

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG187 – Many Realms, One Creation

Hello, and welcome to the podcast. I am excited today about this message, because I believe that it has a huge impact on us as believers in Christ. I want to do something a little bit differently today, just to try this and see how it feels. I am actually going to go to the end of my notes, to the takeaways, and I want to read these first; because I would like for you to have these thoughts in your mind as you begin listening to the podcast. Try to keep them forefront, and then let the podcast itself fill in kind of the details, or put the flesh on the bone, so to speak, as we go forward with this time together.

First of all, I think it is important that we understand there is an infinite number of realms within the creation. That is part of the title of this podcast today – *Many Realms, One Creation* is the title that I have given to it. So, as we approach that, we must understand that within the creation that God has brought forth, there is an infinite number of realms which exist; yet, for the most part, we are unaware of these realms or how to operate within them. Point number two: as believers in God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we must wake up to the many realms that are involved in our faith, and learn to operate within them. Number three: I would say the spirit realm, or spirit world, is one such example of a realm we talk about, but do not really understand or know that well how to function in it. We are generally poorly taught about the spirit realm, because of the lack of teachers who truly understand and have experientially been born of the Spirit. And when I use that term “born of the Spirit,” I am not talking about an initial salvation experience. I am talking about being born again into a realm of spirit.

Lastly, I would say, God, give us hunger to understand and learn how to walk in the Spirit as completely and as competently as we walk in the natural realm. We know how to move and how to function in a natural realm; and that is a great illustration as we begin to get deeper into this teaching, that we do not really relate to other realms as competently and as carefully as we do to this natural world, the realm of the material that we live in.

I want to begin by reading a couple of verses of Scripture out of Ephesians the fourth chapter. I am going to read more of these verses as we get further into this, but I just want to begin here. Ephesians 4, verses 17-18, says, “So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.” And as I said, we will unfold this a little bit more to see really the context that these verses are coming from. But I want to really focus, for the moment, on this idea that he is telling us not to walk in a futility of our mind; and what is he really addressing? He is addressing this darkening of our understanding.

Now, when we use the word darkening, that they are “being darkened in their understanding,” we think of sin, and all of this; but just take it at face value, that there is no understanding. Their understanding is dark – in other words, there isn’t any – so that the Gentiles are walking in a futility of mind because they have no understanding; they are “darkened in their understanding, being excluded from the life of God.” So, when you do not have understanding, it says you are “excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them.” Whenever we are without understanding, then we are excluded from what is

accessible within a realm that exists around us; and we are not able to draw the life, draw the blessing, draw the fruit that exists within that realm, or the life of any kind that exists in that realm, out of just this lack of understanding, this ignorance that does exist.

Paul is addressing this idea that along with ignorance is an exclusion. And we are talking about realms, and we are applying this to realms. Let's read a definition from *The Free Dictionary*, out of the Internet, of the term *realm*. I am going to give you two definitions. The first is, "A community, or territory over which a sovereign rules; a kingdom." This is great for us, because we believe in the Kingdom of God. So, the Kingdom of God, in and of itself, is a realm. It is a realm ruled over by a sovereign. We understand that part of God's creation is His Kingdom, and He rules over that kingdom, so it qualifies under the definition of a realm.

The second definition says, "An area or sphere, as of knowledge." So again, we are talking about the understanding, or knowing, or knowledge; "an area, a sphere, as of knowledge or activity," such as "the realm of science." We see that around us – remember the title, *Many Realms, One Creation* – we exist within a creation that is made up of many, many realms. As far as I know, there is an infinite number of realms in the creation that God has brought forth. And so, we have to ask ourselves, what knowledge do we have, what understanding do we have, what awareness do we have of these realms? Because wherever there is an unawareness, we find ourselves being excluded from whatever exists and dwells there. And many of these realms contain a life, contain things that we really want access to in our eternity, and we will have to have in our eternity to continue on in our relationship with the Father. So, again, I want us to recognize, there is an infinite number of realms in God's creation. Our ignorance of any given realm excludes us from the life and the benefits of what that realm contains.

For instance, here is another realm: there is a realm of Christian salvation. It is a realm in and of itself. An ignorance, or a refusal to enter that realm – remember, he talks about the fact that "they are ignorant because of hardness of heart"; a hardness of heart can give you ignorance, and therefore exclude you. And that applies to the realm of our salvation. If we are refusing that knowledge of salvation, then we are incapable of entering into that realm through faith; and because we are not believing, then we are excluded from the eternal life and the resurrection that is available to anyone who has come into the understanding and the inclusion into that life in Christ. So it is important to understand that once we are no longer ignorant of a realm and what is available within it, we are able to grow and perfect our life experience within that realm.

Honestly, this is not just talking about things that are in an unseen area. In this natural world, this material world that we exist in, there are many realms that exist within this realm. For instance, our physical bodies themselves make up a realm; and if we are ignorant about our physical bodies, then we do not know how to take care of them, we do not know what is going on many times within our bodies, because we do not have the understanding. We do not have the knowledge, and therefore we are excluded from the ability even to really take care of ourselves. And yet, if you take somebody else, take a surgeon, for instance, who has spent time really coming to an understanding of the realm of the physical body; that surgeon, then, is capable of cutting open the body itself and repairing things that have gone wrong, or fixing problems that exist within that body, because of the understanding that he has and the time that he has spent becoming proficient in working with that realm, and within that realm, of the physical body. Now, again, don't try this at home, right? If you do not have the knowledge of the body, then we stay away from that. Not everyone is a surgeon, and you just do not go to anyone when you need surgery. You go to somebody who understands the realm of the body, how it operates,

how it functions, and who is able to diagnose what is wrong with it, and able to go in and hopefully repair it, correct it, so that it will function properly.

So again, surrounding us in the material world are many, many realms; it is not just one realm of the material world. As any given individual, there are things we know about, there are things we do not know about; and when we are excluded from the knowledge and understanding of areas, of different realms, then we are incapable of moving within those realms. We are not able to draw, necessarily, the blessings, the benefits of what exists in those realms. Some realms we have a little bit of knowledge about, a little bit of understanding, but maybe we are not proficient in it. I think some sciences are that way. For instance, everyone has some concept of gravity, but that does not make you a physicist; and there is much you may not know about the science that goes along with physics, but we may know pieces of things.

I am using these illustrations because I want to bring it into a focus about our walk with, and relationship to, the Lord, and our existence as believers in this realm. I think that what tends to happen is that after our salvation, we relate to our salvation experience in a very limited way. There are many realms to our salvation; and I think, as the church, we tend to not teach people about these realms and how to move in them. One example to me is the Scriptures themselves. The Word of God really is almost a realm within itself; and we have to know how to rightly handle the Word of truth. The Scripture itself teaches us that; we have to rightly handle the Word. We have to know how to work in the Scriptures, and understand the Scriptures. We need to teach ourselves and train ourselves and come into deeper understandings of the Bible; because without that understanding, we are incapable of appropriating the fruit and the fulfillment of what the Scriptures say, and how the Scriptures teach us, as believers, to walk with God, to relate to the Lord. This is a tremendous example.

Another example is the spirit world itself, the realm of spirit. Many people exclude the realm of the Spirit. They do not believe in a baptism of the Holy Spirit. They do not believe in gifts of the Holy Spirit. And so, even though they are existent and taught within the Scriptures, people say, "Well, that does not apply for today." And so, they actually train people away from it, and keep them in an ignorance of the spirit world, the things of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit; so that people are not really walking in the benefits of what we have available to us through a spiritual walk with God, and an ability as believers to navigate within the realm of spirit.

I am going to go back to Ephesians, where we just read a couple of verses, and put it in context now with the whole way in which Paul is speaking about our growing in God, our maturing in the Lord, and the way this message applies to us because of that. I am going to read verses 11-18.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ [the body of Christ is to be growing, it is to be being equipped, and it is to be moving in service]; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge [see, the knowledge, the understanding] of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ [in a sense, we are to grow up in all realms that are available in God, into the head, who is Christ; He was a fully matured Son of God], from whom the whole body, being fitted and held

together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.

These verses are talking about the Gentiles; so immediately, we tend to put this over into lack of salvation, or into sin, and that becomes the problem. But all of these verses are addressing the believer, in how the believer is to grow and mature and become a functioning part. And again, remember, if you do not understand a realm, you are not able to function within that realm. You are not able to move within it, and draw from it, accomplish things, be fruitful in moving in that realm. This is the context that he is talking about – not just sin life, and people staying in a sin life; but he is using the Gentile unbeliever as an example of how the mind becomes futile. But, believe me, the mind of a believer can become futile also, if it is not opened, and we are not learning and moving and growing and becoming and maturing into what God has purposed for us in our lives. And if we are not growing, and if we are futile in our minds, then we are darkened in our understanding – in other words, we just do not know, we do not have any understanding. And when there is no understanding, we are excluded from the life of God because of that ignorance. He is using the illustration that they were ignorant because of the hardness of their heart, and it was their own fault. But it is not always our own fault. We can be ignorant because we never heard, we never learned, and nobody is teaching us; or we are being restrained from the knowledge and the understanding.

So this is the context of these verses; and what we want to do is open ourselves up and say, “Lord, we need for our minds to be set free.” The Scripture talks about that, the renewing of our mind, not living according to the futility of this age, or the ways of this world; but instead, having our minds renewed, and having our minds released into the things of God, into the understanding that He has for us. So, we are looking for that experience to be ours.

In Second Peter chapter 3, verse 18, it says, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” We are not just supposed to grow in grace; we are supposed to grow in knowledge. We are to know the Lord. That is what Paul said, “To know Him, and the power of His resurrection.” That is what he was reaching for, constantly. We should be reaching to know the Lord, to know what He has created and prepared for us to walk in. He has given us many precious promises. He has given us all things according to life and godliness. There is so much available to us in and because of our salvation; but we must become aware of it, we must come to an understanding of it, and realize that we have to mature by learning of all the realms which God has opened the door to through our salvation.

We know that God dwells in many realms Himself. In Isaiah 66, verses 1-2, it says,

Thus says the Lord, “Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,” declares the Lord. “But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

The wording of these verses is wonderful. He is saying, “Where is the place that I may rest? For My hand made all these things.” Everything that is made, He made. “Thus, all these things came into being.” There is so much in the creation. And I know the creation may be really, really vast for us to try to think

about or grasp; but I will tell you one thing that should not be too big for us to wrap our hearts around, and that is all that He has provided in our salvation. He has created all of these things. He did not just create the material world that we are able to see and feel and touch. He created all of that which is visible and invisible. And we are to know and understand the things which He has created and made available to us.

He goes on in Isaiah 57:15 to say, "For thus says the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit...'" So, He lives in a realm different than this realm that we now live in. He is able to dwell in this realm; He is able to dwell with the contrite, the lowly, "...in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite." He is able to dwell; we know that He is everywhere. But He is dwelling in places that we are not familiar with, and I think we need to be; because He talks about the fact that "where I am, there shall My servant be also." So we are to become aware of these places that may be higher than our minds right now can conceive of. But it does not mean that they are not accessible to us, if our hunger will drive us to learn.

In Ephesians the fourth chapter, verses 23-24 say, "And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." We are to reach in to this new mind. We are reaching into an understanding that our minds are not futile, and they are not darkened with a lack of understanding; but instead, our minds are renewed. We are released from the futility that exists due to the ignorance. And one thing we do not want to be guilty of is to have an ignorance that is born out of a hardness of our heart, or a refusal or an unbelief to reach in and say, "Yes, these things exist, and yes, they are possible; and yes, I am able to enter into them also." We are able. He is looking for us to come into that place where He is.

First Thessalonians talks about even the realms within ourselves. In First Thessalonians 5:23-24, it says, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass." You see, we, in ourselves, have realms existing within us. We have our spirit world, our spirit body. We have a soul. We have a body, a physical body. And each one of these can function as its own realm, and they can function together and be sanctified entirely in Christ. So, there is a very mystical aspect to this, which a lot of times seems to be what stops people. There is a fear that exists if we try to reach in and learn how to move into that which is the unseen, or the realms that we are not able just from a material aspect to see, to smell, to taste, to touch, to hear; and so, we are driven away. But he is telling us that that is not true.

We see this especially in John the third chapter, starting with verses 4-5. When Christ is speaking with Nicodemus, Nicodemus says to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'" Remember, the Kingdom of God is a realm; you cannot just assume that you can enter in there. It is a realm that you must be immersed into, learn of, and function with. Verses 6-8,

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit [see, they are two different realms]. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Now, I know this terminology “born of the Spirit,” or “born again,” has been used within the Church and Christian context as meaning or referring to the basic initial salvation experience. I believe these verses are talking about something way beyond that. They are talking about a birth into a realm that is beyond just the simple realm of initial salvation that we come into as believers. I do not see most believers with an initial salvation experience being like “the wind that blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound, but you do not know where it comes from and where it is going to.” There is something about being “born into.” It is an experience that we must have, we must be taught of. We must understand it, and not only just have the experience initially, we must then learn how to function, just like we do as a baby being born into the natural realm. You are not born into the natural realm knowing how to function wholly in this realm, being completely competent and capable of doing all things. No, you learn, you grow, you mature; there are many changes along the way before you grow up into the ability to live and move in the natural realm. Why do we think the spirit realm is any different? First, we must be born again into the spirit world, into the realm of spirit; and then, we must grow and learn and become.

Nicodemus, in verses 9-12, responded to Him and said,

“How can these things be?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know [see, there is that understanding] and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”

This is what I think we need to be prepared for in our walk with God. There are many things that are outside the realm. You cannot have a Christian walk that is just encased into the material world and the things that you are able to see and touch. There is a world way beyond that. There is much beyond that. There is a dwelling place of God. There is His Kingdom; there is the Kingdom of God that goes into another realm that you must be able to enter. And so, I encourage us, let there be a hunger in our hearts that drives us to reach in to learn the spiritual things, the heavenly things that have yet to be imparted.

Part of the reason that we do not know it, just like Christ was saying to Nicodemus – I mean, Nicodemus was one of the teachers of that day, and He was saying to him, “You are a teacher in Israel and you do not understand these things?” And I think we have that today. There are many people teaching many things, but there is not a lot that I have seen that are teaching of how to walk by the Spirit, the Holy Spirit; how to walk in the realm of spirit. But we must give ourselves to learn these things, to know these things; because God is going to do a new thing, and we cannot be in the place where He is saying to us, as He did to those standing around, “How will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” What will we do? How will we react if we are told of realms that exist? Will we just harden our hearts, and remain in our ignorance? Or will we open ourselves and say, “Teach me, Lord. Show me. Lead me. Let me walk with You. Let me grow up into a mature son, daughter, of God, and be able to know Your will, and know how to move in these beautiful, wonderful realms that You have created for us.”

I just want to review very quickly the ending takeaways. Number one, there is an infinite number of realms in our creation; yet for the most part, we are unaware of these realms or how to operate within them.

Number two, as believers in God, in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, we must wake up to the many realms that are involved in our faith, and learn to operate within them.

Number three, the spirit realm, or spirit world, is one example of a realm we talk about, but do not really understand, or know how to function in it.

We are generally poorly taught because of a lack of teachers who truly understand, and have experientially been born of the Spirit. And again, I am not talking about an initial salvation experience.

And lastly, God give us this hunger to understand and learn of this wonderful salvation that You have given us, that literally goes on into eternity; for realms beyond anything that we could ask or think or imagine are available to us, because they are there; and we will walk in our eternal relationship with God.

Amen.