

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

PART 2: THE EFFECT OF GOD'S KINGDOM IN THE EARTH

We are week 2 into a 3 week series about the Kingdom of God.

Within these 3 weeks, we're looking at these 4 things:

1. How the OT prophecies spoke of the coming of the Kingdom of God
2. How those OT promises of the Kingdom of God were inaugurated with coming of Christ
3. What the effect is of the Kingdom of God in the Earth
4. What that means for you as an individual Christ follower

Last week we talked about God's Promises About His Kingdom (rule & reign) Being Established In the earth.

- We specifically looked at...
 - What did God promise about His Kingdom in OT prophecies & psalms
 - How Jesus fulfilled the promises about God's Anointed One to user in God's Kingdom
 - God's Kingdom was inaugurated through the virgin birth & life of Jesus
 - God's Kingdom was demonstrated through signs, wonders, & miracles
 - God's Kingdom was established through the death, resurrection, & ascension of Jesus
 - Jesus is seated on David's throne NOW in the heavens, above all things
 - If Jesus is enthroned now...that means He is ruling and resigning over a kingdom now

Tonight, lets start by reading a conversation Jesus had with Pilate:

John 18:33-37 (ESV) So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" **34** Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" **35** Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" **36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not *of* this world. *If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.* But my kingdom is ***not from the world.***" **37** Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."

There are some people who see this scripture as saying that God's Kingdom is heavenly and not at all earthy.

That is an incorrect understanding of the point that Jesus was making. In fact, he makes it quite clear in verse 36 when he says His Kingdom is not “from” this world.

God's Kingdom Is Not Of This World, But It Is For This World.

So what does not of this world mean?

- Not Of The World = Not Carnal
- The Rule & Reign of Jesus is not worldly
- God's kingdom has it's origins in heaven

Jesus doesn't operate like the kingdom's of the world

- He doesn't flip flop on issues with the ebb & flow of popular opinion
- He doesn't hire a PR team to manage His image
- He doesn't define His success by the polls or in the applause from people
- He doesn't bend to the desires or agendas of financial donors
- He doesn't mind being associated with those of low status
- He doesn't manipulate the masses with deceit, half truths, or lies

Jesus doesn't operate like the kingdom's of the world.

- He is a King who serves those He leads
- He is unlimited in resources and knowledge
- He is faithful and unchanging in His words and actions
- He is loving and merciful, even to those unable to help Him
- He is willing to be flogged & pierced for the sins of others

What worldly government has a leader like that?

The Kingdom of God does not have it's origins in this world...it is from above and the King is seated above...but the impact of His kingdom is FOR this world.

Look at the prayer Jesus molded for us.

Matthew 6:9-10 (ESV) Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

This prayer wouldn't be molded if it were not to be expected.

We should be praying this...believing this...living this.

Jesus sets the standard for our expectation in this prayer. That the earth would be so transformed by His Kingdom & Will that it starts to look like heaven.

People have often misunderstood the impact of God's Kingdom in the Earth

- Some expected it to be immediately fully realized
- Some place it off fully into the future

Neither of those things are true.

His Kingdom is Now...And Not Yet.

Luke 19:11 (ESV) As they (the crowd of people following Jesus' ministry) heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

- They supposed/assumed what
 - His Kingdom would
 - appear (anaphainó - to be seen)
 - immediately (par-akh-ray'-mah - instantly, immediately, on the spot)

People had been following Jesus' ministry and watching Him...they believed He was the Messiah...with that belief came the baggage of their expectations upon Him and what does

Jesus doesn't deny they are right in expecting Him to establish a Kingdom...He does correct their expectations of how this Kingdom of His would appear...

Luke 9:12-15 (ESV) He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. **13** Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' **14** But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' **15** When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.

So look at what Jesus tries to teach them about His Kingdom

- A nobleman went into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom and then return
 - He was telling them He has come from heaven into the earth to receive a Kingdom
 - He was here now to begin that work
 - Those who received Him as the King were to engage in business until His return
 - Citizens in the land would hate Him & His Kingship
 - He returns and to receive the fullness of His Kingdom
 - He rewards those who did Kingdom business for their stewardship
 - He saw the people's faithful labor as investment into His Kingdom

This is consistent

Some people have expected God's Kingdom to be immediately fully realized. Today there are people who place His Kingdom off into the future that will in a distant day ahead will be realized when the King returns.

I Don't Think Either Of Those Things Are True.

HIS KINGDOM IS NOW, AND NOT YET

Not Yet Doesn't Mean Coming To Us...It Means Growing Through Us

Yet means that it is fully here...but not fully mature...not fully expanded...not fully grown.

When we look at all the things God spoke through prophets & psalmists, we see a picture being painted of a forever Kingdom that so impacts the world in a way that societies are transformed and nations are healed.

*When I read the scripture I don't see the Kingdom of God as something that is coming to us...I see the Kingdom of God as something that has come to us and is now **slowly growing and spreading** throughout the nations of the earth from generation to generation...*

2 Important Things Jesus Taught About His Kingdom

1. It's Expansion Is Gradual

- **Matthew 13:33 (ESV)** He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

2. It's Established In Human Hearts

- **Luke 17:20-21 (ESV)** Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, **21** nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

How Long Does Jesus Reign Before Handing The Kingdom To The Father?

1 Corinthians 15:24-25 (ESV) Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. **25** For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

All of His enemies have been stripped of their power, but not all have yet lost their influence. Jesus broke the power of sin and death at the cross, yet the influence of sin and death remain in the earth...what is Heaven's answer to a sin filled world - God filled people.

He has put His Spirit in people and so we live with a heavenly inheritance in our hearts, willfully submitted to the Kingship of Christ, our Lord, and that through that way - the Kingdom is gradually filling the earth, transforming societies.

GOD'S KINGDOM IS ESTABLISHED, BUT GROWS SLOWLY

For the past 2,000 years, the Kingdom of God has been expanding and transforming societies.

His Kingdom is not one that conquers quickly by threat of the sword...it is one that expands not through physical force...but by a spiritual power...by love.

Throughout history, societies have been transformed due to the influence of Christianity.

- The Roman Empire, known for its brutality and paganism, eventually embraced Christianity, leading to significant moral and cultural shifts.

- The fall of Rome can be tied to the expanse of the Kingdom of God as the Christian faith began to permeate and transform the empire from within.

The spread of Christianity throughout Europe led to the establishment of universities, hospitals, and various social reforms.

The abolition of slavery in the Western world was driven largely by Christian principles and the efforts of believers like William Wilberforce.

Matthew 28:18-19 (ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, “**All authority in heaven and on earth** has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.”

This passage speaks incredibly clearly of a historical hope where the One who ha

When Jesus says He has “**All authority in heaven and on earth**”

- That is now
- That is a present reality

This doesn't say to just preach to the nations...the command is to disciple nations.

Some people might say, that sounds lofty...I'd say that I don't want to reduce the words of a man who came from God, was killed, and then vindicated by God by being raised from the dead...I don't want to reduce His words to my comfort level.

But even more so than that...Psalm 2 actually gives us the prophetic context and understanding of we should anticipate the Great Commission to be fulfilled and nations disciplined into obedience of Christ

Psalm 2:2 (ESV) The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed

This passage is talking about Jesus, as the Lord's Anointed, standing before Herod and Pilate. It's quoted in Acts.

Acts 4:26-27 (ESV) The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' **27** for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

Then what happens - The Lord who is in heaven laughs, has them in derision, and God says,

Psalm 2:7 (ESV) I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

- This is not talking about Jesus coming into existence or being
- Jesus is the eternal God, having no beginning or ending
- This is talking about the resurrection of Jesus

We know this because it is what the Apostles Peter & John taught

Acts 13:32-33 (ESV) And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, **33** this he has fulfilled to us their children by **raising Jesus**, as also it is written in the second Psalm, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.”

- Jesus is begotten from the dead -
- This is what today I have begotten you means

Right after that in Psalm 2 where it's referring to the resurrection and what does it say?

Psalm 2:8 (ESV) Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

Psalm 2 is the behind the scenes spiritual story of Jesus crucifixion. It is the prophetic context for Jesus saying He has all authority...the nations have been given to Him.

Do you think that He does not intend to bring into His Kingdom the nations He purchased with His own blood.

Let's go even further with this!

When Jesus was on trial before His crucifixion what did he say to Caiaphas & the council

Matthew 26:63-64 (ESV) Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

When Jesus says...today there are a lot people who wrongly think that is Jesus talking about His 2nd coming...when He will come to earth again. But He is not talking about His 2nd coming or a coming to earth because He is quoting Daniel 7

- In Daniel 7 he is not coming to the earth
- He is coming into the throne room of God - the Ancient of Days
- He is coming on the cloud like a Son of Man
- WHEN that happens He is given universal dominion over everything

This isn't the return of Christ to earth...this is His Ascension...it's His coronation where He is crowned as King. Let's look at it...

Daniel 7:13-14 (ESV) I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. **14** And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

When we celebrate ascension Sunday, this is what we are celebrating - His coronation over everything.

What that means...

- Evangelism is not trying to campaign for Jesus
- No - this is a Kingdom...it's a monarchy
- Jesus is already crowned & seated
- As evangelist we go out as heralds into outlying nations with a message
- To tell people who didn't get the word - “guess what - there is a new King”
- We are trying to convince stubborn villagers who don't believe us

Matthew 28:18-19 (ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, “**All authority in heaven and on earth** has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**,

Jesus doesn't say - get disciples from the nations...He says disciple nations.

- The direct object of the verb disciple is the nations
- Disciple the nations

How do we do that?

- Baptizing
- Teach them obey

God's Kingdom began small, with the seed being in Christ Himself

John 12:23-24 (ESV) And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

John 12:27-32 (ESV) “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? *But for this purpose I have come to this hour.* **28** Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” **29** The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” **30** Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. **31** ***Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.*** **32** And I, when I am **lifted up** from the earth, will draw **all** people to myself.”

The death of Christ was the beginning of a great harvest...a harvest of nations coming under the influence of His Kingdom.

There in Galilee there may have only been enough followers of Messiah to amount to what could be a mustard seed when compared to the kingdom of Rome...

Matthew 13:31-32 (ESV) He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. **32** It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

4 Evidences Of The Presence & Expansion Of God's Kingdom

1. The Gospel Is Being Preached

- **Matthew 24:14 (ESV)** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

2. Repentance & Personal Transformation

- **Matthew 3:2 (ESV)** “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

3. Miracles & Healings

- [Luke 10:9 \(ESV\)](#) Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you

4. The Least Of These Are Cared For

- [Matthew 25:34-40 \(ESV\)](#) "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, **36** I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' **37** "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? **39** When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' **40** "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

These signs confirm that the Kingdom of God is actively at work, expanding and transforming lives and societies.

God's relationship with time is different that ours is

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Why Should We Doubt That His Kingdom Will Gradually Transform The Earth

The Kingdom Of God Is Like

- Leaven inserted into dough - it gradually works its way into the whole batch
- Mustard seed - small but grows to overtake the whole garden
- Rock that becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth
- The Nations Are His Inheritance, bought by His own blood
- He taught us pray - His Kingdom On Earth As In Heaven