishes that our children could be raised up like that!

But we today—these children—to these children—we put them the movie of Goliath and we place before them the movie of Goliath and we do not know that that Goliath is just an actor—he is not real—he is not real. And we destroy the children with that Goliath.

And then we present to them a David, who is also an actor and they pay him to be an actor, but he is not real. Which is the real David? That is the one I must discover in the scriptures and show those children the power of David—the dependence of David—David's trust, his certainty, and the knowledge he had in the God of Israel.

These children without movies can come to know David's God. But we have lost that reality, and we teach them about Goliath with the movie and possibly, I myself as a Dad represent this Goliath in stead of showing them David. What a dichotomy! And how we destroy the power and the strength that there is in a child that God would like to use to finish this work at this time and age.

There is a characteristic that children have—when a child is born—how much does he know? How much does he know? Nothing! That's where his power lies—the power of God—not the power of earth. He doesn't know anything.

When a baby is born how much can he do? How much can he do? Nothing! He can't do anything. That is where the source of power is according to God, not according to our secular world. Because we can, we know, we are wise—"without Me—ye can do nothing." How difficult it is to experience for the adults—but for children that is easy.

When a child is born how much does he have? How much does a child have when he is born? Nothing! He can't do anything; he doesn't know anything; and he doesn't have anything—nothing. And for us—nothing—is nothing and no one wants to be nothing.

We want to be Somebody.

Why did Jesus say, of the child is the kingdom of heaven and not to hinder them?

But we as adults what do we do is to hinder their entrance in. Even though we are religious—let's not speak about secular parents. We have hindered their entrance. The disciples were a hindrance. And we hinder from our own children, entering into the kingdom of heaven. This culture has denied children entry into the kingdom of heaven.

But how different is God's conception of life, because what He conceives—because the conceptions that we have performed should be a conception in the Spirit of the eternal Father. But we have lost that reality and that is where our degeneration and depravity begins. When God said that we should multiply—when He said that we should multiply—He was the One that gave that order—He was the One that said that we should fill the earth. He said that to Adam and Eve and He said it in an imperative language. He said it as a supplication, as an order. But when He said that we should multiply ourselves, He did not order us just to multiply the biological factories. That is the work of spiritualism. Spiritualism has made us to multiply just in a biological fashion. That physiologically we reproduce; but not to reproduce in the image of God. What had to be multiplied was God's image. But we have multiplied just the cells—without the Spirit.

Oh, Elizabeth and Zachariah, they multiplied the Image of God—from the womb—through the Spirit, because in them—scripture says of them that both were righteous—that both of them were righteous.

Not before the temple—not before men—not in the synagogue—not in the liturgy—not in the Reformed—not with the Independents—but before God. And He is the One who gives witness that both were righteous and without fault—and without fault!—before the Law—the Torah—and the Law of the Lord.

And what were the results? Oh my beloved, when Zachariah and Elizabeth conceived, were they breathing? Were thy breathing? No they weren't breathing. When God formed Adam and Eve—He breathed—what was it that He breathed? His character—His being—what He is in His essence and the result was, in this body of cells—in this human form, what He made out of dust—what He breathed in was His Spirit and character. The reality—what is concrete in God. Then He told Adam and Eve—and He has told us—multiply God's image.

Let us fill our house with God's image. And God knows that in children, He has to begin. And Ellen White, she says, that higher education are the first years of life. But in the secular world, superior and higher education is post-graduate studies. And we believe in post-graduate studies, but God knows that higher education begins in the womb. There is power in that! A mind that is completely blank, that is void. A mind that is empty, empty of this secular knowledge; empty of these sensorial conceptions; empty of all these philosophies; that it might be filled only of God's knowledge.

But we have failed in that. Mary did not fail in that. Elizabeth did not fail in that. Hannah did not fail in that. And we have a job, and you know that most of us lost that first birth.

I lost that first birth, but God in His mercy permits us to be born again. And each human being within this simple context can be born two times. The first birth—we lost it. And God has forgiven us. We were ignorant—and God forgives sins of ignorance. And He gives us the opportunity He gave Nicodemus—to be born again. Every human being—has the opportunity of being again a child. Every human being. We—with seventy years of age; with eighty years of age; with fifty years of age or thirty—we can become as children again. And receive the strength, the strength of babies as Psalm 8 says.

There is a characteristic in children, where lies the strength, the power, the dominion, the authority—the authority of God, the divine power.

Oh beloved brethren, Satan wants God's power without God's character. He desires power, and human beings in sin, we want power—all types of power—even intellectual power and mental power, even Biblical power. But God's power has only one foundation—His character. These children, who are born for the first time and the children that are born a second time—that power is their's; it is implicit in the new birth. It will not be ours—it will always be of Him. And we claim that His things are ours. But the scriptures teach—and you have observed it—that these children are born and they don't have anything; they don't possess anything; they don't know anything; and they can't do anything.

Have you been present at the birth of a child? Or have you been present at the birth of a horse? Have you seen the difference? How long does it take for the colt to start walking and prancing around? Almost immediately. And why does it happen like that with a human child? The Creator knows why—every child—every child—needs two images of God that might be one. They are made into a help-meet for him. In support—made into security for him.

Not so with the colt, or the calf, or with any other animal. But these children are born for communion. These children are born for dependence. These children are born in faith. These children need a Mom and a Dad—they need. They are born in necessity, they are born dependent and never can they lose that—because when they lose that dependence—they have become adults and they need to be born again.

The Bible says in 1st Corinthians, in 1st Corinthians Paul says something. Let's see if we admit this. Verse 2 of 1st Corinthians chapter 8; "And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

In our fallen condition it is very difficult to admit this, which is the problem of husbands and wives. She knows! She knows—and she knows that she knows. And she manifests that she knows. But then she has an encounter with another one that also knows that he knows. And he knows that he knows. And when two wise are confronted, how difficult it is to agree! We know too much.

But children don't know anything and our Lord, He can write—He can write in the mind of a child all what is His. He can write His Law; He can write His moral values; He can write His name. Oh my beloved, the 144,000 are 144,000 children. Because they have permitted God as Revelation 14:1 says—they have permitted the Lord to write in their frontal lobes—write in their mind—the character of the Father and the character of the Lamb and that's why they are 144,000—they permitted the heavenly Father to write and all the preconceived things that they have—they have placed them aside so that He could write the image of God in them.

Of the children is the kingdom of heaven. But children in my judgment and you can test it—every child in this fallen world is born in faith. Every child is born in faith. But as adults we loose faith and the characteristic of adults is loosing their faith. And the more we grow we have greater unbelief. And the more we grow, the more suspicious we are. The more we grow, the more we suspect of others.

But children don't. Children are not suspicious. If they were suspicious, those children would not permit themselves to be abused. But today Satan has permitted that parents, the very same parents and relatives abuse children. And today that is a daily fact in all this fallen world, because the child is born in faith. He trusts. He trusts in Dad; he trusts in Mom; he trusts in his uncle and his aunt—he trusts—so he gives himself and we have lost the capacity of trust—in God's Word; in our Lord; in His counsel; in His Law; in His Grace and in His Spirit.

But adults—we have faith—we have a lot of faith. We are monsters in faith—but in false faith. We are monsters in false faith—because we trust—we trust tremendously—we trust in ourselves. We have trust—in our selfishness—in our pride and in our wisdom and in our analysis and comprehension. We are monsters of comprehension—in our selfishness.

That is why Jesus said adults will not enter but children will enter. And if you want to see the kingdom of heaven, you have to be born again. And Nicodemus—at our height, at our level, in relationship with our culture—all of us are PhDs compared to Nicodemus. Because what we know now, Nicodemus not even imagined it. What did Nicodemus know about cell-phones? Nothing! Nothing! But we are PhDs in comparison with Nicodemus. And the Lord told Nicodemus, "You are a teacher in Israel."

Notice how the Lord—in every man's sphere—approaches in order to save him. He does not offend him in order to create resentment. He offends him in order to redeem him. God's wounds are for salvation. And Nicodemus understood and he experienced it. Nicodemus was a doctor—in his sphere he was the professor—he was a wise man and he knew that he knew. But he came to Jesus, and he came to Jesus led by the Holy Spirit. He did not come in another way—he came led by the Spirit. And you know that the Holy Spirit does not manifest partiality. He moves all of us; He reproves all of us; He convicts all of us. If we accept Him, He will convince us.

He will convince us in our homes, where lies our family problems. He will convict us and He will convince me that the problem is not in her. The Holy Spirit never comes to me to convince me that the other one is sinful. The Holy Spirit will always come upon me, to convince me, that I am the problem and not that she is the problem.

And if I have trust I will trust in Him. And in order to trust in Him, I have to be as a child. Have you seen children? Children when they feel, when they perceive that they are going to be without communion, that father is going to separate from them, that mother is going to go away from them, they experience something and they don't want to be separated. He doesn't want to break the relationship—because children are born in faith, and in communion. They want to belong to Daddy, and to their Mom, they want to be there. And when a child perceives that; when a child perceives that Mom is going to go away he starts to experience fear. And he has this fear; he doesn't want to separate himself. The child grasps and he grabs his Mom's skirt—he has faith—he trusts—he needs communion. He is born in communion. But what do we do? In Latin countries, we tell children, "Children, don't cry! Be a Macho. Don't cry." And we use a deceptive technique. We take him to the back room, and we put him some toys, and we turn on the television, and we put a movie. And now we even give him a cell phone and give him a computer and internet and we entertain him. And then, when we have him entertained, we tip-toe outside.

We are very intelligent and we destroy thus their faith. And we destroy their communion. And we destroy their trust. And we are criminals! Destroying children. Oh my beloved, when has the Eternal Father separated Himself from us?

At what age did you separate your children from you? At what age were you as a child separated from your parents? At what age did the yellow bus come? At what age—and we were separated. And in that moment, when the yellow bus comes for the first time, what is the children's reaction? They cry! They reject! They don't want to be separated. They were born in faith, in trust, in dependence—but we separate them.

At seven years of age, at eight years of age, father comes home, or the mother comes home, and the child does not greet Dad, and he does not greet Mom. He doesn't know who Mom is. He doesn't really know who Dad is. But he knows about movies and he knows what is on television. He knows who is the actor, he knows who is the great sports man. And he knows very well the basketball player. But he doesn't know his papa, and he doesn't know his momma. The child has been trained to love things. And we change his values; we change his values from trust a person, from trusting in father, from trusting in mother, to place his trust on television; to place his trust on toys. Oh, loved ones, what a crime!

Children are born in faith. Jesus was born in faith. And Mary—never separated herself from Him. John the Baptist was born in faith and Elizabeth never left him. Together as one without rupture, without separation.

But today we separate, because we need to have and having is more important than these children. For us, having is more than faith. And that's why we—faith in God's Word, faith in God, that's an idea—something abstract. Something somewhere up in the air. Our monstrous faith is in what we have; in what we possess; and our values, are about having things. We cannot live without having and each day the more 'adult' we become; we want to have more things. And the more we want to have things—the less we are; the less we are.

In order to be—we don't need to have anything. And these children are born, without having things. And they are born without a desire of having things. But we teach them to have things.

Paul said; "We bring nothing to this world when we are born." Nothing! What did you bring when you were born? What did you bring? Nothing!

And when we die—how much do we take? Nevertheless we place our faith in what we have. And God has desired that we loose faith in what we have and that we might place faith in He who made heaven and earth. Because He wants to found His fortress in children—in children.

If you do not become—and are converted—as one of these—I assure you, verily, unto you—unto you Peter, unto you John, to Matthew, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

What a simple lesson. What a simple lesson! But we don't understand it. Our mind is so complex, our knowledge is so structured, and our wisdom is so abundant, that we don't understand what doesn't require even a dictionary. When our Lord Jesus was very objective, and when He saw the desire for power; the desire of greatness; when He saw that those disciples were already structured with the mind-set of the synagogue and the Pharisees. They wanted to be the wisest. They wanted to be the great ones.

The Lord simply looked for a child, a child of 2,000 years ago, and he placed him in the midst of them.

I can imagine the disciples—"What does Jesus pretend to do with this?"

If you are not converted and become as one of these—ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever humbleth himself as a child shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever trusts, as a child trusts, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Because of them—theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

My beloved brethren, the Holy Spirit wants us to be born again. As Nicodemus—and that we might be born into communion with Him; into dependence on Him; in the certainty of falling into His arms. And just as these children give themselves, just as this little girl gives herself, and comes, and remains here, and obeys, in the same way God desires that your life—that my life—that our lives, may remain, may begin, may be surrendered, may trust, and may wait and may rest, in His arms. In His power.

Then His kingdom will be ours. All what is His, will be ours. Because He is ours. Jesus said, "Our Heavenly Father"—"Our Father"—He is your Father!

Oh beloved, we are orphans. We are orphans. May God permit us to be children in Him.

AMEN