

*The King
and His Son*

**Book 3
God Grows His Nation**

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Dear Reader

Hospitality and Humility

I saw the twin sisters
Hospitality and Humility,
strolling hand in hand down a country lane.
Hospitality stooped and picked a pretty flower,
and to Humility she generously gave.
Humility curtsied and graciously accepted, holding it in her tiny hand.
Then together they breathed the sweet scented fragrance,
until all the petals fell softly to the ground.
A beautiful trail the twin sisters have laid before us.
To follow in their footsteps,
is your choice and mine.
Whether the deeds of hospitality and humility we do and follow.
Or pass by, on stony ground.

Years ago, I made a flying visit to Hong Kong and joined a group of tourists for a one day trip to southern China. These were the days when China was still a mystery to those living outside the massive land mass. Who knew what we might glimpse beyond the border?

Boarding a hydrofoil at Kowloon we sailed to the small Portuguese colony of Macao then climbed onto a bus heading for the Chinese border. We checked through border control, documents read and checked by very friendly border guards, and entered Guangdong province.

Soon we were bumping along a country road, passing cyclists on either side. The roadside stretched into productive valley plains of flooded rice paddies, majestic hills glowing vividly green in the distance. Along the way we made several stops to explore Guangdong's local history, lunched at a town restaurant and finally visited a country commune.

Climbing off the bus, we wandered along a dirt path, breathing in the rising dust and wafting aromas of communal living. Suddenly, a frail elderly woman appeared. Standing by her humble dwelling she frantically waved her arms, calling us over. Responding, our group approached her like a herd of elephants which did not deter her for one moment. Tourists were a challenge she had obviously grown used to, and thoroughly enjoyed.

Her gentle spirit was fetching, while her open face told the story of her life. From every riven wrinkle humility flowed with hospitality as she graciously welcomed us into her little house.

As we filed through her home, I must confess I was truly astounded by the stark simplicity and barest conveniences. Walls and ceilings were made of hardened earth, without any decorative surface. Doors were nonexistent, creating an atmosphere of open plan living where hens and pigs freely roamed at their leisure.

Taken back by our cultural differences, I felt like an inquisitive tourist passing judgment upon her personal lifestyle. But perhaps I was seeing through my clouded eyes of multiple choices, where as her only choice was to make the most of who she was and what she had in the only way she knew how. Perhaps my vision was blurred and she was the chosen person to return me to true focus. This simple dwelling was her home, her mansion, her delight, and she would not withhold it from anyone.

When satisfied we had received her full gift of hospitality, this little mother of China led us through an opening into the compound where we exchanged our goodbyes. As we slowly returned to the waiting bus, greetings resounded from every direction as if we were the centre of a grand parade. But, being true to life, eventually all things come to an end, and so once again we boarded our bus.

While the driver waited for a few late returners, I relaxed in my seat. Looking through my window I noticed a young boy standing just outside the compound. A tiny girl clung to his side like a baby Koala bear. As the warm afternoon sun gathered around them, the boy shaded his eyes for a clearer view. He was about twelve years of age, slightly built with a topping of jet black hair. An aura of pride shone from his face, communicating to all on board: "This is my baby sister and this is our home. You are welcome back at our place any time."

In many respects our countries were far apart and in numerous ways so were our lives. Yet this commune nestled in the vast land of China taught me a rich lesson in hospitality and humility.

Gently, God's Spirit spoke wisdom to my mind: "The fulfillment of life is not acquiring great wealth, nor is it attaining great status. The fulfillment of life is simply using well every moment of time, sharing yourself with others whatever your personal circumstances may be."

As the bus moved on to the road, another lesson in life came to a close.

Wrapped in a cloud of dust the humble boy waved farewell and for the last time gazed at our window of life he most likely would never come to know.

At one time the disciples of Jesus were vying among themselves as to who might be greatest in God's kingdom and so they asked the Son,

"Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Matthew 18:1

The answer Jesus gives echoes the sentiments that a humble spirit is the hallmark of true greatness:

"Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter into the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.'" Matthew 18:2-5

As the disciples press closer to Jesus the contrast between them and the little child grows obviously stark. With innocence the child looks up at the towering disciples each acclaiming their own kind of greatness. As the disciples look down at the tiny child they see the child's tender years lit up with humility and the smaller portions of life being of great worth. Willingness to serve shines in the child's eager eyes, showing the beginnings of true greatness.

As the small child nestles against the Master, the glory of Jesus' humility shines into the world. For you see Jesus who is truly the greatest - second only to the Heavenly Father - humbles Himself and becomes a small child of humanity. Giving up the glory and riches of heaven He meets His proud wayward children where they are, and becomes one with them in life to save them from their plight of sin and death.

"...who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2: 6-8

Yes with humility the Son bore our guilt of sin upon the cross of death to free us from our sentence of everlasting death. Believing in the Son we receive His gift of new life.

"...God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)..." Ephesians 2: 4-5

“He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:12-13

And what about Humility’s twin sister Hospitality? Well listen to this extraordinary statement:

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” Hebrews 13: 2

Are you thinking, searching your life to see if you have met an angel? Is it possible whether visible or invisible we often entertain angels in our daily lives? As we open our hearts to receive heavenly angels those very angels guard the door of our minds, so Satan’s evil angels may not enter and destroy our peace in God.

“For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.” Psalm 91: 11-12

Now borne on angels’ wings we humbly return to the greatest true story ever told.

SEEDS OF HEALTH

You and I are standing on the threshold of a turbulent time never experienced before in the history of Planet Earth.

Fog swirls around political events, natural disasters, strange and mysterious events at either end of a very wobbly spectrum, and we hear daily of extinctions in the natural world, of deadly diseases about to lurch into the world, and terrorism could around the very next corner. We could be totally confused.

Thankfully, oh how thankfully, we have the guiding eye of God's word, foretelling the future and events to happen before Jesus Christ returns at His Second Coming. For our peace of mind, we have thousands of reassuring promises, repeated over and over again in different scriptural verses, to tell us exactly what we need to do NOW to prepare for the tumultuous times. No doubt about it, we are living on the edge...

I am impressed to tell you that exactly the same swirling confusion is happening in the world of health. Have you noticed? And guess what? The knowledge and understanding we need to manage our own health can be quite simple.

In Book 3, we are going to get back to simplicity and have a good look at the simple seeds we can sow in our lives to grow and maintain good health. The scientific word for this is *homeostasis*, a Greek word. But we are going to use the word: STRENGTH. You are right if you think that every single letter of the word STRENGTH means something. Behind every single letter of that word STRENGTH, you will find a piece of the simple way to balanced health.

Armed with this simple tool, YOU will be able to check daily if your lifestyle is balanced for good health, no matter where you are in the world, or what your circumstances are. You may even be able to sow a seed of health for others who are struggling in the mire of very interesting, but sometimes overwhelming health information in these end times of the world.

If you want to dig deeper and add more information and knowledge to the simple STRENGTH way, then you can always come back to base if you wander too far, or get confused. I know, as I have wandered off many times, deep into the realms of research, science, people's experiences, products on offer...It's always refreshing to return to simplicity.

This STRENGTH way will cost no money at all, but will cost you some time as you will need to read and think. And then, if you find STRENGTH useful, the next step is to develop a feedback loop - a daily habit to check in with yourself each day. Sounds too easy? Actually it is, and that's coming from someone who needs to continually work at routine becoming a reality in my life.

So I'll see you in the next Health column in this Book 3, where we begin at the beginning of STRENGTH. Let's take the next step into the end times of the world with STRENGTH.



REMEMBER, A SINGLE SEED OF HEALTH IS ALL IT TAKES TO GROW A BEAUTIFUL FRUIT PRODUCING, LIFE ENHANCING HEALTH MESSAGE IN YOUR LIFE (OR SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE).