

**“The ‘interior castle’ of the human soul, as Teresa of Avila called it, has many rooms, and they are slowly occupied by God, allowing us time and room to grow.”**

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, p.30

### The Interior Castle

God is not a pushy King. I can live in His kingdom in some aspects of my life, and retain my own kingdom in others. But why would I want to?

#### Scripture:

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

For if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly...  
Colossians 2:6-12; 3:1-5a

#### Voice of wisdom:

“Sometimes the places where God’s effective or actual rule is not yet carried out, and his will is not yet done, lie *within* the lives and little kingdoms of those who truly have been invaded by the eternal kind of life itself - those who really do belong to Christ because his life is already present and growing with in them.

“The ‘interior castle’ of the human soul, as Teresa of Avila called it, has many rooms, and they are slowly occupied by God, allowing us time and room to grow. That is a crucial aspect of the conspiracy. But even this does not detract from the reality of the ‘kingdom among us.’ Nor does it destroy the choice that all have to accept it and bring their life increasingly into it.

“Right beside and among the kingdoms that are not God’s stands his kingdom, always ‘at hand.’ It is that of Jesus and his heavenly Father. It can be ours as well. The door is open, and life in that kingdom is real. Even now ‘the whole earth is full of His glory’ (Is. 6:3). True, few see it. The earth is *not yet* ‘filled with the *knowledge* of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.’ But that too one day ‘shall be’ (Hab. 2:14).”

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, p. 30

## Study 9

### **Contemplation:**

What key words and ideas stand out to you? How do they help you take a deeper look at living in the kingdom of God?

What do you think thanksgiving has to do with being rooted in Christ (in the Colossians passage)?

The “things that are above” are the things of Christ, and Christ is always present with us. So setting your mind on the things that are of Christ is not restricted to “heavenly” ideas. What might this look like on a daily basis?

“The door is open, and life in (God’s) kingdom is real.” What does it mean for you to step through that door? And if you have stepped through it, how are you allowing God to slowly occupy the interior rooms of your “castle”?

### **Practices:**

Write down one or two of the key phrases that are important to you. Hold them (literally) before God and wait silently on him. Record any further thoughts he may give you.

Spend time this week meditating on Colossians 3:1-17. Try to read it daily, journaling about what thoughts and insights God is giving you.

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